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From Disease to Desire: Panama and the Rise of the Caribbean Vacation

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From Disease to Desire: Panama and the Rise of the Caribbean Vacation

by

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If you are expecting a fun-filled guide to pampered leisure, then you should put this story back on the shelf. What follows may be disturbing and ruin your vacation. Facts sometimes have that affect:

In 1903, W.E.B. Du Bois declared "the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line."[1] Over the last one hundred years, the "color line" – with small actions and huge historical turns – has slowly eroded only to reveal equally pervasive lines of privilege and inequality.

Today, it seems, the problem of the twentieth-first century is the problem of mobility. Some people can travel and change their reality, and some cannot. Some people travel for pleasure and in luxury, while others travel to survive, to escape war and poverty. The origins of this problem are old, but its sustaining ideas and practices have taken on renewed power in the modern era. Tourism has become the largest and most lucrative of global industries, and yet at the same time, this mobility is far from accessible. Parallel to leisure travel, we are seeing one of the worst migratory crises in history. Millions of Iraqis and Syrians flee a war initiated by the United States and are turned away at border after border. Meanwhile, European and U.S. tourists travel in the other direction and visit luxurious resorts in the southern Mediterranean.

The problem of mobility crosses the Atlantic Ocean; perhaps it began here. In the Americas, millions of tourists from the United States travel to fancy all-inclusive resorts and take luxury cruises to the Caribbean, while countless Mexicans, Cubans, Haitians and other Latin American residents search for a clandestine way to cross the border north. It costs a family from the United States a few thousand dollars to comfortably vacation abroad and cross multiple national borders, with almost no questions asked, while a single migrant from the global south may pay upwards of $6000 to be hidden in trucks and safe houses, and abused by "coyotes" (people smugglers) in search of a better life.

[1] W.E. Burghardt Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk: Essays and Sketches* (Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1907), 13.

Clearly, something is wrong. Some "boat people" are welcomed (red carpets rolled out, lobsters buttered, best wine served), while others are unwanted refugees, hunted and locked up in prisons and deported south. Some people are deemed "desirable" travelers and others as illegal, "undesirables." Where in the world did these boundaries of mobility and immobility come from?

I address this troubling issue, in this dissertation, through the study of tourism – a form of travel I know perhaps too well. Growing up in the town of Winter Park, Florida, a small resort community sucked up by the expansion of Orlando's Disneyworld boom, I have observed firsthand the intimate proximity of travel "haves" and "have-nots." Florida is a destination for retirees and tourists (with money to spend in search of vacation dreams) and also for countless migrants and refugees from the south – from Haiti, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guatemala, Mexico, and so on. In Orlando, literally on one side of the street, there are tourist attractions and fancy hotels, and on the other, run-down apartment complexes and crowded homes of undocumented people who make the tourist machine operate and who, with their low wages, keep the vacation dream affordable.

The tourist economy, of course, is not run solely by migrants. Many people born and raised in Florida have also turned to the service industry for work, serving drinks, food, and entertainment to tourists. For a smile and a fun experience, they earn more than they could teaching or working in something related to their university degree. The pay isn't bad, but the hours and the culture can be rough. To experience someone else's vacation everyday can take a toll on one's body and soul.

Social critics, anthropologists, sociologists, journalists and any number of authors have tried to make sense of the sometimes seedy and unjust tourist culture shaping communities in Florida, the Caribbean, and throughout the world of sunny and tropical destinations. But most of these studies, from my perspective, merely scratch the surface, explaining contemporary "effects" – the social interactions, tourist fantasies, and work conditions of service employees. I want to know much more, and in particular – how it started, and what tourism's emergence and its early practices tell us about the way people traveled thereafter? How did it begin? And what does history tell us about ongoing

experiences of mobility and immobility? What does tourism's early history reveal about the disparate identities of tourists and migrants, of desirable and undesirable travelers?

Answers to these questions are far from straightforward. (As an historian, I can always begin with the statement. "It's complicated.") Through the mode of storytelling, however, closely following and analyzing an earlier generation of travelers, I hope readers will begin to understand some of the "roots" and "routes" that have shaped tourism and travel in the modern era. Patterns formed nearly a century ago have become the guiding principles and practices of today's traveling culture.

Eight years ago I began my own journey – both intellectual and physical – to try and make sense of a history so intimately connected to my own community and my own sense of self, as both a tourist and also a member of a "touristed" community. Along the way, I had the privilege to live and work in many places and form new friendships. The route of tourism I study – from the east coast of the United States to Florida and through the Caribbean – was also the route of my research. During my graduate studies, I likely traveled as much as my tourist subjects. And in a sense, I mobilized a similar privileged identity…although to question, deconstruct, and historicize that very identity – the privileged white American crisscrossing borders. With eyes open, and with critical analysis, I have tried to understand where travel privilege comes from. At the same time, I have worked to avoid some of the pitfalls of being an American abroad. My interest in tourism's past is bound up with the present.

The dissertation I present is based on my work as an historian, ethnographer, traveler and tourist, and resident of the U.S.-Caribbean world. Archives, travels, research, conversations, filming, interviews, and just "hanging out" inform the narrative that follows. I have written this dissertation backwards and sideways, over many years, scribbling notes while in archives and in the bathroom stalls of tourist bars.

Along this journey, many friends welcomed and took care of me. I don't think I could have endured alienating archives or the existential dread of footnotes or being surrounded by tourist crowds, or learned, little by little, how to be my own type of traveler without them. I started this research as one person and came out another, and I

believe/I hope for the better. There are many communities and people to thank for that slow metamorphosis:

Over the past year, I lived in the mountains of western North Carolina and completed most of the dissertation writing there, thanks to the hospitality of good friends - Harris, Agata, and baby Croc. Mornings were spent in a retrofitted cabin, at the computer, and afternoons in the woods and working outdoors. It was a year of productive solitude in nature, and I'm grateful for the Blackwell family for that opportunity. In late spring 2015, Ana Knapp also invited me to her peaceful home in Pecos, New Mexico. In between thinking about Smithsonian naturalists and their influence on tourism, I wandered through piñon forests with my hiking companion Buddy (the neighbor's dog). Ana's friends June, Blake, and Dominique also inspired me with their good food and storytelling, and reminded me that I really wasn't alone in the woods.

Friends, family members, and mentors have taught me how to learn and travel as a way of life. While doing research for this dissertation project, I spent a generative year in New York City and met friends who contributed to my thinking: Wendy James and I made some short films together and discussed critical ideas, particularly those of James Baldwin. Laurie Thomas and Elizabeth Cramer also helped me reflect and share stories of Florida nostalgia. Corey Ellis, my neighbor, student, and friend, reminded me of the value of saying complicated things plainly yet with emotion. Journeying a little further south, I had a meaningful stint at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C. My advisor there, Pamela Henson, pushed me to dig deeper into the archives and my own assumptions. Jeffrey Stine and Marcel LaFollette also offered kind words and useful reading recommendations. In the city, bouncing between museums and archives, Pierre Pratley, Holly Flickinger, and Kirsten Tyree shared reflections and laughs. In addition to learning in the libraries of New York and Washington D.C., my friends and companions also taught me a bit about big city life. (Spending the winter in a crowded and frozen city revealed the powerful pull of tropical travel.)

Over the last eight years, most of my research took place in Panama. The isthmus has been an incredibly insightful place to think about interconnections and the movement of people, ideas, and goods across the Americas. I first visited Panama as an unschooled

undergraduate when Lucas Castrellon invited a group of college friends to meet his family. Our undergrad alma mater, Florida State University, is a popular university for Panamanians wanting to study in the United States. Half a century ago, after the Second World War, the demands of the U.S. military encouraged Florida State to open a branch campus in Panama and after the transfer of the canal on December 31, 1999, the university demilitarized but remained. This transnational academic link introduced me to the country. Lucas and his family taught me more about Panama and U.S.-Panamanian relations than I could ever learn in books. I thank them for their friendship and the history lessons.

After many years in Panama, the isthmus feels sort of like home away from home. It's where I always seem to return and reconnect with friends. I'd like to thank in particular: Noris Herrera, Michael Brown, Orlando Savage, Jesús David Blanco, Diana Moschos, and the students at Cambio Creativo, a youth educational program in Colón. As a volunteer and teacher at Cambio Creativo, I have also learned much from Rose Cromwell, Martin Danyluk, Maya deVries, and Susan Brewer. In 2008, I first began to do research in Panama, where I met inspiring colleagues: Ashley Carse, Ezer Vierba, Matt Scalena, Jeff Parker, and Andrea Karner. They have moved elsewhere, but I still remember them as linked to Panama. Ashley, more than anyone, has been my informal advisor, dear friend, and academic confidant. He read every chapter of this dissertation and offered detailed feedback. Ezer also gave some of the most provocative and useful advice I can remember about doing a PhD. "Don't let your graduate studies and academic worries," he told me on one long walk, "get in the way of your intellectual development."

The network of scholarly friends working in Panama has grown to also include: Marixa Lasso, Megan Raby, and Christine Keiner. Historians, intellectuals, and collectors living on the isthmus have also guided my research: Guillermo Castro at the Ciudad del Saber, Doug Allen, Clyde Stephens, Stanley Heckadon-Moreno, Ana Spalding, and Patricia Pizzurno and Francisco Herrera at the University of Panama. In between research on the isthmus, I also had the opportunity to teach a course on U.S.-Panamanian relations and the history of development for a group of undergraduate students visiting from the United States. For helping me develop that course, I am grateful to Gabriela Valencia,

Tania Braithwaite, Allen Gula, Deanna Lewis, Steve Atamian, Vanessa Lopez, Abbey Rich, Grace Galloway, and the students who provided useful feedback. After treading through the mud of history, the course gave me the chance to imagine an alternative network and philosophy of travel. (I am still trying, though, to figure out what that would look like.)

Traveling an old maritime route across the Caribbean, I journeyed from Panama to Jamaica and Cuba where I also carried out archival research and relied on the support of friends. In Kingston, Jamaica, I'd like to thank Courtney Minors and his brother for going well beyond the duties of renting me a room. During my short time on the island, Beryl Johnson and Allison Perkins also trusted me like an old friend. Later in Havana, Cuba, Julie and her son Marcelo opened their home, gave me access to their extensive library, and treated me as if I were part of the family. At the National Library of Cuba, Rey Salermo told great stories in between smoke breaks, and introduced me to Cuban literature. Fellow researchers in Havana, Takkara Brunson and Joseph Gonzalez also offered guidance and companionship. There are many more friendships – many fleeting and a few enduring – that shaped my Caribbean journeys.

Back at the University of Texas at Austin, a diverse and inspiring community of colleagues and friends also influenced this project. Before I joined UT-Austin's History Department, I had heard rumor of the "Austin Mafia," the extensive family of graduate students and alumni studying Latin American and Caribbean History and Culture. I didn't really believe the "Austin Mafia" existed until they let me in. My experience in the PhD program has felt collegial and at times familial. For the warm feelings I carry with me out of Texas, I am grateful to: Franz Hensel-Riveros, Maria José Afanador, Andres Lombana Bermudez, Sandy Chang, Brian Stauffer, Mónica Alexandra Jiménez, Eva Hershaw, Pamela Neumann, Eyal Weinberg, Juan Sequeda, Juan Camilo Agudelo, Jorge Derpic, José Barragán, Matt Gildner, and Cristina Metz. In Austin, away from the university, I am thankful for the time with Lisette Montoto, Rudy Dunlap, Taylor West, Ragnar Olsson, Mary Pauline Lowry, Leigh Gaymon-Jones, Kaityln Jolly, and Kieran Fitzgerald, among many others. In this weird city in the middle of Texas, I found an understanding and uplifting community.

Before moving west, the University of Texas at Austin was already in my imagination. During MA studies at the University of Georgia, my advisor Pamela Voekel encouraged me to apply to her alma mater. Pamela has been an inspiring example of how to be a critical and engaged scholar. I have carried her lessons with me. In Athens, Paul Sutter, Reinaldo Román, and Bethany Moreton also showed me what it meant to both admire and deconstruct the past. My friends from UGA's graduate program – Levi Van Sant, La Shonda Mims, and Tammie Rosser – have become lifelong friends. They still remind me that the key to really learning is to love and appreciate and listen to the people around you.

In Florida, I first ran into the Austin Mafia. While an undergraduate student at the state university, trying to make sense of U.S. foreign policy in the midst of another war, I met a professor who kept me wide awake. Matt Childs, another UT-alum, gave me some needed academic direction. His insights, his reading recommendations, and his sense of caring and connecting with students guided me to graduate studies in Latin American and Caribbean history. Through the study of history, I began to find answers for the news I watched and read about between 2001 and 2005. U.S. foreign policy and war in the Middle East has antecedents, I realized, closer to home, in the circum-Caribbean. For those transformative years in Tallahassee, I'd also like to thank Joseph Saunders, Marcus Whaley, Andrew Schantz, and Casey Crangle for the conversations and travels we shared.

Florida, like most homes, was an incubator of early thought. This research project, in a way, began before I even knew how to read and write, when I used to visit Disneyworld and the nearby beaches. Images of tourists with high-socks and sunburnt skin asking directions in thick New Yorker accents are imprinted in my early childhood memory. Among outsiders, the culture of Florida gets a bad rap. A professor from an elite institution once told me, thinking he was giving a compliment, "it's amazing you came out of there; I always thought of Florida as an intellectual wasteland." My stock response to the Florida naysayers has become: "well, if you think the state is such a shitty place, what does that say about your grandparents?" The strange people and the beautiful nature of Florida, for me, have been inspiring. On the lagoons and lakes, and coral reefs of the

state, I fished with good friends and contemplated the spectrum of life experience – from why-do-shrimp-run-with-the-moon to what-in-the-world-am-I-going-to-with-my-life to romantic love and big philosophical life questions. For teaching me how to fish and for sharing good conversation, I'm thankful to Chad Carter and Mark Mitchell, along with their families. In between grad studies, they have always been willing to take me out on the boat. Among Florida friends, I am also grateful to Nick Tucciarelli and Alex Ferrell who reminded me that, despite outside prejudices, I could still be a proud Floridian and cultivate literary interests; in fact the two could be mutually generative. I look forward to returning to my home state to spend time on the water and be with family and friends again.

Travel for me is also work. I see no reason to separate work and leisure, friendship and labor, family time and self-reflection. "As far as my activities beyond the bounds of my recognized profession are concerned," in the words of one philosopher I respect, "I take them all, without exception, very seriously."[2] Visiting archives and libraries across the Americas – from New York to D.C. to Miami, Havana, Kingston, and Panama City – introduced me to a diverse array of source materials and experiences: memoirs, interviews, personal papers, government reports and correspondence, travelogues, newspapers, etc. Deciding what to include and exclude in this dissertation narrative was often a difficult decision. But throughout, I have tried to hold to one principle: stay close to the lived experiences of distinct yet exemplary people traveling across the Caribbean. What emerges, I think, is a series of interconnected micro-histories of people on the move.

A dissertation that tries to account for a history crisscrossing national borders inevitably needs help from other researchers. My research interweaves both original research and secondary sources from the fields of history and anthropology to tell a larger story. Each chapter is grounded in ideas from different disciplines to piece together a theoretical combination that engages questions of empire, development, nature/science/culture, and transnational history shaping the modern tourist economy.

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[2] Theodor Adorno, *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2001).

Institutions such as the Fulbright Program, the Smithsonian Institution, the Virginia Wellington Cabot Foundation, and the University of Texas at Austin have supported this research over the years. They made both my research and my travels possible, and gave me the time and the space to think and write. I am especially grateful to Frank A. Guridy, my advisor at UT-Austin, who offered invaluable advice while also allowing me to develop into my own type of historian and author. Committee members – Virginia Garrard-Burnett, Mark Lawrence, Paul S. Sutter, and Megan Raby – also created a thoughtful network of knowledge, accountability, and respect during the long process of dissertating. My hope is that what I have written will be a useful resource for teachers and students interested in learning more about U.S.-Caribbean relations than a typical tourist.

In the beginning and the end, I am grateful to my family – my parents, my grandmother, and my siblings. At home in Winter Park, my parents encouraged and supported my curiosity to learn and imagine, and travel my own way. My grandmother, Cornelia, aka "Moe," was also there for every step of my education. Born in 1913 to Italian immigrants, Moe was my first history teacher, telling stories about her childhood, the Great Depression, World War, and the trials and joys of living in pre-Disneyworld Florida. This dissertation is written in her honor and in memory of the loving lessons she shared with me, our family, and the countless students she taught over her decades-long career as a teacher.

25-27, November, 2015, Thanksgiving
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From Disease to Desire: Panama and the Rise of the Caribbean Vacation

by

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The University of Texas at Austin, 2016

Supervisor: Frank A. Guridy

This dissertation traces the historical "roots" and "routes" of a transnational tourism industry stretching from the Straits of Florida to the Isthmus of Panama. The project describes the emergence of a quintessential "Caribbean vacation" and critically examines ideas and social practices guiding U.S. travelers comfortably into the tropics. Focusing on historical linkages embedded in a key trade route – coalescing at the Isthmus of Panama – the dissertation shows how leisure travel reshaped the history of U.S.-Caribbean relations. The building of the Panama Canal between 1904 and 1914 marked a profound shift in U.S. traveling culture. Modern tourism emerged within the crucible of U.S. empire building and its associated cultural, scientific, and infrastructural developments. My research documents this history through the stories of a wide range of travelers who helped shape and define the Caribbean's tourism industry. By paying close attention to specific cases of mobility and sometimes immobility, the dissertation analyzes broader trends that still effect the tourist experience. Chapters highlight the stories of U.S. frontiersmen who became tourist entrepreneurs in the early twentieth century; national elites in Panama and Cuba who turned liberal aspirations of progress and desirable immigration into tourism development; naturalists and explorers from the Smithsonian who produced knowledge not only for science but also for tourists in search of adventure and discovery in exotic lands; and traveling writers from the "Lost Generation" who articulated new motivations and means of escape for folks at home tired of the drudgery of modern life. These diverse social groups have rarely, if ever, been analyzed in relation to the Caribbean's modern tourism industry. Their ideas and their travels, I show, influenced the way generations of tourists dreamed of and experienced the Caribbean.

Table of Contents

Introduction: Growing up in Vacationland

"It seems to me that certain basic, general elements of our modern-day educated society shine through, as it were, in the picture of this nice little family, oh, not all the elements, and they shine only microscopically, 'like to the sun in a small water-drop,' yet something has been reflected, something has betrayed itself."[3] - Fyodor Dostoevsky

When my grandparents retired in 1968, they moved to Florida. They built a spacious home on a half-acre lot in the Florida Keys, known to visitors and locals as the "American Caribbean."[4] It was my grandparents' dream. In the late 1940s, after the Second World War, they began to spend their vacations in Florida. Each winter they would drive down from Illinois with their three young children, and rent a small house on the beach.[5] In retirement, they planned to return for good, to own their own piece of "paradise." My grandparents spent their last years together in the islands. "We loved it," my grandmother remembered. "We would have people come down to the Keys; and they would stay for weeks. Take them fishing!"[6] My grandfather would golf, play poker, and fish with friends, while my grandmother tended the house and the garden. It was a vacation fantasy, and one that would have a long-term impact on our family's history. My grandparents' decision to move south sparked a small migration. Soon their children were

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[3] Fyodor Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov: a novel in four parts*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002), 236.

[4] The magazine *Travel & Leisure* tells readers that "The Florida Keys are sometimes called America's Caribbean, and they exude an end-of-the-road remoteness and a languid tropicality that rivals the West Indies in appeal." Peter Frank, "Best of the Florida Keys," *Travel & Leisure*, May 11, 2009.

[5] In the late 1940s and early 1950s, my family rented a small house in Vero Beach, originally built by the U.S. military during World War II. The building was used as a "Coastal Watcher" to lookout for German submarines cruising Florida and the Caribbean. During the war, the Germans sunk over 2,000 ships in the waters off of Florida and the Caribbean. The infrastructure of U.S. military transitioned to post-war affordable vacationing. Gaylord Kelshall, *The U-Boat War in the Caribbean*, (Port of Spain, Trinidad: Paria Pub. Co., 1988).

[6] Cornelia Scott (my paternal grandmother) in discussion with the author, May 1, 2009. My grandmother would also fish with my grandfather, but she did not know how to swim. She would go out on the boat nevertheless. Keeping with her traditional duties, her job was to wash the deck and rig the baits. From what I am told, she never fell overboard.

living there as well and raising their own families in the "Sunshine State."[7] From tourists and retirees, we became Floridians, residents of vacationland.[8]

From the perspective of today it seems obvious that "old folks" would retire to Florida and that millions of tourists would annually vacation there: to places like Orlando, Disneyworld, Miami, and the peninsula's many beaches. "My folks are 60," the comedian Jerry Seinfeld liked to joke. "They're moving to Florida. They don't want to go. But's that's the law!"[9] Seinfeld was on to something. My grandparents' dream of tropical leisure was a common one. Florida, the logic goes, is a tourist and retiree destination (of course).

Where, though, did this desire for a tropical vacation and retirement come from? How did tourism become Florida's most lucrative industry? When did it begin, and why? In 2014, the tourism industry generated over $67 billion dollars in economic activity for the state.[10] But what happens to social relations and communities when millions of people embrace this mode of travel and leisurely living? These questions, I have come to realize, extend across the greater Caribbean and across national borders: from the Florida Peninsula to the islands of the Caribbean to the Isthmus of Central America. Tourism has become the region's most important industry.

The Caribbean Sea is home to distinct communities, but they are far from isolated. Looking closely one sees that places – separated by geography, language, and ethnicity – share a history. Communities assumed to be "insular," the historian Lara Putnam tells us, are actually "above-water fragments of submarine unities."[11] Tourism offers evidence of interconnection (although certainly not sameness nor equality). The

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[7] The Sunshine State is the official nickname for the State of Florida. It is also the name of a film, which offers a critical portrayal of tourism development in small town Florida. See, *Sunshine State*, directed by John Sayles (2002; Culver City, California: Columbia TriStar Home Video, 2002), DVD.

[8] The lines of identity between tourist, retiree and investor were often nebulous. From the very beginning of tourism development in the Caribbean region, as I show in Chapter 2, developers hoped tourism would attract investors and/or permanent residents.

[9] *Johnny Carson: King of Late Night*, directed by Mark Catalena and Peter Jones (2012; Arlington, Virginia: Public Broadcasting Service American Masters Series, 2012), DVD.

[10] "Facts about Florida," Official website of the State of Florida, accessed November 2015, http://www.stateofflorida.com/facts.aspx

[11] Lara Putnam, "To Study the Fragments/Whole: Microhistory and the Atlantic World," *Journal of Social History* 39 (2006): 615-630. Tourism touching down in one particular place is an example of local history linked to a bigger picture.

industry is both a local and transnational phenomenon defined by movement across regional and national borders.[12] To offer a recent example, in 2014, over nine million people embarked from ports in Florida to travel to destinations in the Caribbean. Three of the most visited cruise terminals in the world are in Florida – Port Everglades, Port Miami, and Port Canaveral.[13] Their heading is almost always to the south. The Caribbean leads the world in cruise ship capacity, serving an estimated 37% of all cruise itineraries.[14] This tourist route from Florida to the south, however, is not new; it emerged historically. Following people and ships on-the-move reveals Florida to be as much a part of the Caribbean's history as it is part of the United States. Likewise, Caribbean nations (for better, for worse) have become intimately entangled with the history and culture of their colossal neighbor to the north. "In our tourist brochures," according to the author Derek Walcott, "the Caribbean is a blue pool into which the republic dangles the extended foot of Florida as inflated rubber islands bob, and drinks with umbrellas float towards her on a raft."[15] With the recent shift in U.S.-Cuban relations, it looks like the transnational tourist economy linking Florida and Caribbean nations will only continue to grow. In 2016, Carnival Cruise will begin sailing to Cuba – the first cruise from the United States to the island in over fifty years.

These border-crossing connections, though, go beyond physical movement. In the realm of ideas and perceptions, diverse tourist destinations from Florida to Cuba to Panama also have a common story. Although there are clear cultural and historical differences, many Caribbean communities have come to share dependence on tourism and, in the words of Walcott, its "high-pitched repetition of the same images of

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[12] My use of the term transnational follows a line of reasoning developed in the following essay. Laura Briggs, Gladys McCormick, and J.T. Way, "Transnationalism: A Category of Analysis," *American Quarterly* 60 (2008): 625-648.

[13] "Florida is the World's Port of Call," *Florida TaxWatch, Economic Commentary*, April 2015, accessed July 15, 2015, http://www.floridatrend.com/public/userfiles/news/pdfs/Apr15ECFINAL.pdf ;"Florida home to 3 of the worlds most-visited cruise terminals," *Orlando Business Journal*, April 21, 2015, accessed July 15, 2015, http://www.bizjournals.com/orlando/morning_call/2015/04/florida-home-to-3-of-the-worlds-most-visited.html

[14] "Cruise Industry Overview: State of the Cruise Industry," Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association, accessed July 15, 2015, http://www.f-cca.com/downloads/2013-cruise-industry-overview.pdf

[15] Derek Walcott, *The Antilles: Fragments of Epic Memory: the Nobel Lecture* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1993).

service."[16] Tourism markets exotic proximity. An "invented tradition" of tropical paradise – complete with white-sand beaches and palm trees, smiling locals, care-free-lifestyles, and fruity drinks – have become cultural symbols and an industry transcending local difference.[17] Long before tourists arrive to their destination, expectations form and percolate in the mind giving shape to what sociologist John Urry has called the "tourist gaze."[18] Journeying south is both physical and mental action. Dreams of the tropics, as scholar Mimi Sheller documented, are deeply embedded in both U.S. and European imaginations. "Today, we live in the linguistic and material penumbra of this 'contact zone,' whether firing up the 'barbeque,' lounging in a 'hammock,' paddling a 'canoe,' lighting up a smoke of 'tobacco,' or sipping 'cocoa.'"[19] Tropical fantasies of leisure are at the heart of modern traveling culture. Hotels, restaurants, beverage distributors, airlines, tour companies, local and national governments have cashed-in on an exotic image of the tropics. For example, on Highway U.S. 1, running down Florida's east coast all the way to Key West, travelers pass an abundance of hotels and attractions with images of wavy palm trees and names like "Caribbean Dream," "The Caribbean," "El Caribe Resort." As tour operator and warehouse seller Costco tells potential customers, "idyllic beaches, sapphire seas and swashbuckling tales make the Caribbean a warm-weather wonderland."[20]

The promise of tropical pleasure and adventure, and perhaps escape, has materialized into an entire industry, a set of social practices affecting both tourists and those touristed. And yet, few people ask: where did this vision and experience of a vacation come from? How did it become so pervasive? Growing up in a small town

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[16] Ibid.

[17] Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

[18] John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze 3.0* (London: Sage Publications, 2011). Urry explains, "When we 'go away' we look at the environment with interest and curiosity. It speaks to us in ways we appreciate, or at least we anticipated that it will do so. In other words, we gaze at what we encounter. This gaze is as socially organized and systematized, as is the gaze of the medic. Of course it is of a different order in that it is not a gaze confined to professional 'supported and justified by the institution.' And yet even in the production of 'unnecessary' pleasure many professional experts help to construct and develop one's gaze as a tourist."

[19] Mimi Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean: From Arawaks to Zombies* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 42.

[20] "Everyday member savings on top-quality, brand-name vacations," Costco Travel, accessed July 15, 2015, https://www.costcotravel.com/Vacation-Packages/Caribbean

outside Orlando, Florida I first began to wonder about this history and culture of tourism: how did my family, descended from the corners of Europe, end up here? Why did the tourists and retirees, in the millions, keep coming? What happened to the cultures and ways of being that were here before the tourists arrived?

Contrary to timeless-looking brochures and advertisements, the Caribbean has not always been a vacation destination. Its islands and peninsulas did not simply rise out of the sea to bless eager visitors in search of terrestrial paradise. Well before the tourists and retirees, diverse Native American communities, European conquistadores and pirates, settlers and frontiersmen, and slaves and planters traveled and occupied the region. Early European travelers, like their tourist descendants, imagined these tropical lands as mysterious and exotic.[21] The tropics, in the words of historian Richard Grove, were "the symbolic location for the idealized landscapes and aspirations of the Western imagination."[22] But during this long colonial era (1500s to late 1800s), travel to the American tropics was also considered "highly risky."[23] From the days of exploration and conquest to the late nineteenth century, travelers viewed the Caribbean as a violent and dangerous world, far from a relaxing vacation. Death and disease stalked visitors (see Chapter 1). In the late nineteenth century, as historian Catherine Cocks has shown, "most European and North American whites regarded the tropics as the 'white's man grave.'"[24] Yet, by the early-to-mid twentieth century, this perception had largely disappeared. By the time my grandparents traveled south, "everyone knew that they [the tropics] constituted the 'most ideal winter resorts' for vacationers from the temperate zones."[25] Another fifty years, by the end of the twentieth century, and leisure and luxury were

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[21] For more on early European encounters and perceptions of the Caribbean, see Peter Hulme, *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the native Caribbean, 1492-1797* (London and New York: Methuen, 1986); John R. Gillis, *Islands of the Mind: How the Human Imagination Created the Atlantic World* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).
[22] Richard Grove, *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens, and the Origins of Environmentalism, 1600-1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 3.
[23] Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean,* 74.
[24] Catherine Cocks, *Tropical Whites: The Rise of the Tourist South in the Americas* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 17-27.
[25] Ibid.

supposedly *natural* parts of the tropical landscape. "The very sun itself," one author noted in 1996, "seemed preset for our comfort."[26]

How did traveler perceptions shift so dramatically: from imagining the Caribbean as a dangerous and exotic crossroads to seeing the region as a desirable destination associated with comfort and luxury? This profound transformation has somehow been erased from historical memory. Tourists travel and imagine the Caribbean today as if it were always a paradise. There is precedence, however, for this type of amnesia. In an influential essay about the history of the American West and wilderness, the historian William Cronon argued, "one of the most striking proofs of the cultural invention of wilderness is its thoroughgoing erasure of the history from which it sprang."[27] The same, I believe, can be observed with the Caribbean vacation. Analogous to Edward Gibbon's observation about the absence of camels in the Koran, the lack of reflection about the historical emergence of tourism may actually be deep-seated proof of its ongoing importance. Only a culture and a people so intimately familiar with the practices of Caribbean tourism could *naturalize* them out of history. "For him, they were part of reality, he had no reason to emphasize them."[28]

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[26] David Foster Wallace, "Shipping Out: On the (nearly lethal) comforts of a luxury cruise," *Harper's Magazine*, January 1996, 33-56. The essay was republished in Wallace's essay collection the following year, with the new title, "A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again." The collection takes the same name. See, David Foster Wallace, *A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again: Essays and Arguments*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1997).

[27] William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature," in *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*, ed. William Cronon (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1995), 69-90.

[28] Jorge Luis Borges reasoned that the lack of camels in the Koran was proof of its Arab authenticity. Borges writes: "Some days past I have found a curious confirmation of the fact that what is truly native can and often does dispense with local color; I found this confirmation in Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.* Gibbon observes that in the Arabian book *par excellence*, in the Koran, there are no camels; I believe if there were any doubt as to the authenticity of the Koran, this absence of camels would be sufficient to prove it is an Arabian work. It was written by Mohammed, and Mohammed, as an Arab, had no reason to know that camels were especially Arabian; for him they were part of reality, he had no reason to emphasize them." Jorge Luis Borges, "The Argentine Writer and Tradition," in *Labyrinths: Selected Stories & Other Writings*, eds. Donald A. Yates and James E. Irby (New York: New Directions Publishing Corporation, 1964): 181; A similar line of reasoning is developed by the anthropologist Clifford Geertz. He explains the uniquely powerful ability to forget the social process of landscape creation: "As a chameleon tunes himself to his setting, growing into it as though he were part of it, just another dun rock or green leaf, a society tunes itself to its landscape… until it seems to an outside observer that it could not possibly be anywhere else than where it is, and that, located where it is, it could not be otherwise than what

This dissertation challenges current logic and *denaturalizes* the Caribbean vacation. It questions and deconstructs the region's now taken-for-granted desirability for U.S. and European travelers. The project analyzes the historical emergence of the region's tourism industry by looking at changes in mobility networks, linking distinct places and cultures, and also the evolution of an idea, a popular dream of leisure travel. By interrogating a form of mobility that has become "common sense," we can begin to understand the assemblage of people, events, and processes that invented the modern tropical vacation. The convergence of U.S. geopolitical and economic interests, modernizing transportation routes, and ideological aspirations of adventure-pleasure-and-escape gave birth to the Caribbean's tourism industry in the early twentieth century. Although there is no single story or group of people ultimately responsible for tourism's rise, there nevertheless are important historical threads, perhaps themes, that we can retrace to understand how the Caribbean vacation came to be. I cannot explain all the threads making up the tapestry of tourism, but rather will describe the pattern they form.[29]

The tourism industry in the Caribbean – stretching from south Florida to Panama – formed through a diverse and multipronged process. Tourism followed in the wake of U.S. political, cultural, and economic expansion into the tropics in the early twentieth century (see Chapter 1). But to make sense of what happened next, when the tourists started to arrive, we need to know more about the people in-between, mediating and linking broader historical events with the practices and experiences of tourism. Essentially, who were the people leading tourists comfortably into the tropics? What I do in this dissertation is offer intimate and lived examples – a collection of interconnected micro histories – shaping the culture of tourism.[30] I offer parables, perhaps historical case

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it is." Clifford Geertz, "The wet and the dry: Traditional irrigation in Bali and Morocco," *Human Ecology* 1 (1972): 23-29.

[29] My methodological approach is "genealogical" following closely the theoretical observations of Michel Foucault. He writes: "if the genealogist refuses to extend his faith in metaphysics, if he listens to history, he finds that there is something altogether different behind things: not a timeless and essential secret, but the secret that they have no essence or that their essence was fabricated in a piecemeal fashion from alien forms." Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. D.F. Bouchard (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 139-164.

[30] The dissertation brings micro-history into dialogue with the historical study of political economy and histories of technology, development, and environmental change. See Putnam, "To Study the Fragments/Whole."

studies or key fragments, which illustrate themes important to the emergence and the experience of the quintessential Caribbean vacation. This history is neither a linear narrative nor a universal experience, yet it continues to shape key aspects of the present.

Throughout the dissertation, I work to unearth and contextualize what it means to be a tourist in the modern Caribbean. Tourism in its simplest form, in the words of historian Eric Zuelow, "is travel in pursuit of pleasure and an escape from everyday realities."[31] The meanings of "pleasure" and "escape," however, highly depend on cultural, historical, and geographic context. Escaping indentured servitude or slavery on a plantation, for example, is obviously not the same as escaping from bourgeois social obligations in an office. Nor is the pleasure of an enlightening dialogue or working for oneself the same as the pleasure of a drinking binge or a luxury dinner. On the spectrum of pleasure-and-escape there are many possibilities, contingent on personal desire and societal structure. In piecemeal fashion, however, I describe some of these contingent possibilities shaping a particularly hegemonic experience of modern tourism in the Caribbean.

Commonly understood, tourism is a form of travel from one place, defined as "home," to somewhere else for an "extended moment of leisured displacement." Tourism scholar Ascem Anand described this phenomenon "as a composite phenomenon which embraces the incidence of [a] mobile population of travelers who are strangers to the places they visit. It is essentially a pleasure activity in which money earned in one's normal domicile is spent in the place visited."[32] The traveler, in short, leaves home and becomes a stranger, spending money in search of escape and pleasure. Tourism scholars such as John Urry and Dean MacCannell have characterized this type of leisurely mobility as a distinctly modern phenomenon arising only in the last two hundred years or so.[33] In the case of the Caribbean tropics, as I show, the industry is even more recent, dating back to the early twentieth century.

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[31] Eric Zuelow, *A History of Modern Tourism* (New York: Palgrave, 2016), 9.
[32] Ascem Anand, *Advance Dictionary of Tourism* (New Delhi: Sarup & Sons, 1997), 41.
[33] John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies* (London: Sage Publications, 1990); Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York: Schocken Books, 1976).

To be a tourist is not so much a fixed identity, but a set of practices and ideas about travel. As a "composite phenomenon," defining tourism or the tourist is hindered by the problem of specificity, a long running issue and debate in tourism studies. To counter the constraints and potential inaccuracies of a narrow definition of identity, I focus instead on touristic experiences, which include a broader and more comprehensive and at the same time pointed look at tourist identity. To be a tourist is not just about the "gaze" (see John Urry) or perception, nor is it just about the desire for escape or pleasure. Tourism is an intersectional experience. Embracing Kimberle Crenshaw's understanding of identity and adapting it to a different social reality, I recognize that to be a tourist is a socially constructed identity dependent on issues of racial difference, gender, class, nationality, environment, and access to technology and infrastructure.[34] These social variables are not determined by a single individual or a single social group, but instead form and evolve in dialogue, conflict, and negotiation. Boundaries of identity and social practice change from one moment to the next or over the long term, from one era to the following. A writer working in the morning could, for example, by the afternoon, after enough escapist margaritas, become in the eyes of his audience, a tourist. Over a lifetime, moreover, a visitor to a community after enough return visits and the formation of local ties could transform from a tourist into a community resident. Nothing is fixed. Yet at the same time, there are general characteristics.

How does someone come to travel as a tourist? And what specific practices and expectations does that identity entail in the context of Caribbean travel, history, and culture? I address these questions by looking at the producers and shapers of the Caribbean's modern tourism industry. The identity of a tourist, like most identities, is a social composite emerging out of the past. In the following chapters, I focus on the social "builders" – the exemplary travelers, the colonial officials, explorers, naturalists, writers, developers, family members, and perpetual wanderers who guided the tourist masses to a culturally-loaded form of escape and pleasure. Not everyone has followed their lead, but nevertheless a critical mass and a lucrative industry has embraced the hegemonic

[34] Kimberle Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color," *Stanford Law Review* 43 (1991): 1241-1299.

practices and ideas I outline in this dissertation. The tourist shapers and influencers that I describe are not always the most powerful or historically remembered individuals. In their communities, however, these travelers had profound influence. I am not so much interested, in this dissertation, in the "most influential" people, but rather I try to describe the subtle and everyday ways that individual people and their stories of travel embodied and diffused popular modes of leisure travel. What follows is an example of this tourist influence that hits close to home.

Grapevine of Tropical Paradise

On September 18, 1961, City Council members and officials from the small town of Waukegan, Illinois dined on 475 pounds of Caribbean "sea bass," along with "Greek salad" and "French fries." The local newspaper *The Waukegan News-Sun* ran article about the giant meal and included a picture of the fish laid out on main street. The story goes: Edward Havelka, a former Waukegan resident, had invited a group of prominent friends to visit him in the Florida Keys and go fishing. The visitors, though, didn't catch much during their vacation. But after his friends returned north to their families and responsibilities, Havelka decided to go out and catch the fish himself. He then packed the fish on dry ice, and drove all the way back to Illinois to feast with his friends. His trip home that September raised a big stir in the community.[35]

In the late 1950s, Havelka left Waukegan and moved to the island of Big Pine in the Florida Keys. Havelka was my grandfather's cousin. After surviving the horrors of World War II, returning home to a steady and mundane job just didn't seem right.[36] Like the generation of veterans before him (see Chapter 4), Cousin Ed, as we knew him, wanted something more – adventurous, exotic, perhaps free. Cousin Ed decided to buy ninety acres of undeveloped ocean front property and divide it up into lots to build vacation and retirement homes in a subdivision he named, Tropical Bay. "At that time,"

[35] "City Officials To Dine On 475 Lbs. Of Bass," *The Waukegan News-Sun*, September 18, 1961.
[36] Cousin Ed enlisted in the U.S. Army, at the age of seventeen, at the onset of World War II. He served as Private in the Battle of the Bulge, and was severely wounded in the head. The helmet he wore during that battle, which shows two holes (an entry point at the front and exit point in the back), still sits in my childhood bedroom; a gift of my old cousin. He liked to joke that being "shot in the head" had caused him to be a bit eccentric.

my grandmother recalled, "Big Pine had nothing on it. It was just the key deer. No restaurant, no tavern, no nothing. You had to go to Key West to go to the grocery store."[37] Cousin Ed wanted to change that; he planned to develop the island. Back in Waukegan, he distributed promotional material to family, friends and old neighbors. "At Tropical Bay," he explained, there will be "paved roads, city water, electricity and phones and school buses," and equally important, "no city taxes." Cousin Ed talked up, in particular, the health of the tropics. "Climate conditions are ideal. Suffers from asthma, rheumatic fever, hay fever, arthritis, cardiac conditions experience relief in these healthful isles… Frost has never been known on the Keys." Each home, he assured, would have a canal and access to the ocean. "Your boat is docked at your doorstep and you may dive and swim at your property."[38] Tropical Bay would be their own paradise. Cousin Ed, I am told, convinced my grandparents and dozens of other Waukegan residents to move to Florida. Like the politicians and developers who came before him, he saw tourism, retirement, and investment as part of the same process of development (see Chapter 2). If he could get people to vacation, perhaps they would invest in his plan and one day move there. The promise of a vacation became a gateway to future development on the island.

My family's decision to move south, however, depended on much more than Cousin Ed's charisma and his plans for Tropical Bay. There was at least a half-century of history behind their move. The tourism industry in Florida, and more specifically the Keys, began to take root at the beginning of the twentieth century. The expansion of railroads and hotel construction in the 1890s and early 1900s made travel to the south, for the first time in history, comfortably and efficiently accessible to northern residents looking to escape cold winters and crowded cities.[39] The town where I grew up, Winter Park, for example, was founded in 1885 just as the railroad tracks arrived to Florida. As its name reveals, the town was meant to be a winter destination. In a brochure titled

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[37] Cornelia Scott in discussion with the author, May 1, 2009.
[38] "Tropical Bay Estates: In the Famed Florida Keys," Flyer, Big Pine Key, Florida. Scott Family records.
[39] For more on Florida's tourism history, see Tracy Revels, *Sunshine Paradise: A History of Florida Tourism* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2011).

"Florida Cuba," published in 1892, railroad and hotel entrepreneur Henry Plant described Winter Park and its luxurious Seminole Hotel in the following way:

> This pleasant resort, situated on the line of the South Florida Railroad, among the Pines and the beautiful clear water lakes of Orange County surrounded by numerous orange groves and delightful winter homes of Northern visitors, is especially noted for its healthfulness, its balmy climate and dry atmosphere, affording relief from catarrhal and pulmonary affections.[40]

The image of tropical health that Cousin Ed sold in the 1950s and 1960s, it turns out, began to take rhetorical shape a half-century earlier. The lakes and swamps and coasts of Florida, once the home of the Seminole people and seen by early white travelers as dangerous and diseased, were by the late nineteenth century being reinvented as "health resorts" for white American tourists.

This first wave of tourists to the south represented the wealthiest class in U.S. society. They were the "vacation gentry." In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, travel to Florida and the Caribbean was mostly reserved for elite politicians, businessmen, and Victorian-like explorers and collectors. Early visitors included prominent people like Thomas Edison, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Henry Ford, and a young Franklin Delano Roosevelt, among many others. Tropical tourism was an elite privilege up until the Second World War.[41] Yet during that time, millions of middle-class people at home read and heard about the adventures and luxuries that these privileged travelers enjoyed. In the late 1910s and 1920s, just as my grandparents' generation came of age, stories of tropical travel were everywhere: in the press and literature, in advertisements, on the radio, discussed at universities, and exhibited at public museums (see Chapter 3 and 4 on the circulation of stories about tropical travel). The popularity of these travel narratives, undoubtedly, influenced the way the next generation of tourists and their descendants would imagine and experience tropical vacationing. Elite travel

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[40] Brochure, "Florida Cuba," Record Unit 4601 to 4620, The Florida Ephemera Collection, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, Gainesville.
[41] Revels, *Sunshine Paradise;* Cocks, *Tropical Whites.*

practices were adored and mimicked by the next generation and replicated over and over again.[42]

The route that Cousin Ed and my grandparents followed to Big Pine was laid literally on the foundations of an earlier era of conquest, development, and leisure travel. In the early twentieth century, Henry Flagler, one of the founders of Standard Oil and a powerful real estate and railroad developer, sought to turn south Florida into a Caribbean gateway.[43] In 1904, Flagler announced that his Florida East Coast Railroad would build a rail line across 150 miles of ocean, estuaries, and small islands to connect the island of Key West with the Florida mainland. His planning was well timed. That same year, one thousand miles due south, the U.S. government began to dig the Panama Canal. Florida promised to benefit greatly from this southern expansion. Key West was the southernmost deep-water port in the United States, and an important coaling station for ships headed to the future canal. At the turn of the century, the Caribbean was increasingly coming under U.S. imperial control. Six years before beginning the canal project, the U.S. military also invaded Cuba and Puerto Rico and converted the islands into U.S. protectorates, de facto colonies. Flagler's rail line would provide a key transportation link to these new overseas possessions (see Chapter 1). His railroad and hotel industry would also serve the increasing flow of tourists traveling from Florida to the Caribbean. By 1912, tourists could travel across crystal clear seas to Key West and catch a steamship to Cuba and then farther south to Panama, if they desired to see the canal project in its final years of construction. Observers heralded the overseas railroad as yet another "Eighth Wonder of the World."[44]

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[42] My argument closely aligns with Sidney Mintz's understanding of consumer patterns. People of lower social status, he argued, have historically tried to emulate the high classes in their consumption choices. Mintz introduces two terms to explain this social process: "intensification" and "extensification." Intensification refers to the mimicking of upper class consumption to show one's improving status – the transfer of the uses and meanings of those of higher position to lower ranks. Extensification, meanwhile, refers to the use of old materials in new contexts, and with new or modified meanings.Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Viking, 1985), 140.

[43] To learn about Flagler's early business career and his role, later in life, in Florida's development, see Edward N. Akin, *Flagler: Rockefeller Partner and Florida Baron* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1991).

[44] Brochure, "Florida East Coast Railroad, Hotels, and Tour Books," Record Unit 2521 to 2530, The Florida Ephemera Collection, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, Gainesville.

The railroad line infamously did not endure. In 1935, a category five hurricane hit south Florida and wiped out the railroad tracks and killed an estimated 500 people. The infrastructure laid, however, would remain and become the backbone of Florida's emerging tourism industry.[45] Visitors, including my family, arriving to the Keys in the following decades traveled on the infrastructural remains of Flagler's dream. The millions of tons of dirt moved, the drained swamps, and the bridges built for the rail line would be converted into a highway for automobiles. Moreover, along the rail line, hamlets became towns, like New Smyrna, Titusville, and Miami. In 1896 before the railroad arrived, Miami was an agricultural and fishing village with an estimated population of 300. Yet by 1910, the city was home to thousands of residents and visited annually by over 125,000 tourists.[46]

From this early moment of growth, in the first decades of the twentieth century, Miami developed a robust economy dependent on tourist and transportation services. Promotional literature described the city as the "Tropical Zone of Florida." After the Second World War, in the late 1940s, Miami was in the midst of a second tourist boom (the first occurring in the 1910s and 1920s). The other side of my family, on my mother's side, also arrived to the state to participate in this growing tourist economy. During World War II, my maternal grandfather was stationed on a military base in Florida and fell in love with the state. He was not alone in his sentiments. "The establishment of wartime military bases in South Florida," as the historian Chanelle Rose explained, "ushered in the tourist boom in the tropic city as returning soldiers, tourists, celebrities, and war workers sought a permanent residence in the Magic City."[47] After the war, my grandfather looked to return to Florida and, it seemed, escape the orthodox expectations of his Russian-Jewish parents living in Atlantic City, New Jersey. (They wanted him to

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[45] Pat Parks, *The Railroad that Died at Sea: The Florida East Coast's Key West Extension* (Florida: Langley Press, Inc., 1968).

[46] Les Standiford, *Last Train to Paradise: Henry Flagler and the Spectacular Rise and Fall of the Railroad that Crossed an Ocean* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2002). To develop the area surrounding the Miami railroad station, Flagler dredged a channel, built streets, and instituted the first water and power systems in the city.

[47] Chanelle N. Rose, "Tourism and the Hispanicization of race in Jim Crow Miami, 1945-1965," *Journal of Social History* 45 (2012): 735-756; Rose has a new monograph on race and tourism in Miami. Chanelle Nyree Rose, *The Struggle for Black Freedom in Miami: Civil Rights and America's Tourist Paradise, 1896-1968* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2015).

work in their restaurant. Instead, he bought a motorcycle and headed south.) In Miami, he found work with Pan-American Airlines as a mechanic. As a tourist destination and a growing transport hub to Latin America and the Caribbean, Miami had created new employment opportunities (for more on tourism development efforts in south Florida and the Caribbean, see Chapter 2).

The complimentary elements of the tourism industry – the dream of tropical leisure, the transportation infrastructure, and the need for workers to support the service economy – brought the two sides of my family together. By the time my parents met in the mid-1970s, working at "Holiday Hospital" in Orlando, central Florida was just starting to experience the Disney World boom; yet another phase in the region's history of tourism. In the mid-1960s, Walt Disney secretly bought up forty square miles in the heart of the state. In 1971, the Disney Corporation opened its first project in Florida, the Magic Kingdom with 6 themed lands: "Main Street U.S.A., Adventureland, Fantasyland, Frontierland, Liberty Square, and Tomorrowland." Here, visitors would be both entertained and, in a light-hearted way, educated about their nation's history and culture. With the arrival of Disney, Orlando, a southern town with no more than 100,000 people in the mid-1960s, began to develop into a metropolitan city with its economy deeply rooted in the tourism industry. In 1982, the year before I was born, Disney opened another theme park, EPCOT, the Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow. [48] Disney, though, didn't stop with theme parks. There is also a Disney film industry, a publishing firm, a TV channel, outlet stores, and a cruise line taking tourists to Disney-owned islands in the Caribbean. "Mickey Mouse" history, development and entertainment, as the historian Mike Wallace argued, has become a model for the billion-dollar tourism industry. Like Disney, the Caribbean's tourism industry repackages history and culture into a vacation fantasy.

[48] Mike Wallace, *Mickey Mouse History: And Other Essays on American Memory* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996); Richard E. Foglesong, *Married to the Mouse: Walt Disney and Orlando* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2001). Ever since Disney arrived to Florida and after far too many theme park visits, I have been unable to look at a tourist without thoughts of dancing ducks or mechanical pirates drinking rum.

From Orlando and Miami to the Florida Keys and southward across the Caribbean Sea, tourism has shaped everyday life. I tell the winding story of my family's migration for a few reasons: to show the powerful pull tourism can have on families and community development; to acknowledge the autobiographical nature of my research; and also to introduce the historical methodology guiding this dissertation. History at its essence is the story of people. "One can never forget," in the words of William Appleman Williams, "that it is people who act – not the policy or program."[49] To study tourism one must understand the people who participated in and shaped the industry. Retracing their travel routes illuminates historical trends; personal experiences reflect broader processes; microcosms reveal macrocosms.[50] In the following chapters, I use a micro-historical approach to narrate the journeys of individual travelers in the Caribbean, to retell their stories and also link their travel experiences with historical patterns. My goal, rather than explain to readers what they should think, is to show and describe what I have seen and felt from the past – from the archives and from my observations. Through the travel stories I present, readers can make their own judgments. But at the same time, in this retelling, I do not take for granted and uncritically accept the journey as they, the travelers and tourists, have depicted it. We must also recognize the history and ideology behind the stories people tell about themselves. My narrative is not mere storytelling. Building on Stuart Hall's critical read of identity and race, I point out that being a "tourist" or traveler is very much "an unstable identity, psychically, culturally, and politically. Something constructed, told, spoken, not simply found."[51] Oftentimes, it is difficult to differentiate a tourist from say a scientist, a writer, a politician, or a colonial

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[49] William Appleman Williams, *The Shaping of American Diplomacy: Readings and Documents in American Foreign Relations, 1750-1955* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1956), xx.

[50] My narrative and research methods are strongly influenced by microhistorical scholarship. See Putnam's essay, "To Study the Fragments/Whole." Also, Jill Lepore, "Historians Who Love Too Much: Reflections on Microhistory and Biography," *The Journal of American History* 88 (2001): 129-144; Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon and István M. Szíjártó, *What is microhistory? Theory and Practice* (Milton Park: Routledge, 2013). For a classic microhistory study, see Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth Century Miller* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1992). Ginzburg explains the historiography of microhistory in the article, "Microhistory: Two or Three Things That I Know About it," in *Critical Inquiry* 20 (1993): 10-35.

[51] Stuart Hall, "Minimal Selves," in *Identity: The Real Me*, ed. Homi Bhabha (London: Institute of Contemporary Arts, 1987), 45.

official traveling in the Caribbean. The lines were often blurred, and I purposely in this narrative, leave them that way, often complicating them even more. Tourist identity was contextual and often negotiated; it could easily shift, from one moment to the next, from one activity to another (See Chapter 2 and 5). By retelling travel stories, and staying close to the actual journey, the dissertation reveals the layers and patterns of history, conquest, infrastructure, and ideology that go into the practice of a Caribbean vacation. The ability to travel leisurely has depended on big social and historical shifts – in understandings of tropical disease and health, transportation technology and infrastructure, U.S. foreign policy, visions of development and nature, and U.S. imaginations of "abroad" and home. But the only way to see all of these elements coming together is through the study of lived experience, and by trying to understand how those experiences get translated and reinterpreted by both travelers and society more broadly. People on the move carried tourism's history within.

Starting in Florida

I begin this history of Caribbean tourism in Florida because that is where my relationship with the story begins. If I were born in Cuba, or Jamaica, or Panama, or even New York City, perhaps the story would begin there. My narrative choice is not so much about pinpointing a true beginning, an "origins," but instead is about the subjectivity, my particular angle, of looking at history. "All history becomes subjective," Ralph Waldo Emerson once wrote. "In other words there is properly no history, only biography."[52] This history is family biography. My story rooted in Florida, though, is also part of an interconnected story of Caribbean tourism. No story, no destination, no place is really an island. "Instead," in the words of geographer Doreen Massey, "of thinking of places as areas with boundaries around, they can be imagined as articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings, but where a large proportion of those relations, experiences and understandings are constructed on a far larger scale than what we happen to define for that moment as the place itself, whether that be a street, or a region or even a

[52] Ralph Waldo Emerson, "History," in *Essays: First and Second Series* (New York: Vintage Books, Library of America, 1990).

continent."[53] Both biography and place, properly understood, belong to a larger field of time, space, and experience. We must look in multiple directions.

Florida's history is a jumping off point. The state is at the intersection of both U.S. and Caribbean histories; the peninsula, if it had feet, would have one in each. Pre-Columbian and later colonial history highlight these fluid links. Native American groups regularly traveled back and forth between mainland Florida and the Caribbean islands.[54] The Calusa people of south Florida, for example, developed trade and social relations with native communities in Cuba and neighboring islands. Mobility around the changing rhythms and seasons of nature defined travel and community life. In the early sixteenth century, when European conquistadores arrived, Spanish ships also sailed between the islands and the peninsula. The first governor of Puerto Rico, Juan Ponce de León, led the first European expedition to Florida. He was looking, like so many of his successors, for the mythical "Fountain of Youth." But on his last voyage to Florida in 1521, a group of Calusa warriors shot Ponce de León with a poison arrow. His expedition party escaped, and sailed south to Havana, where Ponce de León died of his wounds. The conquistador was a colonial era example of the region's border crossing history. Ponce de León colonized Puerto Rico, fought in Florida, and died in Cuba. In violence and death the region was also connected.[55] There are many mobile and border defying episodes from the past: in the late 1500s and throughout the 1600s, pirates like Francis Drake sailed the Gulf Stream and attacked the Florida coast and then returned south to continue raids on Spanish colonies in Puerto Rico, Cuba, Jamaica, and Panama. The British, Spanish, and French fought for centuries over the Caribbean. In 1762 during the Seven Year War, for example, the British Navy seized Havana from the Spanish Crown. The following year, in the Treaty of Paris ending the war, the British traded Havana for Spain's rights to

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[53] Doreen Massey, "A Global Sense of Place," in *Space, Place, and Gender* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 154.
[54] For an introduction to Florida's indigenous history, Jerald T. Milanich, *Florida's Indians from Ancient Times to the Present* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1998).
[55] For a classic text on Florida and the Spanish Conquest, Herbert E. Bolton, *The Spanish Borderlands: A Chronicle of Old Florida and the Southwest* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1921).

Florida.[56] Five nations, in addition to dozens of distinct Native American groups, have claimed Florida as their own. Spain, France, Great Britain, the United States, and the Confederate States of America all flew flags over the peninsula. The Caribbean region has had an equally dizzying history of foreign flags and control (See Chapter 5).

In Miami today, proud bankers and cosmopolitan businessmen like to claim their city as the modern capital of Latin America. What they don't seem to realize, however, is that for centuries Florida was already part of the Caribbean; not the capital per se, but certainly an important link, a node, in a larger web of connections. That role evolved in the early twentieth century. The U.S. government, U.S. business, and U.S. tourists, traveling from the north, began to use the peninsula to access the Caribbean. Likewise, the diverse people of the Caribbean utilized Florida as their link to the north. That dual transit role – people coming and going shaping a place – is a defining characteristic of the region's history.[57] Movement, mobility and in contrast, immobility, are long running themes in Caribbean history. As a recent museum exhibition described, the Caribbean is a crossroads defined by "fluid motions…where human and natural forces collide."[58] Migrants traveled from south to north, tourists from the north went south, and politicians, developers, writers, naturalists and a diverse array of travelers went back and forth. Communities developed transnationally through these links. People, ideas and goods on the move shaped the Caribbean's history and its development.[59]

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[56] John R. McNeill, *Atlantic Empires of France and Spain: Louisbourg and Havana, 1700-1763* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985); J.H. Elliot, *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006); John R. McNeill, *Mosquito Empires: Ecology and War in the Greater Caribbean* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010). For a history of Havana and its transformation into a key colonial port, Alejandro de la Fuente, *Havana and the Atlantic in the Sixteenth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008).

[57] My understanding of the relationship between mobility and local history is strongly influenced by two works in particular: James Clifford, *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997); Doreen Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994).

[58] *Caribbean: Crossroads of the World*, Three-Museum Exhibition. The Studio Museum in Harlem, El Museo del Barrio, and the Queens Museum of Art in New York, New York. See, http://www.pamm.org/exhibitions/caribbean-crossroads-world

[59] For introduction to transnational history as field of historical inquiry, Laura Briggs, Gladys McCormick, and J.T. Way, "Transnationalism: A Category of Analysis." *American Quarterly* 60 (September 2008): 625-648.

The history of tourism cannot be studied in one place. The industry depends on "routes" as much as "roots." So far, I have emphasized Florida's role in the story of the Caribbean vacation, but the history could just as well begin at the far end of the tourist route. Due south of Florida, the Isthmus of Panama has played an equally important role in the Caribbean's history. Founded as a Spanish colony, around the same time Florida was being explored (1510-1513), Panama served as a key crossroads for colonial trade in the Americas. Spaniards, Native American groups, English pirates, Scottish settlers, French entrepreneurs, and later on, U.S. government officials and businessmen claimed this strip of land bordering the Caribbean Sea.[60] Imperial powers would fight over the isthmus for centuries. This geopolitical interest reached new levels of importance and hubris in the early twentieth century with the building of the Panama Canal (1904-1914). As the canal project came to completion, the U.S. government and the press claimed that the tropics had finally been conquered and made a safe paradise for white travelers (see Chapter 1). Journalists and jingoists argued that the canal opened the Caribbean, from the far north to the far south, for tourist and commercial trade. U.S. officials, along with private entrepreneurs and developers, rushed to build railroads and modernize steamships and port facilities in Florida and the Caribbean islands because of the promise of the canal. The U.S. government justified its occupation of Guantánamo, Cuba with the need to protect the maritime route to the canal; passenger steamships in the early twentieth century sold some of the first package tours transiting the Caribbean playing off the public's excitement for the construction project. One developer in Florida went as far as to rename the town of Harrison to Panama City in 1909 with the hope that popular interest in the Panama Canal project would spur tourism and investment. In the decade that followed the renaming, the town's population quadrupled.[61] From Florida in the 1890s to Panama in the 1910s, in less than twenty years, tourism began to take on a

[60] To learn more about Panama's long history as site of colonial conflict and mobility, Aims McGuiness, *Path of Empire: Panama and the California Gold Rush* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2008); Ashley Carse, *Beyond the Big Ditch: Politics, Ecology, and Infrastructure at the Panama Canal* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2014).
[61] Glenda A. Walters, *Panama City* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2008), 7.

regional role, and in between the isthmus and the peninsula, communities along the route were pulled into a new orbit of leisure travel.

Producing and Consuming the Caribbean

The Caribbean has historically played an outsized role in the imaginations of Europeans and North Americans. The region is the realm of Shakespearean-like fantasies of romance and intrigue.[62] That tradition remains. Today, in the Caribbean, one can follow the path of famous conquistadores, drink in the favorite bars of writers like Ernest Hemingway (see Chapter 4), walk through the rainforest like a Smithsonian explorer (Chapter 3), climb an old fort like Theodore Roosevelt (Chapter 1), and enjoy the nightlife and casinos like a regular Godfather (Chapter 2). As a tourist, one can escape the reality of home in search of a mythical past. And all the while, everyday life can wait safely for one's return. Central to this type of travel has been the sentiment that one is following in the footsteps of history.

The irony of tourism is that the industry packages itself as an escape that brings one closer somehow to history. Not necessarily the reality of the past, but rather our optimistic dreams of it.[63] This is what Walt Disney sold so well at Magic Kingdom and what cruise ships do on their Caribbean voyages: the visitor gets to play history – the pirate, the adventurer, the wealthy baron wining (and whining) and dining, the child who never grows up. Pirates of the Caribbean have amazingly become Disney characters and endearing eccentrics played by actors like Johnny Depp. As one vacation reviewer tells potential guests: "In Pirates of the Caribbean, loopy but lovable Captain Jack Sparrow (Johnny Depp) relates the horrors of being marooned on a tiny deserted island. Later, he's dumped on the same spot, this time with the luscious Elizabeth Swann (Keira Knightley), who soon discovers that Sparrow's first visit involved nothing more horrible than sitting on a perfect beach and drinking rum — much like a modern Caribbean vacation."[64] In

[62] See Hulme, *Colonial Encounters*; Sheller, *Consumer the Caribbean*.
[63] Wallace, *Mickey Mouse History*.
[64] Bob Friel, "8 Dream Beaches of the Caribbean: Sand, sea and palm trees: Fantasies come true here," *NBC News*, accessed July 15, 2015, http://www.nbcnews.com/id/7818136/ns/travel-romantic_getaways/t/dream-beaches-caribbean/#.VfhTbUuJlg0

this romanticized vision, pleasure and adventure overshadow the ugly and mundane, and the Caribbean becomes a magical place.[65] It sounds appealing; yet is thoroughly dangerous. History and culture become "Mickey Mouse history" for mass consumption.[66] All the real people and history behind the fantasy get lost in an illusory haze.

The history of the Caribbean, its labor and race relations, its conquest and exploration, its economic activities were less fantastical and much more brutal. Its relationship with Europe and North America is rooted in exploitation. The development of Latin America, which includes the Caribbean, has for centuries depended on sending natural resources to people consuming somewhere else, far away. "Latin America," as Eduardo Galeano explained, "is the region of open veins. Everything from the discovery until our times, has always been transmuted into European – or later – United States – capital, and as such has accumulated on distant centers of power. Everything: the soil, its fruits and its mineral-rich depths, the people and their capacity to work and to consume, natural resources and human resources."[67] This statement, although "always" may be an exaggeration as Galeano later admitted, exemplifies the history of foreign interest in the region. Profit, greed, exploitation, and pleasure have been driving forces. The insatiable demand for sugar in Europe and the United States, for example, supported centuries of colonial wealth and plantation slavery. The anthropologist Sidney Mintz documented this history in his seminal book, *Sweetness and Power*.[68] Mintz described in detail the violent labor system used for sugar production – the transatlantic slave trade, regimented plantation life, ecological devastation, and the millions of early deaths and miseries caused by metropolitan desires for sweetness. Sugar plantations dominated Caribbean life for several hundred years. Whole communities organized around its production.[69]

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[65] John S. Hogue, "Cheeseburger in Paradise: Tourism and Empire at the Edges of Vacationland," *American Quarterly* 63 (2011): 203-214.
[66] Wallace, *Mickey Mouse History*.
[67] Eduardo Galeano, *Open Veins of Latin America: Five Centuries of the Pillage of a Continent* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1997), 2.
[68] Mintz, *Sweetness and Power.*
[69] For more on sugar and Caribbean history, Reinaldo Funes Monzote, *From Rainforest to Cane Field in Cuba: An Environmental History since 1492,* trans. Alex Martin (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008); Frank Moya Pons, *History of the Caribbean: Plantations, Trade, and War in the Atlantic World* (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2007).

Export industries and agricultural commodities shaped community culture across Latin America and the Caribbean. In the late nineteenth century, businessmen also began to consider the export of bananas as a sort of "green gold." Banana plantations, as the historian John Soluri documented, became a new organizing principle for communities in Central America and the Caribbean. The demands of export agriculture defined local history and culture.[70] Foreign desire, however, has done more than shape agricultural production. In the words of Fernando Coronil, "the worldwide expansion of capitalism and the creation of a global market of commodities has been driven by the profit-seeking effort to control not only cheap labor, technology, or markets, but also nature."[71] Moreover, not all Caribbean industries, as the case of tourism shows, have been based on agricultural commodities. "It is not only things or commodities that are consumed," the scholar Mimi Sheller tells us, "but also entire natures, landscapes, cultures, visual representations, and even human bodies."[72] Services, experiences, landscapes and dreams can also makeup an export industry, or as Latin American elites came to understand tourism – an "invisible export" (see Chapter 2).

In the past, sugar, bananas, citrus and an array of agricultural industries shaped Caribbean culture and its relationship with the rest of the world. But increasingly, in the early-to-mid twentieth century, tourism began to take on a primary role.[73] The tourism industry is now the Caribbean's most lucrative industry – more than sugar or bananas or citrus or any other single commodity or industry. We must seriously consider why and how this happened. There is no coincidence between the Caribbean's colonial history and the rise of tourism. The same nations and people who profited and consumed Caribbean

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[70] John Soluri, *Banana Cultures: Agriculture, Consumption, and Environmental Change in Honduras and the United States* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005); Stephen Topik, Carlos Marichal, and Zephyr Frank, eds., *From Silver to Cocaine: Latin American Commodity Chains and the Building of the World Economy, 1500-2000* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006); Richard P. Tucker, *Insatiable Appetite: The United States and the Ecological Degradation of the Tropical World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

[71] Fernando Coronil, *The Magical State: Nature, Money, and Modernity in Venezuela* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997), 30.

[72] Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean*, 14.

[73] For an innovative study looking at the commodification of both things and experiences, Arjun Appadurai, ed., *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

natural resources have transformed into the region's tourist consumers. History, as Walter Benjamin once put it, is not made up of distinct phases, passing from one to the next; history rather is an accumulation.[74]

The days of slavery and plantations are historically linked to the era of luxury service and all-inclusive resorts. Social rhythms of producing and consuming tourism emerged out of a long history of cross-cultural and cross-border engagement. We must try to make sense of, unravel, the sources and methods of these encounters. In *Sweetness and Power*, Mintz argued that scholars must study not only production, but also the relationship between production and the culture of consumer desire. There is nothing "natural" about patterns of mass production and consumption bringing the Caribbean into contact with the industrialized societies of Europe and North America. Contextualizing his analysis of sugar consumption, Mintz explained:

> One needs to understand just what makes demand work: how and why it increases under what conditions. One cannot simply assume that everyone has an infinite desire for sweetness, any more than one can assume the same about a desire for comfort or wealth or power.[75]

The same can be said when looking at the desire for a Caribbean vacation: one cannot assume that there has always been a demand. The travel decisions of my grandparents, or perhaps Jerry Seinfeld's parents, were not inevitable; they emerged historically from ideas and practices forged over time, shared between kin and neighbor, passed down from one generation to the next. Tourists and retirees did not simply wander out of the desert of suburban and urban America and discover tropical paradise. Someone told them stories, someone guided them, someone cut the trail, someone profited, and someone likely suffered. This is the chain of touristic production and consumption – of labor, ideas and travel experience – that I try to explain in the following chapters. In the early-to-mid twentieth century, a new way of travel and work was forged, connecting the people of the Caribbean once again with the desires of metropolitan consumers.

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[74] Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," in *Illuminations,* ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 253-264.
[75] Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*, xxv.

Gilroy's Ship

A ship-in-transit, with its hierarchically organized crew and passenger groups, evokes the asymmetrical yet interconnected emergence and experience of the modern vacation. A cruise ship is a floating microcosm of the Caribbean's tourism history. In his classic study of the African diaspora, *The Black Atlantic*, Paul Gilroy used a similar metaphor to show the importance of movement for the black experience in the Americas, Europe, and Africa. "The image of the ship," he theorized, is "a living, microcultural, micro-political system in motion."[76] Movement and interconnection within a highly unjust and oppressive social system, he argued, had a profound influence on the history and culture of the African diaspora. The ships, the sea, and their ports of call have long stood, as one philosopher put it, as "paradigms of human existence." The ship at sea represents history's journey.[77]

The United Fruit Company's passenger line, "The Great White Fleet," provides a classic example of tourism's history. Although traditionally known as an agricultural producer of bananas for the U.S. market, "United Fruit," in the words of John Soluri, "also literally brought North Americans to the tropics via the same railroads and steamship lines that whisked bananas to consumers. Long before Club Med came on the scene, United Fruit's Great White Fleet carried tourists on Caribbean cruises."[78] Advertisements of tropical abundance and health used to sell fresh fruit also worked as enticing promotion for tropical travel. The Fruit Company marketed and produced both. Between 1908 and 1913, just as the Panama Canal was coming to completion, the United Fruit Company modernized its passenger service from small steamers to luxury ships capable of carrying 160 passengers. The Great White Fleet became in the early twentieth century the Caribbean's premiere tourist line. The Company's ships were designed to carry both passengers and in its refrigerated hulls bananas and other tropical

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[76] Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1993), 4.
[77] On the metaphor of a ship at sea, Hans Blumenberg, *Shipwreck with Spectator: Paradigm of a Metaphor for Existence,* trans. Steven Rendall (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1997).
[78] John Soluri, "Empire's Footprint: The Ecological Dimensions of a Consumers' Republic," *OAH Magazine of History* 25 (2011): 17.

commodities. Ships sailed back and forth between the United States and the Caribbean. Great White Fleet ships had a number of routes crisscrossing the Caribbean, but one of the most popular routes – called "route #1" – sailed from New York through the Straits of Florida to Cuba, Jamaica, and Panama. [79] Ten of thousands of tourists traveled this route in the 1910s and 1920s. In this dissertation, I try to follow that route to convey the interconnections of early tourism travel and development.

It was not just tourists traveling on these big white ships. Scientists, colonial officials, diplomats, dignitaries, entrepreneurs, writers and countless laborers whose names have been lost to history also sailed on the Great White Fleet. The scientist George Wheeler, who will show up in Chapter 3, traveled from New York to Cuba and Panama aboard UFCO's *S.S. Calamares*. So did Richard Marsh, an explorer affiliated with the Smithsonian, who believed he had discovered a lost race of "white Indians" on the coast of Panama. In 1924, in a strange and telling incident, Marsh returned to the United States aboard the *Calamares* with a group of supposedly white Indians to exhibit to the public in New York City.[80] The tropics, Marsh claimed, still had mysteries to uncover. Diplomats and politicians from the Caribbean also traveled on these luxurious ships. In 1928, the Panamanian ambassador and author, Guillermo Andreve, traveled aboard the *Calamares*' sister ship, the *SS. Ulúa,* to Cuba where he studied the island's tourism industry with an eye toward developing tourism in Panama (see Chapter 2).

A steamship, docking at various ports and connecting with railroad lines, captures the social relations of leisure travel. Each aspect of the voyage, and also each deck of the ship, represents the social hierarchy of the tourism industry. While the crew entertained and pampered tourists on upper decks, workers, normally brown and black and often poor, had to travel in cramped quarters.[81] On shore, more laborers catered to the ship's

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[79] "Tales of the Great White Fleet," *UNIFRUITCO* (August 1929): 24-25.

[80] For a narrative of Marsh's expedition, James Howe, *A People Who Would Not Kneel: Panama, the United States, and the San Blas Kuna* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1998).

[81] Even farther below were ash-faced men, like in B. Traven's *The Death Ship,* shoveling coal into the ship's belly. Traven satirically criticizes the perspective of elite travelers in his novel. He writes: "'Oh down there, those men,' says the stateroom passenger who is allowed a look through a hole, 'those filthy sweating devils, oh, never mind, they do not feel it, they are accustomed to the heat and to such things as the ship going down; it's their business. Let's have another cock well ice.' B. Traven, *The Death Ship* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 1991), 151.

privileged passengers. Taxi cab drivers, vendors, guides, storeowners, and many more people depended on the arrival of tourist steamers for their livelihood. In the mid-1920s, one travel writer, with a strong dose of prejudice and irritation, described the scene incited by the arrival of a luxury steamship to port:

> The news spread quickly that another horde of American tourists had come to the island, and every living inhabitant immediately picked a handful of fruit or found a handful of eggs and came out to offer his wares. The women, of whatever race, simply held up their wares in mute appeal. The men ran after us through the dust, leaping upon our running boards, insistent that we should purchase a bunch of bananas or a ripe breadfruit.[82]

Meanwhile, young boys swam out into the harbor, trying to convince tourists to toss coins into the water. As the author Eric Walrond described and numerous other authors observed, the dark-skinned boys would dive deep to retrieve the coins and impress the white tourists to throw more.[83]

The metaphor, and the reality, of a ship-in-transit with its mobilized hierarchy and its dependence on industrial technologies at port and at sea highlights the social boundaries of who could and couldn't be a tourist (see Chapter 2 and 5). Ships embodied society's privileges and inequalities. Within the tourism industry, we see hierarchy in motion crossing regional boundaries. The injustice of leisure travel was one of the most contentious issues in the twentieth century. It was for this reason that Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association organized the Black Star Line Steamship Corporation in 1919. Garvey, who grew up in Jamaica and lived and worked in Panama during the construction era, was highly aware of U.S. racism. "The big companies that were engaged in the shipping business" Garvey explained, "were determined to keep the Negro off the high seas."[84] UNIA's effort to break the hierarchy of travel inspired white opposition. The technologies and infrastructures of comfort and power were viciously guarded. In 1924, UNIA purchased its biggest ship, the *S.S. General Goethals*, from the

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[82] Harry Foster, *A Tropical Tramp with the Tourists* (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1925), 305.
[83] Eric Walrond, "Wharf Rats," in *Tropic Death* (New York: Collier Books, 1972).
[84] Marcus Garvey, "Autobiography: Articles from the Pittsburgh Courier," in *Marcus Garvey: Life and Lessons*, eds. Robert A. Hill and Barbara Bair (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 88.

U.S. Canal Zone Government. The ship, originally named in honor of the canal's chief engineer and governor general, was renamed the *S.S. Booker T. Washington.* The day the ship set sail for the Caribbean, however, the U.S. Bureau of Investigation (under the orders of J. Edgar Hoover) charged Garvey with mail fraud.[85] Two days later he was in prison. Nonetheless, the ship proceeded on its one and only voyage under UNIA control, sailing from New York to Virginia, and from there, to Cuba, Jamaica, and Panama. The opposition faced during the ship's voyage epitomized white control of mobility. In Kingston and Havana, authorities detained the ship in the interest of creditors. Later, on its return to the United States, the Ku Klux Klan attacked and boarded the ship in Jacksonville, Florida. To add insult, the ship was subject to fines for violations of U.S. maritime regulations in Charleston, South Carolina. Eventually the *S.S. Booker T. Washington* limped back to New York; forced to be sold at auction.[86] The failure to travel could also be a powerful metaphor (see Chapter 5).

The leisurely motion of tourism depended on the same kinetic convergence that historically fed social injustice and imperialism on land, and on the high seas. The social structure of tourism relied on the control of transportation technologies along racial, national, class, and gendered lines. It was the historical accumulation of resources and energy for the privileged few. While black and brown people struggled for their human rights, white tourists could float above the problems of the day in the comfort of luxurious salons and fully stocked bars. This social dynamic – rooted in the Caribbean's colonial history – continues to shape present travel and service work experience.

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[85] J. Edgar Hoover was the Director of the FBI (previously the Bureau of Investigation) from 1924 to 1972. He led the campaign to prosecute Marcus Garvey on a trumped-up charge of mail fraud. The charges against Garvey stemmed from the fact that the Black Star Line sent out a brochure with the picture of a ship with the name, "Phyllis Wheatley." The brochure was published in anticipation of the ship's purchase, which was nearly complete. Hoover and the U.S. government, however, used this as an excuse to attack Garvey and put him jail. For more on this history, Tony Martin, *Race First: The Ideological and Organizational Struggles of Marcus Garvey* (Dover, Mass: The Majority Press, 1986), 178.

[86] *Marcus Garvey: Life and Lessons*, 386-387. For more on Garveyism and its influence on the history of black travel in the Caribbean, Frank A. Guridy, *Forging Diaspora: Afro-Cubans and African Americans in a World of Empire and Jim Crow* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

A Collage of Tourism

The chapters that follow offer both an interconnected yet fragmented narrative of the emergence and experience of tourism in the Caribbean from the early to mid twentieth century, between the early 1900s and the mid-1960s. I make no claims to analytical or geographic comprehensiveness. This is just one history, rather than *the history* of the Caribbean vacation. The dissertation should be read as a collage of essays. Each chapter can be read by itself or in conversation. Each chapter explores a particular theme and a particular social group shaping the culture of tourism. My research and narrative method embraces what the anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss called "bricolage." I use an eclectic and heterogeneous set of sources and stories to illuminate historical "signs" pointing toward broader patterns within tourism.[87] I assemble a collage. Tourism, a multi-experiential activity, appears in this text as U.S. imperial history, as a dream of development, as scientific practice and knowledge-building, as urban discontent and escape, as a point of cross-cultural contact, as a source of rebellion, as ethnographic self-reflection, and as a constituted industry.

Rather than focus solely on the travel experiences of tourists, the narrative instead describes the people who guided and shaped tourist journeys. I am interested in retracing the genealogical roots of modern tourism. In the following chapters, I introduce frontiersmen and U.S. colonial officials, elite politicians and developers, scientists and explorers, traveling writers and tropical tramps, and everyday service workers intermingling with and guiding tourists along a route through the Caribbean. This diverse cast of historical actors helped create the modern day expectations and practices of tourism. Readers will learn about the people who shaped modern ideas of the "tropics" that eventually concretized into the Caribbean tourism industry. But, many aspects of the Caribbean vacation will not be touched on. There will be little discussion, for example, of such classic items as daiquiris and margaritas, nor hammocks and Hawaiian shirts. A whole book could be written and has been on the history of the Panama hat, that quintessential headdress tourists seem to wear only on vacation.[88] From Ecuador to the

[87] Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966).
[88] Tom Miller, *The Panama Hat Trail: A Journey from South America* (New York: Morrow, 1986).

days of the Panama Canal construction project to destinations across the Caribbean, this simple straw hat has become a tourist icon. Although I don't narrate the hat's journey per se, I do describe how writers and travelers from the United States popularized a particular culture of tropical travel that allowed tourists to reimagine and reinvent themselves – in dress, in forms of consumption, in their imaginations, and in social behavior (see Chapter 3 and 4). The narrative moreover cannot take readers to every major destination in the Caribbean – the Bahamas, Barbados, the coast of Mexico, Aruba, Trinidad, etc. What I offer, though, is a historical narrative that analyzes *the feeling* of an experience that gets repeated again and again and packaged for mass consumption. To do this, I analyze the life histories of influential travelers. Through their stories, key relationships and connections shaping tourism are revealed. Traveling as a tourist, I argue, evolved from learned behavior, embodied and mimicked and disseminated from one generation of travelers to the next. My hope is that if some of the social practices I describe seem familiar, you will, after reading this dissertation, have a better idea of their genealogical formation.

Outline of Chapters

Chapter 1, "Empire's Lake," chronicles the Caribbean's transition from a diseased and dangerous region into a tourist's vision of paradise. Here I explore the imperial roots and early transit routes of the Caribbean vacation. The chapter looks specifically at the era of travel between the Spanish-American War of 1898 and the building of the Panama Canal, 1904-1914. Popular perceptions of the tropics shifted profoundly in the first decades of the twentieth century as the United States expanded its empire south into the tropics. The infrastructural and landscape changes brought about by the U.S. imperial project laid the material and imaginative foundations for the region's tourist economy. The image of a healthy tropics, the practices of leisurely consumption, the guides and service workers, even the port facilities and massive ships of the tourism industry developed out of the Caribbean's imperial encounter with the United States. Chapter 1 "sets the stage" that tourism would be performed on in the twentieth century.

Chapter 2, "Service Sector Republic," documents how political and commercial leaders from the region, in Panama, Cuba, and south Florida, envisioned and developed tourism as a means of achieving modernity. Tourism was much more than a social privilege imposed on local communities by foreigners. The chapter traces the geographic and intellectual journeys of a handful of liberal elites in the early-to-mid twentieth century who came to see tourism as economic and social development. Politicians and developers traveled across the U.S.-Caribbean world to formulate a particular liberal vision of "progress" that associated white tourists with cultural and economic capital. Tourism came to play an important role in the toolkit of national development. The chapter documents how local elites developed hotels, casinos, and other tourist attractions to encourage the arrival of "desirable" white tourists from the United States. In this effort to turn tourism into development, unscrupulous characters and vice (gambling, prostitution, bars and brothels, and corruption) gained a foothold in the region's growing economy. At the same time, national governments deemed nonwhite people "undesirable" visitors, essentially deciding who could and couldn't be a tourist.

Chapter 3, "The Nature of Tourism," looks at another important aspect of the Caribbean vacation experience: the dual meaning of tropical nature. The American tropics became a serious object of scientific study for U.S. institutions in the early twentieth century; and second, the tropics continued to be admired and exoticized as a cultural landscape encouraging dreams of adventure. The nature of the Caribbean fascinated generations of European and Euro-American travelers, explorers, and tourists. But what expectations and practices were associated with this naturalist gaze? Where did traveler views of tropical nature come from, and what did they look like as social practice? I analyze the genealogy of U.S. exploration in the tropics through the stories of naturalists and collectors connected to the Smithsonian Institution. These travelers, I argue, represented a vanguard of nature-seeking tourists. Naturalist explorers helped shape and reproduce travel experiences so often packaged within the tourism industry as nature adventure and more recently, as "ecotourism."

Chapter 4, "Travel Writers and Discontents," describes the experiences of creative writers on the move to capture the curiosities and social discontents that seemed to

encourage tourists to valorize the Caribbean in an exotic sense – as an escape from the drudgery of home and modern life. What social forces at home pushed writers to travel to the Caribbean and imagine freedom as abroad? In particular the chapter focuses on urban industrial growth and the disillusionment of the Lost Generation after World War I. U.S. travel imaginations of the Caribbean as an outlet of escape and revelry circulated into popular culture via literature. The chapter follows the journeys of traveling writers, like Ernest Hemingway, John Steinbeck, and Graham Greene, and then juxtaposes their experiences with writers of color like Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston. In their disparate stories of mobility, we can see some of the privileges and inequalities involved in leisure travel.

Chapter 5, "Burning Privilege," moves forward in time to the late 1950s and 1960s to assess the social consequences of the development and culture of tourism. After decades of racial and economic inequality, local people grew to resent tourist privileges reserved exclusively for white Americans. A half-century of anger boiled over into revolt. The chapter puts the nationalist movement in Panama into dialogue with anti-colonial and anti-racist revolts emerging throughout the Caribbean, particularly in Cuba, Jamaica, and the U.S. South. Racism and colonial privilege planted the seeds of their own undoing. The luxury of tourism encouraged mass protest. Tourism made it apparent the difference between foreign "haves" and local "have-nots." Tourists in their "blush-lily-white" hotels and ships embodied privilege.

The final chapter, "The Tourism Industry rolls into the Future," visits contemporary Caribbean destinations to understand how the past has influenced the present. The chapter assesses the Caribbean vacation's tumultuous history in relation to current trends. The tourism industry is more powerful and influential than it has ever been in the history of the Caribbean region. This final chapter follows the journey of a cruise ship departing from south Florida to offer a thick description of contemporary travel experience. Through short vignettes, I discuss some of the ideas and social practices, highlighted in previous chapters, that can still be seen and felt in today's tourism industry. While the Caribbean has undergone decolonization in a political sense, the "decolonization of minds" it seems has yet to happen. A mode of tourism, born in an

earlier era of imperialism and colonialism, remains a fundamental part of the region's postcolonial present.

Collectively, the chapters offer an historical collage of the ideas and practices that would guide future travelers and tourists to the Caribbean. The dissertation describes key historical patterns that make up the modern tourism industry. My narrative is also a form of travel: across time, the early twentieth century to the early twenty-first century; across space, from the Peninsula of Florida to the Isthmus of Panama; and across experience, from U.S. colonial officials to Caribbean elites to naturalists, writers, tourists, and service workers on the ground. My hope is that this history will encourage readers to recognize the relationship between past and present tourist practices and somehow – through this recognition – reimagine a future of cross-cultural travel.

Chapter 1: Empire's Lake

"The revisionist is one who sees basic facts in a different way and as interconnected in new relationships."[1] -William Appleman Williams

In the winter of 1913, the British author Winifred James reported crowds of tourists traveling the Caribbean. Ports, streets, and hotels in south Florida, Cuba, Jamaica, and Panama "swarmed" with visitors. As the Panama Canal project came to a close in 1913 and 1914, the Caribbean entered a new era of tourism. In her travelogue, *The Mulberry Tree*, James chronicled this mass pilgrimage south. "All of patriotic America that had the time and the money," she observed, "was tumbling down through New York as fast as it could to look upon the wonders of the nation's handiwork."[2] That winter, passenger steamships and hotels in the Caribbean were crowded out. "The Canal," one tour operator explained, "[had] created a new interest in the Caribbean countries, their history, resources and future."[3] In the first six months of 1913, more than 18,000 tourists sailed to the isthmus (nearly equal to the population of Panama's capital city).[4]

One hundred years later tourists still travel in a world shaped by the Panama Canal. Although not usually considered a Caribbean destination by today's standards, Panama nevertheless was at the heart of the region's early tourism industry. The building of the Panama Canal between 1904 and 1914 was a watershed moment in the Caribbean's transformation from a diseased to a desirable destination. Tropical vacationing as a cultural rite of passage, and as a regional industry, emerged just as the United States solidified its hold over the isthmus. Yet today, tourism and the canal are somehow viewed as separate issues, separate histories. Historians and the public remember the Panama Canal as an "engineering feat," one of the technological wonders (or depending on one's politics: abuses) of the modern world.[5] On the isthmus, politicians, engineers,

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[1] William Appleman Williams, "Confessions of an Intransigent Revisionist," reprinted from *Socialist Review* (1973) in *A William Appleman Williams Reader*, ed. Henry W. Berger (Chicago: I.R. Dec, 1992), 337-339.
[2] Winifred James. *The Mulberry Tree* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1913), 225.
[3] "Tales of the Great White Fleet," *UNIFRUITCO* (August 1929): 24-25.
[4] *The Canal Record*, August 13 1913, 429. These were substantial numbers considering only about 25,000 people lived in Panama City at the time
[5] Historical monographs on the construction project: David G. McCullough, *The Path between the Seas: The Creation of the Panama Canal, 1870-1914* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1977); Matthew Parker,

and migrant workers built a "path between the seas" for the movement of ships and commodities. This is, as one colleague called it, the story of the "big ditch."[6] Panama's effect and affect on U.S. traveling culture is absent from traditional canal narratives. On the other hand, among the small group of historians who study the history of Caribbean tourism, the canal is also overlooked. Scholarship has tended to focus on tourism in Mexico, Cuba or Jamaica, and in the process, ignore geographic and cultural connections that stretch across the Caribbean, from the Straits of Florida to the Isthmus of Panama.[7] The tourism industry emerged as a maritime route. It depended on ships visiting various ports of call. To visit Havana, for example, often entailed visiting other destinations like Key West, Kingston, or Colón, Panama. Tourism scholarship, in terms of chronology, has also bypassed the canal construction era, instead looking at the 1920s prohibition period or more often, at the post-World War II economic boom that brought a flood of middle class tourists to the region.[8] This type of scholarship, while important, skips over tourism's early emergence on the regional level. Between historiographies of the Panama

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Panama Fever: the epic story of one of the greatest achievements of all time – the building of the Panama Canal (New York: Doubleday, 2007); Alexander Missal, *Seaway to the Future: American Social Visions and the Construction of the Panama Canal* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2008); Julie Greene, *The Canal Builders: Making America's Empire at the Panama Canal* (New York: Penguin Press, 2009).

[6] Ashley Carse, *Beyond the Big Ditch: Politics, Ecology, and Infrastructure at the Panama Canal* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2014).

[7] The history of Caribbean tourism is a relatively new subject of research for historians. The field, however, is slowly growing. Historical monographs include: Rosalie Schwartz, *Pleasure Island: Tourism and Temptation in Cuba* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997); Frank Fonda Taylor, *To Hell with Paradise: A History of the Jamaican Tourist Industry* (Pittsburgh and London: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993); Ian G. Strachan, *Paradise and Plantation: Tourism and Culture in the Anglophone Caribbean* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2002); Krista Thompson, *An Eye for the Tropics: Tourism, Photography, and Framing the Caribbean Picturesque* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007); Evan R. Ward, *Packaged Vacations: Tourism Development in the Spanish Caribbean* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2008); Dennis Merrill, *Negotiating Paradise: U.S. Tourism and Empire in Twentieth-Century Latin America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009); Dina Berger and Andrew Grant Wood, eds., *Holiday in Mexico: Critical Reflections on Tourism and Tourist Encounters*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009); Christine Skwiot, *The Purposes of Paradise: U.S. Tourism and Empire in Cuba and Hawai'i* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010); Catherine Cocks, *Tropical Whites: The Rise of the Tourist South in the Americas* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013). For a recent review of tourism history, John S. Hogue, "Cheeseburger in Paradise: Tourism and Empire at the Edges of Vacationland," *American Quarterly* 63 (2011): 203-2014. For the history of U.S. tourism in Europe, Christopher Endy, *Cold War Holidays: American Tourism in France* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

[8] Existing scholarship has overlooked the emergence of Caribbean tourism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Rosalie Schwartz's book *Pleasure Island*, for example, focuses on tourism in Cuba between 1920 and 1960; likewise in Dennis Merrill's monograph *Negotiating Paradise*, which analyzes tourism in Mexico, Cuba, and Puerto Rico and also begins in the 1920s and concludes in the 1960s.

Canal and Caribbean tourism there remains a serious lacuna of understanding. Tourism cannot be understood in geographic or temporal isolation.

By tracing the history of the tourism industry further back in time, we can begin to understand the roots and routes of U.S. tourism to the Caribbean. Here in this chapter, I describe how the region's tourist economy developed in the first decade of the twentieth century. U.S. imperial expansion "set the stage" for the modern era of travel. Political, scientific, economic and cultural processes that made the United States an empire in the Caribbean at the turn of the twentieth century also opened the region to tourism. The culture and the industry of leisure travel piggybacked on U.S. expansion. Perceptions of tropical health, along with the transportation networks that made a brief vacation possible, were intimately linked to the U.S. imperial project in Panama and also in Cuba. The government, the people, and the visions of nature and society that converged in those years paved the way for the Caribbean's modern tourism industry. The quintessential Caribbean vacation – represented today as an apolitical act of fun – was born in the crucible of US empire building.[9]

Between the Spanish-American War in 1898 and the completion of the Panama Canal in 1914, U.S. travelers began to reimagine the Caribbean as a vacation paradise. How and why did that happen? The history of the Panama Canal offers a historical beginning and geographic angle to make sense of this transformation. The canal project had an important role. First, the rhetoric of "tropical conquest" associated with the canal encouraged a shift in environmental thinking that would have long-term consequences for how tourists experienced the tropics. "America," as one enthusiastic visitor noted, "made the Canal, but she overcame the forces of death first. She overcame the idea of the white man's grave."[10] At the beginning of the twentieth century, travel to the Caribbean – as a

[9] Christine Skwiot makes a similar argument linking tourism and empire in her book, *The Purposes of Paradise;* so does Merrill in *Negotiating Paradise* and Catherine Cocks in *Tropical Whites*. They look at tourism and empire in multiple locations, but their approach is comparative rather than transnational. On the other hand, in this dissertation, I look at the transnational routes and people linking different vacation destinations in the Caribbean.

[10] Stephen Graham, *In Quest of el Dorado* (London: Macmillan, 1924), 167.

well-organized and leisurely experience – was almost a nonexistent activity.[11] Earlier generations of Europeans and Euro-Americans considered the Caribbean a site of exotic adventure. But they also thought of the region as diseased and dangerous.[12] As late as 1896, the journalist and author Richard Harding Davis reported a very different scene than what Winifred James comfortably witnessed in 1913.[13] When Davis and his two traveling companions arrived to the Caribbean coast of Panama, it was as if they had traveled to edge of the world, to the river Styx in Greco-Roman mythology. Davis wrote:

> If Ulysses in his wanderings had attempted to cross the Isthmus of Panama… He would have told how on such a voyage… he had found this isthmus guarded by a wicked dragon that exhaled poison with every breath, and that lay in wait, buried

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[11] In the 1890s there were a handful of packaged vacations from Florida to the nearby islands of the Bahamas. To a lesser extent there were also trips to Jamaica. Thompson, in *An Eye for the Tropics* (4-5) has explained "Starting in the 1880s, British colonial administrators, local white elites, and American and British hoteliers in Jamaica and the Bahamas embarked on campaigns to refashion the islands as picturesque "tropical" paradises, the first concerted efforts of their kind in Britain's Caribbean colonies. Tourism entrepreneurs faced a formidable challenge. Beyond the region the West Indies were widely stigmatized as breeding grounds for potentially fatal tropical diseases. Yellow fever, malaria, and cholera had claimed the lives of many white civilians and soldiers who ventured to the islands, ensuring what historian Philip Curtin describes as 'death by migration.' As one industry supporter recognized in 1891, 'to many old-fashioned people at home [Britain] to book a passage for Jamaica is almost synonymous with ordering a coffin.'"

[12] For the history of tropical disease and its relationship to traveling culture, see Mark Carey, "Inventing Caribbean Climates: How Science, Medicine, and Tourism Changed Tropical Weather from Deadly to Healthy," *Osiris* 26 (2011): 129-141. For tropical disease and travel in the Caribbean during the colonial era, Philip D. Curtin, *Death by Migration: Europe's Encounter with the Tropical World in the Nineteenth Century* (New York, 1989); Kenneth F. Kiple and Kriemhild Conee Ornelas, "Race, War and Tropical Medicine in the Eighteenth-Century Caribbean," in *Warm Climates and Western Medicine: The Emergence of Tropical Medicine, 1500–1900,* ed. David Arnold (Amsterdam: Rodopi B.V., 1996), 65–79; John Robert McNeill, *Mosquito Empires: Ecology and War in the Greater Caribbean* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[13] According to Theodore Roosevelt, the writings of Richard Harding Davis provided "a textbook of Americanism." See Theodore Roosevelt, "Davis and the Rough Riders," *Scribner's Magazine*, July 7, 1916. Also, Beatriz Urraca, "A Textbook of Americanism: Richard Harding Davis's Soldiers of Fortune," *Tropicalizations: Transcultural Representations of Latinidad* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1997). In the same year Davis' travelogue *Three Gringos* was published, the newspaper tycoon, William Randolph Hearst, sent Davis and illustrator Frederick Remington to report on the rebellion in Cuba. The articles from that trip helped increase the American public's support for U.S military intervention on the island. Davis' novel, *Soldier of Fortune*, published the following year in 1897, became a favorite book among white men of his generation. It was suggested that every soldier who went to Cuba carry a copy. Davis also popularized the myth of the Rough Riders who participated in the Cuba military campaign; so much so that his writings are credited with having a marked effect on Theodore Roosevelt's electoral success.

> in its swamps and jungles, for sailors and travelers, who withered away and died as soon as they put foot upon the shore.[14]

There was nothing relaxing about his trip. What changed then between the 1890s and the 1910s that reinvented Caribbean travel from a dangerous adventure (Davis) into a leisurely vacation (James)? In this chapter, I describe this historical shift in tropical travel through the story of the canal project, paying close attention to associated scientific and medical practices.

Second, the Panama Canal helped forge a fast and efficient transportation system for leisure travel. The railroads and steamship lines that flowed south to meet the canal became the backbone of the Caribbean's early tourism industry.[15] Leisure travelers from the United States arrived to the Caribbean by ship, either departing from New York, New Orleans, or Key West. "Unless you deliberately choose it," James noted in 1913, "you cannot travel to Panama on the Atlantic side any other way than comfortably."[16] This, however, was not the case just a decade earlier. In anticipation of increased tourist and commercial traffic following the canal, steamship lines like the United Fruit Company, the Hamburg-American Line, the Panama Railroad Steamship Line and the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company modernized their passenger services. Ships were redesigned specifically for tropical travel. Some ships were, as one traveler praised, "cooled by a system of artificial ventilation which assures a comfortably night's rest even in the warmest weather."[17] Transportation providers, both private and government, expanded their services to meet the growing interest in tropical vacationing. The United Fruit Company, for example, launched its famous "Great White Fleet" just as the canal was

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[14] Richard Harding Davis, *Three Gringos in Venezuela and Central America*, (New York: Harpers & Brothers, 1896), 193.
[15] See Cocks, *Tropical Whites*. For a similar argument about the relationship between tourism and transportation infrastructure, but in the context of the American West, Thomas Andrews, "'Made by Toile': Tourism, Labor, and the Construction of the Colorado Landscape, 1858-1917," *Journal of American History* 92 (2005): 837-863. He explained "railroads did not instantaneously transform travel, but they did make it easier, cheaper, and faster than ever before. By and by, they reshaped virtually every aspect of touristic experience." For the relationship between infrastructure and tourist mobility in Europe, see Andrew Denning, "From Sublime Landscapes to 'White Gold:' How Skiing Transformed the Alps after 1930," *Environmental History* 19 (2014): 78-108.
[16] James, *Mulberry Tree*, 226.
[17] Quoted in Missal, *Seaway to the Future,* 127.

coming to completion. Beginning in the 1910s, Great White Fleet ships began to take tourists from New York to the Caribbean with stops in Cuba, Jamaica, Costa Rica, Panama, and the coast of Colombia.[18]

The rise of the Caribbean tourism industry was remarkably fast. Just ten years after Richard Harding Davis visited Panama in 1896 (the place he compared to the edge of hell), President Theodore Roosevelt embarked on a triumphant tour of the isthmus. Roosevelt was the first U.S. president to travel abroad while in office. During a seventeen-day trip through the Caribbean, the president visited first Panama and then Puerto Rico. To a gathered crowd in Colón, Roosevelt gave a patriotic speech: "I go back a better American, a prouder American, because of what I have seen the pick of American manhood doing here on the Isthmus."[19] The wave of tourists, who visited in the years immediately after the president, seemed to agree. James reported that among the crowds one could hear the "parrot cry of the patriotic tourist whose good-morning and good-night is ever the same: 'Here, sir, you see one of the most marvelous engineering feats that the world has ever beheld.'"[20] Part of this "feat" was the supposed conquest of the tropical environment making the region safe for the "white race." Toward the end of the canal project, the Caribbean was repackaged and sold to eager travelers as a health resort, a sign of the nation's progress and victory over tropical nature.

The visits to Panama by Richard Harding Davis in 1896, President Theodore Roosevelt in 1906, and in 1913 by Winifred James and tens of thousands of tourists mark the evolving relationship between Caribbean tourism and U.S. expansion. During this brief period of time, the material and imaginative foundations were laid for the

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[18] On the history of the United Fruit Company in Central America and the Caribbean, Aviva Chomsky, *West Indian Workers and the United Fruit Company in Costa Rica, 1870-1940* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996); John Soluri, *Banana Cultures, Banana Cultures: Agriculture, Consumption, and Environmental Change in Honduras and the United States* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005); Marcelo Bucheli, *Bananas and Business: the United Fruit Company in Colombia, 1899-2000* (New York: New York University Press, 2005); For a company history from the early twentieth century, see Frederick Upham Adams, *Conquest of the Tropics: The Story of the Creative Enterprises Conducted by the United Fruit Company* (New York: Arno Press, 1914). For a similar triumphal point of view, Stacy May and Galo Plaza, *The United Fruit Company and Latin America* (New York: National Planning Association, 1958).

[19] Address of Theodore Roosevelt to the employees of the Isthmian Canal Commission, Colon, Panama, November 11, 1906, un-cataloged, Panama and the Canal, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, Gainesville.

[20] James, *Mulberry Tree*, 241.

emergence of tourism on a regional scale. In the most basic sense, U.S. military and commercial efforts precipitated improved control of tropical diseases like yellow fever and malaria. These efforts, presented as successful, helped to dispel popular ideas that the tropics were dangerous for "white" people. The rise in tourism also depended on transportation infrastructure and accommodations attached to U.S. expansion. Travel, in short, became much easier in terms of time and comfort.

The emergence of tourism to the Caribbean, however, cannot be reduced solely to transformations in the material world, through advancements in science and transportation technology. Tourism must also be understood in relation to its predecessor: the culture of the frontier.[21] U.S. expansionist projects in Panama and before in Cuba attracted "pioneers" and soldiers from older American outposts, still searching for outlets of escape and adventure. After "conquest," these frontiersmen often became guides and entrepreneurs within the new tourist economy. Their stories and experiences of frontier life helped give rise to an "invented tradition" of tropical travel associated with unbounded freedom and revelry. The agents of U.S. empire – colonial officials, soldiers, and "roughnecks" – offered living examples of *empire-as-a-way-of-life* for tourists in search of comfortable adventure.

In this chapter, we trace the emergence of Caribbean tourism by following changes in U.S. foreign policy, medical science, and transportation technology in the early twentieth century, which in turn shaped the everyday ideas and practices of tourists who would enjoy the fruits of empire. The canal construction project, although not the whole picture, provides a revealing window into a larger story about how shifts in cultural desire and perception, the tropical environment, and infrastructural development came together to constitute a Caribbean vacation. What follows are a series of "telling

[21] The historian, William Cronon, makes a similar argument for understanding nature tourism in the American West, See "The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature," in *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*, ed. William Cronon (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1995), 69-90.

examples" from the isthmus, which describe key developments in that emergent industry.[22]

From Disease to Desire

In June 1904, William Haskins, a native of Alabama, boarded a United Fruit steamer with eighteen other passengers sailing for Panama. To participate in the new canal project, he believed, was the chance to engage in adventure, to be part of history, and also make money. "The passengers," he noted, "represented as odd a cross-section of humanity as one could expect to see. Most had never been to sea before, and were going to Panama hoping that the new land would produce rich returns."[23] Haskins traveled on behalf of the Alabama District headquarters of the Southern Bell Telephone & Telegraph Company. His manager in Montgomery, in conversation with an Alabama State Senator, thought it would be a good move "to get on the ground floor in Panama with a telephone system." As the promoters of overseas expansion had hoped, there was money to be made in the new canal project. "One of these moves," Haskins explained, "required some one to go to Panama to obtain an option on the telephone franchise held in the terminal cities."[24] But no one at the company wanted to physically travel to the isthmus and negotiate the deal. The duty fell to Haskins:

> Finally, I said I would go. The rest applauded my nerve but warned that I was taking my life in my hands. But the die was cast, and in the interim prior to my departure, I tried to round up all the information I could about Panama. The Montgomery library afforded little of value and what there was wasn't

[22] Lara Putnam, "To Study the Fragments/Whole: Microhistory and the Atlantic World," *Journal of Social History* 39 (2006): 615-630.

[23] Built before the era of the "Great White Fleet," the ship Haskins traveled on could accommodate only 18 passengers, in addition to crew.

[24] The narrative of Haskins' journey comes from a series of undated newspaper clippings. See, W.C. Haskins, "Early Day Reminiscences," Richard W. Pat Beall Collection, Panama and the Canal, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, Gainesville. Haskins wrote: "Only one [passenger] on board had a Canal Commission. He was Leonard Schwan, a Mississippian, who had seen service in Cuba and was assigned to the Canal's quarantine section. The first person I contacted on board was Schwan, who, from that time on and until his death around 1913 from consumption at Silver City, New Mexico, was one of my best friends. Most of the other passengers had plans which they did not try to conceal. The head of one family announced that he planned to hire a boat and go up the Chagres to Bohio where he figured to start farming."

> encouraging. In consulting its section on Panama in the Encyclopedia Britannica I read the startling statement that 'The climate is such that no white man can live there.'"[25]

The American tropics were still thought of as the "white man's graveyard."[26] When Haskins began his journey his life insurance policy expired because of a provision barring holders from tropical travel. To visit the Caribbean was no vacation.

From the days of Christopher Columbus to the early twentieth century, the Caribbean had a paradoxical identity as both an exotic paradise and a deathtrap. The Caribbean, and particularly Panama, had long been important transit points for European and Euro-American travelers. But that didn't lessen any fears. To travel through the tropics was viewed as a journey that demanded one stare death in the face. In 1852, for example, James Clark traveled to California via Panama. He recorded intense hardships in his diary. He slept in the dirt, hiked dozens of miles through the tropical forest, and lost companions during the isthmian crossing. Clark was far from alone on his arduous voyage. Between the years 1848 and 1860, more than 200,000 people traveled from New York to San Francisco by way of the Caribbean-Panama route; more than those who used the overland trail across the North American continent.[27] The transcontinental railroad was not yet complete in the United States. Panama offered the shortest maritime route. The trip, however, was not easy. In the nine days it took Clark to get from one ship on the Caribbean to another steamer on the Pacific Ocean, he attended at least four funerals for

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[25] Ibid. Haskins ended up staying in Panama and getting a job with the Isthmian Canal Commission. But as, he explained, "I was making some sacrifices."

[26] For more on conflicting perceptions of the tropics, Nancy Leys Stepan, *Picturing Tropical Nature* (London: Reaktion Books, 2001); Mimi Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean: From Arawaks to Zombies* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003). Specific to Panama, see Stephen Frenkel, "Jungle Stories: North American Representations of Tropical Panama," *The Geographical Review* 86 (1996): 327. For the white's man grave stereotype, more generally, see Phillip D. Curtin, "'The White Man's Grave:' Image and Reality, 1780-1850," *Journal of British Studies* 1 (1961): 94-110.

[27] Between 1848 and 1860 approximately 218,546 people traveled from New York to San Francisco by way of Panama, which is greater than the number who used the overland route. Travelers would take a steamship or sailing vessel from the U.S. east coast to Panama's Caribbean coast, and then take a small river vessel and/or walk across the isthmus to the Pacific Coast. In 1855, a railroad connecting Colon with Panama City was completed making the trip much faster. It was popularly said, however, that during the construction of the Panama railroad in the 1850's there was a "dead man for every cross-tie on the whole line." For the history of the trans-isthmian railroad, see Aims McGuiness, *Path of Empire: Panama and the California Gold Rush*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2008).

companions on the isthmus. When he eventually arrived to San Francisco and found work he himself fell ill. His journal entries end with reports of "vomiting and purging."[28]

During the Spanish colonial era (1513 to 1819), Panama played a key role in trade between the Caribbean, South and North America, and Europe. The Spanish empire relied on the isthmus as a transoceanic land bridge for the movement of silver and gold from its mineral-rich colonies in Peru to its treasury in Madrid. Royal ships transported silver up the Pacific coast to Panama City, where mules, men, and small river-vessels then carried the bullion roughly 50 miles across the isthmus to the Caribbean coast.[29] For that same reason pirates found the area an attractive stalking ground. Francis Drake and later Henry Morgan built their infamous reputations attacking Panama's Caribbean coast. In all those centuries of movement, however, Spanish bureaucrats, English pirates, forty-niners, and an array of other travelers generally thought of Panama as a "corridor of infection," a quick and potentially deadly stopover along their journey. The isthmus became legendary as a treacherous and diseased shortcut between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. [30]

These long-running tropical predicaments had yet to be resolved when the army of canal diggers arrived to the isthmus. The French Canal Company, which initiated the construction project in the 1880s, lost an estimated 20,000 men to disease. Ferdinand de Lesseps, the Company's President, assumed that digging the Panama Canal would not be much different than his earlier success in Egypt with the Suez Canal. It was an engineering problem that required know-how and money. The French believed they had both, but their project ended in disaster. The combination of high mortality rates,

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[28] James Clark Diary, (1851-1852), Box 1, Canal Zone Library-Museum Panama Collection, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

[29] Alfredo Castillero Calvo, "Las ferias del trópico," *Historia General de Panamá*, vol. 1 of 4, ed. Alfredo Castillero Calvo, (Panama City: Comisión Nacional del Centenario, 2004); Christopher Ward, *Imperial Panama: Commerce and Conflict in Isthmian America, 1550-1800* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1993).

[30] The dangers of the Caribbean tropics, according to historian John Robert McNeill, also worked as a natural defense against intrusions from other European colonial powers and settlers. Disease wiped out invading armies and adventurers coming from more temperate zones. The isthmus became legendary as a treacherous and diseased shortcut between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. See McNeill, *Mosquito Empires.* Also see, Belisario Porras, "Panama Before and After Independence," trans. Joseph I. Greene, *The Panama Times*, April 17, 1926; Vilma Chiriboga, *Relatos de Viajeros: Visión extranjera de la Ciudad de Panamá en la segunda mitad del siglo XIX* (Cultural Portobelo: Panama City, 2007).

engineering difficulties, and financial troubles bankrupted the French project.[31] In the late 1890s, the United States did not fare much better in the tropics. In Cuba, during the Spanish-American War, the U.S. Army lost more men as the result of tropical disease than actual fighting.[32] Although fewer than 400 soldiers died in combat, more than 2,000 contracted yellow fever during the war. Disease seriously threatened the U.S. ability to occupy the island. "The health authorities were at their wit's end," Chief Sanitary Officer William Gorgas explained. "We evidently could not get rid of Havana as focus of infection by any method."[33]

When the United States began the Panama Canal in 1904, they faced the same problems. The success of the construction project, in the early days, was far from guaranteed. The most formidable challenge was how to maintain a healthy and stable labor force willing to build and manage the project. Tropical disease remained an obstacle. It soon became apparent to many workers that the glory of digging the canal was not worth an early and very brutal death. When disease epidemic broke out on the isthmus, workers fled by the boatload. During the first year of the project, the turnover rate for white "skilled" American laborers was 75%. [34] Yellow fever caused the greatest scare. Symptoms emerged slowly. Victims developed a headache and back pain, and a flu-like fever. Then, the virus would spread, attacking the liver and proteins necessary for blood to clot. Individuals bled from the eyes, nose and mouth and vomited blood. Growing frantic from the sight of their own decay, many of the sick had to be strapped down as medical professionals, unable to help, watched them die. (In those early days, as Haskins remembered, people were "still giving little credence to mosquitoes as being the cause.") Disease spread.

The canal project would ultimately depend on a non-white workforce. Of the 50,000 workers on the project in 1907 close to 70 percent were "negroes" from the

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[31] See McCullough, *The Path between the Seas.*
[32] Mariola Espinosa, *Epidemic Invasions: Yellow Fever and the Limits of Cuban Independence, 1878-1930* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009).
[33] William Crawford Gorgas, *Sanitation in Panama* (New York and London: D. Appleton and Company, 1915).
[34] This general narrative is based on David McCullough's *The Path Between the Seas.* See footnote 5 for more sources on the Panama Canal construction project.

Caribbean islands. U.S. officials reasoned that black West Indian laborers were more resistant to tropical disease than "white" laborers.[35] Black people, according to social Darwinist and climatological understandings of racial difference, were supposedly built for hard labor in the tropics. Most important, however, was the fact that black West Indians accepted lower pay than white laborers, and were willing to face the health risks in the hope of a better economic future. Black workers were also easier to replace; there was always another man in line. Black West Indian workers died or grew sick, though, in much greater numbers than white Americans on the isthmus.[36]

For black West Indians living in the economically depressed islands, the canal project offered a chance to break from poverty. Recruiters for the Isthmian Canal Commission paid for worker's passage and used well-placed advertisements to fuel "rags-to-riches" stories. "Colón-man-a-come," the story of a canal worker returning home with money in his pocket was also popularized in song and oral and written traditions across the Caribbean. [37] The reality for most workers when they arrived, however, was much different. Albert Peters was one of these young and hopeful migrants when he left for Panama in 1906:

> One day while reading the daily paper I saw where they were digging the Canal from ocean to ocean on the Isthmus of Panama and needed thousands of men. I and two of my pals read it over and we suggested to take a trip over. We were all eager for some adventure and experience. My parents were against the idea. They told me about the Yellow Fever, Malaria and Small Pox that infested the place but I told them that I and my pals are just going to see for ourselves. [38]

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[35] U.S. officials believed that immunity was due to innate racial characteristics rather than personal disease history. For more on this issue, Mariola Espinosa, "The Question of Racial Immunity to Yellow Fever in History and Historiography," *Social Science History* 38 (2014): 437-453..

[36] Michael L. Conniff, *Black Labor on a White Canal: Panama, 1904-1981* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1985). Conniff estimated that the total number of deaths in the West Indian community approached 15,000, one out of every ten migrants.

[37] For the canal's influence in Afro-Caribbean diaspora literature, see Eric Walrond, *Tropic Death* (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1926); Rhonda Frederick, *Colon man a come: Mythographies of Panama Canal Migration* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2005); Lara Putnam, *Radical Moves: Caribbean Migrants and the Politics of Race in the Jazz Age* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

[38] Letter from Albert Peters, Box 25, Canal Zone Library-Museum Panama Collection, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

Peters was 21 years old when he and his friends arrived to Colón. Soon, though, he was sick with malaria. In the hospital "the first night in there the man next to me died and that's the time I remembered my parents plea and wished I had taken their advice." Over the coming months Peter visited the hospital at least two more times with fever. Although he survived and made a career in the Canal Zone, many of his friends did not. "Every evening around 4:30 one could see #5 engine with a box car and the rough brown coffins staked one upon the other bound for Mt. Hope which was called Monkey Hill in those days. The death rate was high…If you had a friend that you always see and missed him for a week or two, don't wonder, he's either in the hospital or at Monkey Hill resting in peace." [39]

A generation of black West Indian men and women saw their future in the Panama Canal. The urge to travel and earn a living sent thousands of black West Indians to the isthmus, but it was difficult to earn enough money to return home. Black laborers often earned no more than ten cents an hour and received the most dangerous jobs. People of color could dig and chop away brush, or serve as waiters and cooks, but white American pride would not allow them to lead or fill skilled positions. Most black West Indians did not have the experience operating heavy machinery, nor would they be allowed to learn.[40] Farnham Bishop, whose father served on the Isthmian Canal Commission, captured popular white sentiment of the time, when he wrote. "These big, strong, black men have to be looked after like so many children. They are very peaceable and law-abiding fellows, but exceedingly lazy, and unbelievably stupid. There is room in their heads for exactly one idea at a time, and no more."[41] These were the days of Jim Crow, and intense racism in both the northern and southern United States. The canal project, in its need for laborers and also its desire to maintain social order, exported the U.S. racist system to the tropics. Many white Americans, in fact, believed that the canal project symbolized the reunification of the south and north after the civil war and the

[39] Ibid.
[40] For a critical read of race and the canal, see Conniff, *Black Labor on a White Canal.*
[41] Farnham Bishop, *Panama, Past and Present* (New York: The Century Company, 1916), 203.

turmoil of reconstruction.[42] In that reunification, blacks would return to the field of hard labor.

The racist hierarchy of labor on the canal project is revealing of the historical time in several key ways: first, it demonstrated how vulnerable and dependent U.S. imperial projects were on the labor of non-whites. The Panama Canal, which white Americans believed epitomized their "conquest of the tropics," was carried out by the brawn and sweat and misery of black laborers. Second, and very much important to the subsequent development of tourism, was the racialized labor regime that the canal project would develop and legalize for U.S. enterprise in the tropics. While white Americans governed and made the rules, black people would become the laborers. The type of racism that governed the canal project would also come to designate the identity and boundaries of the tourist economy. Colonial officials and tourists were white; laborers and service workers were brown and black.[43] But before this social order could fully translate into racialized tourist privileges there was still the unresolved issue of disease.

Scientific understandings of tropical medicine had just started to shift when the United States initiated the canal project. William Gorgas, after serving in the military campaign in Cuba, was put in charge of the U.S. sanitation effort on the isthmus. He arrived to Panama in 1904. Gorgas, a native of Alabama and son of a prominent Confederate General, was a career military man. Before the War of 1898, he had also served as an Army doctor in North Dakota, Texas, and Florida. He and his wife had both caught and survived yellow fever in Texas in the 1880s and were thus immune to the disease. [44] Although Gorgas did not initially think of mosquitoes as carriers of disease, his experience in Cuba would teach him otherwise. In 1900, two years into the U.S.

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[42] Both the Spanish-American War of 1898 and the building of the Panama were seen as projects that helped reunify the nation after the Civil War. Historian Natalie J. Ring explained, "The conventional narrative of sectional reconciliation also posits that imperialism and military ventures overseas, such as the Spanish-American War in 1898, had a nationalizing influence on American culture and that a shared patriotic sentiment made it easier for white Americans to forget the sectional hostilities of a previous generation." See "Mapping Regional and Imperial Geographies: Tropical Disease in the U.S. South," in *Colonial Crucible: Empire in the Making of the Modern American State,* eds. Alfred W. McCoy and Francisco A. Scarano (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), 299.
[43] See Greene, *The Canal Builders.*
[44] Marie D. Gorgas and Burton J. Hendrick, *William Crawford Gorgas, his life and work* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1924).

occupation of Cuba, a special military commission headed by Walter Reed concluded that mosquitoes carried and spread disease. Cuban doctor, Carlos Finlay, theorized over twenty years earlier that mosquitos spread yellow fever, but U.S. authorities only began to accept this theory in 1900; it mattered to the survival of the U.S. imperial project. Gorgas carried these new lessons with him to Panama.[45]

Yet, in 1904 and 1905, it was still commonly believed that yellow fever and malaria emerged from miasmas, that is, unhealthy air, bubbling up from swampy and dirty soil. This theory dated back centuries. Alexander Von Humboldt, after visiting the isthmus in the early 1800s, concluded that decaying mollusks and marine plants on the beach caused yellow fever, while malaria was due to "foul emanations" from over-rank vegetation.[46] It would take more than one government report to break the miasma theory's hold over popular thought. In the early days of the canal project, many of the Isthmian Canal Commission's members still adhered to the old theory. They viewed Gorgas's unorthodox focus on mosquito control as an unnecessary and extravagant expense. His funding was severely restricted. In 1905, in the midst of a yellow fever epidemic, both the chairman of the Isthmian Canal Commission and the governor of the Canal Zone asked for Gorgas's resignation. If he could not resolve the health issues with the budget he had, they did not want him. The story goes that President Roosevelt intervened to save Gorgas' position, against the wishes of lead canal officials. "If you fall back on the old methods you will fail," Roosevelt's personal doctor told him, "just as the French failed. If you back Gorgas you will get your canal."[47] Roosevelt responded to the request for Gorgas' dismissal by granting him greater authority and financial resources. Roosevelt feared the worst for the canal project if the problem of disease was not resolved. (He too had seen firsthand the threat of tropical disease during the war in Cuba.) During the controversy surrounding Gorgas, one fourth of the white workforce

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[45] For the history of yellow fever in Cuba, see Mariola Espinosa, *Epidemic Invasions*.
[46] *Medical Times: A Monthly Journal of Medicine*, Vol. XXXVI, January, 1908. Another famous visitor to the isthmus, quoted by the journal, reasoned "that nowhere else on earth was there concentrated in a single spot so much foul disease, such a hideous dungheap of moral and physical abomination."
[47] *Panama Canal: Gateway to the American Century*, Documentary, directed by Stephen Ives (2010; Arlington, Virginia: Public Broadcasting Service, American Experience Series, 2011), DVD.

fled the isthmus fearing epidemic. [48]

With his new authority Gorgas intensified the campaign against mosquitoes. He called for an all-out-war. Over 4,000 men organized into "mosquito brigades" to destroy the insect's breeding ground.[49] Female mosquitoes depended on sitting fresh water to lay their eggs and allow larvae to develop. Teams drained and irrigated sitting water and cleared an immense amount of brush, and equipped Canal Zone housing with screen windows and doors. Gorgas' brigades also entered the private homes of Panamanians, and without authorization from individual residents, fumigated homes with chemical cleaning agents and insectide powder.[50] In the war against mosquitoes personal liberties were ignored. Extreme measures were taken. To prevent and kill mosquito larvae, the brigades sprayed oil into fields and swamps surrounding the canal and nearby communities. "Petroleum," Gorgas explained, "destroys the larvae by spreading over the surface of the water and smothering them, while phinctas oil acts as a direct poison. These are the chief methods for destroying larvae."[51]

The blood of industrial progress – oil – became the weapon of choice in the conquest of tropical nature. "There was not a smell, or a mosquito, or a fly on Ancon Hill," as one visitor noted, "but over it all was the odor of petroleum, with which the streams and marshes of the whole zone are spayed almost daily; and this has made the Canal and saved the workers."[52] By 1914 the brigades had used over 600,000 gallons of oil, 120 tons of pyrethrum powder, and 300 tons of sulfur. Yellow fever virtually disappeared from the isthmus, and mortality rates among canal employees, a revered statistic among observers of the construction project, dropped from 40 per 1,000 people in 1906 to 8 per 1,000 in 1909. There were few mosquitoes, visitors claimed, left in the

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[48] McCullough, *The Path between the Seas*.

[49] In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the British developed similar health campaigns to deal with malaria in British West Africa and British India. See Ronald Ross, *Mosquito Brigades and How to Organize Them* (London: George Philip, 1902).

[50] Paul S. Sutter, "Nature's Agents or Agents of Empire? Entomological Workers and Environmental Change During the Construction of the Panama Canal," *Isis* 98 (2007): 724-754.

[51] William Crawford Gorgas, "The Conquest of the Tropics for the White Race," President's Address at the Sixtieth Annual Session of the American Medical Association, at Atlantic City, June 9, 1909. Reprinted in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* LII (1909): 1967-1969.

[52] Joseph Pennell, *Pictures of the Panama Canal* (Philadelphia and London: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1912), 10.

populated parts of the Canal Zone by 1907 and 1908. The ground had been cleared (scorched). [53]

The scale of the engineering project that paralleled the health campaign was unprecedented. By the time the transoceanic canal opened in 1914, the U.S. government had built the biggest man-made lake and the biggest locks in the world. (The Chagres River, which flowed into the Caribbean Sea, was diverted and damned to create the main body of water for the canal.) Workers and machine cut through swamps and mountains to connect the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The canal project, as British Ambassador James Bryce saw it, was "the greatest liberty man has ever taken with nature."[54] It looked like a war against nature. When President Roosevelt visited Panama in 1906, he explained: "I have felt just exactly as I should feel if I saw the picked men of my country engaged in some great war. I am weighing my words when I say that you here, who do your work well in bringing to completion this great enterprise, will stand exactly as the soldiers of a few, and only a few, of the most famous armies of all the nations stand in history."[55] The professed enemy was tropical nature, and by 1912 and 1913, it was clear that the United States was winning, although at great financial, social, and ecological cost.

It was at this critical juncture that the tourism industry began to expand across the Caribbean region.[56] The success of the sanitary campaign in Panama and earlier in Cuba was big news in the United States. Journalists and jingoists claimed that Uncle Sam had "conquered the tropics" and made the region safe for the "white race." The U.S. government under the direction of Dr. Gorgas, the story went, had transformed the tropics from a "pest-hole" into a "health resort." "Science and medicine," in the words of

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[53] Stephen Frenkel, "Jungle Stories: North American Representations of Tropical Panama," 327. Statistics about the use of oil and other insecticides for this section come from the documentary, *Panama Canal: Gateway to the American Century*, directed by Stephen Ives (2010; Arlington, Virginia: Public Broadcasting Service, American Experience Series, 2011), DVD.

[54] Quoted in Michael Adas, *Dominance by Design: Technological Imperatives and America's Civilizing Mission* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006), 186.

[55] Address of Theodore Roosevelt to the employees of the Isthmian Canal Commission, Colon, Panama, November 11, 1906.

[56] Mark Carey, "Inventing Caribbean Climates," 129-141. Paul Sutter makes a similar argument in his essay, "Tropical Conquest and the Rise of the Environmental Management State," in *Colonial Crucible: Empire in the Making of the Modern American State,* eds. Alfred W. McCoy and Francisco A. Scarano, 317-326 (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2009).

historian Mark Carey "helped make the tropics safer for Europeans and North Americans – whether colonial administrators or sun-seeking tourists."[57] In the 1910s, there was an immense amount of literature and excitement about the U.S. scientific achievement on the isthmus. [58] "No American," as one author explained, "can visit either Colon or Panama without a large patriotic pride in the work of our sanitary engineers. These cities – not so many years ago – were called the worst pest-holes in the Americas."[59] The U.S. government had defeated the tropical diseases of yellow fever and malaria, the plague of white travelers; American technological know-how had flattened mountains and swamps, moving over 230 million cubic yards of dirt and rock; and white men now lived and governed in the tropics of Panama, the new gateway to global trade. "Before very long the ships of the world will be passing through our Canal," one observer explained. "And we will have to our credit a national achievement over which the old eagle may well spread and flap his wings. We Yankees are reputed to be boasters – and we all think we have a right to boast. But we have never had an accomplishment like this Canal to boast of before. Something we, as a nation, have done ourselves – and not entirely for ourselves." The author added, "A visit to the Isthmus of Panama will make any American proud of his nation. The Canal is the greatest undertaking of the age."[60]

Dr. Gorgas, General Goethals (governor of the canal), and the canal workers became national heroes. After the seeming defeat of yellow fever and malaria, the American Medical Association appointed Dr. Gorgas its President. At the association's annual meeting in 1909, Gorgas explained the significance of their achievement: "the white man can [now] live in the tropics and enjoy as good health as he would have if

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[57] Carey, "Inventing Caribbean Climates," 138.
[58] For a sampling of canal triumphal literature: Willis J. Abbott, *Panama and the Canal in Picture and Prose* (New York: Syndicate Publishing Company, 1913); Emory Adams Allen, *Our Canal in Panama: The Greatest Achievement in the World's History* (Cincinnati: United States Publishing Company, 1913); Ralph Emmett Avery, *America's Triumph at Panama* (Chicago: The L. W. Walter Company, 1913); Farnham Bishop, *Panama, Past and Present* (New York: The Century Company, 1916); Arthur Bullard, *Panama: the Canal, the Country, and the People* (New York: MacMillan Company, 1914); Harry A. Franck, *Zone Policeman 88: A Close Range Study of the Panama Canal and Its Workers* (New York: Century Company, 1913); A. Hyatt Verrill, *Panama, Past and Present* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1921).
[59] Bullard, *Panama: the Canal, the Country, and the People*, 66.
[60] Ibid.

living in the temperate zone. This has been demonstrated both by our two military occupations of Cuba and by our present occupancy of Panama."[61] The U.S. public agreed with Gorgas and the nation's leaders. "The treatment of hygienic conditions on the Isthmus," as President Roosevelt put it, "has been such as to make it literally the model for all work of the kind in tropical countries. Five years ago the Isthmus of Panama was a byword of unhealthiness of the most deadly kind."[62] The tropics had been conquered and finally made safe for U.S. travelers.

Tourists wanted to see with their own eyes what their country had accomplished in the tropics, and now they felt safe to make the trip. In 1911, 15,790 tourists visited Panama; in 1912, over 20,000; and in the first six months of 1913 alone, 18,972 tourists.[63] The words of travel writer, Hyatt Verill, exemplify the popular sentiment leading U.S. tourists comfortably into the once dangerous tropics: "Less than a decade ago this was a mud flat, unspeakably filthy and odorous; but at the touch of the magic wand of United States gold and American engineers it has been transformed into a water-front with few equals in the world."[64] The early tourism industry in the Caribbean grew out of this unique mix of patriotic pride and tropical wonder.

The image of "the white man's graveyard" became – in the span of just a few short years – the image of a winter health resort. The narrative of tropical conquest attracted tourists not only to Panama, but to Caribbean destinations all along the route leading from the U.S. east coast to Panama. Steamship and tour companies turned "health" and tropical conquest into a marketing tool to sell their tours to the Caribbean. "Today health and happiness are the treasures sought on the Spanish Main," the United Fruit Company advertised in 1915. "Great White Fleet ships, built especially for tropical travel, bear you

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[61] Gorgas, "The Conquest of the Tropics for the White Race," 1967-1969.
[62] Letter from President Theodore Roosevelt, August 21, 1908. Reprinted in *The Canal Record*, September 9, 1908.
[63] *The Canal Record*, August 13, 1913, 429.
[64] A. Hyatt Verrill, *Panama of Today* (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1935), 71. The Panama Canal embodied the sensation felt by many tourists when traveling to the tropics. The Canal and the Canal Zone seemed to fill them with patriotic pride for the advancements and accompanying privileges of being a U.S. citizen, which contrasted with the intriguing primitiveness of the local environment and culture.

luxuriously to scenes of romance."[65] The passenger steamship company, Grace Line, explained "where fever and death once convinced the French that no canal would ever be built…[it is] now one of the most healthful spots in the world."[66] Another steamship line advertised, "Here [in Panama] the humblest American will feel some of that imperial pride aroused in the citizen of ancient Rome or of modern Britain by the sight of his race carrying light to the dark places of the world."[67] Travel writers and tourists also reproduced and spread this message. "We landed," as one traveler noted, "and immediately started out to see the wonders performed by the genius of two great Americans, Dr. William Crawford Gorgas and General George W. Goethals. We found no mosquitoes anywhere, and very few flies – I think we saw only two or three in the two days we were in the Canal Zone."[68] After the canal project, fantasies of the tropics could now be (safely) experienced.

Strangely, this conquest narrative fueling the early tourism industry has disappeared from contemporary memory. The story of the canal project, which helped give birth to the Caribbean tourism industry, has submerged into the packaged timelessness of tropical paradise. Today it appears as if the Caribbean were always a fun and safe place to visit. A revisionist read of the classic canal narrative, however, offers a chance to reconsider the meaning of this gap between past and present perception. A few historians, particularly those working in the field of environmental history, have begun to reevaluate the canal's triumphal narrative and its relationship to U.S. empire. Paul Sutter has documented the connection between the building of the canal and popular understandings of tropical disease. "The environmental management practices that had controlled tropical diseases there [in Panama]," he shows, "helped to alter American attitudes about the promise and perils of tropical nature."[69] Sutter complicates the dominant narrative of tropical conquest, though, by pointing out that scientific conquest

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[65] "The Great White Fleet" Advertisement in *Scribner's Magazine*, 1916, from Wikimedia Commons, accessed December 10, 2014, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:United_Fruit_Ad_1916.jpg
[66] Quoted in Cocks, *Tropical Whites*, 91..
[67] Quoted in Sutter, "Tropical Conquest and the Rise of the Environmental Management State," 317.
[68] Erastus Howard Scott, *Panama, Yosemite, Yellowstone* (Chicago: Scott, Foresman, and Company, 1925), 13.
[69] Sutter, "Tropical Conquest and the Rise of the Environmental Management State," 318.

was also the mitigation of unintended ecological consequences brought on by the U.S. imperial project.[70] The spread of malaria and yellow fever in the war of 1898 and then in the early years of the building of the Panama Canal were not the result of an inherently hostile tropical nature. Instead, they were the effects of newly constructed landscapes. In Cuba, army camps filled with thousands of men turned farms and forests into unsanitary mud pits. Human waste, sickness, and bodies were in close proximity. It was likewise in the Panama Canal Zone. The canal project converted rainforests and hilly savannahs into war zones of man vs. nature. Culebra cut, the most difficult and treacherous excavation site, looked more like Dante's inferno than the diverse tropical landscape it used to be. "Now stretches," as one author observed, "a man-made canyon across the backbone of the continent… Men call it Culebra Cut… It is majestic. It is awful. It is the Canal."[71] To make this artificial canyon, men treaded and lived in a monolith of mud; the perfect breeding ground for disease-carrying mosquitoes. Human victims created and then worked in the middle of the mosquito's ideal habitat. These were not "natural" and hostile ecosystems eternally part of the landscape.

The rise of tourism, read in this reflexive way, appears more complicated than the mere control of tropical pathogens. The specific organization of human labor and the use of industrial machines produced the need to tame nature. The "conquest of the tropics," it seemed, was the U.S. government engaging in one of its favorite foreign policy initiatives: solving a problem it helped to create, while denying any role in its creation. The heavy machinery and explosives used for the canal's construction converted forests into diseased landscapes. The desire to industrially engineer a transoceanic canal to feed economic growth at home instigated the ecological (standing water for mosquito reproduction) and social conditions (large migrant populations living in close proximity) necessary for epidemic. The rhetoric that geographically and culturally pinpointed malaria and yellow fever as distinctly "tropical" diseases dangerous to "white" people can mislead as much as its reveals about the history of U.S intervention in the tropics. People of Spanish and European descent had been living in Panama and the Caribbean

[70] Sutter, "Nature's Agents or Agents of Empire?," 724-754.
[71] Missal, *Seaway to the Future*, 69.

tropics for generations. (They were not U.S. citizens however.) The U.S. government, granted, did help eradicate yellow fever, and reduce the infectious rate of malaria in Panama and the greater Caribbean; these accomplishments are worthy of praise. But we also have to acknowledge that the natural habitat of mosquitoes has never been isolated to the tropics. In the summer, from New England to Florida, mosquitoes were abundant. In the continental United States, malaria and yellow fever in addition to other diseases, like influenza, plagued urban and coastal communities up into the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. [72] Washington D.C. even experienced its share of epidemics. The tropics of Panama and the greater Caribbean at the turn of the century, before the canal project, were probably no more deadly than New Orleans or even the industrial cities of Chicago and New York. The conquest of "tropical" disease could more accurately be understood as a broader conquest of particular infectious diseases threatening communities across the Americas, from temperate to tropical zones.[73] These details, however, were easily lost on a public and a government eager to proclaim victory. At Panama, the United States had supposedly "regained" paradise. Tourism and commerce flowed thereafter, and soon, the traveling public would forget this "origins" story almost altogether.

Imperial Infrastructure

Before the Panama Canal project and the Spanish-American War, the United States had no formal territories south of Key West, Florida.[74] But by the time President Roosevelt embarked on his overseas tour (1906), the United States had taken Cuba, Puerto Rico, Panama and the distant Philippines and Guam as colonial possessions. In 1898, the United States fought and won a war against Spain, and in the process,

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[72] See Conevery Bolton Valencius, *The Health of the Country: How American Settlers understood themselves and their land* (New York: Basic Books, 2002); McNeill, *Mosquito Empires.*
[73] Margaret Humphreys, *Yellow Fever and the South* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1992).
[74] There is one exception: Navassa island, an uninhabited, unincorporated territory south of Cuba that the U.S. government has claimed since as early as 1801.

converted a series of national independence movements into an imperial transfer.[75] That same year the U.S. government also annexed the Republic of Hawaii. Five years later, in 1903, President Roosevelt sent a group of naval warships to the Caribbean coast of Panama. The Colombian government had refused to sign a treaty that would allow the United States to dig a transoceanic canal across the isthmus.

Panama had been an important, though outlying, province of Colombia since that nation's founding in 1819. The proposed U.S. treaty would have dramatically curtailed Colombia's sovereignty over the isthmus. Roosevelt responded to Colombian protests with a "big stick" and harsh words: "I do not think that the Bogota lot of Jackrabbits should be allowed permanently to bar one of the future highways of civilization."[76] As U.S warships hovered off the coast, Colombian soldiers garrisoned on the isthmus were paid off in gold, and a small group of Panamanian elites proclaimed their independence. No one was killed during the revolution.

The resulting Hay-Bunau-Varilla treaty with the new Republic of Panama granted the U.S. government the right to build the canal. It also gave the United States total control over a ten-mile-wide strip of land called the Canal Zone that stretched fifty miles across the heart of the isthmus from the Caribbean to the Pacific Ocean. U.S. authorities moreover had the right to "purchase" any additional territory broadly deemed necessary for the construction, maintenance, and security of the canal. [77] There were infamously no Panamanians present at the signing of the treaty. Roosevelt proudly claimed, "I took the Canal Zone and let Congress debate." [78] It was, by most accounts, an imperial hijacking.

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[75] For Cuba's long running fight for independence, see Ada Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba: Race, Nation, and Revolution, 1868-1898* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Louis A. Pérez, *The War of 1898: the United States and Cuba in History and Historiography* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

[76] Quoted in Matthew Frye Jacobsen, *Barbarian Virtues*: *The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000), 45.

[77] For more context on the 1903 treaty between the United States and Panama, see Ovidio Diaz Espino, *How Wall Street Created a Nation: J.P. Morgan, Teddy Roosevelt, and the Panama Canal* (New York: Basic Books, 2003); John Lindsay-Polland, *Emperors in the Jungle: The Hidden History of the U.S. in Panama* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003); Walter LaFeber, *The Panama Canal: The Crisis in Historical Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978).

[78] Joseph Bucklin Bishop, *Theodore Roosevelt and His Time* (New York: Charles Scribner's Son's, 1920).

To control the sea and strategic shipping locations, like narrow straits, canals, and well-placed coaling stations, would supposedly guarantee the future success and security of the United States. Within inner circles of the U.S. government, and in close dialogue with the nation's most powerful capitalists, it was reasoned that if the United States was to continue on its path to industrial progress it had to be a player in the imperial race for colonies and new markets. The naval strategist Alfred Thayer Mahan, for example, argued: "Americans must now begin to look outward. The growing production of the country demands it."[79] His expansionist ideas represented the thoughts of a generation of national leaders. Theodore Roosevelt, who met and befriended Mahan while at the Naval Academy, thoroughly embraced this outlook.[80] Although there was anti-imperialist opposition from figures as diverse as William Jennings Bryan and Mark Twain, the political push for expansion dominated the language and policies of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century.[81] The United States, officials argued, needed to develop new markets in Latin America and the Pacific that would also serve as strategic "stepping stones" on the path to the wider "open door" of the coveted Chinese market.[82]

The historian and political theorist Brooks Adams summarized the popular rationale for this strategy. He wrote in 1898 that the United States "stands face to face with the gravest conjuncture that can confront a people. She must protect the outlets of her trade, or run the risk of suffocation."[83] The U.S. economy and its tumultuous domestic social situation supposedly demanded imperial expansion. The boom-and-bust economy of the 1890s reaffirmed this belief. Adams and his elite contemporaries, as

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[79] Alfred T. Mahan, "The United States Looking Outward," *Atlantic Monthly*, December 1890, 816-824. Also see Mahan, *The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future* (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Company, 1897). Mahan is remembered as one of the most important military strategists in U.S. history.

[80] Peter Karsten, "The Nature of 'Influence': Roosevelt, Mahan and the Concept of Sea Power," *American Quarterly* 23 (October 1971): 585-600.

[81] On Mark Twain and his relationship to U.S. overseas expansion, Amy Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005). For a look at anti-imperialist populism, see William Jennings Bryan's famous speech, "Imperialism: Flag of Empire," delivered August 8, 1900, accessed December 10, 2014, http://voicesofdemocracy.umd.edu/william-jennings-bryan-imperialism-speech-text/

[82] For more on U.S. expansionist plans in the late nineteenth century, Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansionism, 1860-1898* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1963).

[83] Brooks Adams, "The Spanish War and the Equilibrium of the World," *The Forum* XXV (March to August 1898): 648.

described by the historian Matthew Jacobson, "advocated a policy of territorial expansion and administrative concentration… including the consolidation of the West Indies under U.S. control, vigorously maintaining 'Asiatic markets,' and building an isthmian canal as a key to traffic and communication within this emergent trade empire."[84] It was almost a nonpartisan issue. Woodrow Wilson, years before becoming a Democratic candidate for president, agreed that "since trade ignores national boundaries and the manufacturer insists on having the world as a market, the flag of his nation must follow him, and the doors of the nations which are closed against him must be battered down."[85] The United States required new overseas markets for its industrial production to feed the nation's growth and sea power was the key.

A transoceanic canal across the isthmus would link the nation's economic and military interests on the U.S. east coast with the country's new territorial interests in the Caribbean and with its ambitions in the "new far west," that is, in the Pacific and in Asia. An isthmian canal had long been the dream of empires – first the Spanish and then the French.[86] But it was the United States that put this imperial aspiration into practice. "The union of the Atlantic and Pacific at Panama," one author explained, "stand as man's crowning achievements in remodeling God's world." [87] The new canal would save U.S merchant and naval ships over 7,000 miles on their trip from New York to the west coast of the United States, and onward to the Pacific-Asian markets. The long and arduous voyage around the southern tip of South America was no longer necessary. The United States had built the westward passage that had, in vain, been sought for centuries.

With the War of 1898 and the taking of Panama in 1903, the United States gained control of the most important shipping route in the Americas. The U.S. Navy acquired strategically located bases in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Panama, in addition to south Florida. These actions, in a way, modeled the naval strategy of the British empire. "The Caribbean is to be the American Mediterranean," as one enthusiastic observer wrote,

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[84] Jacobsen, *Barbarian Virtues,* 23.
[85] Quoted in William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (Cleveland: World Pub, 1959), 72.
[86] McCullough, *The Path Between the Seas*.
[87] Abbott, *Panama and the Canal in Picture and Prose,* 8.

"and the visible and effective power of the United States in those waters must be equal, probably vastly superior, to that of England in Europe's great inland sea."[88] U.S. designs for the Caribbean, from the Straits of Florida to the Isthmus of Panama, paralleled Britain's naval dominance at the Straits of Gibraltar and the Suez Canal. While the British controlled the eastern route to Asian markets, the United States would control the western route via Cuba, Panama, Hawaii, and the Philippines. In the first decade of the twentieth century, the United States became the uncontested empire of the Caribbean and arguably, all of the Americas.[89]

The growth of tourism in the Caribbean – from Florida to Panama – was intimately linked to this U.S. military and commercial expansion. Tourists came to rely on the same transportation systems built to serve empire. Travel comfort and speed, in addition to assurances of tropical health, were fundamental to the emergence of the Caribbean's tourism industry. Without the development of imperial infrastructure (ports, railroads, bridges), it would have been a difficult journey for tourists to visit newly "sanitized" tropical destinations. Trains and ships used to transport raw goods from new commercial frontiers also transported soldiers farther south to extend the boundaries of U.S. control, and later, for tourists to enjoy the results.

In the mid-nineteenth century, for example, Florida was a newly conquered Indian frontier. But by the 1890s, it had become the settled staging ground for another wave of expansion. [90] The Battleship *Maine* sailed out of Tampa and stopped in Key West before arriving to Havana harbor where its fiery destruction sparked war. The ports, railroads and tourist accommodations of Florida became the jumping off point for the U.S. invasion of Cuba. "For some time before the opening of actual hostilities between the United States and Spain," one journalist noted, "Key West bore the appearance of a war

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[88] Ibid.
[89] See David Healy, *Drive to Hegemony: The United States in the Caribbean, 1898-1917* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988); LaFeber *The New Empire.*
[90] "Plant System Brochures and Time Tables," Record Unit 4601 to 4620, The Florida Ephemera Collection, George A. Smathers Libraries, the University of Florida, Gainesville.

port."[91] Meanwhile in Tampa, Roosevelt and his Rough Riders trained in the field adjacent to the Tampa Bay Hotel owned and operated by The Plant System of Railways and Hotels. Another Florida developer, Henry Flagler (mentioned in the introduction), also built the Florida East Coast Railroad just as the U.S. government began to look farther south. His railroad tracks reached quiet Miami in 1896, two years before the invasion of Cuba.[92]

When the U.S. government began the canal project in Panama, Flagler announced he would extend his railroad to Key West. Flagler's railroad reached its southern terminal in Key West in 1912, two years before the completion of the canal.[93] In a brochure for passengers, the railway's management explained:

> When the road is finished it will be a strong factor in handling the rapidly – increasing passenger business to Cuba. It also will be the nearest rail point in the United States to the eastern end of the Panama Canal. It is believed the possibilities of the road in connection with the rapidly growing commerce of the United States with West Indian and Central American points will warrant the great outlay for construction…. A line drawn from Miami to the southward would pass midway through Cuba and strike Colon, one of the terminals of the Panama Canal. [94]

The voyage, according to the railroad, would be "a veritable trip through wonderland."[95] The brochure also included a map of the Caribbean and an image of heaven-like pillared gates, flanked by two smiling black men in servant uniform, accompany the slogan, "Paradise Regained." A list of Hotels and General Information follows inside the brochure.[96]

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[91] Jefferson B. Browne, *Key West: The Old and the New* (St. Augustine: The Record Company, 1912). On Key West's role in the War of 1898, Wright Langley and Joan Langley, *Key West and the Spanish American War* (Key West: Langley Press, 1998).
[92] For more on Flagler and his role in Florida development, Edward N. Akin, *Flagler: Rockefeller Partner and Florida Baron* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1988); David Leon Chandler, *Henry Flagler* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1986).
[93] Sidney Walter Martin, *Florida's Flagler* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1977).
[94] Brochure, "Florida East Coast Railway Guide, 1911," Record Unit 2521 to 2530, The Florida Ephemera Collection, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, Gainesville.
[95] Ibid.
[96] The brochure portrays an image of two black men dressed in servant uniform. One of the men carries gulf clubs with his right arm, and gestures welcome, with his left. The other man, carries a suitcase and

Reaching the canal became a rationale for the southern expansion of transportation infrastructure and travel routes. The United Fruit Company reasoned, for example, that the Canal had created a new opportunity to both profit and enlarge its fleet. Between 1908 and 1913, the Company modernized its passenger service from small steamers to luxury ships capable of carrying 160 passengers. Paying homage to the U.S. naval warships sent by President Roosevelt to circumnavigate the world in 1907, the Company named its new passenger service, "The Great White Fleet." UFCO's Route #1 went from New York to Cuba to Jamaica and Panama.[97] These advances in transportation made it possible for a tourist to luxuriously embark for the first time in history on a two-week vacation to the Caribbean.[98]

The development of tourist infrastructure into newly colonized territories followed a similar pattern of imperial piggybacking. In Cuba, Colonel Leonard Wood, commander of the Rough Riders, became Military Governor on the island after the war. The infrastructure he commissioned became the scaffolding of Cuba's new tourist economy. Wood ordered the construction of Havana's famous boardwalk, the Malecón, admired by both tourists and Havana residents. The goal of the military government, Wood believed, was to bring business and development to the island. "When capital is willing to invest in the island," he declared, "a condition of stability will have been reached."[99] Sanitary conditions, infrastructure, and U.S.-styled government would assure foreign investment.

In Panama, the canal and the massive port facilities built to accommodate ship traffic served not only commodity trade and the military but also the movement of leisure travelers. The Panama Canal Zone had all the creature comforts of a newly formed American suburb – with restaurants, recreation facilities, movie theaters, and lots of U.S. Americans to interact and socialize with. "The Canal Zone," as one visiting writer

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gestures in the same way. Come visit is the message to tourists: take the railway to paradise where happy "negroes" await the tourist's arrival.

[97] "Tales of the Great White Fleet Steamers *Pastores*, *Calamares*, and *Tenadores*," *UNIFRUITCO* (August 1929): 24; Adams, *Conquest of the Tropics.*

[98] For a related discussion, John Soluri, "Empire's Footprint: The Ecological Dimensions of a Consumers' Republic," *OAH Magazine of History* 25 (2011): 15-20.

[99] Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba under the Platt Amendment, 1902-1934* (Pittsburgh: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), 44.

explained in 1913, "is an outpost of a high civilization in the tropics. It affords object lessons to the neighboring republics of Central America in architecture, sanitation, road building, education, civil government and indeed all the practical arts that go to make a State comfortable and prosperous."[100] U.S. "engineering" and scientific achievements in the new frontier of the Caribbean tropics had made it easy and safe for U.S. tourists to vacation south. The Canal Zone government, under the orders of the President of the United States, even built luxury hotels for tourists to come visit the Canal. The Hotel Tivoli, overlooking Panama City from Ancon Hill, was built in anticipation of President Roosevelt's visit in 1906. In the years immediately following his visit, additions were made to the hotel to accommodate "those persons connected with, or interested, in the construction of the Canal who were constantly arriving from the United States."[101] The Hotel Tivoli became one of the most well known and popular hotels on the tourist scene in the early twentieth century. "Here," as one writer noted, "practically all of the tourists come and stay while on the Isthmus."[102] According to another travel writer, "every tourist stops at the Tivoli at least for dinner, which consists usually of about twelve courses of chinaware and cutlery, wiped, flourished, and served with much ceremony by a score of negro waiters."[103] The U.S. government also commissioned the construction of the Hotel Washington on the Caribbean side of the canal. General Goethals, Governor of the Canal Zone, explained:

> the lack of suitable hotel accomodations [sic] in the vicinity of the Atlantic terminus of the Canal was brought to the attention of the President [Taft] during his visit to the Isthmus in November last, and he authorized the construction of a suitable fire-proof hotel by the Panama Railroad Company in Colon on the site of the present old "Washington Hotel," both to supply this want, and as a revenue producer for the Panama Railroad Company.[104]

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[100] Abbot, *Panama and the Canal in Picture and Prose*, 360.
[101] *The Canal Record*, March 18, 1908, 227.
[102] Frederick Haskins, *The Panama Canal* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1914), 170.
[103] Harry L. Foster, *A Tropical Tramp with the Tourists* (London: John Lane, The Bodley, Ltd, 1925).
[104] "Chairman and Chief Engineer, George W. Goethals to Secretary of War, Washington D.C., 5 November, 1910," Box 112, File 13-K-15. Record Group 185, Records of the Panama Canal, National Archives, College Park.

The federal government was deeply involved in the development of the early tourism industry. "For the tourist who comes to do the Canal," according to one travel writer, "everything begins with the Hotel Washington and ends with the Tivoli."[105] Private industry also spread-headed tourism growth. The United Fruit Company, in addition to running its passenger service, opened a number of luxurious hotels along the Caribbean-Panama route such as the Titchfield Hotel and also Myrtle Bank Hotel in Jamaica. On account of the increased traffic generated by the canal triumph, according to Winifred James, "Jamaica, which stood like a solitary inn upon the road to town, was reaping the benefit. On the way down from New York it was a relief, after five weary days at sea, to be able to get off the ship."[106]

It was no coincidence that the most popular tourist destinations in the Caribbean, and the Pacific (the Hawaiian islands), followed the route of U.S. empire laid in the early twentieth century. In 1897, there was no serious tourism industry south of Florida, nor were there any U.S. colonial possessions. But by 1912-1913, multiple steamship and railroad lines raced south to the Caribbean. White American tourists, "in the midst of the wildest orgies of imperialism," flocked to the Caribbean. [107] The material connections, in terms of science and technology, linking U.S. imperialism with the expanding boundaries of leisure travel are undeniable. But, it is not enough to show that Caribbean tourism emerged in the early twentieth century just as, or because, the U.S. government and big business expanded into the region. To understand the historical connection between the rise of tourism and U.S. imperialism requires more than describing overlapping chronology and shared infrastructure. We also have to understand the ideology that made this type of travel desirable at that particular moment. The culture of U.S. empire also created the culture of Caribbean tourism.

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[105] George A. Miller, *Prowling about Panama* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1919), 96.
[106] James, *The Mulberry Tree*, 225.
[107] Rosa Luxemburg, "The Idea of May Day on the March," in *Selected Political Writings of Rosa Luxemburg*, ed. Dick Howard (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 317.

Empire-as-a-way-of-life

"A generation ago, Horace Greeley said, 'Go West, young man, go West!'" one canal worker sermonized. "Tomorrow the word may be, 'Go South!'"[108] Following U.S. history from the early nineteenth century to the early twentieth century, one can observe the real and imaginary lines of the frontier shifting and expanding from the American West to the Caribbean and Pacific.[109] The Isthmus of Panama became the southern edge of this new "frontier." Canal workers saw themselves as the next generation of frontiersmen. As the author Arthur Bullard described them in 1914, they were the "modern frontiersmen of our day, undismayed by the odds against them."[110] The movement west then south was part of the same mentality of conquest. Many canal workers, in fact, began their careers on the Western frontier before the occupations of Cuba and Panama.

The same men who engaged in the conquest of the American West led the conquest of the American tropics. Colonel Gorgas, for example, was stationed in North Dakota, Texas (where he and his future wife caught yellow fever), and Florida before being sent to the Caribbean.[111] The Isthmian Canal Commission sought military and frontier men to engineer the canal. The project relied on white Americans, who had conquered the west with violence, dynamite, steel and concrete. George Goethals, who served in the Cuba campaign and oversaw the completion of the canal as Chief Engineer, began his career conducting surveys for the Army Corps of Engineers in the Pacific

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[108] Bishop, *Panama, Past and Present,* 241.

[109] In the nineteenth century, as Americans moved farther west, they often traveled through the Caribbean and across the Central American isthmus on their journeys. They normally, though, did not stay very long. Filibusters like William Walker tried to carve out their own republics in the circum-Caribbean, like they did in Texas, but farther south the local population effectively pushed back against white American imperialists. Walker died in a firing squad in Honduras and his attaché, Colonel Titus, retreated to Florida and founded a town there after his name. The U.S. military put troops on the ground in Panama no less than thirteen times before the beginning of the canal project. The main thrust of settler expansion, however, remained continental and westward for most of the century. See, McGuinness, *Path of Empire;* Michel Gobat, *Confronting the American Dream: Nicaragua under U.S. Imperial Rule* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

[110] Bullard, *Panama: the Canal, the Country, and the People*, 45. McGuinness argues in *Path of Empire* that Panama was at least since the mid-nineteenth part of the history of the U.S. frontier. He writes: "Rather than separate stages or competing processes, the making of the United States as a transcontinental nation and U.S. expansion overseas in Panama were coincident with one another and intertwined."

[111] Marie Gorgas and Burton J. Hendrick, *William Crawford Gorgas: His Life and Work* (New York: Doubleday, 1924).

Northwest. John Frank Stevens, Goethal's predecessor in Panama, had helped build the Great Northern Railway in the 1880s, which ran from Saint Paul, Minnesota through the American West to Seattle, Washington.[112] The canal project's first Chief Engineer, John Findlay Wallace, had also been a railroad man in the trans-Mississippi area. White men all down the hierarchical line of the canal project had similar migration histories, moving from the west to the tropics: from the President of the United States to engineers to military men to low-level Canal Zone officials. Soldiers, engineers, and government officials moved water and earth and people to reshape landscapes to serve the demands of U.S. production and metropolitan consumption.[113] The Caribbean's transition from a conquered landscape to a vacation destination, in this sense, echoed environmental, technological, and also cultural changes that occurred earlier in the American West.[114] The rise of Caribbean tourism began at the closing of the frontier.

This expansion involved not just economic interests and military strength. The "American" cultural way of life, in the minds of many people in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, depended on continual growth. The frontier fed the industrial machine, but it also offered an outlet of escape and rebirth for the wanderlusts and discontents of society. "That restless, nervous energy," Frederick Jackson Turner wrote in 1893, "that dominant individualism, working for good and evil, and withal that buoyancy and exuberance which comes with freedom, these are the traits of the frontier." Turner captured this popular belief in his famous essay, "The Significance of the Frontier in

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[112] See Clifford Foust, *John Frank Stevens: Civil Engineer* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2013).

[113] "Biographical Notes," *Yearbook: Society of the Chagres,* (1911-1917), Panama and the Canal, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, Gainesville.

[114] On the American West, the frontier, and tourism, see Andrews, "'Made by Toile': Tourism, Labor, and the Construction of the Colorado Landscape, 1858-1917"; Hal K. Rothman, *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998); Hal K. Rothman and William P. Clements, eds., *The Culture of Tourism, the Tourism of Culture: Selling the Past to the Present in the American Southwest* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003); John F. Sears, *Sacred Places: American Tourist Attractions in the Nineteenth Century* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998). For later developments, with the automobile, see Paul S. Sutter, *Driven Wild: How the Fight Against Automobiles Launched the Modern Wilderness Movement* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002).

American History."[115] He argued that the frontier was "a magic fountain of youth in which America continuously bathed and rejuvenated… This perennial rebirth, this fluidity of American life, this expansion westward with its new opportunities, its continuous touch with the simplicity of primitive society, furnish the forces dominating American character."[116] If the frontier ended, so would the nation's greatness.

The most powerful men in politics and business agreed with Turner's assessment. "His personal influence," according to historian William Appleman Williams, "touched Woodrow Wilson and perhaps Theodore Roosevelt, while his generalization guided subsequent generations of intellectuals and business men who became educational leaders, wielders of corporate power, government bureaucrats, and crusaders for the Free World."[117] Turner's ideas were influential, but he was not their sole creator nor proponent. As much as he invented a way of thinking, he also reproduced one. By the 1890s and early 1900s, the culture of "manifest destiny," the necessarily-always expanding frontier, was an accepted and celebrated part of popular culture.[118]

What, one might be wondering, does the history of the frontier have to do with the emergence of a Caribbean tourism industry? There is a tradition of critical scholarship, thankfully, to help make sense of the historical relationship between empire, the frontier, and the rise of tourism. [119] In the 1990s, Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease proposed a cultural approach for the analysis of U.S. empire. In their edited volume, *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, they called on scholars, "to understand the multiple ways in

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[115] Originally presented at the meeting of the American Historical Association in Chicago, 12 July 1893, accessed December 9, 2014, http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/gilded/empire/text1/turner.pdf
[116] Ibid.
[117] William Appleman Williams, "The Frontier Thesis and American Foreign Policy," *The Pacific Historical Review* 24 (1955): 379-395..
[118] For an early and now classic critique of the culture of manifest destiny, see Albert Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History* (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1935). On the relationship between the western frontier and tourism, see Anne Farrar Hyde, *An American Vision: Far Western Landscape and National Culture, 1820-1920* (New York: New York University Press, 1990); Kerwin L. Klein, "Frontier Products: Tourism, Consumerism, and the Southwestern Public Land, 1890-1990," *Pacific Historical Review* 62 (1993): 39-71.
[119] Studies ranging from Walter LaFeber's *The New Empire* to Alfred W. McCoy's and Francisco A. Scarano's edited collection *Colonial Crucible* to Louis A. Perez's *The War of 1898: The United States and Cuba in History and Historiography* (Chapel Hill & London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998) to Robert Kagan's *Dangerous Nation: America's Foreign Policy from its Earliest Days to the Dawn of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Vintage Books, 2007) depict the United States as an imperial power in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

which empire becomes a way of life."[120] The culture of white supremacy at home, they argued, was the same culture that fueled U.S. interventionism abroad. Their book is now considered a seminal study for scholars looking at the intersection between empire, transnationalism, neocolonialism, and war.[121]

This critical look at U.S. international history, however, grew out of the earlier work of radical historians. In the 1950s and 1960s, William Appleman Williams challenged how historians and everyday Americans understood the history of U.S. expansion. "One of the central themes of American historiography," Williams explained in 1955, "is that there is no American Empire." He questioned the belief in U.S. exceptionalism. "Expansion," he argued, "is nothing more than a polite word for empire."[122] The history of the Western frontier and U.S. overseas expansion, he explained, were part of same process of imperialism. U.S. foreign policy and domestic affairs needed to be understood and analyzed together. In classic studies like *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, Williams focused on the economics and high politics of U.S. history to make his point.[123] Kaplan and Pease, in the 1990s, extended this vein of analysis to argue that the history of U.S. imperialism was more complicated and pervasive than the story of diplomatic elites, military action and market forces. It was also, they explained, "about consolidating domestic cultures and negotiating intranational relations."[124] To make sense of U.S. domestic culture or its brethren abroad, we must understand the two as relational, shaping one another.

Another important scholarly volume, *Close Encounters of Empire*, reaffirmed the theory that U.S. imperial expansion operated as a cultural way of life. The book's contributors argued that historians could no longer ignore the cultural practices of

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[120] Amy Kaplan, "Left Alone with America: The Absence of Empire in the Study of American Culture," in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, eds. Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease, 3-21, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993).
[121] Russ Castronovo, "'On Imperialism, see…': Ghosts of the Present in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*," *American Literary History* 20 (2008): 427-438.
[122] Williams, "The Frontier Thesis and American Foreign Policy," 379-395.
[123] William's seminal works include but are not limited to: *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy,* (Cleveland: World Pub. Co, 1959); *The Contours of American History* (Cleveland: World Pub. Co, 1961) and later in his career, *Empire as a way of life: an essay on the causes and character of America's present predicament, along with a few thoughts about an alternative* (New York : Oxford University Press, 1980).
[124] Kaplan, "Left Alone with America," in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, 14.

everyday people when examining the history of U.S. empire in the Americas. In the volume's first theoretical essay, Gilbert Joseph explained that historians of U.S.-Latin American relations must bridge the traditional gap between the study of cultural beliefs and practices and the history of policymaking and structural economic trends. Empire, he argued, is not an abstract concept that can be analytically sliced up into different parts; it was historically wrapped up in the everyday.[125] Elite politicians, businessmen, soldiers, service workers, and even tourists make up its history.

The history of the Caribbean vacation provides a pervasive example of this lived history linking U.S. empire and domestic culture. U.S. foreign policy and U.S. traveling culture come from the same tradition. The political economy and culture that created U.S. empire also created the tourism industry. To study the Caribbean's history allows one to see the imperial-tourist relationship sharing transportation, economics, politics, science, and even social practices and privileged comforts.

The far edges of U.S. expansion provided a space for white Americans to experience and confront nature, as Turner theorized, and feel free from the constraints and rules of home. The frontier was a region, a place, a nature, a culture that did not fit into preconceived notions of civilization.[126] The American West was a frontier because Native Americans and Spanish-Mexican settlers did not live and use the land the same way white Anglo-Saxon people viewed the proper relationship between man and community, and man and nature. It had to be conquered, settled, civilized. The American tropics fit into this paradigm of thinking. The white American workforce on the isthmus saw their mission, and way of being, as part of the U.S. expanding frontier. Spanish America and its descendants of dark-skinned locals followed a different way of being;

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[125] Gilbert M. Joseph, "Close Encounters: Toward a New Cultural History of U.S.-Latin American Relations," in *Close Encounters of Empire: Writing the Cultural History of U.S.-Latin American Relations*, eds. Gilbert M. Joseph, Catherine C. LeGrand, and Ricardo D. Salvatore, 3-46 (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1998). Of course, Latin American authors and scholars had been arguing that the United States was an empire since the nineteenth century. U.S.-based scholarship, in this sense, built upon the longstanding anti-imperialist analyses of generations of critics who were from or who worked on Latin America.

[126] On the meaning of the "frontier" in U.S. history, Kerwin L. Klein, *Frontiers of Historical Imagination: Narrating the European Conquest of Native America, 1890-1990* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Malcolm Anderson, *Frontier: Territory and State Formation in the Modern* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1997).

one that was supposedly hostile to white American values. It too had to be conquered for the sake of "progress."[127]

At the same time, there was something appealing about the uncivilized frontier. It was both abominable and liberating. The rules of "civilization" did not entirely apply to the frontier during its conquest. It was a liminal zone between civilization and barbarism. And Americans living or visiting that zone had the privilege of being able to have one foot in each. Many canal workers, for example, saw themselves as hard drinking "roughnecks" living in the pagan tropics. Clubs and societies embracing rugged manhood became famous in the days of construction. The Society of Chagres, an all white-male club of canal workers encouraged unchecked freedom. Member John K. Baxter explained:

> Three cheers, my brothers, three rousing cheers for Pagan Panama.
> What other city on all the seven seas is so plenteously provided with bars, breweries, brothels, bodegas, barrel houses, cantinas, clubs, groggeries and gin mills? Where is Scotch Whiskey more plentiful or more vile? Where so complete a collection of topers, tipplers, tanks, panhandlers and pimps? Where is the Sunday night souse in such esteem, or the Monday morning headache so habitual?
>
> If you are persecuted in arid Kansas, in Russia or in Maine, if you are parched and thirsty and the Pharisees will give you no vital drop to ease the burden of your woes, there is a refuge for you in Panama… We will welcome you with wassail and good cheer, and speed you merrily on the road to Hell! Many of us have traveled the way, and some of us have reached the goal! – and our end is in Panama! [128]

Frontier life was hard drinking, individualistic, and free from the constraints of civilized conformity. Panama City and Colón lived up to this reputation. The Canal Zone, inhabited overwhelmingly by men, banned bars and unmarried living, but in nearby Panamanian cities there were no such restrictions. The U.S. government, it seemed, outsourced its workers' desire for fun and vice. Panama City, right across the street (Fourth of July Avenue), became known as the Red light District of the Canal Zone. The

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[127] See Frenkel, "Jungle Stories," 317-333.
[128] *Yearbook: Society of the Chagres*, *1915*, Panama and the Canal, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, Gainesville.

stories of debauchery became infamous and encouraged many repressed Americans to see it for themselves (see Chapter 5 for more on this tourist zone). [129]

As tourists, Americans could visit Panama and be proud of their nations conquest of the tropics, while still getting a taste of the liberating revelry of frontier life in a way that seemed quintessentially American. The frontier mentality, in all its effort to escape and be free from constraints, was the forerunner of the culture of tourism. The culture of the frontier became the comfortable escapist culture of the Caribbean vacation. Tourism's emergence embodied the democratization and standardization of *empire-as-a-way-of-life*. Not only did tourism and the frontier share a culture, but in many cases frontiersmen worked as cultural mediators between domestic society and life abroad. The agents of empire, who led the "conquest of the tropics" not only subdued the region to make white Americans feel safe, in terms of health, they also established the attractions and facilities to accommodate the tourist's visit. Individuals with entrepreneurial ambitions developed bars, restaurants, tour companies, newspapers, and attractions (big and small) to serve the rapidly growing class of leisure travelers. White canal workers and U.S. soldiers, living in the tropics, became mediators in the emerging tourism industry. They entertained and encouraged the next round of travelers. They also offered a model of how to travel. In this sense, they played a similar role to the frontiersmen of the American West, like Buffalo Bill and his peers, who went from cowboys and soldiers to tourist entrepreneurs.[130]

Charles Wesley Powell, a former canal worker, organized a botanical garden that became one of the more popular attractions for visitors to the isthmus. *The Panama*

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[129] See Jeffrey Wayne Parker, "Empire's Angst: The Politics of Race, Migration, and Sex Work in Panama, 1903-1945," (Dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin, 2013); Matthew Scalena, "Illicit Nation: State, Empire, and Illegality on the Isthmus of Panama," (Dissertation, Stony Brook University, 2013). Travel writer Harry Foster explained, "the tourist in Panama will be troubled mainly by an upset sense of direction. He's never quite sure whether he's in the Canal Zone or in Panama, and can't decide whether he ought to disapprove or have a good time himself." He added, "no self-respecting town could possibly sound so much like Coney Island. It fairly shrieked with the blare of jazz – of jazz from radios, jazz from mechanical pianos, jazz from phonographs…The music might be American, but the dancing was international and sometimes interracial. For this was not a self-respecting town." Harry Foster, *A Tropical Tramp with the Tourists* (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1925), 95-98.

[130] Louis S. Warren, *Buffalo Bill's America: William Cody and the Wild West Show* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005).

News, an English-speaking newspaper geared toward tourists, published a number of articles about Powell's garden. They explained:

> Undoubtedly, the Panama Canal has a rival for honors. 'Have you seen the 'Big Ditch?' will not be the only question put to tourist's who pass through these parts. One does not need an extraordinary amount of foresight to predict that without doubt both local people and visitors will soon be exclaiming with pride and admiration, 'Have you seen POWELL'S ORCHID GARDEN, the TROPICAL STATION of the MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDENS? If you haven't, you should, for it is one of the prettiest places in the world. [131]

Former canal workers ran the newspaper that covered Powell's story. *The Panama Times*, according to its editorial board, "reflects the scenic charm, historic interest, tourist attractions, business opportunities and commercial advance of Panama and neighboring republics." John K. Baxter, a secretary in the Isthmian Canal Commission, was Chief Editor and writer for *The Panama Times*. Baxter, a native of Tennessee and a Harvard graduate, was a canal employee turned writer and entrepreneur.[132] In addition to writing for *The Panama News,* Baxter was also the first editor of the English-based newspaper *The Panama American*, which frequently headlined the motto, "Panama, A Play-Ground for 365 Days in Every Year."[133] Colleagues remembered Baxter as an "outstanding writer" who often attributed his daily inspiration to his favorite drink, Rum Azuero. "Some half dozen of us," he wrote in one article "as fine a gang of pirates as ever scuttled a ship, at the fag end of an eventful evening were raising our voices in song at the old University Club." [134] Baxter also helped establish the Society of the Chagres. A number of the Society's members turned to promoting tourism. John O. Collins, who compiled

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[131] *The Panama Times*, March 19, 1927. The newspaper stated: "[it is] one of the most interesting sights of the Canal Zone, and botanically by far the most remarkable thing to be seen there. It is something unique in tropical America, if in the whole world."

[132] "Biographical Notes," *Society of the Chagres, 1911, Yearbook*, Panama and the Canal, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, Gainesville.

[133] The Panama Times newspaper is held at National Library of Panama, Ernesto J. Castillero R., Panama City, Panama.

[134] *The Panama American*, March 20, 1932; *Yearbook: Society of the Chagres*, *1915,* Panama and the Canal, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, Gainesville. Baxter almost always made mention to alcohol in his articles.

the Society's yearbook in 1914, was involved in the growing industry.[135] Collins joined the canal project after serving as a private in the war in Cuba. He became one of the main authorities for tourism information on the isthmus, publishing *The Panama Guide* and *Recreation in Panama* in 1913 and 1914. [136] Yet another member of the Society, W.M. Baxter, was the Canal Zone government's official tour guide. Baxter accompanied tourists on their railroad sightseeing tour of the canal, which by the early 1910s had become a highly efficient and profitable business. According to the Canal Zone newspaper in 1912:

> The sightseeing business has therefore been systematized and its conduct is now a regular part of the work. There is no better way to see the Canal than the trips of the sightseeing train, and none that requires so little time…. The train moves slowly through Culebra Cut, and about the locks and Gatun Dam, while the guide explains in clear and authoritative manner all phases of the work and answers all questions.[137]

In an article for the Society of Chagres yearbook, Baxter wrote "They [the tourists] are generally comfortable men and women of 50 or more, a few spinsters, an occasional girl of near 20 years. Men between 25 and 45 are few. I suppose they are too busy to take three weeks for Panama." [138] To rough canal men like Baxter, tourists were often viewed as annoying and weak. "The male fool is annoying only when he becomes excited," Baxter noted. "He has read a book, or perhaps two books, about the Canal on his way to the Isthmus."[139] Nonetheless, tourists did help pay the bills.

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[135] The following year Baxter organized the yearbook and wrote most of its articles.
[136] John O Collins, *The Panama Guide,* (Mount Hope, Canal Zone: I.C.C. Press, 1912); *Recreation in Panama*, (Culebra, Canal Zone: John O. Collins, publisher, 1914).
[137] *The Canal Record*, December 18, 1912.
[138] *Yearbook, Society of the Chagres, 1913*, Panama and the Canal, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, Gainesville. W.M. Baxter seemed to like making fun of himself and the tourists he had to show around: "my wife admits that I am naturally mean, but I will not. At least it was not meanness that made me act so badly in the case of the man with the umbrella," who was a tourist. "The male fool is annoying only when he becomes excited. He has read a book, or perhaps two books, about the Canal on his way to the Isthmus. Books on Panama are probably no more inaccurate than books on Tibet; but there are more of them. And the inaccuracies are the most interesting points, therefore these lodge more firmly in the head of the fool."
[139] Ibid.

These brief examples show the intimate relationship between the U.S. military, the canal, and the emerging tourism industry. Empire, defined as military or engineering infrastructure, was on the human and everyday scale bound up with tourist services. A small world of educated white men, as seen in the Society of Chagres, moved between various social positions – in war, colonial governance, and tourism. The boundaries between the military, canal work, and the emerging tourism industry were highly permeable. Individuals like Baxter and Collins, so closely linked to each other, reveal how empire at the everyday level became entangled with tourism. They lived in the same Canal Zone community, worked in the same offices, and were often members of the same exclusive clubs.

It was not, however, just white canal workers who entered the tourism industry. There were also Panamanian elites, small business owners, and a whole legion of service-sector entertainers and workers from across the Caribbean and the Americas.[140] Black West Indians who participated in the construction project also became involved in the tourism industry. "They, with a numerous crop of descendants, are now an integral part of the community," wrote Sue Core, a white American woman who lived in the Canal Zone. They served:

> In all capacities where hard work is the watch word, they still form the backbone of the labor set-up which keeps the Panama Canal going… Clerks, dock laborers, grass cutters, garbage men, laundry workers, painters, waiters, carpenters, truck drivers, ice men, delivery boys, janitors, messengers, cooks, laundresses, nursemaids, dressmakers, and general helpers. There is no phase of life here in which the colored people do not play a helpful role. [141]

In the highly racist and patriarchal American colonial society of Panama, however, black West Indians were allowed to climb only so far in terms of socio-economic mobility. Black laborers went from digging ditches for white foreman to serving drinks at the Hotel Tivoli and Hotel Washington for white tourists. Core tells us, "the relation between white boss and colored worker is generally one of mutual exasperated tolerance; but on the

[140] Parker, "Empire's Angst."
[141] Sue Core, *Maid in Panama* (New York: Clermont Press, 1938), xix.

whole, however, it is amiable and pleasant. They annoy one another exceedingly at times; but knowing that each is necessary to the well-being of the other, they exercise self-restraint sufficient to get along."[142] The racialized hierarchy of the canal project, combined with the culture of the imperial frontier, translated into the social practices and labor regime of the tourism industry. The system served the desires of white, often male, privileged Americans.

Conclusion

U.S. imperial expansion from the Straits of Florida to the Isthmus of Panama in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries set the stage for the growth of the Caribbean's tourism industry. The region's transformation from a diseased to desirable destination emerged out of the crucible of U.S. imperial expansion in a number of important ways: as a nature to conquer and make safe; as a frontier to enjoy and exploit; as an extension of U.S. commercial and political interests; and as a revenue source for maintaining the infrastructure of empire. When the United States became an empire in the Caribbean in the first decade of the twentieth century, the region transformed into a tourist's paradise. Today, though, this crucial relationship seems to be forgotten. Harry Franck, a travel writer who lived and worked in Panama during the final years of canal construction, seemed to predict this erasure:

> The swift growth of the tropics will quickly heal the scars of the steam-shovels, and palm-trees will wave the steamer on its way through what will seem almost a natural channel. Then blasé travelers lolling in their deck chairs will gaze about them and snort: 'Huh! Is that all we got for nine years' work and half a billion dollars?' They will have forgotten the vast hospitals with great surgeons and graduate nurses, the building of hundreds of houses and the furnishing of them down to the last center table, they will not recall the rebuilding of the entire P.R.R. [Panama Railroad], nor scores of little items like $43,000 a year merely for oil and negroes to pump it on the pestilent mosquito, the thousand and one little things so essential to the success of the enterprise yet that leave not a trace behind. Greater perhaps than the building of the canal is the accomplishment of the United States in showing the natives how life can be lived safely and healthily in

[142] Ibid.

tropical jungles. [143]

The legacy of the U.S. imperial project, however, is still alive in the tourism industry that dominates the Caribbean. Recognizing this history should raise fundamental questions about the meaning and practice of leisure travel: what type of regional development did the intersection between imperialism and tourism promote? What type of culture of travel might this connection encourage? The beginning of our answers starts here in the historical crucible of U.S. empire.

[143] Harry A. Franck, *Zone Policeman 88: A Close Range Study of the Panama Canal and Its Workers*, (New York: Century Company, 1913), 312.

Chapter 2: Service Sector Republic

"If you have a lot of what people want and can't get, then you can supply the demand and shovel in the dough."[1] –Meyer Lansky

On October 28, 1928, Guillermo Andreve – a Panamanian revolutionary and national hero – sailed from Colón, Panama to Havana, Cuba. Andreve traveled as a first-class passenger on the *S.S. Ulua*, a 6000-ton "reefer ship" in the United Fruit Company's "Great White Fleet."[2] Aboard ship, he was surrounded by luxury. The Great White Fleet, "built especially for tropical service and for the most exacting of passengers," was the most famous cruise line in the Caribbean's early tourism industry. The *S.S. Ulua* and its sister ships were known as "the largest and finest ships that sailed the tropics," designed specifically for "Caribbean cruising."[3]

Andreve, however, was no tourist. He traveled for another, yet related, purpose. In early November, he arrived to the island as a diplomat for the Panamanian government. His specific task was to "study the organization and development of the tourism industry in the Republic of Cuba" and report back what he learned. This was no frivolous assignment. In the words of Panama's president, this was an "important mission."[4] In the

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[1] Quoted in Stephen Birmingham, *'The Rest of Us:' The Rise of America's Eastern European Jews* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1999), 152. Birmingham explains that Meyer Lansky "read a book called *Making Profits*, written a few years earlier by a Harvard professor of economics named William Taussig. In it, Professor Taussig had outlined the law of supply and demand. What it meant, Lansky explained to his less literate associates, was, 'If you have a lot of what people want and can't get, then you can supply the demand and shovel in the dough.'Among his friends, this quickly became known as 'Lansky's Law,' and it would become the basic precept by which organized crime would live from that point onward, just as legitimate capitalist society lived by, and had been living by it, all along."

[2] The S.S. Ulua served as passenger ship in the 1920s and 1930s, but before and after this time period, it also served in the world wars. During the First World War, the ship carried a total of 728 officers and 15,344 troops on military voyages from the United States to the European front. In 1942, the S.S. Ulua was again commissioned into the U.S. Navy to serve in the Second World War. See Mark H. Goldberg, *"Going Bananas" 100 years of American Fruit ships in the Caribbean* (Kings Point, NY: The American Merchant Marine Museum, 1993).

[3] The United Fruit Company claimed that all its passengers were "diplomats and debutantes, captains of industry and 'congenial vacationists… the kind of traveler who wants the best and is willing to pay for it." Quoted in Catherine Cocks, *Tropical Whites: The Rise of the Tourist South in the Americas* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 62. In 1928, the same year Andreve visited Cuba, Ernest Hemingway made his first visit to the island. Tourists, businessmen, writers, and diplomats often traveled the same routes and on the same ships. See Chapter 4 for more on Hemingway's travels to Cuba.

[4] "Correspondence between Panamanian President, Florencio Harmodio Arosemena, and Cuban President, Gerardo Machado y Morales," November 1928, Legación de Panamá en Cuba, 1928, El Archivo del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores. Panama City.

1920s, the Caribbean's tourist economy was growing rapidly. An estimated 100,000 tourists visited Cuba in 1928. Panama was experiencing a similar influx of visitors. That year, more than 75,000 tourists arrived to the isthmus (not counting the thousands of sailors and soldiers who also took 'shore-leave.') According to a report by The National City Bank of New York, commissioned by the government of Panama, "the tourist business is the most important factor [for the republic's economy], and is certain to grow from year to year."[5] During his trip, Andreve met with Cuban officials to discuss tourism development strategies that could also be implemented in Panama. The Cuban government, in its efforts to maximize profits, organized an international publicity campaign and promoted the development of first-class hotels and attractions, like casinos, cabarets, and horseracing.

In a short book titled, *How to Attract Tourists to Panama*, Andreve outlined Cuba's tourism model and explained how his own country could replicate its success.[6] He focused in particular on Cuba's Tourism Law of 1919, which created the island's first National Tourism Commission, and which laid out a series of incentives to attract investors. The Tourism Law of 1919 defined the Cuban state's role in developing the island's soon-to-be controversial tourist economy. Most importantly, and with long-term effects, was the law's legalization of gambling and casinos, known as the "Monte Carlo Bill." The law represented the first step in the Cuban state's effort to turn tourism into a tool for national development. It also invited, inadvertently, the economy and culture of vice that would come to characterize the island's tourism industry. In the 1920s and early 1930s, a cast of unsavory figures, such as Meyer Lansky, Lucky Luciano, Frank Costello, and lesser-known gangsters and opportunists, first began to invest in the Caribbean's tourist economy.[7] Andreve, seemingly unaware of these potential consequences,

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[5] George Roberts, *Economic Survey of the Republic of Panama*, 1929. El Archivo y la Biblioteca Ricardo J. Alfaro, Panama City. Also printed in Spanish, *Investigación económica de la República de Panamá* (Panamá: Imprenta Nacional, 1930).

[6] Guillermo Andreve, *Cómo atraer el turismo a Panamá* (Edición oficial: Panamá, 1929).

[7] For more on tourism in Cuba and state legislation supporting the industry, see Rosalie Schwartz, *Pleasure Island: Tourism and Temptation in Cuba* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997); Evaristo Villalba Garrido, *Cuba y el turismo* (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1993); Andrea Colantonio and Robert B. Potter, *Urban Tourism and Development in the Socialist State: Havana during the 'Special Period.'* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2006), 91.

recommended that Panama follow similar legislative steps to promote development. He explained that the tourism industry offered "naturally beautiful and exotic" countries, with underdeveloped agricultural and industrial resources, a path to progress. The state, he argued, had an important role to play in fostering tourism growth. Upon his return to the isthmus, the Panamanian government passed a similar tourism law to Cuba's, legalizing gambling and casinos. Tourism as national development, it seemed, was a transnational model. [8]

Andreve, a revolutionary hero, national literary figure, and politician, was now a tourist planner. On the surface, his recommendations looked like a radical departure from his earlier public career. During Panama's long struggle for independence, he served as a colonel in the Thousand Days' War (1899-1902). He was an outspoken critic of Colombian centralized rule. "Among the group of men, who took it upon themselves to create and organize the republic," according to Panamanian scholar Rodrigo Miró, "Guillermo Andreve exhibited characteristics that gave him a unique profile."[9] Following Panamanian independence in 1903, Andreve served as President of the National Assembly (1910-1912) and during the presidency of Belisario Porras (1912-1924) as Secretary of Education, and later Secretary of Government and Justice. On the isthmus, Andreve earned the reputation as a "militant liberal" in the fight for national sovereignty. He was also a respected author. In addition to his political career, he was according to Miró, "the creator of our national [Panamanian] literature." In 1904, just as the canal project began, Andreve founded Panama's most influential literary journal, *El Heraldo del Istmo*, where he published his own work, provided an outlet for talented young Panamanian authors, and played host to literary guests from around Latin America such as Rubén Darío. Andreve was a sojourning intellectual, revolutionary, and liberal in the classic nineteenth century Latin American sense. [10] But by the 1920s, he was apparently also a man of tourism.

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[8] Andreve, *Cómo atraer el turismo a Panamá*.
[9] Rodrigo Miró, "Don Guillermo Andreve y su labor literaria," *Epocas* (July 2000): 3.
[10] Ibid. Also see "Escritos de Andreve," *Revista Lotería*, 282-283-284 (Aug-Oct. 1979). An abridged list of Andreve's books include: *Justo Arosemena un patriota inmaculado*, 1917; *Homenaje a Gil Colunje*, 1917; *Cuestiones legislativas*, 1924; Sobre el agua, 1925; *A la sombra del arco*, 1925; *Manual electoral*, 1928;

Andreve's personal history, leading up to his 1928 trip to Cuba, sheds light on a revealing contradiction within Latin American politics and development strategies in the early twentieth century. Political elites fought for national sovereignty and often espoused the rhetoric of anti-imperialism, yet at the same time, embraced policies that worked to attract U.S. social and economic capital.[11] How was it possible to be a revolutionary and nationalist and also a promoter of a tourist economy rooted in the culture of U.S. empire?

Through the story of Andreve and other like-minded politicians, this chapter analyzes this seeming paradox. As the United States established its imperial control over the Caribbean and the tourism industry began to grow, as discussed in Chapter 1, local elites sought to twist this new international interest in their own political and economic favor. Elite strategies focused on both short-term gains from visitors and long-term economic growth through foreign investment. To give narrative focus to this development strategy, I zoom in on the 1920s and the administration of President Belisario Porras (1912-1924), remembered today as the "architect of Panama's modernization."[12] Events on the isthmus during this particular time have much to tell us about broader policies shaping Caribbean tourism development. National efforts to promote tourism were profoundly transnational. As the journey of Andreve reveals, tourism in one place was intimately connected to developments in other parts of the Caribbean. Panama modeled policies in Cuba, but in truth, tourist developers traveled in both directions. Politicians and businessmen in south Florida were also part of this elite network, in dialogue with their neighbors to the south and forging close ties of economic and cultural exchange. By following the intellectual journeys and policies of men like

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Cómo atraer el turismo en Panamá, 1929; *Una punta del velo*, 1929; *La reforma electoral*, 1929; *Consideraciones sobre el liberalismo*, 1931; *Alfonso López y el liberalismo panameño*, 1934; *El milagro de Navidad*, 1945. All the following books can be found in the National Library of Panama. In addition to his own writing, Andreve founded and directed *El Heraldo del Istmo*, *El Cosmos*, and the literary journal *La Biblioteca de Cultura Nacional*.

[11] Peter A. Szok, *La Ultima Gaviota: Liberalism and Nostalgia in Early Twentieth-Century Panama* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2001). For an innovative and insightful analysis of development thinking more broadly in Latin America, see Walter Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2000).

[12] Patricia Pizzurno Gelós and Celestino Andrés Araúz, eds. *La modernización del Estado panameño bajo las administraciones de Belisario Porras y Arnulfo Arias Madrid* (Panama: Editorial Mariano Arosemena del Instituto Nacional de Cultura, 1992).

Guillermo Andreve and Belisario Porras, we can better understand these regional links and how elite sectors in these various places (south Florida, Panama, and Cuba) came to embrace tourism as a model of development.

In the early twentieth century, tourist fantasies of tropical travel and elite dreams of "progress" converged. State promotion of the Caribbean tourism industry began much earlier than scholars and the public typically acknowledge.[13] The classic post-WWII era of tourism development depended on a half century of foundational policies. Liberal legislation, put in place in the first decades of the twentieth century, allowed for highly unregulated economic growth, which culminated in the 1950s boom period so often studied by tourism scholars. Tourism may seem to belong to a different and more contemporary current of thinking and mobility, distinct from late nineteenth- and early twentieth century liberal visions of the nation-state. But where some historians have perceived a chain of disparate events shaping the Caribbean's history, I see one single, evolving phenomenon, which keeps piling event upon event, and policy upon policy. Tourism is part of a long thread of development ideology running from the nineteenth century into the twentieth century, and perhaps into the present. Old attitudes of thought came to imagine tourism as a path to modernity. Elites in the Caribbean updated and used liberal visions of development to justify and promote tourism in the early-to-mid twentieth century. (In the context of neoliberalism, they are still used today.)[14] Foreign tourists from the north, elites reasoned, could become important consumers for emerging economies. And with the right incentives, visitors might decide to stay and invest their cultural and economic capital for the long term. "There is more to the development of the

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[13] The following monographs, for example, focus on tourism development in the Caribbean in the post-World War II era: Dennis Merrill, *Negotiating Paradise: U.S. Tourism and Empire in Twentieth-Century Latin America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009); Evan R Ward. *Packaged Vacations: Tourism Development in the Spanish Caribbean* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2008).

[14] To learn more about the history of liberalism in Latin America, see E. Braford Burns, *The Poverty of Progress: Latin America in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983). For more regionally specific studies: Brooke Larson, *Trials of Nation-Making: Liberalism, Race, and Ethnicity in the Andes, 1810-1910* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Charles Hale, *The Transformation of Mexican Liberalism in the Late-Nineteenth Century* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989). For Panama, in particular, Szok, *La Ultima Gaviota.* For Cuba, Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

tourist business," one economic report explained in the late 1920s, "than the mere expenditures of visitors… The chief value of this travel is the publicity value… Men of all lines of business and varieties of interests will be visitors here in increasing numbers, and business men of experience, even on vacation trips, have their eyes open to opportunities."[15] Tourism ideally would translate into foreign investment.[16] In the quest for national "progress," elites viewed tourists as desirable immigrants, as capital investors, and as sources of interconnected and competitive development linking regional economies with the rest of the "civilized" world. Tourists from the United States and Europe represented the twin pillars of "Western civilization" - money and whiteness.

The chapter analyzes this logic of tourism development and how it came to be so powerful in the Caribbean. It describes how and why state policymakers sanctioned and promoted the social practices and attractions of tourism.[17] In contrast to contemporary views that often remember early twentieth century elites as "vende patrias," that is, "national sellouts," there was in fact an established and sophisticated political rationale guiding their actions.[18] What they did, they believed, was in the best interest of the nation. The tourism industry supposedly served nationalist interests. Dismissing elite-led development as mere corruption or *laissez faire* indifference overlooks the power of their beliefs on past and present policies (see Chapter 5 and 6). The injustices of U.S. imperial action, as discussed in Chapter 1, did not stop local elites from valorizing "Western" culture and industry in their strategies for national development. Political philosophies of positivism remained common belief. There were debates about details, but essentially, it

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[15] George Roberts, *Economic Survey of the Republic of Panama,* 190.

[16] Catherine Cocks notes a similar relationship between tourism and land development in her book *Tropical Whites* (46): "Tourism for all of these entities remained intimately tied to colonization, and nearly all the publicity materials extant from the turn of the twentieth century reflect the same assumption that visitors were essentially prospective citizens."

[17] Political upheavals in the mid twentieth century were arguably made more acute by the excesses and social inequalities of tourism (see Chapter 5). These consequences, however, were far from planned.

[18] The Nicaraguan revolutionary Augusto Sandino has often been credited with popularizing the term "vendepatria" in the early twentieth century. The term became one of Sandino's (and later the Sandinistas') most popular epithets thrown at elites accused of selling out the country to Wall Street bankers and the U.S. military. Leftists and revolutionaries would continue to use the term throughout the twentieth century to label elites who got rich with foreign trade, while the rest of the citizenry struggled in poverty. See, Jeffery M. Paige, *Coffee and Power: Revolution and the Rise of Democracy in Central America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997). Particular to Panama, see Ovidio Diaz Espino, *How Wall Street Created a Nation* (New York: MJF Books, 2001).

was a shared belief that Western Europe and the United States offered universal models of progress for Latin American and Caribbean nations.[19] Inheriting a liberal tradition rooted in the nineteenth century, elites in the early-to-mid twentieth century acted to promote "Western" development and cultural trends. "The dreams of this elite," as the historian Peter Szok documented in the case of Panama, "was a bustling center of business that would attract Europeans and civilize the isthmus."[20] What follows is an intellectual genealogy of how tourism became part of this particular vision of the future. In the early twentieth century, tourism emerged as another spoke on the wheel spinning toward progress.

Liberal Development in the era of Imperialism

In the wake of U.S. imperial expansion, tourism became a highly profitable industry in south Florida, Cuba, and Panama… for those in the right position to take advantage of it. Business owners, politicians, and even writers found work in the new tourist economy. The industry also supplied service work to chauffeurs, wait staff, maids, cooks, bartenders, musicians, prostitutes, and a variety of other jobs catering to U.S. visitors. By the late 1920s, coastal cities like Miami, Havana, Colón, and Panama City had become bustling destinations for U.S. tourists and military personnel. The number of tourists to the Republic of Panama in the early twentieth century was comparable, possibly even greater, than to Cuba and south Florida. The National City Bank of New York reported that while "no authentic figures exist for the expenditures of these visitors [to Panama]… unquestionably the aggregate is a large item in the prosperity of these cities [Colón and Panama City]."[21] In 1926, *The Panama Times*, an English-speaking newspaper, stated:

> Probably the second greatest resource of Panama [City] and Colon is the ever-present tourists, some 70,000 of whom pass through our narrow streets and peer

[19] Peter Wade, *Blackness and Race Mixture: The Dynamics of Racial Identity in Colombia* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 1993), 10; Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development: the Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 47.
[20] Szok, *La Ultima Gaviota*, 7.
[21] Roberts, *Economic Survey of the Republic of Panama*, 190.

> longingly into our unique shop doorways every year… many a dollar is exchanged here annually for Panama hats, rum, and coach fares, and every fakir, coach driver, and rum vender knows that as soon as one shipload of tourists is gone another will arrive. *They always have and they always will*.[22]

Social conditions at home and abroad opened Caribbean communities in the early twentieth century to a new form of economic development. Many of these changes, in particular advancements in tropical medicine and transportation technology, were beyond the control of local people. Part of the reason for Andreve's 1928 trip to Cuba, for example, was the decision by Pan-American Airways to begin passenger service connecting Miami and Havana with Colón, Panama. More and more tourists were expected to arrive to the isthmus by air, in addition to steamship.[23]

"Outside forces often determine what is available to be endowed with meaning." But, as Sidney Mintz asks: "at what point does the prerogative to bestow meaning move from the consumers to the sellers?"[24] Scholars have been slow to recognize the influence of local actors in the rise of Caribbean tourism. As the anthropologist Amanda Stronza explained, "often our assumptions have been that locals were duped into accepting tourism rather than having consciously chosen such an option for themselves."[25] The historical record, however, challenges preconceived notions that Caribbean communities passively accepted the tourism industry. In the early-to-mid twentieth century, liberal politicians and businessmen in the Caribbean viewed tourism as an important economic resource. They did not simply wait for the tourists to arrive. Both Panamanian and Cuban leaders embraced their new positions as tropical vacation resorts and international models of sanitation and hygiene (Chapter 1). Living in the era of U.S. expansion, elite sectors decided to welcome the possibilities of tourism development. "People on contested territories," according to historians Frederick Cooper and Jane Burbank, "could resist,

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[22] "Panama's Distinctive Stability," *The Panama Times*, January 23, 1926.
[23] Legación de Panamá en Cuba, 1928, El Archivo del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores. Panama City.
[24] Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1985), xxix.
[25] Amanda Stronza, "Anthropology of Tourism: Forging New Ground for Ecotourism and Other Alternatives," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 30 (2001): 261-283.

deflect, or twist in their own favor the encroachment of a more powerful polity."[26] State officials and private citizens sought to "twist" the influx of foreigners "in their own favor." They worked to expand the Caribbean's appeal building new hotels and consumer attractions, and promoting an identity that reified the region as an exotic destination. The rise of Caribbean tourism depended on local development efforts.

The life history of Belisario Porras exemplifies the tensions and possibilities of tourism development within the crucible of U.S. empire. In 1903, as the United States took control of the isthmus, Porras spoke out against U.S. intervention. He was a committed anti-imperialist in the tradition of figures like José Martí.[27] In the 1880s and 1890s, Porras traveled throughout the Caribbean, Central America, and Europe speaking and writing about the fundamental importance of progress directed by and for Latin Americans. He believed in the sanctity of both liberalism and national sovereignty. Porras grew up in a small town in western Panama, the son of a politician committed to the Colombian government. As a young man, he studied law in Bogotá, a city he fondly remembered as the "Athens of America." After graduating with his doctorate in law from the National University in 1881, he traveled to Europe as a diplomat with "a thousand projects in mind." Through the lessons of foreign travel, he hoped to bring progress and "civilization" to the Colombian nation. According to his autobiography, he considered renowned Colombian caudillos, Gil Colunje and Buenaventura Correoso, as the sources of his political-liberal aspirations. "It was in the hands of these two illustrious sons of the isthmus," Porras recalled, "that I crossed the threshold of adolescence and I joined the ranks of the party, and which later motivated me to stand on the battlefield, to enter government, and defend the party in the press and in the courts, when it was still a crime

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[26] Frederick Cooper and Jane Burbank, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 4. Also see the edited collection *Close Encounters of Empire: Writing the Cultural History of U.S.-Latin American Relations* for a nuanced read of elite decision-making in the context of U.S empire. Gilbert Joseph explains in the collection's introduction (8): "Popular and elite (or local and foreign) cultures are produced in relation to each other through a dialectic of engagement that takes place in contexts of unequal power and entails reciprocal borrowings, expropriations, and transformations."

[27] To learn more about José Martí, see Jeffrey Belnap and Raúl Fernández, eds., *José Martí's "Our America": from National to Hemispheric Cultural Studies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998).

to think."[28] In the Thousand Days' War (1899-1902), between Conservatives and Liberals, Porras joined the liberal cause. He became a general in the war, leading Panama's fight against the centralizing government of Bogotá. He had no intention, however, of Panama becoming a separate nation. He viewed the war as an internal dispute between conservatives and liberals. In the face of impending U.S. expansion, Porras argued "Colombian sovereignty should be maintained at all cost."[29]

But Porras found himself isolated in his nationalist commitment to Colombia. After the Colombian Senate refused to ratify the canal treaty, the majority of Panamanian liberals and conservatives "gave unconditional support to the idea of independence."[30] His opponents in the new Panamanian government revoked his citizenship, and he was forced into exile, to El Salvador. When Porras was finally allowed to return to the isthmus in 1906, he came back with a more conciliatory perspective toward the United States and its hegemonic relationship with the new Panamanian nation. He explained the shift in his opinion, in his autobiography, by way of a parable. He described how U.S. officials invaded the home of family friends, forcing them onto the street in order to fumigate for mosquitoes. The family was upset. U.S. officials, his friends argued, were "the enemies of the country." But a few years later, the family came to see things differently, according to Porras. "Have you seen the streets, Doctor?" they cheerfully asked him. "Now we can walk them without getting dirty."[31]

Nationalists like Porras remained opposed to U.S. control, but they also began to recognize new opportunities. The *gringos* had brought modern sanitation and transportation technology; perhaps, despite the humiliation, a foundation for "progress" had been laid. Porras concluded, "progress and innovation are resisted by those who do not understand their potential benefits. Today we proclaim a great good what we believed

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[28] Belisario Porras, *Trozos de la Vida* (San José de Costa Rica: Imprenta Alsina, Sauter, Arias & Co., 1931). For more on Porras' life, Manuel Octavio Sisnett, *Belisario Porras o La vocación de la nacionalidad* (Panamá: Imprenta Universitaria, 1972).
[29] Belisario Porras, *La venta del Istmo: Manifesto a la Nación* (Panama: Editorial Portobelo, 1996).
[30] Ernesto J. Castillero Reyes, *La causa inmediata de la emancipación de Panamá: historia de los orígenes, la formación y el rechazo por el Senado colombiano, del tratado Herrán-Hay* (Panamá: Imprenta Nacional, 1933), 108.
[31] Porras, *Trozos de la vida*, 107.

before to be a terrible ill."[32] Elected president of Panama in 1912, and again in 1916 and 1920, Porras would continue to criticize U.S. control on the isthmus but more tactfully and selectively. The U.S. government and its military obviously would stay, but Porras and subsequent presidents would demand that the U.S. government leave room for Panamanian businesses and development to thrive.[33]

It was within this context that tourism appeared to be a potential middle ground between total U.S. domination and nationalist desires to control the economy. Political and commercial elites began to reimagine U.S. citizens as "visitors," invited guests of the republic.[34] In the early days of the tourism industry, social distinctions between sailor, soldier, and tourist were often blurry and done so purposely, to assuage nationalist and commercial interests.[35] Part of this effort to refashion U.S. occupation under the heading of tourism, for example, dealt with the influx of U.S. sailors and soldiers that began to arrive to the isthmus in the 1910s and 1920s. Panama's Association of Commerce called these military personnel "tourists." Sailors, one Panamanian newspaper reported, represented the "economic redemption of Panama."[36] "The constant passage of U.S. warships through the Panama Canal," according to historian Jeff Parker, "generated a lucrative tourist economy that offered sailors and other North American visitors a range of "exotic" commodities." High-end cabarets earned huge profits when the U.S. Navy arrived to port. In 1929, in just two months, more than 180,000 U.S. sailors visited Panama. This, though, was a regular occurrence in port cities around the Caribbean. "The Panamanian cities," Parker noted, "belonged to a broader Caribbean world that shared a

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[32] Ibid, 108.

[33] The Panamanian government regularly debated with the U.S. Canal Zone government about Panamanian businesses having to compete with U.S. commissaries selling essential and non-essential items to U.S. residents and visitors in Panama. See, for example, the Treaty of 1936, popularly known as "the Beer and Meat Treaty." Patricia Pizzurno Gelós and Celestino Andrés Araúz, *Estudios sobre el Panamá Repubicano, 1903-1999* (Colombia: Manfer, 1996), 207-255.

[34] In the context of U.S. hegemony, the Panamanian government began to identify U.S. soldiers and sailors within the framework of tourism. The Tourist Bureau of the Panama Association of Commerce took note of tourists and sailors alike as part of the tourism industry. It noted that "including passengers for Panama, cruise tourists, through passengers and sailors who take 'shore leave,' and sailors of the United States fleet, 750,000 persons have visited Panama from overseas in the past year." Cited in George Roberts' *Economic Survey of the Republic of Panama*, 1929; Also see, Patricia Pizzurno, "El turismo y el patrimonio en el Panamá republicano," *Revista Canto Rodado* 21-22 (2007): 12.

[35] "Tourists Should Follow Example of U.S. Sailors," *Star and Herald*, February 27, 1931.

[36] "La flota llega el 18, con que la espera usted?" *El Diario Nuevo*, February 2, 1923.

history of entertaining North American tourists and U.S. military personnel."[37]

The National Exposition

Accepting the reality of the U.S. military presence, but still fighting for national sovereignty, meant finding the means to prosper within imperial control. As president, Porras hoped to convert U.S. canal triumphalism into an instrument of the economy. The opening of the canal, Porras believed, would draw the world's attention to the isthmus as "one of the great centers of universal commerce."[38] The Panamanian government joined the canal celebrations. In 1912, in anticipation of the Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco, an event that would receive an estimated nineteen million visitors, the Porras administration began to organize its own parallel National Exposition.[39] Expositions and festivals, on the grand scale, were seen as a way to promote development and investment. Officials in Panama reasoned that tourists, departing from the east coast of the United States, would coordinate their trip to pass through the actual canal. The Panamanian event would become part of a celebratory trip en route to the more extensive Panama-San Francisco Exposition.

The National Exposition of Panama had to two goals: one, to attract foreign visitors to spur short-term monetary gains; and two, to stimulate long-term economic growth in national industries by inviting North American and European immigrants and capital investment. In 1913, the Porras administration set events in motion, hiring journalists and a publicity company to advertise in the United States. The government hired W.W. Rasor, the editor-manager of *Pan American Magazine*, to publish full-length illustrated articles about Panama. The magazine would report on Panama's progress and its role as "the travelers' Hub of the Universe." Later that year, Gerald Hamilton, a journalist working at the *New York Herald*, also signed a contract to develop a

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[37] Jeffrey Parker, "Empire's Angst: The Politics of Race, Migration, and Sex Work in Panama, 1903-1945," (Dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 2013), 217.
[38] Porras, *Trozos de la vida*, vii. For more on this elite vision of Panama as center of global commerce, see Szok, *La Ultima Gaviota.*
[39] Robert W. Rydell, *All the World's Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876-1916* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), 208-233.

promotional campaign. Hamilton would write a weekly chronicle about the exposition to circulate to major U.S. newspapers.[40]

The government also coordinated with steamship companies to advertise the Panama event as part of the San Francisco exposition. The United Fruit Company, for example, promoted a special trip from New York to San Francisco by way of the canal. In a promotional flyer, UFCO officials explained that traveling "through the Panama Canal acts as a fitting prelude to the expositions; perhaps in no other way can the purpose and meaning of these commemorative expositions be so well understood."[41] In Panama City, meanwhile, an elaborate urban development program began to modernize the rural outskirts of the old colonial city into a neighborhood with broad, paved streets and sidewalks to host the upcoming event. The neighborhood, still known today as "La Exposición," would become the home of new government buildings of Commerce, Education, Agriculture, and Entertainment, in addition to a new stadium and horseracing track. The Exposition, moreover, would be the location of foreign embassies. The neighborhood, state officials asserted, would confirm Panama's position as a modern republic and a center of commerce. "From a purely business point of view," the exposition's director explained, the construction project was "bound to give quick and many returns."[42] The new neighborhood would also provide Panama City's wealthiest residents the opportunity to move into more spacious and luxurious homes. "It will," according to one journalist, "become the residential district for the higher classes." As John Collins noted in the *Pan American Magazine*, "a hitherto undesirable neighborhood has been converted into a very desirable one."[43]

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[40] Exposición Nacional de Panamá: Commemorativa al Descubrimiento del Océano Pacífico Porras, Tomo XXIV, Archivo de Belisario Porras, Panama City. *The Pan-American Magazine* is online at the Hathi Trust Digital Library, accessed January 4, 2015, http://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000636937

[41] *The Canal Record*, March 24, 1915.

[42] Exposición Nacional de Panamá: Commemorativa al Descubrimiento del Océano Pacífico Porras, Tomo XXIV, Archivo de Belisario Porras, Panama City. Also see, "Propuesta para la protección de La Exposición y Bella Vista," Grupo panameño de trabajo para la conservación y documentación de sitios, barrios y edificios del Movimiento Moderno en Panamá, May 2007; Pizzurno Gelós and Andrés Araúz, *Estudios sobre el Panamá Repubicano.*

[43] John O. Collins, "The Panama Canal and its Jonah," *The Pan-American Magazine* XXII (November, 1915): 111.

There was of course a nationalist twist to Panama's celebration of the canal. The National Exposition honored the U.S. engineering feat, but unlike the San Francisco event, focused on the republic's *Hispanidad*.[44] In its framing of the exposition, the Panamanian government emphasized its historic relationship with "Madre Patria Española" (the Spanish homeland). It reminded visitors that Charles V of Spain had originally proposed to build the canal in Panama in 1534. Most notably, exposition officials shrouded the celebrations in the four hundred year anniversary of the "discovery" of the Pacific Ocean by Spanish conquistador, Vasco Núñez de Balboa.[45] This effort to highlight Spanish colonial history was significant in light of the U.S. government's clear abuse of the republic's sovereignty.

Yet at the same time, in seeming contradiction, the exposition sought to attract U.S. capital. James Zetek, former Canal Zone employee and USDA scientist from Chicago, was appointed the National Exposition's director. Zetek, who also became the director of the Smithsonian's research station in Panama, was a close friend of President Porras. He reminded the president that the exposition should target wealthy tourists from the northeast United States, who annually escaped the winter cold and vacationed to warmer climates. "We should not forget," Zetek wrote to Porras, "that in all Expositions attractions and entertainment are the principal factors that bring the success we desire. If we have a good horseracing track, an athletic field for baseball, etc… we will have nothing to fear in respect to a good turnout…. Panama City will be the place tourists choose to go." He added, we must remember, "it is the foreigner with money that we want to interest…. which will bring to Panama the much needed capital and genius to develop the resources that lie latent in her bosom."[46] Officials in Panama's Ministry of

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[44] For a seminal study on Panamanian national identity, see Ricaurte Soler, *Formas Ideologicas de la Nación Panameña* (Panamá: Ediciones de la Revista Tareas, 1963).

[45] *El Diario de Panamá*, March 6, 1914; *Memoria que el Secretario de Estado en el despacho de fomento presenta a la Asambela Nacional de 1914* (Panamá: Diario de Panamá, 1914). Note that all "Memorias" in this chapter are housed at the Biblioteca Nacional de Panamá, Ernesto J. Castillero R., Panama City; Exposición Nacional de Panamá: Commemorativa al Descubrimiento del Océano Pacífico Porras, Tomo XXIV, Archivo de Belisario Porras, Panama City.

[46] Correspondence between James Zetek and President Porras, June 1915, Exposición Nacional de Panamá: Commemorativa al Descubrimiento del Océano Pacífico Porras, Tomo XXIV, Archivo de Belisario Porras, Panama City.

Development and Public Works agreed:

> If our character closes us off from finding the necessary elements to fertilize our fields and develop our national wealth, then why not attract foreign capitalists, agents of economic activity, and tourists… who we may win over by objectively demonstrating our commercial, agricultural, and industrial opportunities?[47]

Elites in other parts of the Caribbean shared this view of development. Boosters in Florida, for example, closely allied tourism and real estate investment. Eyeing events on the peninsula, officials in both Panama and Cuba noted that tourists who escaped the cold climate of the North for one season often returned to Miami the next year to purchase lots and build winter homes. In less than twenty years, Miami had transformed from a sleepy town to a cosmopolitan winter resort with tens of thousands of inhabitants. A good tourism industry could entice desirable foreigners to become investors and perhaps permanent residents.[48]

A key component of this particular vision of development was the racialized notion that progress depended on the "white race." Social Darwinism, and the ideas of social scientists like Benjamin Kidd, were common belief. Kidd argued that the tropics remained underdeveloped because the dark-skinned majority was of "low social efficiency."[49] Elite minorities in Panama, Cuba, and throughout the Caribbean, believed they needed more people of European descent to become modern. As historian Aviva Chomsky documented, "many Latin American nationalists embraced so-called 'scientific' racism and urged European immigration and racial whitening as building blocks to national dignity and independence."[50] Cuban intellectual Fernando Ortiz argued

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[47] Ibid.

[48] Armando Maribona, *Turismo y ciudadania* (Habana: Grafica Moderna, 1943); Consulado de Panamá en Miami, Box 1, Correspondence, 1931-1942, Archivo Nacional de Panamá, Panama City.

[49] Benjamin Kidd, *Social Evolution* (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1894), 316. For a critical analysis of eugenics in Latin America, see Nancy Leys Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).

[50] Aviva Chomsky, "'Barbados or Canada?'" Race, Immigration, and Nation in Early-Twentieth-Century Cuba." *Hispanic American Historical Review* 80 (August 2000): 420. Also Mignolo, *Local Histories/ Global Designs*. He writes (13): "The colonial people, deprived of their riches and of the fruit of their labor under colonial regimes, suffered, furthermore, the degradation of assuming as their proper image the image

as early as 1906 that "white immigration is what we should favor," because it would "inject in the blood of our people the red blood cells which tropical anemia robs from us, and sow among us the seeds of energy, of progress, of life ... which today seem to be the patrimony of colder climates."[51] Elites in Panama agreed with this assessment. Porras was direct about his own vision for the isthmus: "I consider the actual population of our Republic to be insufficient to carryout her development."[52] The country needed to promote the "healthy" immigration of people of European descent, he concluded, who possessed ready-to-use capital. In the early twentieth century, state and commercial developers began to interpret the promotion of migration, foreign investment, and tourism as mutually inclusive projects. Like previous generations of Latin American liberals, who had tried to attract white immigrants, the next generation of elites did something similar with tourism. U.S. tourists fit the mold of desirable immigrants and potential investors. The National Exposition was Panama's first attempt to merge these ideas of development.

When the exposition opened, however, it was a financial disappointment. The First World War began just as the construction of the canal finished in 1914. The restrictions and paranoia of world war dramatically reduced the number of tourists originally expected to travel to Panama for the exposition. [53] During the war, the U.S. government increased its control over the isthmus and instituted a rather totalitarian program of censorship. The newly converted "health resort" had temporarily become a tightly monitored and militarized U.S. strategic possession, not exactly a vacation paradise. Military authorities warned Panamanian merchants that "photographs, postcards, souvenir books, drawings, etc., pertaining to the locks, fortifications, the Canal and ships transiting the Canal will not be permitted transit in the mails… all such articles

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that was no more than the reflection of the European vision of the world, which considered colonial people racially inferior because they were black, Amerindians, or 'mestizos.'"

[51] Fernando Ortiz "La inmigración desde el punto de vista criminológico," *Derecho y Sociología* 1 (1906): 55.

[52] "Ideas del Presidente sobre Agricultura e Inmigración," *El Diario de Panama*, January 2, 1923.

[53] See, Exposición Nacional de Panamá: Commemorativa al Descubrimiento del Océano Pacífico Porras; Pizzurno Gelós and Andrés Araúz, *Estudios sobre el Panamá Repubicano.* 82.

[should] be withdrawn from sale during the present war."[54] The U.S. government advised residents of the isthmus to use only one side of paper in their mail correspondence, as prohibited information would be "deleted by means of clipping."[55] The war forced President Woodrow Wilson, along with a procession of other sightseers, who had planned to visit Panama, to instead travel by rail line to the San Francisco Exposition. Passenger steamships with Caribbean cruise routes were conscripted into the war and used to transport soldiers and supplies to the European front. The emerging tourism industry temporarily shut down.

Rather than generate revenue for the republic, the ambitious advertising and construction projects pushed the national government into debt. By 1917, the initial boom had turned into an economic crisis. Between 1904 and 1914, rural Panamanians and black West Indian migrants flooded into the cities of Colón and Panama City to participate in the growing service economy. But with WWI and the completion of the construction project, the multiple streams of revenue from tourism and the Canal Zone dried up. Thousands of unemployed residents were trapped in the cities and in need of government services.[56] The boom and bust nature of the tourism industry, and its dependence on U.S. political and economic events, became apparent early on.

Only after the war ended did the Caribbean's tourism industry rebound. And only then did the attractions and infrastructure put in place for Panama's exposition become of use. The Association of Commerce, founded two months before the exposition, reflected back in January 1929 on the rise, early fall, and rise again of tourism:

> The merchants of Panama have had no little part in making the Isthmus of Panama one of the world's most popular winter resorts. The road was long and the task at times discouraging, but well-directed and persistent effort has at last been crowned with success and commerce can now depend upon a continuous flow of visitors to the Panama Canal during the three months winter season for

[54] *The Canal Record*, June 26, 1918 and January 2, 1918.
[55] Ibid, August 14, 1918.
[56] *Memoria que el Secretario de Estado en el despacho de Hacienda y Tesoro presenta a la Asambela Nacional de 1914, 1916, 1922.*; "Por que no progresa rapidamente este pais?" *El Diario de Panamá,* April 21, 1914.

many years to come.[57]

But a few months later, in October 1929, the tourists again stopped coming to visit. Leisure travel slowed to a trickle during the Great Depression. Thousands of residents in Panama City and Colón were left unemployed and with few economic opportunities. While wealthy owners of service industries had a better chance of riding out the depression with earlier profits, everyday Panamanians struggled to find new sources of income in the increasingly overcrowded urban environment. At the height of the depression, Guillermo Andreve reflected on what had happened. The nation's leaders, he believed "had fallen asleep in their prosperity."[58] War and economic depression continued to plague liberal aspirations for long-term progress. Panama's dependence on an economy of service made the nation extremely vulnerable to changing events in the United States.[59]

Tourism as a national development strategy was first embraced in the Caribbean in the 1910s and 1920s. Panama's National Exposition, which took place in 1916, is an early instance of elites merging strategies of desirable immigration and foreign investment with tourism. This close relationship between foreign investment, immigration, and tourism, however, can still be seen in contemporary policies. Tourism is today viewed as a prelude to lifestyle migration and long-term investment. "Recognizing the economic growth potential of this phenomenon," according to anthropologist Ana Spalding, "the Panamanian government [in the 1990s and early 2000s] has adopted a series of policies to attract foreign residents and associated investments in real estate and foreign-based businesses."[60] The roots of these (neo)liberal policies date back to the beginning of the Panamanian republic.

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[57] "Panama All-Year Resort Is Aim of Association," *The Panama American*, January 1, 1929.
[58] Guillermo Andreve, "Consideraciones sobre el Liberalismo," in "Escritos de Andreve," *Revista Lotería*, 282-283-284 (Aug-Oct. 1979).
[59] For classic analyses of Latin America's economic dependence on the United States and Europe, see Andre Gunder Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America: Historical Studies of Chile and Brazil* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1967); Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, *Dependency and Development in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979).
[60] Ana K. Spalding, "Lifestyle Migration to Bocas del Toro, Panama: Exploring Migration Strategies and Introducing Local Implications of the Search for Paradise," *International Review of Social Research* 3 (2013): 67-86.

Transitismo: a local-global philosophy

As a set of ideas about economic trade and modernity, however, the framework for the tourism industry actually preceded the arrival of tourists by several centuries. Since the sixteenth century, during the era of the Spanish empire, Panama's economy depended on the movement of people and goods. Residents on the isthmus believed their geographic position linked to a larger web of trade was their greatest resource. Colonial era elites in Panama had rarely, if ever, focused on the production of material goods for export. Instead, they chose to specialize in the service sector to support maritime trade and travelers passing through. In a now seminal essay on Panamanian history, historian Alfredo Castillero Calvo argued that three key historical periods defined what he called "transitismo," that is, Panama's dependence on a transit-based economy: 1) the period of Spanish flotillas in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when an incredible amount of Andean gold and silver crossed the isthmus to the Caribbean on its way to Spain; 2) a brief surge period in colonial trade right before the national independence movements of the 1810s and 1820s; and 3) the California gold rush when more 49ers crossed the isthmus on their journey to the west coast than those travelers crossing the North American continent through the middle west (see Chapter 1).[61] The building of the Panama Canal, and the resurgence of this service economy, was another key phase in this evolving history of transitismo. The historian Guillermo Castro further clarified this theory made reality. Castro explained that there was an important difference between specific transit-based economic activities and transitismo as an all-encompassing system. Transitismo, he argued, was characterized by a monopoly of the transit route by the state or an imperial power in order to concentrate profits in elite hands. The state centralized authority to guarantee that the entire country served the interests of transitismo.[62]

Generations of Panamanian elite believed in, and tried to implement, this form of

[61] Alfredo Castillero Calvo, "Transitismo y dependencia: el caso del istmo de Panamá." *Nueva Sociedad* 5 (1973): 35-50. For more of Calvo's work, see *Historia General de Panamá* (Panamá: Comité Nacional del Centenario de la República, 2004); *La ruta interoceánica y el Canal de Panamá* (Panama: Colegio Panameño de Historiadores / Instituto del Canal de Panamá y Estudios Internacionales, 1999).
[62] Guillermo Castro H. *El agua entre los mares* (Panama: Editorial Ciudad del Saber, 2007).

development. Belisario Porras, as president in the 1910s and 1920s certainly did, and so did his son, Hernán Porras, a well-known historian and political figure from the mid-twentieth century. The younger Porras offered the best articulation of his father's vision.[63] "White capitalists," according to Hernán Porras, were best equipped to control the country and turn the nation's privileged geographic position into a path of progress. This mode of development, rooted in liberal ideals of foreign trade and scientific racism, justified the concentration of nearly all of Panama's economic and political power in the hands of a small group of elite families. The canal project and the international attention that followed reenergized this long-held belief. [64] The canal provided a means to develop a modern transit economy, one in which new types of travelers, especially tourists, would have an important role. The isthmus' geographic position along an important trade route took on new meaning in the early twentieth century. Panama was no longer just a place to pass through; it was also a traveler's destination. By the 1910s and 1920s, the old maritime route, through the Straits of Florida to the Isthmus of Panama, was also a route of tourism.

Panama was not alone in its belief that its geographic location on the world map was its greatest asset. Elites across the Caribbean shared this particular view. In Cuba, political and commercial leaders claimed that more tourism incentives needed to be pushed forward in order for the country to receive "the benefits it deserved due to its climate, natural beauties, and its geographic position."[65] In south Florida, the rhetoric of tourism development was quite similar. Henry Flagler extended his east coast rail line to Miami, in 1896, and in 1912, to Key West, claiming that Florida's "geographic position" warranted the massive construction investment. In the 1920s, Pan-American Airways also initiated its first international route from Miami to Cuba, Jamaica, and Panama, justifying

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[63] Hernán F. Porras, *Papel histórico de los grupos humanos en Panamá* (Panamá: Editorial Portobelo, 1998).

[64] For an excellent analysis of this elite view of development, see Marco A. Gandásegui, ed., *Las clases sociales en Panamá: Grupos humanos, clases medias, elites y oligarquía* (Panamá: Centro de Estudio Latinoamericanos, 2008). In particular, Gandásegui's essay, "La conentración del poder económico en Panamá."

[65] "Comunicaciones y telegramas de diversas entidades comerciales, apoyando las gestiones que realizaba el comité acción turística para que se sometan a la consideración de las clases económicas las modificaciones que se vaya hacer en la legislación sobre turismo," La Habana, del 21 de Febrero al 18 de Julio de 1934, Box 85, Secretaria de Presidencia, Archivo Nacional de la República de Cuba, Habana.

its choice in location because Miami's "geographic position" made it the gateway to the Americas.[66] The Caribbean had always been a crossroads – a place of transit, a place to pass through – for European and North American travelers. With that many destinations claiming the same geographic importance, the question became how to standout on the route.

The "Second Harvest"

In Cuba and in south Florida, tourism became the next industry of "progress," after plantation industries like sugar, citrus and bananas. In Panama, tourism was second only to the canal in commercial importance. Political and business elites in the region began to call tourism their "second harvest."[67] The tourism industry, they hoped and planned for, would become the source of a "vast quantity of new capital."[68] When Guillermo Andreve sailed for Cuba in 1928 he went to study the new tools being developed for this second harvest. The machines and labor regimes of agricultural work were slowly giving way to a new economy of luxurious hotels, entertainment, and refined service. Cuba, Andreve argued, offered a model. After his trip, Andreve concluded, "man, in general, is attracted by historic monuments, the marvels of nature and by entertainment."[69] As Panamanian historian Patricia Pizzurno has described in extensive detail, "the highest aspiration of elites was to convert the isthmus into a North American protectorate in the style of Cuba."[70] In other words, they wanted to find a way to make money under the shadow of U.S. empire. Soon after Andreve's return, Panama passed a similar tourism law to Cuba's. The Panamanian version also legalized gambling and

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[66] "First Airmail Miami-Cristobal-Miami, Charles A. Lindbergh, 2/4/29- 2/13/29," Collection 341, Box 250, Folder 6., Pan American World Airways, Inc. Records, Miami.
[67] Andreve, *Cómo atraer el turismo a Panamá*; Armando Maribona, *Turismo y ciudadania* (Habana: Grafica Moderna, 1943); The Jamaica Tourist Trade Development Board, *Survey and Report on the Potentialities of the Tourist Industry of Jamaica* (Kingston: The Government Printer, 1945).
[68] "Memorandum mecanografico, referente al escrito que dirige A.T. Moreaux, al presidente de la republica, considerando ser el momento propicio para aumentar el turismo en Cuba, y solicitandole una entrevista a fin de exponerle su proyecto de fomento turistico. Adjunto dicho escrito," Habana, 19 de agosto de 1925, Box 85, Secretaria de Presidencia, Archivo Nacional de la República de Cuba, Habana.
[69] Andreve, *Cómo atraer el turismo a Panamá,* 5.
[70] Patricia Pizzurno, "Zona de contacto y espacio intervenido en Panamá," *Tareas* 138 (2011): 85.

created a system of generous concessions to develop tourist attractions. State officials believed that these efforts would promote the isthmus as a place of leisure, and "also operate as points of convergence for foreign capital to develop commerce and industry."[71]

The rise of the tourism industry was indeed transnational: tourists obviously crossed borders, but so did industry promoters. Elite developers also traveled abroad in search of tourism models and connections. Andreve was one of many travelers studying the new possibilities of tourism in the early-to-mid twentieth century. Luis Machado, for example, a respected Cuban diplomat, traveled in the other direction to the isthmus.[72] Machado had been the president of Cuba's tourism commission in the 1920s and 1930s, and later served as Cuban Ambassador to the United States (1950-1952) and a director at the World Bank.[73] At the time of his visit to Panama in 1941, his task was to help the Panamanian state form a "coordinated plan" to boost tourism revenue. Machado argued that the state had an important role to play in the development of tourism. "Only the government," he claimed, "is able to make and execute a coordinated tourism plan, such as the construction of roads, the facilitation of communication technology, and the regulation of prices and tourist services." He concluded his report, arguing, "to develop tourism is to develop the nation's wealth." This potential, however, depended on improving "propaganda, transport, housing, and entertainment."[74] The Panamanian government followed Andreve's and later Machado's recommendations closely. The development of hotels, transportation infrastructure, and tourist attractions, like horseracing tracks and casinos, became the heart of the isthmus' tourism industry.

Tourism in Cuba was a continual source of inspiration for Panama; and at the same time, Florida served as a model for both Caribbean nations. Cuban and Panamanian

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[71] *Memoria que el Secretario de Estado en el despacho de Hacienda y Tesoro presenta a la Asambela Nacional de 19*28.

[72] Luis Machado y Ortega, *Informe*, June 14, 1941, Presidencia de Arnulfo A. Madrid, Box 6. Archivo Nacional de Panamá, Panama City.

[73] Interview with Luis Machado, Oral History Program, The World Bank/IFC Archives, July 18, 1961, accessed January 5, 2015, http://oralhistory.worldbank.org/transcript/machado/transcript-oral-history-interview-luis-machado-held-july-18-1961; "Luis Machado, 79, Ex-Envoy of Cuba," *The Washington Post*, February 10, 1979.

[74] Luis Machado y Ortega, *Informe*, June 14, 1941, Presidencia de Arnulfo A. Madrid, Box 6. Archivo Nacional de Panamá, Panama City.

officials regularly traveled to Miami. Exchanges and meetings occurred between tourism boosters on both sides of the Straits of Florida as early as the 1910s, and continued for several decades into the 1950s. In August 1929, for example, a group of Cuban businessmen affiliated with the Rotary Club "were entertained in Miami."[75] Visitors learned about tourism and commercial developments in the "Magic city." Developers in Miami hoped to convert their city into a regional hub of Latin American trade and travel. There was considerable interest among Florida businessmen about developments in the Caribbean. Writing to the president of Cuba in 1925, A.T. Moreaux, representing the Greater Florida Association, praised the Cuban state's efforts to promote tourism. "I am convinced," he wrote, "that the hour has arrived for Cuba. The whole situation, this great continental trend to travel and invest, is unprecedented."[76] In November 1929, Florida's Rotary Delegation also sent a group of members to Havana, where they met with a young Luis Machado, Havana's Rotary Club President, and also the Cuban nation's president, Gerardo Machado. "I also am a Rotarian," the president told the invited guests. "As we help your financial institutions [in the U.S.], which are practically in many cases Cuban institutions, so you must help in the development and progress of our country, and in the expansion of our economic activities… Our purposes and our ideals are the same."[77] Pro Cuba-Miami partnerships formed to facilitate the movement of tourists and capital. Local authorities in Miami agreed to advertise the island in their tourist publications; and Cuba's tourism commission agreed to reciprocate.

Panamanian authorities also cultivated close relations with tourist officials in Miami. The government set up a consulate in Miami in the early 1930s with the hopes of funneling tourists and capital further south. The consulate's main task involved attending

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[75] Ora E. Chapin, "Across Boundary Lines: Rotarians of Cuba and Florida adopt Rotary's good-will formula," *The Rotarian* XXXVI (January 1930): 26-27, 48.

[76] "Memorandum mecanografico, referente al escrito que dirige A.T. Moreaux, al presidente de la republica, considerando ser el momento propicio para aumentar el turismo en Cuba, y solicitandole una entrevista a fin de exponerle su proyecto de fomento turistico. Adjunto dicho escrito," Habana, 19 de agosto de 1925, Box 85, Secretaria de Presidencia, Archivo Nacional de la República de Cuba, Habana.

[77] Chapin, "Across Boundary Lines: Rotarians of Cuba and Florida adopt Rotary's good-will formula," 26-27, 48. For more on the Miami-Cuba tourism connection, see Chanelle N. Rose, "Tourism and the Hispanicization of Race in Jim Crow Miami, 1945-1965," *Journal of Social History* 45 (Spring 2012): 735-756; Louis A. Pérez Jr. *On Becoming Cuban: Identity, Nationality, and Culture* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999).

festivities and events with information in hand about the isthmus' tourist attractions and commercial possibilities. Panama's first consulate in Miami was Howard Brown, a former United Fruit company employee and U.S. citizen who had lived in Panama in the 1920s. Brown boasted that he had strong ties with Miami's mayor and Chamber of Commerce. To the Panamanian press, he reported that he took the consulate job "to serve Panama however possible. I am proposing to open a permanent exhibition of Panamanian articles in Miami, a city that is visited by thousands of tourists each month and has played an important role in her progress." To Panama's president, he wrote, "I have devoted much of my time to preparing exhibits of Panama and talks before various clubs and other organizations." Brown organized exhibits for the Miami Chamber of Commerce, and at popular stores like Sears, Burdines, and at social clubs like the Rotary club, the Kiwanis club, and the Woman's Club of Miami. In his public speeches, Brown proclaimed, "that Panama and Miami have much in common as tourist centers."[78]

Tourism development in all three locations (Florida, Cuba, and Panama) involved offering generous concessions to private developers. This, promoters believed, was the key to reaping the "second harvest." In Panama, the state passed law after law, and handed out contract after contract, in its effort to support privately financed tourism projects.[79] In 1922, for example, the state conceded a tract of land to Panamanian investor, Raul Espinosa, to construct a stadium for "all classes of spectacle," though primarily for horseracing, "to stimulate the arrival of tourists to the isthmus."[80] The state exempted Espinosa from having to pay taxes on supplies for the construction and maintenance of the stadium in exchange for "indirect benefits" to the republic. The contract required Espinosa to pay only a small annual fee for the use of the land.[81] The government offered similar concessions for the development of hotels and casinos. After

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[78] Consulado de Panamá en Miami, Box 1, Correspondence, 1931-1942, Archivo Nacional de Panamá, Panama City.

[79] *Memoria que el Secretario de Estado en el despacho de Hacienda y Tesoro presenta a la Asambela Nacional,* from 1922 to 1936. Also, Patricia Pizzurno surveys many of these tourism laws, decrees, and contracts in her article, "El turismo y el patrimonio en el Panamá republicano," *Revista Canto Rodado* 21-22 (2007).

[80] *Memoria que el Secretario de Estado en el despacho de Hacienda y Tesoro presenta a la Asambela Nacional de 1922.*

[81] Ibid.

the legalization of gambling in 1928, the Panamanian state received a flurry of investment propositions. "A modern tourist hotel and casino for Panama," the press reported, "seems almost certain."[82] New York investor, Ben Gray, obtained one of these state concessions to build several hotels and casinos worth at least $750,000 (worth at least $10 million today). The first year, Gray would pay the state $5,000 to permit gambling in his casinos. The payment then increased annually by $1,000, not to exceed $12,000 per year. The contract stipulated that Gray had free use of government lands to construct hotels and casinos, and access to any neighboring lands for "beautification" projects. The state moreover exonerated Gray from national taxes.[83] That same year the Panamanian government also received a major development proposal from the Union Hotel Corporation of New York to "build a modern $1,000,000 hotel and casino" in the Exposition neighborhood. The National City Bank of New York would finance the new hotel and Minor C. Keith, owner of the United Fruit Company, would "furnish the land for the proposed structure."[84]

Members of Panama's Association of Commerce praised the state's role in promoting tourism development. They were "confident that none of the world's touring centers offers greater attractions to the traveler, is now, with the full approval and material encouragement of these powerful assistants, entering upon a well-organized program to make the Isthmus of Panama an all year travel resort."[85] Historians of Cuba have documented similar investment schemes on the island. In 1924, the Biltmore Company, named after Vanderbilt's estate in Asheville, North Carolina, completed a 10-story luxury hotel in downtown Havana. Six years later, the famous National Hotel and its casino, built atop an old Spanish fort guarding Havana, was completed by a New York-based construction firm. Meyer Lansky, the American gangster, received his first government concession in Cuba in the early 1930s to operate the casino at the National

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[82] "New York Men Offer to Build Panama Hotel," *The Panama American*, January 1, 1929.
[83] *Memoria que el Secretario de Estado en el despacho de Hacienda y Tesoro presenta a la Asambela Nacional de 19*30.
[84] "New York Men Offer to Build Panama Hotel," *The Panama American*, January 1, 1929.
[85] "Panama All-Year Resort Is Aim of Association," *The Panama American*, January 1, 1929. For more on The Panama Association of Commerce, see *The Panama American Magazine* 21, (May-October, 1915): 230-231.

Hotel. Generous state contracts to private tourist entrepreneurs grew exponentially in the 1920s and 1930s.[86]

Tourism also worked as an incentive for the expansion of state projects that on the surface did not seem to be related to the tourism industry. Road building, for example, took off under the banner of tourism. One of the Panamanian state's first major road-building projects, circa 1912, connected modern Panama City with the ruins of Old Panama. The road provided passengers with a scenic tour of the ruins, weaving through the old city and passing by famous sites, like the King's Bridge. It also created a path for the development of the city's eastern border. Project managers reported to the Minister of Development and Public Works that the state would recover the cost of the project in no time at all because of tourist revenue. [87] Tourism, it seemed, was a convenient pretext for the building of transportation infrastructure. Rural agricultural goods could be transported to Panama City, and in the other direction, tourists and foreign investment would, in the words of Porras, "penetrate" and modernize the interior.[88] John Baxter, the editor of *The Panama Times*, congratulated the state on its road-building initiatives. "Touring the new roads," he wrote, "will be immediately popular. For every one stranger or even Panamanian who visited such towns… in the past there will be hundreds in the future. This will not only be immediately profitable, but it will lead eventually to mutual benefits that can not now be estimated."[89]

Machado, in his official report, also advocated road building as tourism development. The state, he argued, should extend tourism into the interior of the country (not just in the main cities). He proposed that the government improve roads and set up regional tourist boards to manage and regulate attractions and businesses. "The international Pan-American highway," Machado explained, "will provide the tourist an

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[86] See Evaristo Villalba Garrido, *Cuba y el turismo* (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1993); Enrique Cirules, *The Empire of Havana* (Havana: Editorial José Martí, 2003); Rosalie Schwartz, *Pleasure Island: Tourism and Temptation in Cuba*; T.J. English, *Havana Nocturne: How the Mob Owned Cuba and Then Lost it to the Revolution* (New York: William Morrow & Co., 2008).

[87] *Memoria que el Secretario de Estado en el despacho de Fomento presenta a la Asambela Nacional de 1912.*

[88] See Ashley Carse, *Beyond the Big Ditch: Politics, Ecology, and Infrastructure at the Panama Canal* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2014), 169-175.

[89] John K. Baxter, "New Roads Open Panama's Interior to Automobile." *The Panama Times*, January 23, 1926.

easy, comfortable, cheap and safe means to travel in his own vehicle and with his own resources; and, on this route, Panama because of her geographic position, is an obvious stopping point, and should, at the same time, aspire to be, because of her incomparable tourist attractions, not only a way station, but also a logical and natural mecca for the American traveler."[90]

The most lucrative tourist activities, however, continued to take place in the port cities, in their restaurants, bars, and nightclubs. Taxes on liquor sales, gambling, and tobacco became the largest revenue generators for the state. Depending on the year, according to historian Matthew Scalena, alcohol taxes accounted anywhere from 20% to 50% of Panamanian state revenue.[91] The Porras administration's fiscal agent explained that "the government should give every incentive to grow and develop these attractive activities."[92] The state found a source of revenue and business owners grew rich from these foreign demands. As Panama City and Colón became major touristic spaces, Panamanians seemed to lose enthusiasm for the development of other sectors of the economy. There were quicker profits to be made, illicit and licit, from the country's growth as a service sector republic.

The social consequences of these tourist activities, though, were immense. The salacious demands of tourists and U.S. soldiers supported a "seedier" element to life in Panama City and Colón. Bars and brothels lined the border separating the cities from the Canal Zone. Both Panamanian and foreign commentators complained of the brutality and "immorality" of Panama's urban environment. Narciso Garay, a long-time public servant, complained that "the spectacle of the streets of Colón was something almost painful for me."[93] The Panamanian writer, Demetrio Korsi, writing in the 1920s, expressed his own critical sentiments in a poem "Vision of Panama." He wrote:

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[90] Luis Machado y Ortega, *Informe*, June 14, 1941, Presidencia de Arnulfo A. Madrid, Box 6. Archivo Nacional de Panamá, Panama City.
[91] Matt Scalena, "La economía del vicio," *La Prensa*, May 18, 2014.
[92] Letters from Fiscal Agent to President Porras, August 1924, Box 663, Archivo de Belisario Porras, Panama City.
[93] Quoted in Szok, *La Ultima Gaviota*, 47; Also see, Sharon Phillips Collazos, "The Cities of Panama: Sixty Years of Development," in *Cities of Hope: People, Protests, and Progress in Urbanizing Latin America, 1870-1930*, Ronn Pineo and James A. Baer, eds., 240-257 (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1998).

Gringos, gringos, gringos…negros, negros, negros…
Shops and stores, a hundred races in the sun.
Square-faced cholitas and clumsy mulatas
Fill the lobbies of brothels
A decrepit taxi passes with tourists.
Soldiers, sailors, come and go
And women in short skirts, the cabaret workers
Panama, where the gringos have discovered the land of Adam.
Panama the easy, Panama the open,
Panama of Central Avenue,
The crossroads, bridge, port, and door
Where one enters through the Canal.

Movement. Traffic. All the bars,
All the drunks, all the foxtrots
And all the rumbas and all the crooks
And all the gringos that God sends us.
Thousands of foreigners and thousands of wallets…
Spirits, music…how awful!
The millions dance their macabre dance
Gringos, negros, negros, gringos…Panama![94]

U.S. visitors found Panama in the early twentieth century to be an ideal place for the fulfillment of vice: drunkenness, gambling, paid sex. This behavior had as much to do with U.S. preconceived notions of tropical exoticism and sexuality (see Chapter 1). Nonetheless, the state sanctioned these foreign desires.[95] Despite the negative social effects, the state and tourism merchants promoted and authorized profitable vices. As Jeff Parker documented, "the majority of proprietors in both the Cocoa Grove and Navajo districts [Panama City's red light and tourist districts] consisted of elite Panamanian families." Federico Boyd, the mayor of Panama in the 1910s owned property in Cocoa

[94] Demetrio Korsi, "Visión de Panamá," Lo*s Gringos llegan y la Cumbia se Va* (Panama: Imprenta Excelsior, 1953). Also see Ricardo Miró, *Las noches de babel* (Panamá: Asamblea Legislativa, 2002), originally published in 1913.
[95] For U.S. conceptions of Panama, see Stephen Frenkel, "Jungle Stories: North American Representations of Tropical Panama," *Geographical Review* 86 (July 1996): 327. There is also a large literature on U.S. and European perceptions of the American tropics. See, for instance, Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992); Frederick B. Pike, *The United States and Latin America: Myths and Stereotypes of Civilization and Nature* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992); Nancy Leys Stepan, *Picturing Tropical Nature* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 2001).

Grove, which he leased out and authorized as a bar and brothel.[96] It seemed political and commercial leaders were willing to do most anything for "progress," regardless of the moral implications.

The question is why would Andreve, Porras, and other elites be willing to allow and in fact promote development, and particularly tourism development in this way? What type of state building project was this? What did hotels and casinos and tourist desires have to do with national progress? The answer seems straightforward: there were immediate profits to be made in the sanctioning of vice, and there had been a long tradition of a service economy dependent on traveler desires. "If you have a lot of what people want and can't get," as Meyer Lansky put it, "then you can supply the demand and shovel in the dough."[97] Elites, as good businessmen, supplied what visitors wanted.

But the complicated part is that these economic activities emerged within a highly controlled context: the U.S. Canal Zone competed heavily with Panamanian commerce. U.S. government commissaries in particular sold non-essential items to foreign visitors, despite Panamanian protests. Panama had one clear advantage, however. The Canal Zone prohibited bars and gambling. The selling of vice seemed to be one of the few alternatives for the nation's service economy to develop, away from U.S. government subsidized competition (see Chapter 5). As the Panamanian writer, Joaquín Beleño, described it, "in the Zone, discipline, in Panama, disorder, there abstinence, here pleasure."[98] The Canal Zone/Panama border relationship represented in microcosm the type of socio-economic exchange that linked the United States with the Caribbean more generally.

The legalization of gambling and the extraordinary expansion of the Caribbean's tourist economy of vice took off during the era of U.S. puritan progressivism. Cuba's tourism law passed the same year the 19th Amendment, Prohibition, went into effect in the United States. The Caribbean became an outlet for U.S. travelers in search of drink (see Chapter 4). Whole bars and businesses picked up and moved from the United States

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[96] Parker, "Empire's Angst," 75.
[97] Quoted in Birmingham, *"'The Rest of Us.' The Rise of America's Eastern European Jews,* 152.
[98] Quoted in Pizzurno, "Zona de contacto y espacio intervenido en Panamá."

to Cuba, Panama, and other Caribbean locations. "Prohibition laws," according to Parker, "provided incentive for many nightclub owners in the U.S. to expand or relocate their business abroad. Panama became a very enticing place for North American entrepreneurs because of the large U.S. presence on the Isthmus."[99] Bar owners from the United States ended up migrating to Panama and Cuba. Max Bilgray, known as "the cabaret king of Colón," claimed to have turned Panama's cabaret scene in the 1920s from a "frontier style" to a "rallying place for genial comrades." Bilgray had previously owned saloons in Chicago until prohibition in 1919. He relocated to Panama and opened The Tropic, which would become one of Panama's most popular bars. Another bar and cabaret entrepreneur from the United States, Mary Lee Kelley, found financial success running "one of the most famous whorehouses in the world" in Panama.[100] In a 1926 profile in *The Panama Times*, Kelley described herself as a "rags to riches" woman of Irish descent. "Why I'm as Irish as Patty's pig. I came from Boston where everybody's Irish including all the politicians and policemen."[101] Both U.S. Americans and Panamanian businessmen found economic opportunity hosting visiting Americans in search of pleasures restricted at home.

The U.S. federal ban on alcohol consumption and its crackdown on its domestic vice economy was still in effect when Panama voted on its own tourism law in 1928. "Gambling," Andreve noted, "would become a primary revenue source [in Panama] and our main tourist attraction."[102] At the same time, though, Andreve acknowledged the potential risks involved in this type of tourism development. He explained in his initial report that Panamanians should be prohibited from visiting the new casinos and hotels, in order to protect them from moral corruption and financial ruin. "In order to benefit the nation rather than damaging it," he wrote, "it should be absolutely prohibited for national citizens, who are not employees, from visiting the gambling rooms… If we let our countrymen gamble, I foresee many misfortunes and unfortunate events."[103]

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[99] Parker, "Empire's Angst," 75.
[100] Ibid.
[101] *The Panama Times*, February 29, 1926.
[102] Andreve, *Cómo atraer el turismo a Panamá,* 23.
[103] Ibid.

It's unclear whether Panamanians were legally prohibited entrance to the casinos or not. Nevertheless, the misfortunes arrived. The tourism law that Andreve recommended for Panama was the same law that Meyer Lansky and a whole slew of gangsters and crooks took advantage of to build their gambling and hotel empires. National tourism policies opened the floodgates to the most creative and transnational developers of vice. In Cuba, according to one author, "Lansky was a big shot on the island, a friend of government officials going all the way to the top."[104] Unscrupulous friends of Lansky, like Lucky Luciano, also came to have influence in Panama, in addition to Cuba. After being deported from the United States and later Cuba, Luciano decided (allegedly) to base his illegal operations out of Panama, to smuggle narcotics. Panamanian elites were not immune to the social consequences caused by this influx of shady characters. In January 1955, Panama's President José Remón was assassinated at the Juan Franco racetrack (built in 1922 during the Porras administration). Although the killers were never found, many believed that Luciano and his international narcotics ring operating in Panama were responsible for the president's death.[105]

For national elites, however, tourism was more than an industry of foreign sin and U.S. dollars. The arrival of visitors promised to stimulate the economy, but it also could buttress more culturally infused state projects. The tourism industry served as both an economic and a cultural resource. Under the pretext of tourism development, elites in Panama and Cuba also became the authorized gatekeepers of national culture. Early on, the Panamanian state converted the National Exposition into an opportunity to extend its power into peripheral regions of the republic. Exposition officials sent representatives to each province of the newly formed nation to call on local leaders to send delegates, agricultural products, and local flora and fauna to the event. Everyone on the isthmus,

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[104] Quote from English, *Havana Nocturne,* 4.

[105] On the assassination of President José Remón Cantera, see Larry LaRae Pippins, *The Remón era an analysis of a decade of events in Panama, 1947-1957* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964); Ezer Vierba, "The Committee's Report: Punishment, Power and Subject in 20th Century Panamá," (Dissertation, Yale University, 2013). President José Remón had, according to U.S. government accounts, previously provided protection to drug-running and mafia activities in Panama back when he was a police officer in Colón in the 1930s and 1940s. His wife supposedly participated in these illegal activities as well. During a visit to Puerto Rico, Mrs. Remón was found with a bag of narcotics, and forced to pay a $50,000 fine by U.S. customs officials. Perhaps unrelated, but emblematic of their transnational lifestyle, Mrs. Remón was in Florida at the time of her husband's assassination.

they requested should "decidedly cooperate with the Exposition."[106] They had a responsibility to impress foreign visitors.[107] At a time when residents of Panama's interior understood their identity primarily in terms of their hometown or province, the insertion of National Exposition objectives into rural life operated as a subtle tool of a centralizing state.[108] Tourism became another reason for the nation to unite.

The promotion of Panamanian folkloric culture as a tourist attraction was also very much connected to this nationalizing and Hispanicizing project. While U.S. tourists often thought of Panama as a republic of dark-skinned and primitive "natives," the state used cultural events like the exposition and carnival to emphasize the "lighter" side of Panamanian heritage. Tourism brochures and pamphlets reflected this position; overwhelmingly ignoring the Afro-Caribbean elements of Panamanian culture and portraying indigenous Panamanians as primitive and interesting, though separate from the formal republic.[109] As early as 1910, city leaders reorganized and took control of carnival in Panama City. "With the formation of the Republic and the progress of the country," Andreve noted, "things had to change."[110] The nation's elite replaced the revelry of "arrabal," the city's poorest neighborhood, with sanitized images of white carnival queens and Hispanicized traditions for both national and foreign consumers. "Our carnival," Andreve explained, "is more cheerful, more bustling than what they have in Cannes, Havana, Madrid, Nice, Paris, and San José de Costa Rica and San Sebastián."[111] Andreve concluded that tourists and Panamanians who participated in Panama's updated carnival would "suffer a momentous change and remember those happy moments for the

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[106] "Planos definitivos de Exposicion Nacional," *El Diario de Panamá*, April 1, 1914.
[107] For a related argument on the ways national elites promoted cultural heritage to attract foreign tourists and investment, see Dina Berger and Andrew Grant Wood, eds., *Holiday in Mexico: Critical Reflections on Tourism and Tourist Encounters* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009).
[108] "Exposición Nacional de Panamá: Commemorativa al Descubrimiento del Océano Pacífico Porras," Tomo XXIV, Archive of Belisario Porras, University of Panama, Panama City.; *Memoria que el Secretario de Estado en el despacho de Fomento presenta a la Asambela Nacional de 1912.*
[109] For more information on Panamanian folklore, see Manuel Fernando Zárate, "Nacionalidad y folklore," and Dora Pérez de Zárate, "Nuestra posición frente a las teorías folklóricas." In *El Desarrollo de las Ciencias Sociales en Panamá*, Alfredo Figueroa Navarro, ed. (Panamá: Universidad de Panamá, 1983).
[110] Guillermo Andreve, "Breve historia del carnival," in *Panamá en sus usos y costumbres*, Stanley Heckadon Moreno, ed., 583-591 (Panama: Editorial Universitaria, 1994).
[111] Andreve, *Cómo atraer el turismo a Panamá,* 26.

rest of his life."[112] Elite organizers remade the festivities into an economically viable attraction. In the process, they also defined and restricted the meaning of Panamanian nationality. Members of the elite Club Unión annually elected the carnival queen from the country's white ruling minority. [113] Parade floats reinforced this Hispanic tradition through music, dance, and dress. In this way, the tourism industry operated as an ideological platform, as much for domestic as foreign audiences. The nation's elite under the label of tourism development decided what to remember and celebrate. With the tourism industry as an economic resource and a means to distribute information abroad and at home, elites could articulate what it meant to be a citizen of the republic.

The rise of tourism generated a unique relationship between national culture and economic development. Particular commodities, histories, and cultural ways took on new values and forms. Republican visions of culture and history solidified, in part, within the tourism industry. [114] Historic sites and traditions ignored for centuries received state funds, private investment, and renewed cultural lore. The possibility of tourism encouraged the Porras government, for example, to pass the republic's first law of historic preservation in 1912, not coincidentally, at the height of the isthmus' first tourism boom (see Chapter 1). The institutionalization of historic conservation was immersed in tourism development projects.[115]

Similar and simultaneous efforts to turn colonial ruins into tourist attractions occurred in both Cuba and Florida. Tourists willingly paid to see and experience the Caribbean's colonial past of pirates and Spanish conquistadores. But parallel to historic conservation, and national identity, was always economic interest. The conservation of Old Panama, the site of the first Panama City until Henry Morgan's famous attack of 1671, provides a fitting example. As the state sought to preserve and profit from the ruins of Old Panama, it also offered concessions to investors to build hotels, casinos, and even

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[112] Andreve, "Breve historia del carnival," 591.
[113] Ibid. Also see, Carlos Enrique Paz, "El alma alegre de Panamá" in *Panamá en sus usos y costumbres*, 583-591.
[114] For a similar argument in a different context, see Hal Rothman, ed., *The Culture of Tourism, The Tourism of Culture: Selling the Past to the Present in the American Southwest* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003).
[115] Patricia Pizzurno, "El turismo y el patrimonio en el Panamá republicano."

a zoo around the ruins. In 1931, the state granted José María Ramirez the right to build a hotel, restaurant and bar, movie-theater, two big swimming pools, and a tennis court in the historic area in exchange for his pledge to maintain and promote Old Panama as a tourist attraction. Although Ramirez never fulfilled his obligations and the state subsequently canceled his concession in 1933, due to the decline in tourism following the Great Depression, it nevertheless illustrated the state's extreme willingness to grant developers low-cost or free access to lands and historic monuments.[116]

Tourism and Racial Exclusion

In the early twentieth century, elites would do most anything to ally their nation's past and future with "Western" civilization. They wanted "progress" and tourism offered a new means of attracting social and economic capital. It was not just a question of economic necessity; tourism also promised "cultural" development.

The historian Lara Putnam explained: "the story of the making of outsiders is thus also the story of the making of insiders and of the naturalization of the barriers – ideological, institutional, physical – between them."[117] Putnam was referring to racialized restrictions that limited black mobility in the Caribbean in the 1920s and 1930s. Her observation, though, very much pertains to the history of tourism. The making of "insiders," the making of privileged tourists, was also the making of "outsiders," undesirable immigrants. While Latin American elites created extremely liberal and generous incentives for some people to visit and invest (white people of European descent), they intensely discriminated against "non-white" travelers and migrants. Tourism is also part of the history of defining desirable and undesirable people, potential insiders and inherent outsiders. In Panama and Cuba, the state built hotels, attractions, and created new ways to attract tourists and U.S. investors. At the same time, they patrolled the borders and coasts to keep "undesirables" out because of their racial and

[116] *Memoria que el Secretario de Estado en el despacho de Hacienda y Tesoro presenta a la Asambela Nacional de 1934*. See Contract 12, for example, concession to Douglas March to occupy and use lands in Panama Vieja to construct a zoo.
[117] Lara Putnam, *Radical Moves: Caribbean Migrants and the Politics of Race in the Jazz Age* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 19.

ethnic background. In 1926, Panama passed an immigration law, just two years before the legalization of gambling, that excluded the entry of people of African descent, in addition to "Chinese, Gypsies, Armenians, Arabs, Turks, Hindus, Syrians, Lebanese and Palestinians."[118] Article 20 of the law stated that "those individuals to whom the present law refers, who find it necessary to come to the territory of the Republic, in transit to other countries, must solicit special permission from the Department of Foreign Relations through the Panama Consul at the port of departure."[119] Meanwhile, white U.S. tourists did not even need a passport to enter the country. Restricting mobility along racial lines was widespread. "According to a survey of Latin American countries," conducted by Afro-Panamanian activists, "it was revealed that besides Panama, seven countries exclude Negroes entirely… and others set up extremely difficult entrance qualifications."[120]

The racialized structures of mobility and immobility did not distinguish between rich and poor, nor well-known and unknown people of color. In 1930, for example, when Langston Hughes planned a trip to Cuba, officials in New York tried to deny him passage. "The [steamship] companies claimed," according to historian Frank Guridy, "that they could not sell him a ticket because the Cuban government banned 'Chinese, Negroes, and Russians,' from entering the country."[121] Hughes eventually was able to purchase a ticket, with the help of influential white friends. Other prominent black travelers, like the African-American educator Mary McLeod Bethune and NAACP secretary William Pickens, experienced similar discrimination when trying to visit Cuba. "There is a policy," Pickens wrote to the U.S. Secretary of State, "inspired and supported from some sources to harass, hinder and discourage Negro citizens of the United States,

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[118] For more on racial exclusion in Panama, see Marixa Lasso de Paulis, "Race and Ethnicity in the formation of Panamanian National Identity: Panamanian Discrimination Against Chinese and West Indians in the Thirties," *Revista Panameña de Política* 4 (2007): 63. Lasso writes: "Panamanian society has constantly questioned the right of the Chinese and West Indian community to become Panamanians. In 1904, one year after the formation of the Republic, law declared them races of prohibited immigration, a status that was reinforced by successive laws and culminated in the 1941 constitution that denied citizenship to the races under the category of prohibited immigration."

[119] *Star & Herald*, October 23, 1926.

[120] George Westerman, *A Minority Group in Panama: Some Aspects of West Indian Life* (Panama: National Civic League, 1950), 15.

[121] Frank A. Guridy, *Forging Diaspora: Afro-Cubans and African Americans in a World of Empire and Jim Crow* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 157.

when they seek to exercise their privilege of coming to the republic of Cuba, even as tourists for a week or a month seeking education and knowledge, or on business or pleasure."[122] The problem was also pervasive in Panama. George Westerman, a Panamanian journalist and activist of black West Indian descent, consistently and passionately denounced racial injustice in the tourism industry (also see Chapter 5). Westerman questioned: "Why has the law still been permitted to operate to the detriment of thousands of non-white peoples who wish to spend a brief vacation with Isthmian relatives or friends, or visit this Republic en route to other Central American countries?"[123] Westerman documented case after case of discrimination, from the 1930s to the early 1950s. An African-American nurse from Harlem on her way home from a conference in Brazil, for example, tried to stop in Panama for a brief vacation. Authorities told her, however, "that she could not come to Panama as American Negroes are not permitted to land in Panama."[124] Up until the mid-1950s, the Panamanian state required African-American tourists to have a passport to enter Panama, and put down a deposit of $500, while white Americans could enter with $1 tourist card, and no passport.

Outsiders, from the United States, did not exclusively define the privileged identity of tourists in the Caribbean. Elites from the region also had an important role in defining who could and couldn't be a tourist. White American travelers and investors were welcomed with open arms, while undesirable races were shut out, or even thrown out. "Every age has its Inquisition," the writer B. Traven wrote in the late 1920s. "Our age has the passport to make up for the tortures of medieval times."[125] And like the inquisition, the tourism industry had its share of hypocrisy and rationalized exceptions for the immoral and privileged. The American mob and drug dealers, like Meyer Lansky and Lucky Luciano, were seemingly given the keys to the city, while at the same time, respectable black educators and intellectuals like Langston Hughes, George Westerman,

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[122] Quoted in Guridy, *Forging Diaspora*, 157. Also see, Frank A. Guridy, "From Solidarity to Cross-Fertilization: Afro-Cuban/ African American Interactions during the 1930s and 1940s," *Radical History Review* 87 (Fall 2003): 19-48.
[123] "RP Discriminates In Entry Laws, Writer Charges," *The Nation*, November 22, 1947, in George W. Westerman Papers, Box 63, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York.
[124] Letter from George Westerman to President Jose Antonio Remon, July 30, 1953, George W. Westerman Papers, Box 63, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York.
[125] B. Traven, *The Death Ship* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 1991), 57.

and Mary McLeod Bethune were harassed and put under suspicion. Elites opened their community's door to a tourist economy rooted in gambling, drinking, and prostitution and at the same time, tightened the reins on non-white people, who often had direct familial connections wanting to travel in the Caribbean.

Nineteenth century liberal ideals about desirable and undesirable immigration transferred to twentieth century thinking about tourism. For elites, tourists became the great "white hope" for cultural and economic development. The tourism industry, based in hotels, cabarets, and casinos, became a new aspect of Latin American and Caribbean visions of modernity. This model of development had both historical and contemporary consequences. State policies that privileged white foreigners and tourists fueled, in part, popular revolt against colonial and minority rule in the mid-twentieth century, as I document in Chapter 5. It was no coincidence that Fidel Castro and his band of revolutionaries turned the Havana-Hilton hotel into the revolution's headquarters and renamed it, "Free Havana." It was no surprise that the 1964 revolt against U.S. rule in Panama also turned its rage on the tourist economy. The area around the famous Hotel Tivoli became the heart of the most intense street battle. As I highlight in Chapter 5, "Burning Privilege," we cannot understand the problems of development, or the motivations of revolt, without also considering the systemic and racialized injustices embodied in tourism. The seeds of national development policies in the early twentieth century sowed their own undoing. In the mid-twentieth century, the "second harvest" turned out to be a near-fatal disaster for elites.

A second conclusion to keep in mind is that yet another generation of Caribbean elites, after the social upheavals stretching from the 1960s to the 1980s, has returned to this liberal vision of tourism development; one rooted in earlier modes of thinking. The development strategies of the early twentieth century and the early twenty first century are remarkably and unfortunately similar (see Chapter 6). For the privileged tourist, these historical realities reemerging in the present should cause one to pause and reconsider. 'Why is white skin associated with tourism, while black skin regardless of one's nationality represent someone, something, else?' Since the early twentieth century, Latin American and Caribbean elites have helped to define the boundaries of travel identity.

Racially coded definitions of who was and wasn't a desirable tourist still play an important role in classifying acceptable and unwanted visitors. "Economic migrants and 'boat-people' are turned away," as Mimi Sheller has explained, "while increasing numbers of tourists and boat people of a more desirable kind (traveling by cruise ship and yacht) pour into Caribbean 'resorts' or buy their own 'piece of paradise.'"[126] The racialization of tourism development has determined who can and can't travel and enjoy the pleasures and opportunities of mobility. Tourism in the Caribbean, early on, was defined as the white man's vacation. The expansion of U.S. empire into the region, in combination with local elite efforts to "twist" this influx of foreigners in their favor, opened the Caribbean to a new era of leisure travel. In the next two chapters, I look more closely at privileged social groups from the United States, who embodied and helped spread dominant travel practices for Caribbean vacationing. Once the stage was set (Chapters 1 and 2), the chosen actors stepped onto the stage and taught countless spectators how to play on vacation (Chapter 3 and 4). The next two chapters identify social groups, in particular U.S. explorers and travel writers, who inspired a modern and hegemonic tourist identity, one that still resounds in contemporary travel culture.

[126] Mimi Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean: From Arawaks to Zombies* (London: Routledge, 2003), 33.

Chapter 3: The Nature of Tourism: Smithsonian Naturalists as guides to the Tropical Environment

"If you have health, a great craving for adventure, at least a moderate fortune, and can set your heart on a definite object which old travelers do not think impracticable, then travel by all means. If, in addition to these qualifications, you have scientific taste and knowledge, I believe that no career, in time of peace, can offer to you more advantages than that of a traveller."[1] –Francis Galton

His bedroom resembled a small nature museum, a "cabinet of curiosities." In the room, there were skulls, shells, feathers, stuffed birds, pressed plants, and minerals: an assortment of dead animals and natural objects. As a child, Theodore Roosevelt loved to study and collect nature. It was a passion, perhaps an obsession, beginning around the age of nine. Growing up he accumulated hundreds of specimens, which he proudly called the "Roosevelt Natural History Museum."[2] Traversing and possessing nature, he believed, would make him strong in body and mind. "There is a delight," he later explained, "in the hardy life of the open. There are no words that can tell the hidden spirit of the wilderness, that can reveal its mystery, its melancholy and its charm."[3] Young Roosevelt, according to biographer Edmund Morris, "would head for the lakes of the Adirondacks, or the woods of Long Island and New Jersey, collecting specimens and data and loping for miles, gun in hand, after wild game."[4] In a letter to his sister, from August 1876, Roosevelt described these youthful adventures as full of "ornithological enjoyment and reptilian rapture."[5]

As an adult, this fascination with exploration and discovery expanded to new geographies. In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, as the United States became an imperial power, Roosevelt's curiosities also traveled across national borders. His adventures took him from the Adirondacks of New York to the American

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[1] Francis Galton, *The Art of Travel; or, Shifts and Contrivances available in Wild Countries* (London: John Murray, Albermarle Street, 1872), 1.
[2] Mark V. Barrow, Jr., *A Passion for Birds: American Ornithology after Audubon* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1998), 9-10.
[3] Theodore Roosevelt quoted and remembered at the Roosevelt Memorial rotunda at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, accessed March 3, 2015, http://www.amnh.org/theodore-roosevelt-quotes
[4] Edmund Morris, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt* (New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1979), 51.
[5] Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Bonnie Roosevelt, August 6, 1876, Oyster Bay, Long Island. Online at The Theodore Roosevelt Center at Dickinson State University, accessed March 4, 2015, http://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org

West to the American tropics and eventually, the African continent. The trajectory of his life history mirrored U.S. expansion and closely preceded the era of mass tourism. Naturalist exploration, and even war and national politics, in his life, were intimately entangled with international travel. And as I argue in this chapter, this intense desire for adventure also came to shape the culture of tourism.[6] Roosevelt's history is a microcosm of a larger societal phenomenon emerging at the turn of the twentieth century. In the United States, at that time, the quest for discovery and adventure converged into a popular ethos of tropical travel. Roosevelt's childhood interests in nature collecting, along with his later exploits in war, foreign travel, and big-game hunting highlight an often ignored aspect of modern traveling culture: deep-seated desires for "adventure" shaped the way Americans vacationed and interacted with people and nature in the tropics. Countless children, and young boys in particular, dreamed like Roosevelt of travel to far-off places in search of "wild" nature and undiscovered lands. The social and ecological values of modern tourism have their roots in this search for the foreign and exotic. Tourism developed out of the same social context that fostered U.S. scientific and military expeditions abroad. Elite travelers created, reproduced, and spread a mythos and a habitus of tropical exploration that inspired generations of tourists.[7]

Following Roosevelt's travels reveals a key genealogical thread shaping the "nature" of twentieth century tourism. As a soldier, a politician, and a naturalist, he helped form the route of U.S. empire and also the route of tropical tourism (see Chapter 1).[8] Beginning in 1898, Roosevelt along with his unit of Rough Riders sailed from Tampa, Florida to the southern shores of Cuba where they fought against Spanish forces

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[6] My use of the term "adventure" comes from George Simmel's classic essay on the subject. He argues that "the most general form of adventure is its dropping out of the continuity of life." See George Simmel, "The Adventurer," in *George Simmel on Individuality and Social Forms*, Donald N. Levine, ed., 187-198, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press). Simmel's essay on adventure was originally published in 1911.

[7] My theoretical framing for this chapter linking tourism, exploration, and adventure builds on contributions found in the edited collection, Robert J. Gordon and Luis Antonio Vivanco, eds., *Tarzan was an Eco-tourist: And Other Tales in the Anthropology of Adventure* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006).

[8] To learn more about Roosevelt's life as "adventurer," see Michael R. Canfield, *Theodore Roosevelt in the Field* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015).

near the city of Santiago. They returned home as national heroes.[9] Almost immediately after the war, the triumphant colonel was elected Governor of New York. His exploits in Cuba transferred into political capital. As President of the United States, Roosevelt continued to engage in and publicize the value of foreign travel.[10] In 1906, he was the first sitting U.S. president to go abroad, sailing to Panama and Puerto Rico. The building of the Panama Canal was one of his proudest presidential moments. ("I took the Canal Zone and let Congress debate," he famously declared.) His overseas trip also marked the opening of a new era of U.S. travel to the Caribbean. "Uncle Sam" had supposedly conquered the tropics and made the region safe for the "white race."

In 1909, just three weeks after leaving the White House, the former president sought out new adventure. He returned to his boyhood passion collecting nature. "I sailed thither from New York," he wrote in a travelogue of the experience, "in charge of a scientific expedition sent out by the Smithsonian, to collect birds, mammals, reptiles, and plants, but especially specimens of big game, for the National Museum at Washington."[11] The Smithsonian-Roosevelt expedition traveled to British East Africa and collected over 23,000 natural history specimens.[12] The trip stimulated a new interest among the U.S. public in hunting and tourism to Africa.[13] The killing of thousands of animals, Roosevelt

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[9] Reflecting back on the War of 1898 and his friendship with Colonel Leonard Wood, Roosevelt wrote, "we both felt very strongly that such a war would be as righteous as it would be advantageous to the honor and the interests of the nation." Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1902), 13.

[10] For more on Roosevelt's overseas travels, Kelly Enright, *The Maximum of Wilderness: The Jungle in the American Imagination* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2012), 9-34.

[11] Theodore Roosevelt, *African Game Trails* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910), 3.

[12] The mammals alone from the Smithsonian-Roosevelt expedition numbered 5,013 specimens, according to Smithsonian staff, and included nine lions, thirteen rhinoceros, twenty zebras, eight warthogs, and four hyenas. A number of giraffes, elephants, cheetahs, leopards and other big game animals were also shot and killed. Many of those animals remained on display at the National Museum in Washington D.C. until recently, when in 2003 the Smithsonian finally updated its exhibits. In 2003, the Smithsonian opened the new Kenneth E. Behring Family Hall of Mammals, featuring new mounts and displays. See, "Celebrating 100 Years: Smithsonian-Roosevelt African Expedition," accessed March 11, 2015, www.mnh.si.edu/onehundredyears/expeditions/SI-Roosevelt_Expedition.html

[13] My focus is on Caribbean travel, but at times, the narrative shifts to thinking about the tropics more broadly. Among explorers and tourists, the tropics were often viewed as a monolithic region, which allowed fantasies and generalizations to travel across distinct geographic and cultural boundaries, from South and Central America all the way to sub-Saharan Africa. See, Enright, *The Maximum of the Wilderness*; Trevor Simmons, "Selling the African Wilds: An Economic History of the Safari Tourism Industry in East Africa, 1900-1963," (Dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin, 2015); Robert

believed, was a great adventure in the service of science. Anticipating criticism, he explained, "I can be condemned only if the existence of the National Museum, the American Museum of Natural History, and all similar zoological institutions are to be condemned."[14]

The twenty-sixth President of the United States claimed to follow a noble tradition. He saw himself as a man of action, of travel, and of science. After running for president for a third term and losing in 1912, he returned again to the tropics, this time, to the Amazon on an expedition sponsored by the American Museum of Natural History. He almost died. He wrote afterward that it was "a hard and somewhat dangerous but very successful trip."[15] The river they explored was renamed in honor of Roosevelt. Four years later, in 1916, he made his final trip through the Caribbean to celebrate the founding of a tropical research station in British Guiana. He explained that the station "marks the beginning of a wholly new type of biological work, capable of literally illimitable expansion."[16] Indeed, the former president was deeply committed to ideas of expansion – through exploration, scientific knowledge, and territorial conquest.

Roosevelt's overseas experiences reflected a common sentiment embraced by men who grew up, more often than not, racially white and raised on stories of masculine adventure. The tropics, whether in the Americas or beyond, promised an escape from the mundaneness of modernity; the opportunity to engage in a manly "strenuous life." Travel

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Fletcher, *Romancing the Wild: Cultural Dimensions of Ecotourism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014).

[14] Quoted in Patricia O'Toole, *When Trumpets Call: Theodore Roosevelt After the White House,* (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2005), 67. The U.S. press heralded Roosevelt an adventurer. *Scribner's Magazine* paid him, in advance, $50,000 to write about his experiences. The book he wrote about his travels, *African Game Trails*, became a best seller. "The thing that kept me in Africa for a year," he told admiring audiences, "was that I was doing scientific work and that every day I was there I saw not only the world of Africa in the present, but I saw the world of America and Europe in the past." Also see Roosevelt's lecture series, "A Zoological Trip Through Africa: A Lecture by Theodore Roosevelt, in the Science Series of the Throop Extension Courses, March 21, 1911," *Bulletin, California Institute of Technology* XX (July 1911).

[15] "Col. Roosevelt's Official Report on the Discovery of His River," *New York Times*, May 27, 1914. Also see Roosevelt's travelogue of the expedition, *Through the Brazilian Wilderness* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1914); For a history of the Roosevelt expedition to Brazil, Candice Millard, *The River of Doubt: Theodore Roosevelt's Darkest Journey* (New York: Broadway Books, 2005).

[16] Theodore Roosevelt, introduction to *Tropical Wild Life in British Guiana: Zoological Contributions from the Tropical Research Station of the New York Zoological Society,* by for William Beebe, G. Inness Hartley, and Paul G. Howes (New York: The New York Zoological Society, 1917), ix-xi.

was the chance to discover nature and be active. Men like Roosevelt believed that the tropics were an extension of a frontier and wilderness ethic, where "they might enjoy the regeneration and renewal that came from sleeping under the stars, participating in blood sports, and living off the land."[17] In the early twentieth century, Roosevelt's journeys embodied an emerging culture of tropical travel. He also offered a high-profile role model. His social position ensured that he would pass on ideas and practices to future travelers. His stories, covered heavily in the U.S. media, inspired a generation of men. A young Ernest Hemingway, for example, dreamed of going on a naturalist expedition. "When Roosevelt came to Oak Park on a whistle-stop tour after his African safari of the previous year," according to Patrick Hemingway (the author's grandson), "Ernest, in his own little khaki safari outfit, was standing alongside his grandfather Anson, cheering on the great African hunter and rough rider of San Juan Hill."[18] Roosevelt brought home a vision of an intriguing and exotic tropical world and in a very material way, laid out a path for future travelers to follow and experience.

The popular president, however, was not alone in creating and spreading a social and ecological ethos of tropical travel. In the early-to-mid twentieth century, institutions like the Smithsonian, the National Geographic Society, and the American Museum of Natural History in New York also shaped how hopeful travelers understood and experienced the tropics. Roosevelt was one of many. Explorers and naturalists outlined social practices for experiencing, possessing, and appreciating the tropics in the modern era of tourism.[19] Through the power of example, they taught fellow travelers how to wonder and wander.

In this chapter, we look at one institution, the Smithsonian, and a select group of explorer-scientists to describe, to give feeling, to the practices of adventure and tropical exploration that would fuel tourist experiences of nature and society in the tropics and

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[17] William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature," in *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature,* William Cronon, ed., (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1995), 78. Also see Enright, *The Maximum of Wilderness.*

[18] Patrick Hemingway, foreword to *Hemingway on Hunting*, by Ernest Hemingway (New York: Scribner, 2003), xxvi.

[19] Catherine A. Lutz and Jane L. Collins, *Reading National Geographic* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1993).

that would come to shape the "nature" of the Caribbean vacation. By paying close attention to the ideas and beliefs of these travelers, the analytical emphasis will be on travel behavior and experiences. The chapter offers a phenomenological read of naturalist exploration. We learn about travelers and their influence on future tourists not exclusively through their use of language but rather "by their behavior, by the totality of their deeds, by the consequences caused in life by their presence."[20] I closely follow their journeys to point to how tourists mimicked the naturalist adventure. The expedition model – the explorer's preferred method of tropical travel in the early twentieth century – became the tourist's dream and reality of an adventurous vacation. The tourism industry, over and over again, has recreated the experience of being "on safari," on an expedition. Through the stories of an earlier generation of travelers, I describe social practices – ways of traveling and also thinking about the tropics – that have been passed down from one generation to the next. Once the Caribbean became accessible and marketed as a tourist destination (Chapters 1 and 2), how would tourists in the early-to-mid twentieth century actually travel and make sense of their journey? Explorer-scientists offered high profiles examples of what it meant to venture through the tropical environment.

Diffusing Knowledge

For Roosevelt, national politics, expansion and natural history were profoundly linked.[21] "The foundation of our success as a country," he argued, depended on "scientific imagination."[22] He himself traveled and explored, but he also believed that it was the responsibility of government and society to foster and spread interest in both

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[20] Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus, and Other Essays*, Gustavo Aguilera, ed., (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), 11. Explaining phenomenology, Camus adds, "phenomenology declines to explain the world, it wants to be merely a description of actual experience… it resembles the projector that suddenly focuses on an image." For classic texts on phenomenology, see Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: A General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology* (New York: Collier Books, 1963); Martin Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982); Jean Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1956).

[21] On the relationship between national identity and nature, Charlotte M. Porter, *The Eagle's Nest: Natural History and American Idea, 1812-1842* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press: 1986); Margaret Welch, *The Book of Nature: Natural History in the United States 1825-1875* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998).

[22] "A Zoological Trip Through Africa: A Lecture by Theodore Roosevelt, in the Science Series of the Throop Extension Courses, March 21, 1911," 6.

travel and scientific research. As early as 1882, for example, at the age of twenty-four, Roosevelt decided to donate his childhood natural history collection to the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History; the same year he was elected to the New York State Assembly (his first political office).[23] The ambitious politician, over the following decades, would become one of the Smithsonian Institution's most powerful and vocal supporters.[24]

As president, from 1901 to 1909, Roosevelt advocated for an unprecedented increase in federal funding for museum construction, scientific exploration, and nature education. In 1904, he pushed for funding for the construction of a new National Museum (the same building that stands today). The Smithsonian's exhibition halls, completed in 1910, expanded 220,000 square feet and were dedicated entirely to natural history.[25] The Smithsonian, which critics like Mark Twain mocked as a "poor, useless, innocent, mildewed old fossil" in the late nineteenth century, emerged at the turn of the twentieth century as the nation's premier research and educational institution.[26]

The Smithsonian became, and still remains, the most important institution in the United States to study, explore, collect, and make sense of the tropics. As Pamela Henson, the Director of the Smithsonian Institution Archives, told the press as recently as 2007, "We [at the Smithsonian] are what I call a temple of national identity. What we put on center stage says a lot about what the U.S is – our culture, history, what we believe in terms of science."[27] The Smithsonian and its history also reveal a lot about what it has meant to be a U.S. citizen traveling abroad. At the Smithsonian, science, industry, and cultural identity merged to inspire a national ethos of exploration and discovery.[28]

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[23] Theodore Roosevelt, *An Autobiography* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), 19.
[24] In this sense, Roosevelt was following the footsteps of his father, who had also been an influential patron of science education.
[25] *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of The Smithsonian Institution, Showing the Operations, Expenditures, and Condition of the Institution for the Year Ending June 30 1912* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1913), 3.
[26] Mark Twain, *The Innocents Abroad, or The New Pilgrims' Progress* (Hartford, Connecticut: American Publishing Company, 1869), 23.
[27] Elizabeth Blair, "Smithsonian, Congress Share a Turbulent History," *National Public Radio*, May 20, 2007, accessed March 14, 2015, http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=10283521
[28] Donna Haraway's observations about the cultural importance of the Museum of Natural History in New York equally apply to the Museum in Washington. She writes "one is entering a space that sacralizes democracy, Protestant Christianity, adventure, science, and commerce." See Donna Haraway, "Teddy Bear

Today, in the early twenty-first century, millions of students and families still look to the Smithsonian for "scientific imagination." To be a witness – to be a visitor – is to be a part of the nation. U.S. culture, the museum's staff reminds us, is about discovering new worlds, exploring the "frontiers" of civilization. Over 28 million people toured the Institution's exhibits last year. The Smithsonian is the biggest museum complex in the world, housing natural history specimens and cultural artifacts from around the globe.[29] (Often called the "nation's attic," it more appropriately should be called a "global attic.") In museum exhibits, and also on television programs and in books and magazines, the Smithsonian and its staff are heralded as national heroes bringing the world home to domestic audiences. Scientists at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama, as one recent television program on the National Geographic channel reported, have uncovered "the secret life of the rainforest." The program described one scientist, studying bats, as the "batwoman of Panama," while another scientist, working in the rainforest canopy, was depicted as "a real life Tarzan, never more at home than when he's in the canopy."[30] Today, if one wants to travel and explore distant locales as a tourist that can also be arranged with the Smithsonian. The institution is an international tour operator:

> Discover the beauty of small group travel with Smithsonian Journeys… You'll venture beyond the highlights of each destination and go off the beaten path. With 24 fabulous itineraries to choose from, our small group of escorted tours are also excellent travel value with virtually everything included in your tour price, such as international airfare. Enjoy quality accommodations, comprehensive sightseeing, and lectures by your Smithsonian Study Leader, as well as the

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Patriarchy: Taxidermy in the Garden of Eden, New York City, 1908-36." in *The Haraway Reader,* Donna Haraway (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 151-197. The National Air and Space Museum and the National Museum of Natural History, the two most popular Smithsonian museums, tell the story of the frontiers of U.S. history: the American West, tropical nature, the deep ocean, and outer space. To think through the relationship between colonial frontiers and space exploration further, see Peter Redfield, *Space in the Tropics: From Convicts to Rockets in French Guiana* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

[29] "Visitor Statistics," *Newsroom of the Smithsonian*, accessed March 13, 2015, http://newsdesk.si.edu/about/stats

[30] *Secret Life of the Rainforest*, Smithsonian Channel. accessed March 11, 2015, http://www.smithsonianchannel.com/shows/secret-life-of-the-rainforest/0/141211

> expertise of a top-notch Tour Director. Choose a favorite destination from Europe, Asia, and Africa to South America and Australia.[31]

Museums, naturalist exploration, childhood dreams, and tourism feed off one another. They are interdependent. This relationship, however, is not new. It can be traced to the beginning of the twentieth century, and perhaps even further back in time. To study the Smithsonian is to study a history linking exploration, scientific research and education with the nature of tourism. Its institutional history provides an illuminating window into understanding how the tropical environment became a fundamental part of U.S. traveling culture.[32]

The Smithsonian was established in 1846 and received its original funding and its name from an Englishman. James Smithson, an amateur scientist, a student of the European enlightenment, died in Genoa in 1829, and despite never having visited the United States, decided to leave his entire estate to the U.S. government with the specific request that the money be used to found in Washington, under the name of the Smithsonian Institution, an "establishment for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men." In August 1846, twenty-seven years after his death, Congress finally passed legislation bringing the Smithsonian Institution into existence. The question remained though: what type of "knowledge" would the Smithsonian "increase and diffuse" and for what purpose?[33]

In the mid-nineteenth century, the Smithsonian became the collecting house for the possessions of conquered territories. The museum's first natural history collections focused on the western part of the North American continent. Research and exhibit

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[31] *Smithsonian Journeys*, accessed March 11, 2015, http://www.smithsonianjourneys.org

[32] To better understand the role of museums shaping popular cultural beliefs and practices, particularly as it pertains to the way the "West" has conceptualized the "exotic" or the tropics more broadly, see James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1988); Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Karsten Schubert, *The Curator´s Egg: The Evolution of the Museum Concept from the French Revolution to the Present Day* (London: Ridinghouse, 2009); Michael Taussig, *My Cocaine Museum* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2004); Kevin Walsh, *The Representation of the Past: Museums and Heritage in the Post-Modern World* (New York and London: Routledge, 1992); Steven Conn, *Museums and American Intellectual Life, 1876-1926* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

[33] For more on the life of James Smithson, see Heather Ewing, *The Lost World of James Smithson: Science, Revolution, and the Birth of the Smithsonian* (London, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2007).

strengths paralleled the growth of U.S. military and commercial power. "This was natural," as the sixth secretary of the Smithsonian, Alexander Wetmore, believed "because of the military and other expeditions that were going off into the far reaches of our territories."[34] Military and railroad surveyors assembled natural history specimens and also Native American artifacts for the museum. The Smithsonian of the mid-to-late nineteenth century concentrated on the "increase and diffusion of knowledge" about the American west.[35]

The focus of Smithsonian research and its collections, however, began to shift in the early twentieth century. The southern frontier moved to the forefront of scientific and public interest. After the War of 1898 and President Theodore Roosevelt's self-proclaimed taking of Panama in 1903, the tropics increasingly entered into the national consciousness. There emerged an immense thirst for knowledge about the nature and culture of newly acquired territories: from Puerto Rico, Cuba, the Philippines, Hawaii, Panama, Haiti, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, across the Caribbean and Pacific. Charles Walcott, the fourth Secretary of the Smithsonian, noted that "the construction of the Panama Canal aroused so greatly public interest in the aboriginal remains of the West Indies that the bureau has arranged for more extended studies in West Indian archeology."[36] The Smithsonian's research and collecting efforts in the Caribbean would also include extensive biological studies of the region's flora and fauna.

The rise of U.S. empire in the Caribbean made scientific studies of the region extremely important to both the government and U.S. businessmen. How could the nation govern, exploit or enjoy the fruits of expansion without intimately knowing the region's

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[34] Letter from Alexander Wetmore to Frank Chapman, June 23, 1943. Record Unit 7006, Box 4, Alexander Wetmore Papers, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington D.C.

[35] Ibid. Wetmore explained that: "In that early days Baird [Assistant Secretary and then Secretary of the Smithsonian] had his hands full with birds, reptiles, and fishes of the western half of our country." The Smithsonian would therefore "send all the South American specimens to Sclater [Secretary of the Zoological Society] in London who was working in that field." In the nineteenth century, the regions of Latin America, Africa, and Asia were essentially divided up between the British, French, and other European empires and their supporting scientific institutions.

[36] *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of The Smithsonian Institution, Showing the Operations, Expenditures, and Condition of the Institution for the Year Ending June 30 1912* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1913), 25.

nature?[37] Institutions like the Smithsonian in Washington D.C. and the American Museum of Natural History in New York took on prominent roles in this new era of expansion. They viewed themselves, as the historian Philip Pauly explained, as "a medium of expression between authoritative science in America and the people."[38] Museum growth, scientific expeditions to the American tropics, and U.S. imperial expansion occurred side by side. This historical process mimicked earlier European imperial encounters with the tropics. Territorial conquest, as the historian Richard Grove documented, encouraged Europeans "to understand unfamiliar floras, faunas and geographies, both for commercial purposes and to counter environmental and health risks." It "propelled many erstwhile physicians and surgeons into consulting positions and employment with the trading companies as fully fledged professional and state scientists."[39] The institutionalization and popularization of scientific research depended on imperial concerns. The Spanish, British, French, Dutch, and Portuguese empires all had created scientific and educational institutions to support their overseas interests.[40] What Europe had done before – merging science, commerce, and knowledge production to govern overseas colonies – the United States embraced and improved upon in the early twentieth century.

The Smithsonian, which essentially had no collections or scientists focused on the American tropics in the mid-to-late nineteenth century, refocused its research efforts southward. The institution strove to be a center for tropical research. By the middle of the twentieth century, as one Smithsonian scientist remembered, "almost all of the people in the United States National Herbarium [a branch of the National Museum of Natural History] were interested in tropical plants, and mostly of the Americas, and thinking about it, looking at that group, I don't think there was anyone who was interested in

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[37] For a related argument, Phillip J. Pauly, "The World and All That Is in It: The National Geographic Society, 1888-1918," *American Quarterly* 31 (1979): 517-32; Also, Lutz and Collins, *Reading National Geographic*.
[38] Pauly, "The World and All That Is in It," 517.
[39] Richard Grove, *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens, and the Origins of Environmentalism, 1600-1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 8.
[40] Bernard Bailyn "Introduction: Reflections on Some Major Themes," in *Soundings in Atlantic History: Latent Structures and Intellectual Currents, 1500-1830*, Bernard Bailyn and Patricia L. Denault, eds., (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2009), 28.

[anything] other than the American tropics."[41] When the U.S. government conquered territories in the tropics, scientists gained a new field of study, and the public found a new object of desire.

The Smithsonian and its staff of scientists offered practical knowledge about the tropical environment. But scientific research, as the historian David Arnold reminds us, has also "for more than a century had a profound influence on historical thinking." The instruments of science also provided epistemological tools for embracing more subjective constructs as well. "Ideas about the natural world," Arnold pointed out, "have developed and informed our very understanding of history and culture."[42] The tropics, not unlike the American west before it, became the symbolic location for modern U.S. imaginations of "wild" and "pristine" nature.[43] The geographic boundaries of U.S. imaginaries expanded with the increase of scientific knowledge about the tropics. "From the most scientific point of view," as the ecologists Warder C. Allee and Marjorie Hill Allee told young readers in 1925, "there is still the glamour of romance in the tropics. The beauty of the golden-flowering tecoma tree, the absurdity of the great bill of the toucan, the drama of the long struggle between white men and yellow fever – these are as keenly fascinating when seen with wide-open critical eyes as ever they were in any legendary tale."[44] Storytelling and popular entertainment wove deeply into the fabric of scientific research. The public, little by little, learned how to imagine its new tropical territories in a scientific way.

Reports of scientific expeditions in the tropics became new age parables of adventure for the U.S. public. The Smithsonian organized dozens of high-profile expeditions in the early twentieth century. The century also began with an intense push to expand the role of museums in educating the public about natural history. Children visiting the halls of museums, as Henry Osborn of the American Museum of Natural

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[41] William L. Stern, Oral History Interview, July 2, 1997, History of Tropical Biology, Record Unit 9606, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington D.C.
[42] David Arnold, *The Problem of Nature: Environment, Culture, and European Expansion* (Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell, 1996), 2.
[43] See Enright, *The Maximum of Wilderness;* Grove, *Green Imperialism*; Arnold, *The Problem with Nature;* Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*.
[44] Warder C. Allee and Marjorie Hill Allee, *Jungle Island* (Rand McNally & Company: Chicago and New York, 1925).

History claimed, "become reverent, more truthful, and more interested in the simple and natural laws of their being and better citizens of the future through each visit."[45] In the context of rapid urbanization and the loss of everyday contact with nature, museums would supposedly bring nature and history to the city, and teach young Americans about the natural order of life. Nearly two million people annually visited the Smithsonian, and its collection of patriotic and natural artifacts, in the early twentieth century. "On public view there are found," at the Smithsonian, Alexander Wetmore told radio listeners, "skeletons of huge dinosaurs and other animals of the past, groups of mounted animals collected in Africa by Theodore Roosevelt, life-size groups of Indians and other peoples fill the halls of the Natural History Building."[46] Natural history exhibits, it was believed, could offer the public a model for thinking about and traveling through time, space, and different natures. They would teach visitors how to wonder about and travel to far-off destinations (which were no longer so far away).

Mimesis and Life History

The genealogy of Caribbean tourism is much older than tourists or tourism developers often recognize. From the era of Roosevelt in the early twentieth century to the era of twenty-first century tourism, the tropics have remained a fantastical "other" nature to explore, exploit, and also protect. "When we go to the tropics, perhaps as eco-tourists to see the jungle," according to scholar Nancy Leys Stepan, "we imagine ourselves stepping back in time, into a purer or less spoilt place than our own; we hope to see plants and animals quite unlike, and more exotic than, those familiar to us; we expect somehow to come closer to nature in the tropics or to find that objects, or ourselves, achieve there a kind of transcendence."[47] The beliefs of earlier explorer-scientists and

[45] Quoted in Haraway, "Teddy Bear Patriarchy," 189.
[46] Alexander Wetmore, "The Ninetieth Anniversary of the Smithsonian Institution," Radio Talk, WMAL, August 12, 1936, Alexander Wetmore Papers, Record Unit 7006, Box 233, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington D.C.
[47] Nancy Leys Stepan, *Picturing Tropical Nature* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2001), 11.

modern tourists, in that regard, were not that different. Generations of U.S. travelers and tourists have imagined the nature of the tropics as awaiting discovery.[48]

Tourism is a copy, an imitation of an imitation, of a very old model of travel. It depends, on what Walter Benjamin called, the "mimetic faculty," that is, the cultural inclination to mimic or imitate observed human behavior.[49] Tourists have followed and mimicked the social practices and beliefs of earlier travelers. "What biologist, or indeed young man who has read the *Voyage of the Beagle*," as one Smithsonian scientist described his own travel desires, "not been as anxious to see those far-off places as he had been to see Friday's footprints on the sands of Tobago."[50] The explorers of the past became examples for future travelers to imitate. The history of European and North American exploration in the tropics did not so much pass, or fade away, but instead accumulate. The lessons piled up; origins often erased but not forgotten. Expeditions from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, mimicking older practices, in the words of historian Robert Kohler, "gave countless consumers instructions in understanding nature in a naturalistic or scientific way. They were the cultural software of the middle-class outdoor vacation, giving a simulated experience of nature-going and endowing it with intellectual purpose."[51] Explorer-scientists taught the public that visiting nature could be more than "leisure." It could be "recreational," spiritually and intellectually uplifting. Tourism was also active.

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[48] Mark Carey, "Inventing Caribbean Climates: How Science, Medicine, and Tourism Changed Tropical Weather from Deadly to Healthy," *Osiris* 26 (2011): 129-141; Stephen Frenkel,"Jungle Stories: North American Representations of Tropical Panama," *Geographical Review* 86 (1997): 317-33; "Old Theories in New Places: On Environmental Determinism and Bioregionalism," *The Professional Geographer* 46 (1994): 289-95.

[49] Walter Benjamin, "Doctrine of the Similar," in *New German Critique* 17, Special Walter Benjamin Issue (1979): 65-69; Also see, Michael Taussig, *Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses* (New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall, Inc., 1993).

[50] Waldo L. Schmitt, "Knowledge and the Zest of Life: By uniting the young and the old in the imaginative consideration of learning," Speech given at Rutgers University for the Inauguration of Lewis Webster as University President, May 8, 1952, Record Unit 007231, Box 73, Waldo L. Schmitt Papers, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington D.C. The story of *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe, which Schmitt notes, has continuously been a favorite read by scholars, artists, and the public at large: from the anthropologist Franz Boas to the acclaimed film director Ridley Scott. To learn more about Robinson Crusoe's relationships to European colonialism in the Caribbean, see Peter Hulme, *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean, 1492-1797* (London and New York: Methuen, 1986).

[51] Robert E. Kohler, *All Creatures: Naturalists, Collectors, and Biodiversity, 1850-1950* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2006), 88.

The idea of the tropics as the location of a more primitive or wild nature has a long running tradition in Western thought. Modern views of the tropics can be traced back to the environmentally determinist thinking of the ancient and medieval world – as expressed by Greek philosophers like Hippocrates, Aristotle and Herodotus, and later, Enlightenment thinkers like Montesquieu and Rousseau. Over 2,000 years ago, Hippocrates in his treaty *On Airs, Waters, and Places* presented "the environmental idea that human minds, bodies, even whole societies, were shaped by their geographical local, their climate and topography."[52] Generations of Western thinkers and travelers have followed this line of reasoning: differences in nature and society could be understood along climatic and geographic lines. These theories, organizing nature and culture, traveled with European naturalists and explorers across the Atlantic to the Americas. And they have followed us into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. "The geopolitical paradigm that Columbus and his contemporaries inherited from classical antiquity," in the words of historian Nicholas Wey-Gomez, "remains alive and well in the West."[53] To understand modern perceptions and fantasies, though, we do not need to return to the time of Hippocrates or later, Columbus. There are other means, more closely connected to modern experience, to make sense of the genealogy of Western imaginations and engagements with the tropics.

The biographies and the journeys of explorers and scientists from the early-to-mid twentieth century helped assemble the fabric of U.S. traveling culture. Behind every naturalist, behind every expedition, and behind every museum exhibit, in the words of Donna Haraway, "lies a profusion of objects and social interactions which can be recomposed to tell a biography embracing major themes for the twentieth century."[54] Tourism and its valorization of tropical nature are part of that biography. In the back and forth process between individual and society, explorers and scientists became both architects and mediators of popular knowledge and experiences of the tropics. Social

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[52] David Arnold, *The Problem of Nature,* 17. Also see, Clarence J. Glacken, *Traces on the Rhodian Shore: Nature and Culture in Western Thought from Ancient Times to the End of the Eighteenth Century*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), 82-88.
[53] Nicolás Wey Gómez, *The Tropics of Empire: Why Columbus sailed South to the Indies* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2008), 57.
[54] Haraway, "Teddy Bear Patriarchy*,"* 152.

influence did not just manifest itself in museum exhibits, published articles or headline stories of adventure. Naturalists of course published, but they also shared their stories of collecting and traveling with the public through other mediums – through radio and film, public and university lectures, museum exhibits, and everyday conversations with people in their community.[55] Their influence went far beyond the production of scientific papers. The anthropologist Hugh Raffles' observation about nineteenth century natural scientists in the Amazon, in particular Henry Wallace Bates, also holds for the twentieth century and tropical exploration more generally:

> Bates's Amazons circulated not only in his letters, taxonomic papers, and travel writings, but also with the butterflies and beetles he sent sailing out across the ocean, and through the gathering networks of locality that his travels helped ramify. And, it was not only in the clubs and libraries of Victorian London and in the botanical gardens and exemplary exhibitions staged throughout the empire that the Amazon materialized. It also happened right here, in place, in the urban and rural landscapes of the American tropics, in the agonistic and often claustrophobic spaces of intersubjective encounter.[56]

Explorer-scientists created the tropics for northern imaginations in writing, in exhibitions, and through the networks of travel they forged for travelers to follow. A diverse group of explorers, naturalists and collectors traveled to the American tropics and brought their experiences home. The network of influence was extensive. Famous explorers, well-endowed research institutions, humble professors and teachers, and relatively unknown travelers all played a role in circulating "scientific" ways of engaging and consuming the tropics.

The next section follows the travels of one scientist, George Wheeler, who made a small yet important contribution to the structure of experience guiding U.S. tourists into the tropics. The details of his journey form a biography linking tourism and science in the early twentieth century Caribbean. In his story of travel, there emerges a series of

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[55] See Marcel Chotkowski LaFollette, *Science on the Air: Popularizers and Personalities on Radio and Early Television* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); Lutz and Collins, *Reading National Geographic*.

[56] Hugh Raffles, *In Amazonia: A Natural History* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2002), 515.

important themes shaping the relationship between science, environmental knowledge, and tourism. We can see: commercial interests and corporate expansion into the Caribbean via the United Fruit Company; infrastructural and financial support via the U.S. government; scientists and professors from universities and museums guiding the next generation of travelers; and then scientists returning home to share the good news and encourage yet another generation. His trip, rather than being a unique adventure, was exemplary of a growing and influential web of U.S. explorer-scientists increasing and diffusing knowledge about the tropics. Roosevelt and the Smithsonian were not alone in their efforts.

Tropical Travels of George Wheeler

On May 31, 1924, a young scientist by the name of George Wheeler boarded a United Fruit Company (UFCO) steamship docked in Brooklyn, New York. Five days later, the *S.S. Ulua* entered the harbor of Havana, Cuba. It was Wheeler's first time in the tropics. That summer, he traveled as a man of science and also a man on vacation. During his first day in Cuba, for instance, he went sightseeing and drinking with a group of tourists. He reported in his diary on the quality and low price of piña coladas: "strained pineapple juice very good – 20 cents." He also noted the complimentary beer they received on their automobile tour of the city, which "freely do the Americans imbibe."

The next morning, perhaps a little hung over, Wheeler was on the outskirts of Havana collecting ants. The microcosm of his experience – as a 27 year-old white-male scientist in the tropics – reveals scientific and touristic travel to be intimately linked.[57] Over the course of three months in 1924, Wheeler traveled from Cuba to Costa Rica to Panama, touring and studying his way across the Caribbean. He traveled and drank with tourists, studied with fellow scientists, and relied on countless local people to produce his travel experience.

[57] The record of George Wheeler's trip is part of the Smithsonian Institution Archives. It includes a travel diary, personal correspondence and photos, along with scientific pamphlets, maps, and an oral interview. All narrative details come from: George C. Wheeler, Record Unit 009560, Box 1, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington D.C.

After his brief visit in Cuba, Wheeler headed for the banana and cacao plantations of Costa Rica. He was on a UFCO Research Fellowship and his scholarship stipulated that he study and collect tropical insects threatening the company's agricultural investments. In the 1920s, bananas were the second most consumed fruit in the United States, and UFCO was the number one supplier. The company controlled vast tracts of land on the Caribbean coast of Central America. To protect its investments, UFCO employed a legion of full-time and visiting scientists. Plant diseases like Panama disease and insects could, and often did, wreak havoc on the company's monoculture plantations.[58]

In Costa Rica, Wheeler's typical day involved taking the company train and collecting specimens in the surrounding fields. He noted in his diary: "we got off and collected for an hour while the train went out on a branch line and returned. We discovered the formicarium [nest] of that huge ponerine ant…[and] we dug into it."[59] In between field studies, Wheeler also found time for recreational activities. One morning before collecting insects, he went looking for "Indian" artifacts. UFCO's resident plant pathologist, three Costa Rican laborers, and himself, he wrote in his diary, "tried digging into Indian graves – little success. Found a few fragments of pottery – one the head of a parrot, which I have kept." UFCO's vast network of ships and trains supported not only banana production, but it seemed, amateur archaeology and touristic activities. On the weekend, the young scientist also took the company train to the capital, San José, for nighttime entertainment. He attended a vaudeville show. The experience, though, disappointed. He recalled: "the actors talk too fast; I could understand very little." Depending on the moment, Wheeler could be a natural scientist, agronomist, tourist or adventurous grave robber.[60]

On the evening of June 28, about a month into his trip, Wheeler boarded another UFCO ship sailing for Panama. He spent the rest of the summer studying entomology at

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[58] John Soluri, *Banana Cultures: Agriculture, Consumption, and Environmental Change in Honduras and the United States* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005).
[59] George C. Wheeler, Record Unit 009560, Box 1, Smithsonian Institution Archives.
[60] Ibid.

the newly opened Barro Colorado Island (BCI) Research Station.[61] When U.S. engineers flooded the land (ten years earlier) to create the Panama Canal, a small mountain of 476 feet transformed into an island sanctuary for nearby flora and fauna. Eight miles of a former mountain ridge, in the middle of Panama and occupied by local farmers for centuries, became an island of "pristine" tropical nature for U.S. scientists to explore and research.[62] The nature of Barro Colorado Island, which would become the home of the Smithsonian's most important tropical research station in the Americas, was actually the product of human engineering. The U.S. government's intervention on the isthmus created a tropical outpost not only for the U.S. military and business interests, but also for the U.S. scientific community. Barro Colorado Island, as the botanist and patron of science, David Fairchild, explained was "only a week's voyage from New York, and within easy reach of excellent hotels and restaurants, stores of reagents, glassware and apparatus, and all the living-equipment which a population of ten thousand Americans has been able to devise."[63] Wheeler, who arrived in 1924, was one of BCI's first scientific guests.

Four years earlier, in 1920, the National Research Council in Washington D.C. founded the Institute for Research in Tropical America. The new Institute included Executive Committee members from the Smithsonian Institution, Harvard University, the American Museum of Natural History, the University of Michigan, and the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences. The committee decided at their first meeting that "the Institute shall be incorporated for the purpose of promoting research in tropical America, including exploration and the establishment of laboratories and research stations."[64] The

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[61] For the United Fruit Company's business interests in and around the Panama Canal Zone, see Ashley Carse, *Beyond the Big Ditch: Politics, Ecology, and Infrastructure at the Panama Canal* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2014), 133-156.

[62] Megan Raby, "Ark and Archive: Making a Place for Long-term Research on Barro Colorado Island, Panama." *Isis* 106 (December 2015): 797-824; Nils Lindahl Eliot, "A Memory of Nature: Ecotourism on Panama's Barro Colorado Island," *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies* 19 (December 2010): 237-259.

[63] David Fairchild, "Barro Colorado Island Laboratory: In the Rain Forest Jungle of Panama, on an Island in Gatun Lake, Conducted by the Institute for Research in Tropical America," *Journal of Hereditary* XV (March 1924): 109-110.

[64] United States Canal Zone Biological Area, Barro Colorado Island Records, 1918-1964, Record Unit 134, Box 1, Smithsonian Institution Archives.

Institute considered a number of locations in the American tropics for the establishment of its research station. They first studied the Santa Marta Mountains on the Caribbean coast of Colombia as a potential site. But, as one committee member recalled, "the most serious objection to the former region is that it is in a foreign country, and a Spanish one at that. I believe that this is real objection."[65]

Barro Colorado Island, on the other hand, was in the middle of the U.S. Panama Canal Zone. "It is the only place," Dr. Frank Chapman, of the American Museum of Natural History, reported, "within the jurisdiction of the United States where the flora and fauna characteristic of the American continents in the tropics can be studied."[66] Governor Jay Johnson Morrow of the U.S. Canal Zone accepted the Institute's request that the island be "withdrawn from settlement" and be "set aside by proclamation as a Biological Reserve for Research in Botany and Zoology."[67]

The group of scientists and administrators, heading up the Institute for Research in Tropical America, believed that the future of U.S. scientific research depended on access to the American tropics. As committee member Thomas Barbour explained, the new station would allow, "the teacher of biology with a small salary to have the thrill of Wallace, Bates, and Spruce when they first set foot in the Amazon Jungle… To see these trees (the great espave trees) and to work our carefully marked trails provide all the illusion of exploration, but with this great difference: we have pure drinking water."[68] In this sense, the station foreshadowed later efforts within the tourism industry to create the "illusion" of adventure while minimizing risk by removing the danger and uncertainty of tropical travel.

The research station, built on the back of U.S. imperial infrastructure and also Panamanian dispossession, was in its first year of operation when Wheeler arrived. Scientists depended heavily on support from both the U.S. government and private

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[65] A.G. Ruthven to Duncan S. Johnson, Botanical Garden, The John Hopkins University, March 28, 1923, Record Unit 134, Box 1, Smithsonian Institution Archives.
[66] "Barro Colorado Island," *Science*, December 1927, from Wheeler collection, Record Unit 009560, Box 1, Smithsonian Institution Archives.
[67] Thomas Barbour to A.G. Ruthven, July 14, 1923, Record Unit 134, Box 1, Smithsonian Institution Archives.
[68] Thomas Barbour, *Naturalist at Large* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1943), 196-197.

corporations to travel to the tropics. The United Fruit Company, for example, offered Wheeler free transportation in return for research insight. The Canal Zone government in Panama provided free transportation on its railroad, the privilege to shop in its commissaries, and government housing to visiting researchers. Meanwhile, the National Research Council built and ran the field station.[69] The networks facilitating Wheeler's trip also linked to universities back in the United States.

When Wheeler left for the American tropics, he was a recent graduate of Harvard's PhD program in Biology. For his dissertation, he focused on the morphology and taxonomy of ants, studying under the guidance of the famed entomologist William Morton Wheeler (of no familial relation). Many of Wheeler's ideas, that is the elder Dr. Wheeler, have been fundamental to scientific understandings of biodiversity, in particular his teaching of organicist theory – the idea that nature and the universe were an organic whole, everything had its place, often within a hierarchal structure of value.[70] W.M. Wheeler was also a leading figure in the establishment of the BCI Research Station. In a very direct way, he introduced his student protégé to the field of tropical travel and biology. It was his support that got young Wheeler research funding. In an interview, George Wheeler recalled, "I'd never been to the Tropics, and he [my advisor] wanted to give me a chance to go there, so he arranged for a fellowship with the United Fruit Company."[71] Wheeler's university connections introduced him to a larger network making his travels possible.

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[69] The institutional connections Wheeler relied on can be seen clearly in his working relationship with James Zetek, who had proved to be a useful mediator between the Canal Zone and the Republic of Panama. Zetek was named custodian of the Barro Colorado Research station. "No person could possibly be found more suited to the position," Thomas Barbour wrote. "His long familiarity with social and biological conditions on the Isthmus makes him extremely valuable." Smithsonian representative on the Committee made the same recommendation: "Zetek can be depended upon to act as a local representative here. He is on friendly and intimate terms with [President] Porras and could act as a go-between if this is desired." Zetek was a close friend of Panama's president, Belisario Porras, and was a strong advocate of foreign development for the small Central American nation, whether it was for scientific research, tourism, or agribusiness. See correspondence between A.S. Hitchcock and Thomas Barbour, June 1923, Record Unit 134, Box 1, Smithsonian Institution Archives.

[70] For a discussion of William Morton Wheeler's organicist theory, see Donna Haraway, "Teddy Bear Patriarchy," 151-197. For more onWheeler's life and works, see Mary Alice Evans and Howard Ensign Evans, *William Morton Wheeler, Biologist* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).

[71] George C. Wheeler, Record Unit 009560, Box 1, Smithsonian Institution Archives.

The same year BCI was founded, W.M. Wheeler wrote an article explaining his commitment to student travel, exploration, and research in the tropics:

> Not only do many of us wear out our most valuable tissues converting the graduate students into mere vehicles of our own interests, prepossessions and specialties but nearly all of us fail to excite in them that spirit of adventure which has in the past yielded such remarkable results in the development of our science…We have in the Philippines and at our very doors in the West Indies, Mexico, Central and South America the most marvelous faunas and floras in the world.[72]

This "spirit of adventure," as Roosevelt and many others believed, was fundamentally connected to tropical travel. W.M. Wheeler and his colleagues at the Institute not only envisioned, but helped enact their plan for the future development of biological tropical research. Their efforts, however, depended on the expansion of U.S. political, economic, and transportation networks into the Caribbean (see Chapter 1).

In August 1924, George Wheeler returned home to his new teaching position at Syracuse University. The knowledge and experience he gained from his travels was useful to U.S. companies, the U.S. government, fellow scientists, and also to U.S. students. At the university, Wheeler became a recognized expert in tropical biology. The local newspaper in Syracuse published articles about his travels. He also received a number of invitations to lecture about his discoveries. For the student Science Club at Syracuse, for example, he gave a lecture entitled "Biological Work in Central America." For the Faculty Club, he gave another presentation, with "illustrations." His teaching and research, upon his return, were infused with personal travel experience, first hand field knowledge, and also a small collection of tropical insects, which he accumulated during the trip. Wheeler, a relatively obscure figure in the wider scientific community, had brought the story of the American tropics home.[73] Retracing the stories of scientists like Wheeler is crucial for understanding how future travelers would also navigate the region.

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[72] William Morton Wheeler, "The Dry-Rot of Our Academic Biology," *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors* 9 (March 1923): 8-10.
[73] George C. Wheeler, Record Unit 009560, Box 1, Smithsonian Institution Archives.

Whether famous or everyday, teachers and scientists spread a similar message: the magic of the tropics was still waiting for discovery.

As part of the story leading up to Wheeler's trip, we should also note – that even before graduate school – he had worked with another famous biologist encouraging tropical travel. At the Rice Institute in Houston, Texas, Wheeler completed his undergraduate studies under the guidance of Julian Huxley. Wheeler believed that Professor Huxley "was responsible for my going into biology."[74] Huxley came from a long line of British intellectuals popularizing and satirizing science. His brother was Aldous Huxley, the author of *A Brave New World* and many well-known novels and travel books (see Chapter 4). Their grandfather, Thomas Huxley, was affectionately known as "Darwin's bulldog" for his defense of the theory of natural selection. Julian himself was a passionate advocate of science education and international travel. Later in life, after helping found the Biology Department at Rice, Julian would become the first Director of UNESCO, and a founding member of the World Wildlife Fund, two organizations which have been extremely important to the development of nature conservation and tourism.[75]

Wheeler, as I have tried to show with this winding geographic and educational journey, was a living point of connection between a scientific establishment of professors and museum researchers and a public eager to learn about and experience seemingly exotic nature. He lived and traveled *in the middle* between science and tourism. Within his personal history, we can literally observe less than five degrees separation between Charles Darwin and Thomas Huxley and a tourist drinking in Havana and Panama. As one of Wheeler's former students reminisced, "for me, a myrmecologist at heart since childhood, George Wheeler is a living and personal link to the "Classical Period' of North American myrmecology."[76] How many other students did natural scientists like

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[74] Ibid. As an undergraduate, Wheeler was uncertain whether he would major in and study the German language or biology. Huxley persuaded him to pursue the latter.
[75] For more on Julian Huxley, see C. Kenneth Waters and Albert Van Helden, eds., *Julian Huxley: Biologist and Statesman of Science* (College Station: Texas A & M Press, 2010).
[76] James C. Trager, "George C. Wheeler – An Appreciation," *Advances in Myrmecology* (New York: E.J. Brill, 1988): xvii-xxvii.

Wheeler encourage to travel to the tropics during their long careers as researchers, community leaders, and teachers?

Scientific Exploration and Imperial Exploitation

The distinction between geopolitical interest and the scientific search for truth was often nebulous. Exploration, the act of traveling through an unfamiliar area to learn more about it, has historically been the precursor to exploitation, the act of benefiting from resources, often unfairly. "Exploration" and "exploitation," not coincidently, share the same Latin roots. As observed in the tropical travels of Wheeler and his relationship with UFCO, scientists often walked a thin line between science and political-economic interest. The story of another traveler, a renowned ornithologist who worked at the Smithsonian from the early 1920s to the mid 1960s, offers another interesting history of mobility and exploration for examining this dynamic, and its influence on the public's reception and understanding of tropical travel.

The travel and research experiences of Alexander Wetmore are documented at the Smithsonian's archives, from his first recorded observation in Florida in 1894 to his final collecting trip to Panama in 1966. The arch of his professional career paralleled U.S. imperial and touristic expansion. As a highly productive taxonomist and collector, Wetmore traveled throughout the Americas, though predominantly in the Caribbean region. For the Smithsonian's Museum of Natural History, he collected over 26,000 bird and mammal skins, in addition to 4,363 skeletal and anatomical specimens and 201 clutches of bird eggs.[77] Because of his collecting work, his publications, and his role as an administrator and public advocate for nature education, Wetmore's colleagues nicknamed him the "Dean of American ornithologists."[78] His book *The Migration of Birds* (1927), because of its popularity with general readers, went through a number of editions. As one reviewer described it, the book was "the best and most thorough treatise on migration that has been published in America, and the most readable and entertaining

[77] All documentation regarding Alexander Wetmore comes from Record Unit 7006, Smithsonian Institution Archives.
[78] S. Dillon Ripley and James A. Steed, "Alexander Wetmore, June 18, 1886 - December 7, 1978," *National Academy of Sciences, Biographical Memoirs* 56 (1987): 597-626.

account with which we are acquainted."[79] Wetmore's list of publications, over his career, included over 700 entries (articles and books). As a scientist, Wetmore also described over 189 new species and subspecies of birds. Dozens of previously unnamed birds and animals were named in his honor: a collection he fondly called his "private zoo." During his tenure as the sixth Secretary of the Smithsonian, from 1945 to 1952, Wetmore also oversaw a major expansion of the Institution's research and museum facilities. Under his leadership, the Smithsonian inaugurated the National Air Museum (now the Air and Space Museum) and the Canal Zone Biological Area in Panama (now called the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute). His achievements as a scientist, an administrator and as a public figure were far reaching.[80]

Both nature and travel fascinated Wetmore from an early age. He recorded his first field entry in 1894 at the age of eight while on a family vacation to Florida. "The pelican is a great big bird," he noted, "that eats fish."[81] The nature that Wetmore came to value as an adult and as a professional scientist, like Roosevelt and so many of their peers, grew out of childhood experience. He told an audience of museum visitors that, as a young boy, "I was amazed at the Latin names applied to birds, entranced by accounts of the birds of Texas and other places that seemed equally remote, and fired with a desire to travel and to study the birds of distant places that has remained with me throughout my life."[82] Wetmore shared this life-long passion with the public. During a radio talk entitled "The Value of Travel" he told listeners:

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[79] Letter from David T. Pottinger to Alexander Wetmore, June 22, 1927, Record Unit 7006, Box 230, Smithsonian Institution Archives.

[80] For more detailed biographical information on Wetmore, see Paul H. Oehser, "In Memoriam: Alexander Wetmore," *The Auk* 97 (July 1980): 608-615; John Sherwood, "His Field Notebook Was Started in 1894; It Is Not Yet Complete," *The Washington Star*, January 13, 1977. For a discussion of his contributions to paleornithology, see Storrs L. Olson, "Alexander Wetmore and the Study of Fossil Birds," in *Collected Papers in Avian Paleontology Honoring the 90th Birthday of Alexander Wetmore*, Storrs L. Olson, ed., Smithsonian Contributions to Paleobiology 27 (1976): xi-xvi. Also see, Mark Barrow, *Nature's Ghosts: Confronting Extinction from the Age of Jefferson to the Age of Ecology (*Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

[81] Letter from Alexander Wetmore to Thomas Barbour, October 28, 1944, Record Unit 7006, Box 4, Smithsonian Institution Archives.

[82] Alexander Wetmore, "Something about Museums," Speech for the Opening of New Wing of Science Museum of the St. Paul Institute, November 29, 1938, Record Unit 7006, Box 233, Smithsonian Institution Archives.

> the absorbing interest of my life has been the study of biology, of all of the living things, plant and animal, that we find about us, and above all, birds. While much of this work is done in the museum and in the laboratory, happily another part is only to be found outdoors. Since boyhood I have made studies of living creatures in the field, and regularly have had opportunity for travel in such pursuits.[83]

Birds and nature, he emphasized, were the great joys of travel. He explained that "the urge to travel, to journey, is constant in the majority of individuals of the human race and happily many find it possible to satisfy this desire. There are few who are content to stay constantly in one locality." The best form of travel, he added though, was connected to the study of nature. This type of travel, he argued, "is active and brings health." It "make[s] us better citizens, better trained for our own life problems, and better and happier people."[84] Wetmore, like many of his colleagues, was a firm believer that scientific exploration and foreign travel went hand in hand.

How, though, did Wetmore get the opportunity to travel and explore? This in itself was an important lesson for aspiring naturalists to model. What relationships and practices did Wetmore embrace in order to carryout his research and pay for his adventures? Wetmore's mode of tropical travel reveals a great deal about his role as a mediator of public knowledge and travel desire. His fieldwork, from the very beginning of his career, depended on U.S. political and economic interests in the American tropics. The Bureau of Biological Survey, part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, paid for his first overseas trip to Puerto Rico in 1911. His task, which also became his doctoral dissertation, was to study "bird life in connection with agriculture."[85] Similar to Wheeler's paid scientific travels, Wetmore's study of tropical flora and fauna linked to economic necessity. U.S. corporations invested heavily in Puerto Rico in the decades after the War of 1898.[86]

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[83] Wetmore, "The Value of Travel," Future Farmers of America, National Radio Program, August 7, 1939, Record Unit 7006, Box 233.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Alexander Wetmore, Oral History Interview, Record Unit 9504, Smithsonian Institution Archives
[86] James Dietz, *Economic History of Puerto Rico: Institutional Change and Capitalist Development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986); Similar types of capitalist development occurred in Cuba and Panama in the wake of U.S. military occupation, see Marifeli Pérez-Stable, *The Cuban Revolution: Origins, Course, and Legacy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Michael L. Conniff, *Panama*

Wetmore's scientific research and his travels would develop along the existing lines of U.S. empire. He depended on financial and infrastructural support from the U.S. government to carryout his collecting expeditions. When he traveled to the Caribbean – to Puerto Rico, Haiti, Cuba, Guatemala, Panama – he relied on the support of the U.S. military. In Panama, for example, the U.S. army regularly supplied Wetmore and his long-time assistant, Watson Perrygo, with a military jeep. Caribbean Air Command also provided free helicopter and airplane transport to remote regions of the country. Wetmore wrote to a Commanding General, explaining that Caribbean Air Command, "made it possible to cover a considerable area that would not otherwise have been available, and so added measurably to the results of the work. In fact, through this transportation the value of the data secured was more than doubled."[87] There were, however, strings attached to this science-military relationship. In his letters to military commanders, Wetmore offered important environmental and geographic knowledge. After a collecting trip to the Darién, along the border between Colombia and Panama, Wetmore wrote to General Harmon. He began, thanking him for his support, "we reached Jaque expeditiously, thanks to your kindness in arranging transport for us in a C-47, in the early morning of March 25." Wetmore then proceeded to describe his journey, and offer some previously unknown information he thought useful to the military:

> As nearly as I could estimate our camp lay back somewhere between 50 and 60 miles, by river, from Jaque at the river mouth. I was interested to find that there is a trail that is used regularly by the Indians, and to some extent by the Panamanians, that comes from the projecting point of land shown in the center of Guayabo Cove, up over the hill at 1000 feet elevation and then comes down into the valley of the Rio Imamado, following this river to its mouth at our camp. Further, there was another trail used extensively by the Indians, and to some degree by Colombians and Panamanians, that comes in from Colombia along the Rio Jurado, following the right branch of the river in question which is known as the Rio Jampabado to its headwaters. From there it goes over a high ridge at something over 3000 feet on the boundary of Darien and comes down on the

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and the United States: The End of an Alliance (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012); William D. McCain, *The United States and the Republic of Panama* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1937).

[87] Letter from Wetmore to Major General Willis Hale, May 6, 1948, Record Unit 7006, Box 153.

> Panama side along the valley of the Rio Chicao. The two trails join here and continue down the Jaque.[88]

Wetmore had gathered valuable details about local geography and transportation routes.

During his numerous visits to Panama, he also worked more directly for the U.S. military. In the early 1940s, the army needed a biologist to undertake a survey of flora and fauna, before it tested phosgene, cyanogen chloride, mustard gas, and potentially VX nerve gas and sarin on San José Island in Panama. Wetmore was the lead biologist for the chemical weapons experiment. He authorized the testing, reporting to military officials, that "the experiments in question may be carried forward on San Jose without too great disturbance of the animal and plant life found there if the area covered does not include more than one-third of the surface of the island."[89] He added that a trained biologist, which ended up being himself and one of his assistants, should be allowed to observe and collect in the area before testing the chemical weapons. Wetmore reported to the Smithsonian, in a confidential letter: "we took advantage of this [opportunity] to make as complete collections as possible for the value that these would have to science."[90] The exploits of the military had created an opportunity for scientific exploration.

There is a long history of scientists depending on and supporting imperial expansion and geopolitical interests in their effort to do research. Science was not immune from the dynamics of state power; indeed it depended on it. During World War II, for example, Wetmore also supervised military research at the Barro Colorado Island Research Station. "The usual work by biologists at the island," Wetmore explained to his colleague Frank Chapman, "had to be cancelled for security reasons… As a matter of fact there are some very serious investigations going on in connection with the war on the part of several scientists located on the island. This, however, is a matter not for wide discussion."[91] At the end of the war, BCI reopened under Smithsonian control and

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[88] Letter from Wetmore to General H.R. Harmon, June 12, 1947, Record Unit 7006, Box 153.
[89] Letter from Wetmore to Brig. Gen. E.F. Bullene, November 30, 1943, Record Unit 7006, Box 153.
[90] Wetmore, Confidential Memorandum, October 23, 1944, Record Unit 7006, Box 153. To learn more about the chemical warfare texting on San José Island, see John Lindsay-Poland, *Emperors in the Jungle: The Hidden History of the U.S. in Panama* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003), 44-73.
[91] Letter from Wetmore to Frank Chapman, April 4, 1945, Record Unit 7006, Box 153.

Wetmore was appointed Secretary of the Smithsonian. Wetmore in his relationship with the U.S. military, in this sense, followed a long tradition. In the nineteenth century, European scientists had formed similar partnerships. Charles Darwin, to offer a classic example, traveled to the Galapagos Islands on a British naval warship, the *H.M.S. Beagle* (her Majesty's ship), ordered to map the South American coastline. The ship's Captain, Robert Fitzroy, wrote of the journey: "Never, I believe, did a vessel leave England better provided, or fitted for the service she was destined to perform, and for the health and comfort of her crew, than the Beagle. If we did want any thing which could have been carried, it was our own fault; for all that was asked for, from the Dockyard, Victualling Department, Navy Board, or Admiralty, was granted."[92] The U.S. scientific community of the early-to-mid twentieth century was no exception. It too relied on the financial and infrastructural support of war making and imperial design.[93]

The close ties between science and empire shaped the outcomes of naturalist research. But it also shaped the public's reception about what it meant to travel and explore the tropics. As early as 1919, the anthropologist Franz Boas warned about the dangers of mixing geopolitical interests with scientific research. In a letter to *The Nation*, Boas protested U.S. scientists engaging in military reconnaissance and espionage. He wrote: "I wish to enter a vigorous protest [against] a number of men who follow science as their profession [and who] have prostituted science by using it as a cover for their activities as spies."[94] Boas claimed to have "incontrovertible proof" that at least four men, who were representatives of scientific institutions in the United States, were involved in espionage overseas. He did not name the men specifically, but strongly condemned their actions. The "service of truth" should be the very essence of a scientist's life, Boas argued, and yet these types of secret partnerships were dishonest, threatening both the "results of their work" and "the development of international friendly

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[92] Robert Fitzroy, *Narrative of the Surveying Voyages of His Majesty's Ships Adventure and Beagle between the years 1826 and 1836, Volume II* (New York: AMS Press, 1966), 43.
[93] For scientific research's relationship to the history of imperialism, see Grove, *Green Imperialism.* For the history of British imperialism and science, Richard Dayton, *Nature's Government: Science, Imperial Britain, and the 'Improvement' of the World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).
[94] Franz Boas, "Scientists as Spies," *The Nation*, December 20, 1919.

cooperation."[95] His letter generated intense controversy. The Secretary of the Smithsonian tried to get Boas fired from his teaching post at Columbia University. Boas was able to retain his job, but lost his prestigious post on the council of the American Anthropological Association and was forced to resign from the National Research Council.[96] The relationship between science and U.S. foreign policy evidently was difficult to break.

This link between science and military interests can be observed in the story of another ornithologist who arguably became the most famous spy in modern history. The real James Bond was actually a British ornithologist working in the Caribbean in the early-to-mid twentieth century. He was a staff scientist at the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences and in close contact with scientists at the Smithsonian, including Alexander Wetmore. In 1936, Bond published a popular field guide, *Birds of the West Indies*.[97] The author Ian Fleming, who moved to Jamaica after serving in British intelligence during the Second World War, was a fan of Bond's work and decided to adopt the ornithologist's name for his famous spy novels. There is no evidence that the real James Bond was involved in espionage, although Fleming liked to brag that 95% of his writing came from real life.[98] The coincidence nevertheless is intriguing, and perhaps metaphorically revealing of the links between scientific research and geopolitics.

Equally interesting was the fact that James Bond and Alexander Wetmore were good friends. Bond referred to Wetmore as "my old friend." The two men maintained regular correspondence throughout their lives, from the late 1920s to the early 1970s. "You oscillate between the north and south so rapidly," Bond wrote to Wetmore in 1941, "that it is a little difficult to catch up with you."[99] Later in life, Wetmore also helped Bond set up a small fund at the Smithsonian "for life-history studies of indigenous

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[95] Ibid.
[96] David H. Price, *Anthropological Intelligence: The Deployment and Neglect of American Anthropology in the Second World War* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 7-14.
[97] James Bond, *Birds of the West Indies* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961).
[98] *The Real Story: James Bond*, documentary series on The Smithsonian Channel, accessed March 1, 2015, http://www.smithsonianchannel.com/shows/the-real-story/james-bond/679/134213
[99] Letter from James Bond to Alexander Wetmore, August 25, 1941, Record Unit 7006, Box 6.

species of birds of the Antilles and other Caribbean islands and of the Bahamas."[100] Students can still apply for the James Bond fund at the Smithsonian.

In the early-to-mid twentieth century, covert agents often posed as naturalists to get access to "sensitive areas." This relationship could provoke criticism or admiration. The U.S. press, for example, heralded the ornithologist S. Dillon Ripley and his work at the Office of Strategic Services (predecessor to the CIA). In August 1950, *The New Yorker* published a flattering eighteen-page profile on Dillon, describing him as a world traveler, explorer, ornithologist, and war hero.[101] The article detailed Ripley's activities with OSS, training and equipping Indonesian spies, all of whom were supposedly killed during World War II. Ripley sent agents to Burma, Thailand, and Malaysia, and worked closely with British intelligence. Major General William J. Donovan, who was the head of OSS, claimed "Ripley's previous contacts and experience, and his imagination, resourcefulness, energy, and tenacity, made him very useful to us."[102] The public disclosure of Ripley's involvement in espionage, while praised in the United States, caused a great deal of controversy abroad. "In one fell swoop, Ripley had alienated the new prime minister of India," according to the scholar Michael Lewis, "and had confirmed the worst fears of those Indians suspicious of U.S. neo-imperialism."[103] Yet at home, Dillon's reputation remained intact. In 1964, he was appointed the eighth Secretary of the Smithsonian, serving twenty years in that position. Upon his retirement, President Ronald Reagan awarded Dillon the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

The historical connections between the Smithsonian, scientific research and spying were sometimes apparent but more-often-than-not below the surface. The point of this discussion is not to join the club of conspiracy theorists, but rather to highlight a very real link between science and imperial geopolitics, which merged together and shaped the character of "the increase and diffusion of knowledge." We have to seriously consider: what type of research and scientific knowledge emerged from within the confines of

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[100] Letter from James Bond to Smithsonian Institution, June 5, 1973, Record Unit 7006, Box 6.
[101] Geoffrey T. Hellman, "Curator Getting Around," *The New Yorker*, August 26, 1950.
[102] Quoted in Michael Lewis, "Scientists or Spies? Ecology in a Climate of Cold War Suspicion," *Economic and Political Weekly* 37 (15 June 2002): 2323-2332.
[103] Ibid, 2324. Also see Michael Lewis, *Inventing Global Ecology: Tracking Biodiversity Ideal in India, 1947-1997* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2004).

formal and informal military operations? What did it mean for "objective" men of science to arrive to remote communities and environments on military helicopters, to document flora and fauna before the testing of chemical weapons? What type of science and adventure did these relationships justify and support in the minds of the public? What did it mean for the nation's naturalist explorers to also be agents of U.S. empire? My answers at this point are more suggestive than conclusive, but it does seem extremely telling that tourists, as I outlined in Chapter 1, would embody *empire-as-a-way-life* while on vacation. Why not? Who was there to tell them or guide them differently?

Private Capital for Naturalist Expeditions

While scientists like Wetmore and Ripley traveled with the support of the U.S. military or other federal agencies, some Smithsonian staff focused on fostering ties with big capitalists. Another option available to naturalists seeking tropical adventure and research was to find a private patron. Waldo Schmitt, a highly efficient collector and systematic zoologist studying marine crustaceans at the Smithsonian, for example, made dozens of research trips to the Caribbean and the Pacific by courting and traveling with some of the richest families in the United States. In the early part of his career, in the 1910s and 1920s, Schmitt worked closely with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Fisheries. But in the aftermath of the Great Depression, Schmitt began to look elsewhere for funding.[104] The expedition model Schmitt embraced became well-known among his Smithsonian colleagues: find a wealthy patron, who wanted to cruise through the region where you wanted to collect, and with the Smithsonian stamp, allow him to get his expenses written off by the federal government. The model was known as the "Bredin Format," named after a wealthy patron (a Florida real estate and hotel

[104] Waldo L. Schmitt Papers, 1907-1978, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 7231, Smithsonian Institution Archives. To learn more about the relationship between the federal government and funding for scientific research, see Hunter A. Dupree, *Science in the Federal Government: A History of Policies and Activities to 1940* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964).

developer), who Schmitt traveled and collected with in the Caribbean.[105] He first met Bredin on a Smithsonian expedition sponsored by Huntington Hartford.

In 1937, Schmitt organized a much-publicized expedition with one of the wealthiest families in the United States. Huntington Hartford, a young and wealthy "playboy," wanted to explore the Caribbean and make his career as a writer of pirate lore and also as a naturalist explorer. To carryout research, Hartford purchased a 111-foot fully-rigged sailing ship and renamed it after his favorite author, Joseph Conrad. "For years I had the hazily romantic notion," he explained, "that I wanted to sail in a square-rigger. How grand it would be, I dreamed, to bowl over the seas in the wake of such swaggering adventurers as Morgan and Red Legs, Blackbeard and Dampier."[106] Lots of money, fantasies of adventure, and scientific research had merged into a Smithsonian expedition.

Hartford was the heir to a family fortune, receiving an annual income of $1.5 million as early as the age of six. His grandfather founded the Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company bringing in tea, coffee, and spices from the tropics to consumers first in New York City and eventually throughout the United States. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, the company had more than 16,000 stores and generated more than one billion in revenue in the 1930s: "they were Wal-Mart before Wal-Mart."[107] But young Hartford, by his own account, detested the idea of running the family business. "I had an income of over a million dollars a year," he told his biographer, "can you imagine me sitting out with a bunch of clerks?"[108] While his father and uncle ran the family business, Hartford played the amateur explorer, writer, artist, patron of science and creativity.

In the spring of 1937, Schmitt traveled from Washington D.C. to Palm Beach, Florida to meet Hartford and the crew. Florida would be their jumping off point for their Caribbean expedition. "They have a most beautiful new home just recently acquired as

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[105] Fenner A. Chace, Jr., Oral History Interview, October 6 and 11, 1977, Record Unit 9516, Smithsonian Institution Archives.
[106] Huntington Hartford, "Gone without the Wind," *Esquire Magazine*, October 1938.
[107] Dave Kansas, "A&P Heading to the Checkout Counter?" *The Wall Street Journal*, December 10, 2010.
[108] Quoted in Suzanna Andrews, "Hostage to Fortune," *Vanity Fair*, June 12, 2010, accessed March 12, 2015, http://www.vanityfair.com/news/2004/12/hartford200412; Also see, Lisa Rebecca Gubernick, *Squandered Fortune: The Life and Times of Huntington Hartford* (New York: Putnam, 1991).

sort of base of operations for Hartford's West Indian cruises," Schmitt wrote Wetmore, who helped coordinate the partnership. "Mr. Hartford," Schmitt added, "is not adverse to reasonable publicity and feels that the newspapers, if they ask for information, should be given something. It would not be amiss to send a note to *Science* and to the *Museums Journal*, and I would also like a copy sent to the Explorers Club for their little journal."[109] Both Schmitt and Hartford pushed for publicity. Hartford, in addition to encouraging newspaper attention, wrote his own article about the trip for *Esquire* magazine in October 1938 entitled "Gone without the Wind."[110]

After a week of tuxedo dinner parties in Palm Beach, the expedition party sailed south. "We attracted a lot of attention [leaving port]," Schmitt recalled, "and a number of small motor boats came up close to get snaps of us and one indeed in movies."[111] The *Joseph Conrad* would sail to the Caribbean, "stopping at such islands," in the words of Schmitt, "as fancy may strike us." Over the course of three months, the expedition visited the Bahamas, Haiti, Puerto Rico, St. Thomas and the Virgin Islands, St. Croix, Saba, St. Eustatius, Dominica, Martinique, Barbados, Jamaica and Cuba. "The cruise was a most successful one," Schmitt reported to Wetmore back in Washington, "covering about forty-five hundred miles and making nineteen stops at fifteen of the West Indies. A not inconsiderable collection of marine invertebrates was brought back, some algological material, two adult porpoises and embryo… and a few miscellaneous items."[112]

During the trip Schmitt oversaw most of the collecting work, while Hartford was busy with other matters. On shore, Hartford seemed to prefer to visit and drink with other wealthy travelers and white colonialists on the islands. Meanwhile at sea, he was often sick. "Every other wave," Hartford commented, "was not a roller, but a steam roller… my stomach, I regret to say, was not in a mood for extended arguments."[113] Schmitt wrote

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[109] Letter from Waldo Schmitt to Alexander Wetmore, March 6, 1937, Record Unit 7231, Box 91.
[110] Huntington Hartford, "Gone without the Wind," *Esquire Magazine*, October 1938.
[111] Waldo Schmitt, Diary, from March 3 to May 12, 1937, Smithsonian-Hartford West Indies Expedition, Record Unit 7231, Box 91.
[112] Letter from Waldo Schmitt to Alexander Wetmore, March 6, 1937, Record Unit 7231, Box 91.
[113] Huntington Hartford, "Gone without the Wind," *Esquire Magazine*, October 1938.

in his diary, "I do feel sorry for him, for he's a pleasant plucky chap."[114] On the expedition, Hartford also looked for land to purchase. Schmitt noted in his diary, in between his naturalist field notes, that "Hunt wanted to see it [a small island off of St. Croix] with viewing to buying. Has a wonderful sand beach and best flat reef for collecting this side of Tortugas."[115] Years later, Hartford would return to the Caribbean to build his dream resort. He purchased a small island in the Bahamas for $11 million and then spent an additional $20 million to construct a 52-room luxury hotel with an expansive garden modeled after the Palace of Versailles. His scientific expeditions, his efforts to shape popular culture, and his business plans culminated in a resort named "Paradise Island."[116]

The collections and private funds Schmitt brought into the Smithsonian were useful to both the institution and his own professional career. He accumulated huge collections of marine invertebrates. One colleague remembered, "he's a taskmaster as a collector. As soon as he got into the field he was a completely changed man. He was a demon. Thanks to him we got a lot of material."[117] Another colleague at the Smithsonian recalled, "I don't think the Institution would have the standing it does, if it hadn't been for Waldo."[118] In 1943, Schmitt was appointed Head Curator of the Department of Biology at the National Museum of Natural History. He owed his success, he believed, to his private patrons. After his new appointment, he wrote a letter to Allan Hancock, the owner of Rancho La Brea Oil Company. "Down in the bottom of my heart," he explained, "I know I owe it to my friends. The opportunities that you folks have extended me, making it possible for me to broaden my knowledge of zoology and extend my contacts in the scientific world, are in no small measure responsible for this good fortune. I am really truly grateful."[119] In the 1930s, Schmitt traveled with Hancock on a number of expeditions to the Caribbean and the west coast of South America. The relationship was

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[114] Schmitt, Diary, from March 3 to May 12, 1937, Smithsonian-Hartford West Indies Expedition, Record Unit 7231, Box 91.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Andrews, "Hostage to Fortune."
[117] Fenner A. Chace, Jr., Oral History Interview, Record Unit 9516.
[118] Richard E. Blackwelder, Oral History Interview, January 17, 1973, Record Unit 9517, Smithsonian Institution Archives.
[119] Letter from Waldo Schmitt to Helen and Alan Hancock, March 16, 1943, Record Unit 7231, Box 14.

mutually beneficial. With Schmitt aboard, Hancock's trips received instant credibility. They became known as "the Smithsonian-Hancock Expedition." Schmitt was also useful in the field. His knowledge of marine invertebrates could point toward exploitable natural resources on the seabed. Oil companies like Hancock's, it turned out, funded many "objective" scientific studies at the Smithsonian and other research institutions with the hope that the discovery of invertebrate marine life would identify undersea oil reserves.[120] Scientific exploration could also promise profitable exploitation. In between the tropical fantasies of Hunting Hartford and the privately-funded search for oil reserves, Schmitt became a respected man of science.

The travel stories of both Schmitt and Wetmore highlight the long running and influential relationship that U.S. imperial and capitalist interests have had at the Smithsonian and other research institutions. By closely following their tropical journeys and the relationships they formed, there emerge serious and controversial questions: for example, what type of behavior and what type of travel and exploration have these partnerships legitimized? What happens to scientific knowledge when the U.S. military or people like Hartford have the reins? Hartford, who had his hands deep in both scientific work and the arts, believed that the producer of knowledge and art "must be more than a mirror. They must…be a leader. They don't just reflect. They lead; they change the action and course of events."[121] Travel practices, embraced at the Smithsonian, seeped into U.S. imaginations of adventure, science, and tropical nature.[122]

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[120] Fenner A. Chace, Jr., Oral History Interview, Record Unit 9516. For more on Schmitt's travel with Allan Hancock, see Schmitt Papers, Record Unit 7231, Box 95.

[121] Huntington Hartford, Oral history Interview, May 19 1970, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. It still is common practice for the Smithsonian and its scientists to form close ties with the nation's big capitalists. Today, visitors to the National Museum of Natural History enter through the "Behring Rotunda," named after Kenneth Behring, a car-salesman, Florida real estate developer, and former owner of the Seattle Seahawks football team. In 2003, Behring donated $100 million to the Smithsonian, more money than any donor in the museum's history. "I love animals," Behring told the press, explaining his donation. "I go to Africa a lot and I just want all the kids to have the enjoyment that I've had." The National Museum of American History is now officially "The National Museum of American History: Kenneth E. Behring Center." The Behring family name is literally etched in stone, and U.S. history, at the museum. There are also prominent exhibits that bear his name, like the "Behring Hall of Military History" and the "Behring Family Hall of Mammals." At the Museum of Natural History, in the middle of the "Behring Family Rotunda," a huge elephant welcomes visitors. The elephant, the "symbol of the museum," was shot by a big-game hunter in Portuguese-controlled Angola in 1955. Behring, it turns out, is also an enthusiast of big game hunting. He has hunted some of the rarest animals in the world. His

Adventure Tourism

When one reads about the stories of U.S. scientists or explorers abroad, one normally learns about "Indiana Jones" or Roosevelt-type individuals roughing it in the tropical jungle to seek truth and knowledge. Feats of individual prowess have become sustaining myths in U.S. popular culture and also within the tourism industry. Tourists to the Caribbean, and more broadly to the tropics, have followed in the footsteps of this earlier generation of explorers. Countless young people have mimicked their ideas and social practices. How many people have imagined themselves as a Roosevelt-type-figure on safari, a Smithsonian scientist collecting and studying exotic species, a James Bond-ish adventurer partying by night, and swinging through the jungles and conquering by day? Children and even adults played and dreamed such cultural tropes at home and while on vacation.

Travel to the tropics offered active and meaningful experience. Adventure, as the sociologist George Simmel theorized as early as 1911, promised participants "experiences that occur beyond the humdrum of everyday life."[123] The form, psychology, and values of adventure and nature tourism emerged from this culture of tropical exploration. Ideas and practices developed and embraced by well-respected travelers connected to institutions like the Smithsonian have been passed on to the rest of society,

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nature trips, which he wants "all the kids" to experience, have actually been hunting expeditions. Behring has also leveraged his financial support for the Smithsonian to legitimize these hunting interests. In 1997, he traveled to Kazakhstan to hunt wild sheep, Kara-Tau argali, one of the most endangered species in the world. Behring shot a 'trophy' animal, but could not get the carcass into the United States without a special waiver. The Smithsonian subsequently submitted paperwork on behalf of Behring to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, claiming that the sheep was shot for scientific purposes. The sheep is now part of the museum's permanent collection. See, "Prime Time: Killing Rare Animals," *ABC News*, April 19, 2014; "Wild Sheep Controversy," *CBS News*, March 22, 1999.

[122] Donna Haraway has offered an insightful thesis to read *against the grain* of these science-capital partnerships. "The owners of the great machines of monopoly capital," she argued, "were, with excellent reason, at the forefront of nature work – because it was one of the means of production of race, gender, and class. For them, 'naked eye science' could give direct vision of social peace and progress despite the appearances of class war and decadence. They required a science 'instaurating' jungle peace; and so they bought it." The agents of science and their patrons reaffirmed and assured the natural order of things. See Haraway, "Teddy Bear Patriarchy," 186.

[123] Simmel, "The Adventurer," in *George Simmel on Individuality and Social Forms*, Donald N. Levine, ed., 187-198 (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press).

emulated by the next generation of aspiring travelers. The nature of tourism took its inspiration from this history.

Children grow up into tourists fantasizing of an adventurous life. Waldo Schmitt, who even had a Boy Scout Troop named in his honor, recalled:

> Young people have often come to me and have written more often to the Smithsonian Institution asking how they may get on trips to far-off places and how to prepare themselves for a life of exploring. I can't forget the boy who wanted to know how to become an elephant hunter, what equipment he would need, whether there was insurance for that calling, and what the job paid.[124]

In magazines like the National Geographic, on radio and now television programs, during visits to museums, and in schools and in private homes, stories of tropical adventure endlessly circle within popular culture in the twentieth century, and now in the twenty-first century.[125] "Adventure," according to Robert Gordon and Luis Vivanco, "enjoys ubiquitous status in public culture and late capitalism."[126] The mythos and habitus of the explorer not only reflected values from an earlier time, but have also helped "increase and diffuse" practices that are still embraced by tourists today.

The rise of ecotourism, in recent decades, reflects this democratizing trend. "Once the province of elites," Gordon and Vivanco note, "[adventure] has become accessible and fashionable among the middle classes, and is one of the fastest-growing segments of the tourism industry."[127] Middle-class travelers can now act like explorers. The circum-Caribbean, it seems, is the favored region for adventurous U.S. tourists in search of tropical nature.[128] As the fastest growing segment of the tourism industry, ecotourism has

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[124] Schmitt, "Knowledge and the Zest of Life," Record Unit 7231, Box 73. Boy Scout Troop 33 in Takoma Park, Maryland is named after Waldo Schmitt and his son, accessed March 2, 2015, http://troop33.takomaparkscouts.org/about-us/history/waldoschmitt

[125] Lutz and Collins, *Reading National Geographic*; Chotkowski LaFollette, *Science on the Air.*

[126] Gordon and Vivanco, eds., *Tarzan was an Eco-tourist,* 1.

[127] Ibid. Also see, Kohler, *All Creatures*; Barrow, *Nature's Ghosts*.

[128] The United Nations declared the year 2002 the International Year of Ecotourism. For literature on contemporary ecotourism, see Tamara Budowski, "Ecotourism Costa Rican Style," *Towards a Green Central America: Intergrating Conservation and Development,* Valeria Barzetti and Yanina Rovinski, eds., 48-62 (West Hartford, Conn: Kumarian Press, Inc., 1992); Héctor Ceballos-Lascuráin, *Tourism, Ecotourism, and Protected areas: The state of nature-based tourism around the world and guidelines for its developmen,* (Switzerland and Cambridge, UK: International Union for Conservation of Nature and

catered to the desires of U.S and European tourists, "seeking serenity and pristine beauty overseas."[129] This fascination with remote, supposedly wild nature has fostered the belief that the tropics were somehow separate from the troubles of the industrialized and modern world. The scholar Candace Slater in her article "Amazonia as Edenic Narrative" argued that tourist imaginations of the tropical rainforest have fostered "a skewed and largely static approach toward a multilayered and decidedly fluid reality. The problem is not just that this vision is often false or exaggerated but that it obscures the people and places that actually exist there."[130] This naturalist gaze has also obscured the layers of history leading tourists into the tropical environment. Ecotourists often embrace a peopleless and ahistorical view of their travel destinations, and forget the roots of their mimicked travel behavior.

Although the history from exploration to ecotourism is not linear, a straight line from the early twentieth century to the present, old patterns of thought and action have nevertheless remained in use. In the previous sections, I offered thick and layered descriptions of early twentieth century naturalist experiences. In the details of these journeys, one can begin to recognize the historical patterns that tourist expectations and experiences would sprout from. While not everyone can work for the Smithsonian or charge-up a hill like Theodore Roosevelt, they can on vacation still briefly feel the thrill, the illusion, of discovery. Thomas Barbour's comment about the Barro Colorado Research Station and its support of scientific travel, for example, could just as easily apply to the thousands of tourists that have followed: "to work our carefully marked trails

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Natural Resources, 1996); Sterling Evans, *The Green Republic: A Conservation History of Costa Rica* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999); Martha Honey, *Ecotourism and Sustainable Development: Who Owns Paradise?* (Washington D.C: Island Press, 1999); Deborah McLaren, *Rethinking Tourism and Ecotravel: The Paving of Paradise and what you can do to stop it* (West Hartford, Conn.: Kumarian Press, Inc., 1998); Richard B. Primack, David Barton Bray, Hugo A. Galletti and Ismael Ponciano, eds., *Timber, Tourists, and Temples: Conservation and Development in the Maya Forest of Belize, Guatemala, and Mexico* (Washington D.C.: Island Press, 1998); Lane Simonian, *Defending the Land of the Jaquar: A History of Conservation in Mexico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995); Paige West and James G. Carrier, "Ecotourism and Authenticity: Getting Away from it All?" *Current Anthropology* 45 (2004): 483-498; Amanda Stronza, "Anthropology of Tourism; Forging New Ground for Ecotourism and Other Alternatives." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 30. (2001): 261-283.

[129] Honey, *Ecotourism and Sustainable Development*, 11.

[130] Candace Slater, "Amazonia as Edenic Narrative." in *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*, William Cronon, ed., (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996), 114.

provide all the illusion of exploration."[131] Exploration-adventure is just one component of the modern tourist experience, yet is central to the industry's marketing. The tourism industry has cashed in and packaged the desire to get close to (to experience) wild nature.

Naturalist explorers in the early-to-mid twentieth century I suggest provided role models for this packaged travel experience. They operated as mediators between an earlier era of exploration, rooted in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, and the modern era of tourism. My conclusions are suggestive rather than definitive: scientific explorers stimulated, channeled, and advised the way tourists would imagine and experience tropical travel and tropical nature. Tourists looked up to the actions of scientific explorers whose journeys provided a clear message: if one wanted to understand the mysteries of the tropics, one had to see it and experience it for oneself. Built into the mimicked culture of exploration, however, were deep-seated assumptions about the order of society and its relationship to nature. Scientific and nature travel have also been framed and sold as distinctly masculine and racialized feats of adventure. Watson Perrygo, Smithsonian naturalist and Wetmore's long-time assistant, recounted his decades of Caribbean adventure in this way:

> I went down one day [to the village] and I was just right, and the hawk made a sweep down for the chicken, and I killed it, and it's in the Smithsonian collection now. Of course, that set everything…. From then on I was their white man. Every evening, after I got through work, [the chief] would send a girl to come down with big bamboo fans…and they'd keep us cool, and we'd talk, and we'd drink native drinks. From then on it was our country.[132]

The explorer was a new age hero, the possessor of all he surveyed. He was the useful white man welcomed by native villagers. He was not alone in these sentiments. This lesson of the privileged traveler's inherent worth has, both implicitly and explicitly, been passed on to tourists. Exploration and tourism have reflected, reinforced, and mobilized prejudices and inequalities, even naturalized them. "In the field," Donna Haraway

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[131] Barbour, *Naturalist at Large*, 196-197.
[132] Watson M. Perrygo, Oral History Interview, August 8, 1978, Record Unit 9516, Smithsonian Institution Archives.

explained, "the entire operation rested on the organization of the safari, a complex social institution where race, sex, and class came together intensely."[133] Take, for example, the organization of the Barro Colorado Island Research Station in Panama. Today BCI is the most important research station in the American tropics and also a popular eco-tourist attraction visited by over 5,000 elite tourists every year.[134] The research station, however, was founded on a similar social structure to that of a hierarchically organized expedition. On the island, from the early 1920s to the mid-1960s, workers of color were assigned the most rigorous manual labor and segregated to the "Boy's House," apart from the main sleeping and dining quarters. Meanwhile, women of any racial background were prohibited from spending the night on the island. The station's administrators believed that females, and people of color, were incapable of and would get in the way of serious research. Wetmore and his colleagues, for instance, routinely dismissed the work of women. "Her whole proposition sounded rather fruity to me," Wetmore wrote to Thomas Barbour, concerning a female scientist looking to collaborate with the Smithsonian. In the early-to-mid twentieth century, scientific gatekeeping by men was a regular and frustrating occurrence. "Let us keep a place where real research men can find quiet, keen intellectual stimulation, freedom from any outside distraction," David Fairchild wrote to Barbour.[135] The notion of privileged solitude, although no longer formally rooted in racial and gendered divisions, still remains a guiding attitude within scientific and tourist travel. The hopeful explorer, in need of rest and time to think, must not be distracted. He demands peace, away from other people. The restful contemplation of the scientist, in this sense, foreshadows the vacation escape of the tourist.

This solitude, however, rested on the backs of other's people labor. On BCI, people of color rowed the boats, constructed the houses, cut the trails, cooked the meals, and built and fixed the machines that allowed scientists and tourists to visit the island and imagine themselves alone in nature. Barbour explained the labor situation to Fairchild: "Labor is very cheap and quite abundant, though not especially efficient… and a hundred

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[133] Haraway, "Teddy Bear Patriarchy," 168.
[134] Nils Lindahl Eliot, "A Memory of Nature: Ecotourism on Panama's Barro Colorado Island," 237-259.
[135] Quoted in Pamela Henson, "Invading Arcadia: Women Scientists in the Field in Latin America, 1900-1950," *The Americas* 58 (April 2002): 577-600.

or two dollars expended under supervision would make most parts of the Island very accessible. I find upon experience and investigation that John English, like most of his race, is decidedly unreliable and has little regard for truth but he is a useful person if a little high grade abuse is administered about every four days."[136]

Workers at the low-end of the hierarchical ladder obviously saw "adventure" and "exploration" from a dramatically different perspective. Fausto Bocanegra, a BCI employee in the 1940s and 1950s, explained: "when they got here, because of my knowledge, I was their teacher." Bocanegra and his supposedly "unskilled" colleagues, who lived in the island's "Boy's House," knew as much or more about the tropical environment than their scientific guests. He remembered one time collecting specimens with a U.S. scientist. "I worked here almost a month with a hunter... [but] I was the hunter and he was my helper, because I caught the animals and he took what he wanted, with… permission from the Smithsonian."[137] Local people organized and made accessible the nature that scientists and also tourists would discover. But rather than acknowledge these intimate dependencies on other people's knowledge and labor, we instead are left with a history of white-male prowess. White men pondered and thought and "discovered," while people of color *paid* for this privileged free time with their sweat and hard labor. As the historian James Clifford described, "a host of servants, helpers, companions, guides, and bearers have been excluded from the role of proper travelers because of their race and class, and because theirs seemed to be a dependent status in relation to the supposed independence of the individualist, bourgeois voyager."[138] In the early-to-mid twentieth, white American explorers justified these social distinctions with racialized theories of biological and often climatic difference.

Science also offered "objective facts" for defining authority and identity. The social structure of safaris, collecting expeditions, stationary fieldwork, and even tourism relied on a naturalized hierarchy. Educated white men like Wheeler, Barbour, and

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[136] Letter from Thomas Barbour to David Fairchild, March 3 1924, Record Unit 134, Box 1, Smithsonian Institution Archives.
[137] Fausto Bocanegra, Oral History Interview, August 15, 1988, Record Unit 9561, Smithsonian Institution Archives.
[138] James Clifford, "Traveling Cultures," in *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997), 33.

Fairchild sat atop this social order. According to scientists and colonial officials, this was the natural order of things. The tourism industry, I suggest, has mimicked and packaged this same type of social order for mass consumption. Tourists have imagined themselves as explorers of undiscovered nature, while guides, trail cutters, maids, drivers, and a whole host of servants labor in the shadows (see Chapter 6 on the Gamboa Rainforest Resort).

Back home, in the United States, racialized and genderd social hierarchy have historically shaped the institutions educating the public about tropical travel. In Washington D.C. and New York, the Cosmos Club and the Explorer's Club – where Alexander Wetmore, Waldo Schmitt, and other Smithsonian scientists gathered and socialized – women and people of color were prohibited from membership. If a woman entered the doors of those famous clubs it was often as a servant, like the author Zora Neale Hurston did to pay her bills in the 1920s. "I learned things from holding the hands of men like that," Hurtson later commented.[139] The Explorer's Club did not permit female members until 1981; the Cosmos Club did not open its doors until 1988.[140]

Tourists, whether aware of it or not, still travel with the legacy of white-male domination. My comments, again, are suggestive rather than definitive: There were and remain, however, significant connections between scientific and traveling practices espoused by elites institutions like the Smithsonian, the American Museum of Natural History, The Explorer's Club and its members, and the emergence and the organization of adventure and nature tourism.

During a recent visit to the American Museum of Natural History in New York, it was quite obvious that everyone but white people were part of the "natural" exhibits: Northwest Coast Indians, Asian peoples, African peoples, South American peoples, and so on. "They," the other people, were part of nature to study and gaze at in museum exhibits and ideally while on vacation (see Chapter 6 as well). The Smithsonian's Natural

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[139] Quoted in Valerie Boyd, *Wrapped in Rainbows: The Life of Zora Neale Hurston* (New York: Scribner, 2003), 81.

[140] The Explorers Club's official history, accessed March 1, 2015, https://explorers.org/about/history/history; The Cosmos Club, accessed March 1, 2015, https://www.cosmosclub.org/Default.aspx?pageid=31

History Museum follows a similar organizational model naturalizing hierarchy along racial and national lines.

Science produced and reproduced in an atmosphere of unquestioned white-male authority has influenced the ecological and social values and practices of tourism. The history of Smithsonian expeditions in the Caribbean and the tropics more broadly reflect a pervasive culture of exploration in search of possessory value, that is, to take ownership over the natural world. Although the cabinet of curiosities (which I used to open this chapter) is a rather rare hobby today, the culture of classifying, collecting, possessing and exoticizing tropical nature is still a key aspect of modern day travel practice. The aspects of nature which scientists thought should be collected and preserved reveals a great deal about a society's vision of order. The Museum of Natural History in Washington D.C., for example, has the largest Natural History Collection in the world. The bird collection alone consists of 640,000 specimens. The bird collection at the Museum of Natural History in New York is even larger, consisting of over 750,000 specimens. The Division of Vertebrate Zoology holds over 3.5 million specimens. These collections have certainly been important to scientific research in the United States, but they also arguably became a popular model mimicked by young students and future travelers.[141] The collection and display of nature objects, as James Clifford put it, are "crucial processes of Western identity formation."[142]

In the "West," the United States and Western Europe, there remains a strong and widespread desire to collect and possess nature. Smithsonian explorer-scientists embodied and helped to diffuse this insatiable approach to understanding and appreciating nature. Wetmore, for one, collected over 26,000 specimens for the National Museum, and in the process, solidified his position as an important man of science. Explorer-scientists, however, often made little to no acknowledgment of their own position and role in shaping a society that valued ownership over the natural world. They

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[141] Barrow, *A Passion for Birds*; Barrow, *Nature's Ghosts.*

[142] Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture,* 220. The history of western science, Bruno Latuor agreed, "is in large part the history of the mobilization of anything that can be made to move and shipped back home." Bruno Latour, *Science in Action: How to Follow Scientists and Engineers Through Society* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1987), 225.

instead justified their collecting and traveling habits by espousing a self-filling prophecy. Wetmore lectured to an audience of museum visitors:

> Civilized man is steadily occupying increasing areas of the surface of the earth, and with his occupation come such vast changes from the original condition that natural conformations are destroyed and hundreds and thousands of species, and hundreds of thousands of individuals of animals and plants, must disappear. Only those can remain that are sufficiently adaptable to fit into the modified scheme brought by man's presence. Those at all sensitive to change or that require special conditions for their existence inevitably disappear.[143]

Wetmore promoted a culture of *collect-it-before-it-inevitably-disappears*. He reasoned that now was the time for a city of any size to build up its museum collection. Modernity was taking over; now was the moment to get it before it's gone. In the context of late-twentieth century tourism, this mentality seems to have evolved into: see it and experience it before it inevitably disappears. The rainforest is disappearing we are told. Modernity is taking over the local and authentic. Get there and know it before it's gone. The traditional cabinet of physical specimens has largely been replaced by the possession of authentic experiences, photographs and souvenirs displayed on one's living room shelf.[144] "Guns have metamorphosed," as Susan Sontag described, "into cameras in this earnest comedy, the ecology safari."[145] Exotic nature is still desired, and makes its way home. While tourists may no longer go into the "jungle," with gun in hand, they still imagine themselves as somehow "discovering" an exotic and disappearing land, the "rainforest." Environmental and conservation movements have changed much in the way travelers relate to tropical nature.[146] But the tourism industry, like its colonial predecessors, nevertheless has continued to interweave social and naturalized hierarchies into the tropical environment, and continued to depict explorer-tourists as somehow apart or even superior to the tropical world. Tourists often remain above and apart from nature,

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[143] Wetmore, "Something about Museums," Record Unit 7006, Box 233.
[144] On the consumption of images of the tropics, see Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean*; Stepan, *Picturing Tropical Nature*; Also, Krista Thompson, *An Eye for the Tropics: Tourism, Photography, and Framing the Caribbean Picturesque* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006).
[145] Sustan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1977), 15.
[146] For example, Evans, *The Green Republic*.

unaware of their own role in shaping these threatened environments. Like the white-male scientists before them, tourists classify the world around them and treat themselves as something apart. In this regard, little has changed within the social relations and ecological beliefs guiding tourists into the tropics.

The scientists of the past have given modern day travelers important tools to think about and understand nature; in particular, they have taught an appreciation of biodiversity and conservation.[147] Organisms and ecosystems, travelers are reminded, depend on interconnected relationships. Yet at the same time, the legacy of naturalist exploration has left travelers with a less than ideal ideology and way of traveling to interact with those very environments. The production of scientific knowledge emerged within and depended on U.S. imperial and capitalist expansion and in the process of doing science, promoted a culture of racial and gendered hierarchy and also a particularly powerful culture of possession and ownership over the natural world. The tourism industry has followed that tradition.

The increase and diffusion of the culture of adventure for mass consumption, however, has also taken on more existential and epicurean forms, in addition to physical prowess, scientific exploration, and getting close to nature. In the following chapter, I continue to explore the inspirational roots of modern tourist identity. But rather than focus on the social practices of explorer scientists, I examine another key yet complementary social group motivating tourists to travel abroad. Through the stories of travel writers, in the interwar period (between the First and Second World Wars), one can see both domestic motivations for leaving home and also how dreams of tropical escape circulated into popular culture. Adventure, as Simmel noted, promised escape from the everyday routine of one's life. In the early-to-mid twentieth century, there emerged myriad ways to experience this adventure overseas. Tourism could be active exploration, as seen in this chapter, and also, an individualistic escape from the drudgery of home.

[147] See, for example, Kohler, *All Creatures*; Frederick Rowe Davis, *The Man Who Saved Sea Turtles* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

Chapter 4: Travel Writers and Discontents

"Was it through books that you first thought of ships?"
"Reading a book, sir, made me go abroad."[1] –Wilfred Owen

In the spring of 1933, David A. Smart, Henry L. Jackson, and Arnold Gingrich founded *Esquire* magazine: "The Quarterly for Men." Their goal, they explained, was to create a magazine that would "become the common denominator of masculine interests – to be all things to all men."[2] That spring, they began to search for authors to write for the magazine. "We were going around New York with a checkbook calling on writers and artists," Gingrich recalled, "trying to make them believe that we were actually going to come out with a luxury magazine, devoted to the art of living and the new leisure."[3]

The turning point, when everyone began to "believe" in *Esquire*, came when Ernest Hemingway (with the promise of a sizable cash advance) agreed to write for the new magazine. After that, Gingrich, Smart, and Jackson would "drop" the famous author's name in their meetings with potential advertisers, and advertisements started to sell. Hemingway became, in the words of Gingrich, "one of the best friends this magazine ever had, and that at a time when its need of friends was the greatest. It is not too much to say that, at the very earliest point, he was its principal asset."[4] Hemingway, the story goes, helped make *Esquire*. He even invented, indirectly, its name, addressing a letter to "Arnold Gingrich, Esq."[5] During the first seven years of the magazine's circulation, between 1933 and 1939, Hemingway contributed twenty-six articles and "letters," and six short stories. He seemed to be the ideal writer for jump-starting sales for a men's magazine. The author was a literary celebrity in the early 1930s, after the

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[1] Wilfred Owen, "Navy Boy," in *Poems* (London: Imperial War Museum, 1990).
[2] "Editor's Box," *Esquire*, Inaugural Issue, Autumn 1933.
[3] Arnold Gingrich, "Publisher's Page," *Esquire*, October 1961.
[4] Ibid. For more on Gingrich's relationship with Hemingway, see, "Scott, Ernest, Whoever," *Esquire*, December 1966. Also by Gingrich, *Nothing But People: The Early Days at Esquire* (New York: Crown, 1971). Gingrich supposedly pitched the idea of contributing to the new magazine to Hemingway during a chance encounter in a bookstore in New York.
[5] "Esquire," according to the Merriam Webster dictionary, is "used as a title of courtesy usually placed in its abbreviated form after the surname." It is also the name for "a member of the English gentry ranking below a knight." Merriam Webster Dictionary, accessed January 5, 2016, http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/esquire

publication of *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) and *A Farewell to Arms* (1929). Because of his name on the cover, according to the scholar Kevin Maier, "*Esquire*'s circulation skyrocketed from a modest 100,000 copies in 1933 to over 555,000 by 1936."[6]

Hemingway, the novelist of masculine adventure, was equally sought after for his non-fiction work. Some of his most popular writing about bullfights in Spain, hunting in sub-Saharan Africa, and offshore fishing in the Caribbean first appeared in *Esquire.*[7] For the magazine's inaugural issue, published in the fall of 1933, he wrote an article about big-game fishing in Cuba, an island that had long been of interest to U.S. readers. The author traveled in the summer of 1933 from Key West to Havana with Captain Joe Russell to go fishing. In his article, "A Cuban Letter," Hemingway described his early morning routine in Havana and also his fishing adventures in the Gulf Stream.[8] After going into great detail about his room and his breakfast at the Hotel Ambos Mundos, he reported that he caught fifty-two marlin and two sailfish that season. In the "letter," he even offered fishing tips. "The main thing," he told readers "is to loosen your drag quickly enough when he starts to jump and makes his run."[9] His leisure time on the island converted into his writing material. For the next three decades, Cuba would remain one of Hemingway's favorite literary destinations.

In the 1930s, *Esquire* was the best selling men's magazine. Its success also did something profound to Hemingway's role in popular culture. As men looked to *Esquire* for fashion and adventure, Hemingway became a key mediator – reflecting and shaping – U.S. imaginations of foreign travel. In his work and his daily life, Hemingway cultivated a traveler's identity, rooted in white American ideals of masculinity, and then shared it for mass consumption. Travel, as the scholar Russ Pottle described, was "vital to supporting Hemingway's self-fashioned writer's lifestyle."[10] A sense of travel and

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[6] Kevin Maier, "'A trick men learn in Paris': Hemingway, Esquire, and mass tourism," *The Hemingway Review* 31 (Spring 2012): 68.
[7] John Fenstermaker, "Ernest Hemingway in Esquire," in *Literature and Journalism: Inspirations, Intersections, and Inventions from Ben Franklin to Stephen Colbert*, Mark Canada, ed., 187-207 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan (2013).
[8] Ernest Hemingway, "Marlin off the Morro: A Cuban Letter," *Esquire*, Autumn, 1933.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Russ Pottle, "Travel," in *Ernest Hemingway in Context*, Debra A. Moddelmog and Suzanne del Gizzo, eds., 367-378 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

adventure marked nearly all of his writing. He presented his stories as examples of masculine strength and independence and often, at the same time, glamorous and leisurely experiences.[11] Men, and in particular white American men, wanted to live and travel as Hemingway did; many still do. "He had his own poetic gift," *The New York Review of Books* wrote recently, "to make the reader feel it had happened to him."[12] One fan recalled, "he brought places to life, exotic places… I just couldn't get him out my mind. When I read him, I was only a teenager, I never had left my hometown."[13] Another reader, who ended up traveling to Spain and being gored by a bull, remembered, "It felt like he was talking directly to me."[14] Whether to Europe or the Caribbean or sub-Saharan Africa, generations of readers followed in the literary and literal footsteps of *traveling* writers like Hemingway.

In this chapter, we look at the literary journeys of writers to explore, in Hemingway's words, "the sequence of motion and fact which made the emotion" of foreign travel so appealing to U.S. readers in the early twentieth century.[15] Between the two world wars (1918-1941), a new generation of writers began to articulate and practice travel as the ultimate expression of "freedom." The era resounded with a literary call to go abroad. "Diaspora," the historian Paul Fussell argued, "seems one of the signals of literary modernism, as we can infer from virtually no modern writer's remaining where he's 'supposed' to be."[16] No one, apparently, wanted to stay home. All sorts of creative people, from writers to artists to musicians, embraced, in the words of Ford Maddox

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[11] Maier, "'A trick men learn in Paris': Hemingway, Esquire, and mass tourism."
[12] James Salter, "The Finest Life You Ever Saw," *New York Times Review of Books*, October 2011.
[13] *Michael Palin's Hemingway Adventure*, directed by David F. Turnbull (1999; London: BBC, 1999), DVD.
[14] "Running with the Bulls," *Snap Judgment*, National Public Radio, December 19, 2014.
[15] Hemingway, *Death in the Afternoon* (New York: Charles Scribner's Son, 1932), 2. My focus in this chapter is overwhelmingly on white male writers traveling in the tropics, and the identity they embraced and shared with the reading public. But, I also recognize that there was a diverse group of writers traveling in the Caribbean in the early-to-mid twentieth century. Therefore, in this introduction, I choose to discuss the travel desires of writers more broadly. In the last part of the chapter, for example, I also briefly discuss the experiences of travel writers of color and juxtapose their experiences with the dominant perception and reality of white-male travel writers producing literature for tourist consumption.
[16] Paul Fussell, *Abroad: British Literary Traveling Between the Wars* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 11.

Ford, "the habit of flux." [17] In the interwar period, as the historian Emily Rosenberg explained, "the fascination with traveling around and describing foreign areas – long evident in human history – reached new heights."[18] Foreign travel became a widespread obsession.

In the early-to-mid twentieth century, the Caribbean was fundamentally entangled with this production and consumption of modern English-American literature. The region – stretching from the U.S. south to Mexico, Central America, the islands, and northern South America – was a crossroads where the dreams of writers and tourists met. Among scholars, though, there seems to be a conscious or unconscious effort to "box-off" literary heroes from this transnational and imperial history. Admirers often hold up the great works of modern literature as universal parables, divorced from the social and environmental geographies, social inequalities, and racially-charged encounters that writers actually experienced and wove into their stories. "Too often literature and culture," in the words of Edward Said, "are presumed to be politically, even historically innocent; it has regularly seemed otherwise to me… society and literary culture can only be understood and studied together."[19] Art, writing, and travel, as the scholar James Clifford suggested, are best understood as "relational." They have never been closed-off, geographically bound, culturally coherent to one locale.[20] By decontextualizing literature from the mobile experiences of its authors, we risk "lobotomizing" English-American literature from the fluid and often unjust world it was made in.[21] Literature – for better, for worse – is part of the social and economic history of its time. It shares responsibility for creating and reproducing the privileges and injustices that have defined the boundaries of mobility and immobility in the modern era.

Historians of European colonialism, following scholars such as Said, have been

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[17] Ford Madox Ford, *The English Novel: From the Earliest Days to the Death of Joseph Conrad* (London: Constable & Co, 1930), 9.
[18] Emily Rosenberg, ed. *A World Connecting, 1870-1945* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), 3.
[19] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 27; Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994).
[20] James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1988).
[21] Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (New York: Vintage, 1993), 12.

more open to examining the far-reaching and culturally influential journeys of creative writers. There is a scholarly tradition of critically reading "colonial" travel writing as a way to understand European perceptions of and interactions with the rest of the world. Mary Louise Pratt's study, *Imperial Eyes: Studies in Travel Writing and Transculturation*, for instance, has become a classic text for scholars analyzing Europe's encounter with colonial subjects. Pratt looked at "European travel and exploration writing… in connection with European economic and political expansion since around 1750."[22] Travel writing, she argued, became "one of the ideological apparatuses of empire." Writers described landscapes, natures, and people in vivid and often condescending language for European readers back home. The rest of the world was, in their view, ripe for commercial expansion and the fulfillment of fantasy. In this sense, travel writing helped justify European imperial control over distant people and places. It also significantly shaped "European society, culture, and history."[23] The West's encounter with the colonial world brought home in the form of material goods, scientific discoveries, and travel writing altered the perceptions and behaviors of European domestic society.[24]

Historians have built on Pratt's insights to study travel writing throughout the colonial era, dating from the nineteenth century all the way back to the early sixteenth century. But what about travel writing's relationship to the twentieth century era of tourism? As Pratt briefly points out at the end of her book, the visions of travel writers have been "appropriated and commodified on an unprecedented scale by the tourist industry."[25] The influence of writers as travelers did not simply stop with the end of European imperialism. Between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, however, there was a marked shift in traveling culture. "Earlier travel writing," Helen Carr explained, "often came out of travel undertaken for reasons of work, as soldier, trader, scientist or

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[22] Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London and New York, 1992), 4.
[23] Ibid.
[24] For more on this relationship between culture in the metropole and colonies, see Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995).
[25] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 221.

whatever, or perhaps for education or health; increasingly in the twentieth century it has come out of travel undertaken specifically for the sake of writing about it."[26] After exploration, there was travel, and after travel, as Paul Fussell argued, there was tourism.[27] Motivations for leaving home have evolved, with their changing environment.

What historical and cultural processes changed the experience of international travel for Euro-American and Europeans in the twentieth century, and equally important, what characteristics defined this altered experience? The generation of travel writers that came of age between the two world wars, although a cog in a massive machine of change, played a crucial role in this transformation, helping to articulate and certainly reproduce and circulate a new ethos of travel: *to go for the sake of going*.

The journeys of a select group of white-male travel writers, who came of age during the interwar period, reveals political and social processes intersecting with literary production and in turn, shaping the perceptions and practices of tropical tourism. The chapter looks at the personal travel experiences of English-American authors in the first decades of the twentieth century. My approach embraces a form of storytelling and analysis, which historians call, "exemplification," whereby "the event [or individual story] recounted becomes a cameo, finely, densely wrought, on which we may trace the lineaments of grosser grander sculpture. The microcosm of a moment thus reflects the larger social macrocosm."[28] Wanderlust writers, whether tourists read their work or not, gave texture and meaning to the modern tourism industry. But to better understand this influence, we need to look more closely at how and why writers themselves valued foreign travel. We must, as Toni Morrison advised, refocus the critical gaze from the "described and imagined to the describers and imaginers."[29] My objective is not so much to analyze rhetoric or literary content, but rather to study a hegemonic vision of the "writer's lifestyle" and critically understand how this persona of white male freedom shaped the identity of the modern tourist.

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[26] Helen Carr, "Modernism and Travel, 1880-1940," in *Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs, eds., 70-86 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
[27] Fussell, *Abroad*, 38.
[28] Ann Twinam, *Public Lives, Private Secrets: Gender, Honor, and Sexuality in Colonial Spanish America* (Stanford University Press, 1999), 23.
[29] Morrison, *Playing in the Dark*, 90.

The life history of writers like Hemingway – included, yes, lots of storytelling – but also physicals journeys and encounters that transformed into literary material. We begin by studying the journey. The travel experiences of white male writers offer a two-way mirror into the history of Caribbean tourism: revealing many of the domestic motivations encouraging tourists to leave home, to go into "self-exile" or more temporarily, to go on a vacation; and second, their experiences show how "exotic" and tropical destinations and ways of understanding cultural difference entered into mainstream thought. In their collective biography of mobility, we can see both push (home) and pull (foreign) forces coming together to create patterns of leisure travel from the "Global North" to the tropics. The experiences of a select group of writers as travelers in the interwar period highlight the domestic social discontents and opportunities, and also the foreign curiosities and fantasies that encouraged tourists to valorize "abroad" in an exotic sense – as an escape, a new and often temporary canvas for one's dreams.

Away from home, writers translated their experiences into literature for public consumption, and ignited traveling imaginations. They blended genres of ethnography, autobiography, and fiction to introduce readers to new worlds.[30] "One of realistic fiction's big jobs," according to the author and literary critic David Foster Wallace, "used to be to afford easements across borders to help readers leap over the walls of self and locale and show us unseen or – dreamed-of people and cultures and ways to be."[31] Writers traveled, wrote about it, and then encouraged others to follow their path. Their personal experiences expressed in literature became part of a new culture of leisure travel emerging in the interwar era. The value of going abroad penetrated deep into U.S. society and deep into the way modern Americans understood leisure time.

Both nonfiction and fiction literature have shaped what it meant to be a tourist abroad. Traveling writers were not bound by literary genres. They could produce "travel writing" and distinctly, a novel, from the exact same experience.[32] Fiction and nonfiction

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[30] Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean*, 141.
[31] David Foster Wallace, "E Unibus Pluram: Television and U.S. Fiction," in *A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again* (New York: Little, Brown and Co., 1997), 51.
[32] Travel writing is traditionally understood as its own unique genre of literature, but for this chapter I purposely blur the lines between fiction, non-fiction, and travel writing to show their shared creative roots

often came from the same source and often complemented one another in terms of their affect. This cross-pollinating is seen clearly in the career of Hemingway. From the early 1920s to the mid-1950s, Hemingway wrote about his travels in novels, nonfiction books, and in articles and short stories for magazines, like *Cosmopolitan*, *Life*, *Scribner's*, *Collier's*, *Holiday*, in addition to *Esquire*.[33] His work and his *way of being* spoke to a social desire to find pleasure and self-affirmation in the act of traveling abroad. The best place to find real adventure and real experience, Hemingway articulated, existed beyond the rules and boundaries of the United States.

After leaving home for the First World War, and after seven years in Paris's expatriate scene, Hemingway moved to the Caribbean in the late 1920s – first to Key West and then to Havana. The region became, for him, a new source of leisure recreation and literary inspiration. The waters off Cuba, he explained, "are the last wild country there is left."[34] Fishing gave him a rush like-no-other and "a lot of time to think." Often narrating his tales in the second person, it was as if he was inviting "you," the reader, to join his escapades. For *Holiday Magazine* in 1949, Hemingway looked back at his time abroad in Cuba. In the opening paragraph, he stated:

> People ask you why you live in Cuba and you say it is because you like it. It is too complicated to explain about the early morning in the hills above Havana where every morning is cool and fresh on the hottest day in summer. There is no need to tell them that one reason you live there is because you can raise your own fighting cocks, train them on the place, and fight them anywhere that can match them and that this is all legal.[35]

Hemingway mentioned repeatedly the freedoms he enjoyed on the island. He loved Cuba and the beauty of its sea, but more than anything, he felt free – it was "all legal." He had

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in the writer's experience of traveling abroad. Travel writing may be better understood by focusing on the identity of its author, that is, the *traveling* writer. As Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs explain, "Writing and travel have always been intimately connected." See, *Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 2.

[33] For a complete list of Hemingway's magazine work, see Carlos Baker, *Hemingway: The Writer as Artist* (Princeton University Press, 1980), 409-439.

[34] Hemingway, "On the Blue Water: A Gulf Stream Letter," *Esquire*, April 1936.

[35] Hemingway, "The Great Blue River," *Holiday Magazine*, July 1949.

escaped, in his mind, the overly civilized rules of home. Here, he could drink, fight, fish, and live the way he wanted. Abroad, dreams could be actualized.

Travel writers, whether telling their stories as fiction or nonfiction, could make fantasies of adventure feel possible; you read it and then dreamed of your own journey. In April 1934, one young man from rural Minnesota felt this sensation. Arnold Samuelson, a twenty-two year old aspiring writer, read a story by Hemingway called "One Trip Across" about a boat captain who fished the Gulf Stream between Havana and Key West. "Harry Morgan, the central figure," as described by the writer Toni Morrison, "seems to represent the classic American hero: a solitary man battling a government that would limit his freedom and his individuality."[36] Samuelson was so taken by the story he decided to hitchhike from Minnesota to Key West. "That story," he explained later, "gave me the impulse to travel two thousand miles to the meet the writer. At best I hoped he might spare me a few minutes to talk about writing."[37]

Samuelson arrived to Key West in the spring of 1934 aboard the Florida East Coast Railroad.[38] Immediately, he went to look for Hemingway. "There seemed a good chance E.H. would show at his house in Key West," he wrote. "He was back from a hunting trip in Africa. I had seen a newspaper picture of his arrival on the boat in New York."[39] That afternoon Samuelson went to Hemingway's house and knocked on the door. The encounter with the often-combative author went surprisingly well. The older man jotted down a reading list, and lent him two books: a collection of short stories by Stephen Crane and a copy of *A Farewell to Arms*. The next day, Hemingway offered him a job as night watchmen on the new fishing boat, the *Pilar*, recently purchased with funds forwarded from *Esquire*.[40] Recounting their relationship for the magazine, Hemingway wrote, "besides writing this young man had one other obsession. He had always wanted

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[36] Morrison, *Playing in the Dark,* 70.
[37] Arnold Samuelson, *With Hemingway: A Year in Key West and Cuba* (New York: Random House, 1984), 3.
[38] The train was part of The Florida East Coast Railroad, which famously constructed the overseas railroad to meet the Panama Canal maritime trade. Completed in 1912, the rail line operated until 1935, when a hurricane wiped it out.
[39] Samuelson, *With Hemingway,* 3.
[40] Paul Hendrickson, *Hemingway's Boat: Everything He Loved in Life, and Lost* (New York: Vintage, 2012), 66.

to go to sea… To fulfill his desire… we promised to take him to Cuba."[41] Over the next year, Samuelson traveled with Hemingway back and forth between Key West and Havana. He lived on the boat, fished and served drinks, and worked on his own writing.

Samuelson literally followed his favorite author into the Caribbean. Arriving to Havana, he recalled, "we walked the narrow, shaded streets lined with buildings cemented together in a solid front against the sidewalks, which were just wide enough for us to walk in single file, with E.H. in the lead, taking long steps, Pauline [his second wife] behind him and me in the rear taking medium steps, walking on air. I was having that exhilaration, which only comes in full force during your first trip on foot in a foreign city."[42] Samuelson got the chance to travel abroad and improve his writing skills with Hemingway. But not long after, he stopped traveling and writing to find more stable income. Eventually, he settled in rural Texas and started a small lumber business and raised a family. "I wanted to write," like Hemingway, he wrote in a memoir, posthumously published by his daughter, "not knowing there were thousands of others who wanted the same thing."[43] Hemingway's writing inspired countless young men. The short story of the boat captain that Samuelson loved, for example, would turn into the novel *To Have and Have Not* (1937), and would later become a Hollywood movie starring Humphrey Bogart. The story touched a wide audience.

Authors who wrote of adventure in distant locales spoke to the desires of young Americans with dreams of travel and a literary career. But for every one traveler who made his career writing, there were hundreds, even thousands, that earned very little money and even less recognition. Samuelson was one of many; so was Hemingway, though with literary and financial success.

Forgotten Travelers, Forgotten Geographies

The history of Hemingway is just the tip of a societal iceberg of travel desire emerging in the early-to-mid twentieth century. No one then could have predicted that he

[41] Hemingway, "Monologue to the Maestro: A High Seas Letter," *Esquire*, October 1935.
[42] Samuelson, *With Hemingway*, 162.
[43] Ibid, 84.

would become the single most recognized travel writer of the era. There were more than a few (more than a boatload of) authors traveling and translating their experiences into literature. Between the world wars, authors such as John Steinbeck, Aldous Huxley, Graham Greene, and less-remembered writers like Richard Halliburton, Harry Franck, and Harry Foster also traveled and wrote and shaped the imaginations of hopeful travelers. The journeys of English-American authors – from the United States and Great Britain – engaged in and gave meaning to international travel. Less privileged writers of color like Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, and Claude McKay, as I show in the last section of this chapter, were also part of this mobile network of literary production. The English-speaking peoples of the world were, it seems, united in their literary interest with the rest of world. Authors participated in, mediated, and interpreted a new travel culture for metropolitan readers.

As travel became more accessible, "national" authors and literature increasingly looked transnational.[44] Writers were constantly on the move and finding literary inspiration in the act of international travel. Even authors traditionally associated with domestic literary subjects went abroad. John Steinbeck, for example, one of the main author's competing with Hemingway for the attention of the reading public, traveled

[44] Transnational in relation to "national literatures," in this sense, refers to the fact that U.S. authors, recognized distinctly as "American" writers, would often produce their work while living abroad, whether they were writing about home or events in a foreign country. Hemingway, for example, wrote many of his short stories about Nick Adams growing up in Northern Michigan while Hemingway himself was living in Paris. My use of the term transnational is best understood as the movement of people, ideas, or goods across national borders. This movement moreover is not unidirectional. The flow of ideas, peoples, and goods can go back and forth, as I show here in this chapter in terms of literature and traveling culture produced abroad and circulated back to the United States, and then in the process, encouraging another wave of travelers to travel overseas. For more on transnational history as historical method, see Laura Briggs, Gladys McCormick, J.T. Way, "Transnationalism: A Category of Analysis," *American Quarterly* 60 (September 2008): 625-648; Mae M. Ngai, "Promises and Perils of Transnational History," *Perspectives on History, The Newsmagazine of the American Historical Association* (December 2012); Louis A. Pérez Jr., "We are the World: Internationalizing the National, Nationalizing the International," *The Journal of American History* 89 (September 2002): 558-566. Specifically referring to the history of the United States, Pérez writes: "The history of the nation is imagined as larger than the sum total of its parts, if only because the premise of the nation as a sum total is flawed. In fact, the nation is itself only part of a larger global total. Narratives conditioned by or contingent upon the proposition of the nation fail to take in the larger international circumstance of American history, especially those relationships and communities that function independently of the nation. It is thus necessary to historicize the nation outside of itself, to fashion new narratives that imagine sites of historical meaning released from the temporal boundaries and spatial markers that have enclosed the history of America."

regularly to Mexico and Central America. Although Steinbeck is remembered today as a novelist of the Great Depression in the United States and life in northern California, he actually began his career writing about Panama and the Caribbean. In 1929, the same year Hemingway published his best seller *A Farewell to Arms*, Steinbeck published his first novel *Cup of Gold*.[45] Steinbeck had traveled from California to New York via the Panama Canal a few years earlier, his first overseas trip. Inspired by the journey, he wrote a novel about the legend of Henry Morgan and his attack on the Spanish colonial city of Panama. His depiction of the famous English pirate, critics believe, was cut from his own fantasies of adventure. "They were starting for the Indies [Morgan and his crew]," Steinbeck wrote, "the fine far Indies where boys' dreams lived."[46] The book, published just two months before the stock market crash of 1929, sold poorly. But as Steinbeck matured as an author, he continued to write about the people and places he visited south of the U.S. border. His novella *The Pearl* about an impoverished family on the coast of Mexico drew on a story he heard during his travels in 1940. (The book is still read widely in U.S. classrooms.[47]) The first hand account of that inspirational trip to Mexico with his friend, the marine biologist Ed Rickett, was also published as a book, *Log from the Sea of Cortez* (1941). Written as a rambling travelogue, the book was part adventure, naturalist exploration, and philosophical reflection. "It would be good to live in a perpetual state of leave-taking," Steinbeck considered, "never to go nor to stay, but to remain suspended in that golden emotion of love and longing; to be loved without satiety."[48] Steinbeck, the quintessential writer of the American experience, was quite transnational in his literary interests.

In the 1920s, when Hemingway and Steinbeck were still relatively unknown, travel writers like Richard Halliburton had already established themselves as best selling authors. In his first book, *The Royal Road to Romance* (1925), Halliburton explained his

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[45] John Steinbeck, *Cup of Gold: A life of Sir Henry Morgan, Buccaneer, with Occasional Reference to History* (New York: McBride & Co, 1929).
[46] Ibid.
[47] Steinbeck, *The Pearl* (New York: Viking Press, 1947).
[48] Steinbeck, *Log from the Sea of Cortez* (New York: Penguin Classics, 1995), 21. Steinbeck regularly returned to the subject of Mexico. He also wrote, for example, a screenplay about the revolutionary Emiliano Zapata. The script was made into a popular film, directed by Elian Kazan and starring Marlon Brando. See *Viva Zapata!* Presented by Twentieth Century Fox, 1952.

itinerant obsession, declaring, "Let those who wish have their respectability. I wanted freedom, freedom to indulge in whatever caprice struck my fancy, freedom to search in the farthermost corners of the earth for the beautiful, the joyous and the romantic."[49] In the 1920s and 1930s, Halliburton retraced Ulysses' journey in the Mediterranean, Cortez's conquest of Mexico, Robinson Crusoe's fictional experience on the Caribbean island of Tobago, and even wrote about his own unusual journey swimming across the Panama Canal. He paid the lowest toll in the canal's history. *Vanity Fair*, annoyed by his overwhelming success, profiled Halliburton in 1930 describing his books as "marvelously readable, transparently bogus, extremely popular, and have made their author a millionaire; because his invariable picture of himself (patent pending) is that of a diffident, romantic boy; because he is the most popular ladies club lecturer in America, and every knock *Vanity Fair* gives him is just a boost."[50] Over the years, as *Vanity Fair* hoped, the public has virtually forgotten Halliburton; today tour guides briefly mention his name at the Panama Canal's viewing center. But during his lifetime, he was one of the most famous authors of his generation.[51] The broadcast journalist Walter Cronkite credited Halliburton, in part, with his decision to become a news correspondent. He made travel glamorous, Cronkite remembered. The author Susan Sontag also read Halliburton as a child, and looking back on her career, claimed that his books were "surely among the most important books of my life."[52]

Writers as travelers were cultural heroes, and in some cases, cultural producers. They made distant places and experiences seem accessible to readers at home; in effect, producing guidebooks for future travels. "Their movements, rhetoric, and imagery," as the scholar Mimi Sheller argued, "shaped not only the itineraries, but also the fantasies

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[49] Richard Halliburton, *The Royal Road to Romance* (New York: Garden City Publishing Company, 1925).
[50] Clare Boothe, "We Nominate for Oblivion," *Vanity Fair*, June 1930.
[51] Halliburton's publications include: *The Royal Road to Romance* (1925); *The Glorious Adventure* (1927); *New Worlds to Conquer* (1929); *The Flying Carpet* (1932); *Seven League Boots* (1935); *Richard Halliburton's Book of Marvels: the Occident* (1937); *Richard Halliburton's Second Book of Marvels: the Orient* (1938). For more on Halliburton's legacy, see R. Scott Williams, *The Forgotten Adventures of Richard Halliburton: A High-Flying Life from Tennessee to Timbuktu* (Charleston: The History Press, 2014).
[52] Quoted in Greg Daugherty, "The Last Adventure of Richard Halliburton, the Forgotten Hero of 1930s America," *The Smithsonian Magazine*, March 25, 2014.

and perceptions of the tourists who followed in their footsteps."[53] Their journeys outlined an imaginary and material route of leisure travel. Tourists literally followed them abroad. Over the decades, their collective story, detached from any single author or text, has taken on a life of its own and morphed into the explicit and implicit art of our modern traveling culture. Today as a tourist, for example, you can drink and fish in Key West where Hemingway once lived, or hangout at El Floridita bar in Havana, where the author drank daiquiris in the afternoon and met his favorite mistress, Leopoldina Rodríguez, and all the while, appreciate and imagine and briefly engage in this free-wheeling "writer's lifestyle."[54]

Scholars of modern English-American literature, however, have seemingly forgotten the profound influence creative writers have had on the sanctioned behavior of tourism, and in particular for the Caribbean vacation. The roots of twentieth century literature extended well beyond metropolitan centers. New York, Paris, and London are traditionally associated with the generation of authors who came of age between the two world wars.[55] But the tropics were also part of their itinerary. Writers traveling in Latin America, Africa, and Asia were part of a colonial and cosmopolitan network of literary production. Twentieth century literature thought to be produced distinctly in Europe or the United States was often created in a more "global," or third world context.

Hemingway, one of the most famous American authors of the twentieth century, spent most of his adult life outside the United States. While he traveled more than most writers, beyond the traditionally understood circles of modern literature, he was not the only one. The list is long. Many English-American authors rarely lived at, or wrote about, "home." George Orwell, for example, set his first book in Burma and some critics believe that his most well-known books *1984* and *Animal Farm* were actually based on his observations of colonial governance in southeast Asia.[56] Another British author, Aldous

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[53] Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean*, 165.
[54] Andrew Feldman, "Leopoldina Rodríguez: Hemingway's Cuban Lover?" *The Hemingway Review* 31 (Fall 2011): 62-78.
[55] See, for example, Craig Monk, *Writing the Lost Generation: Expatriate Autobiography and American Modernism* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2008).
[56] Emma Larkin, *Finding George Orwell in Burma* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006); Robert Colls, *George Orwell: English Rebel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 18. About Orwell and his

Huxley, spent more time abroad and wrote as much about the Americas – from the U.S. southwest to Mexico and Central America – than about his native England. Poking fun at the previous generation of English writers who stayed home and comparing William Wordsworth to his own tropical travels, Huxley wrote:

> He chose, in a word, to be a philosopher, comfortably at home with a man-made and, therefore, thoroughly comprehensible system, rather than a poet adventuring for adventure's sake through the mysterious world revealed by his direct and undistorted intuitions. It is a pity that he never traveled beyond the boundaries of Europe. A voyage through the tropics would have cured him of his too easy and comfortable pantheism.[57]

Graham Greene also travelled and wrote about Latin America, including books about Cuba, Mexico, and Panama. "It was boredom," he told readers, which first sent him abroad.[58] The most respected poet of the Lost Generation, Hart Crane, also lived and wrote in Mexico and Cuba before committing suicide on a steamer in the Gulf of Mexico.[59] The author John Steinbeck, as discussed earlier, also began his writing career focused on Central America and the Caribbean. Harlem Renaissance writers like Langston Hughes found poetic inspiration in Cuba and the Caribbean. "I am to go to Havana," Hughes wrote his literary patron, "for rest, new strength and contact with the song."[60] Zora Neale Hurston spent over two years traveling around the region, and wrote her most popular book about an African-American family in Florida while she was staying in Haiti. The transnational dimensions of literary modernism, and its influence on

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relationship to British colonialism, Colls writes, "For the British, every hill station was somewhere to escape from… [Orwell's] great-great grandfather had been a slave-owner in Jamaica. His father-in-law had been a teak dealer in Burma. His father had been an official in the opium trade. These family heirlooms gave him a personal stake in what he witnessed. Presiding over thousands of little ceremonies of control and consent [as a British police officer in Burma], even the control and consent of a man about to be hanged, Orwell did his duty. But when he came to reflect upon that duty, he laid down his swagger-stick and took on the role of colonial anthropologist instead."

[57] Aldous Huxley, *Wordsworth in the Tropics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1928).

[58] Graham Greene, *In Search of a Character: Two African Journals* (New York: Viking Press, 1961). Greene, among his many books, regularly returned to Latin America and the Caribbean as settings for his storytelling. In Mexico: *The Lawless Roads* (1939); *The Power and the Glory* (1940). In Cuba: *Our Man in Havana* (1958) and in Panama: *Getting to Know the General: The Story of an Involvement* (1984).

[59] For short review of Crane's life and works, see William Logan, "Hart Crane's Bridge to Nowhere," *The New York Times*, January 28, 2007.

[60] Quoted in Frank A. Guridy, *Forging Diaspora: Afro-Cubans and African Americans in a World of Empire and Jim Crow* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 124.

popular traveler imaginations, were culturally profound, despite retrospective navel-grazing at New York, Paris, and a few major cities. This erasure, this forgetting, of the entangled relationship between literature, mobility, and the routes of tourism does not, though, diminish any historical importance.[61]

Lost Generation in the Paradox of Progress

Travel writing has for centuries portrayed the Caribbean, and other tropical locales, as an epicurean fantasy for Euro-American and European reading publics. In the early-to-mid twentieth century, however, this colonial dream found itself in a new context of rapid change. Escape to the south became even more enticing, and available. The rise of urban industrial capitalism, the expansion of transportation and communication technologies, and the fears of civilizational decline and world war, made foreign travel the most popular literary subject of the era. Whether one was a cynic or a jingoist about modern change, the story of travel had appeal.

To make sense of the social and technological context fueling the desire to go abroad, we look at the story of one travel writer, Harry Foster. His life, and the lives of other white male writers on the move, embodied the new era of transnational travel. The young people who came of age during and after the First World War, the "Lost Generation," became wanderlust pioneers of an expanding and pleasure-based travel industry. They helped circulate the message that going abroad had inherent value.

In 1919, the same year the Versailles Treaty was signed ending the First World War, twenty-five year old Harry Foster began his travels as a free-lance writer and a "tropical tramp." He was not the only young person with the urge to go abroad after the war. "You're not the first one," the captain of a tramp steamer in Panama lectured to him. "Every time I hit port a dozen fellows want to ship to South America. It's the war that did it. Those that didn't get over feel that they've been cheated out of something, and they're looking for it now."[62] As Foster admitted, he was tired of military discipline, and he had

[61] We often forget where our ideas and behaviors come from. They seep into the subconscious, origins forgotten.
[62] Harry L. Foster, *The Adventures of a Tropical Tramp* (New York: A.L. Burt Company, 1922), 2.

no interest in returning home to a sedentary life. During the war, he served in the U.S. Army's 78th Infantry Division. In the trenches of France, with men falling all around, he was soon promoted to 1st Lieutenant. He later specialized as an instructor in modern warfare. Among the rank and file soldiers, Foster was a highly educated man. Born in Brooklyn, New York in 1894, his parents paid for him to study at an elite prep school in New Jersey and later at Lafayette College in Pennsylvania; this in an era when most Americans did not even complete secondary school.[63] All the early signs pointed toward a successful and comfortable future. Foster's experience in the First World War, however, would change the direction of his life.

After the war, Foster returned to the United States for his final deployment with the Army, this time, along the Mexican border. [64] A few months later, after being honorably discharged, he crossed into Mexico and began to work his way south. "Seized by the same wanderlust that has led so many other ex-soldiers into foreign lands," he explained, "I had drifted down through Mexico and Central America."[65] Foster wanted to explore, to be free, to be independent. And he hoped to pay his way as a travel writer. He struggled initially, though, to find a publisher for his stories. By the time he reached Panama, it was obvious that writing on its own would not cover his expenses. Since the magazines declined to publish his work, Foster decided, "that the first requisite for a magazine writer of my particular species was a steady job of some sort."[66] In Panama, he applied for work at the U.S. government's Canal Zone commissary. He was hired almost immediately to be in charge of the shoe department:

> "Do you know anything about shoes?" the manager inquired.
> "Not a thing."
> "Good. I'll put you in charge of the department."[67]

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[63] In 1910, the average number of years of schooling for U.S. Americans was roughly 8.1 years. By 1940 that number had only increased to 8.6 years. See, *120 Years of American Education: A Statistical Portrait, National Center For Education Statistics* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 1993).
[64] Harry L. Foster, *A Tropical Tramp with the Tourists* (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1925); Obituary, *New York Times*, March 16, 1932.
[65] Foster, *The Adventures of a Tropical Tramp*, 1-8.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Ibid.

Foster though grew dissatisfied. "The shoe department seemed to be no place for a would-be writer of romance," he believed. "Nor did the rest of the Canal Zone supply it. Since the completion of the big ditch it had become an orderly well-regulated American community, where everything ran according to rule, under the direction of a paternal but strict and all-powerful American governor – just like a huge military camp." The riotous frontier feeling of the construction period had disappeared, and Foster wanted adventure.

At the docks in Panama, he looked for a job shoveling coal on an outgoing tramp steamer, but found no work. "Ain't you never heard of tropical tramps," a friend asked him, "lots of fellows – some of 'em college graduates – is doin' it regular. Big men, railroad superintendents an' everything – lots of 'em… they just can't help the wanderlust." There was simply not enough work to support the influx of men trying to tramp their way through the tropics after the war. Foster decided to stay on at the Canal Zone's shoe department and save up for the trip. He felt lucky to have a job. A month later he had the money he needed. "Then I secured a map of South America, closed my eyes, and jabbed with a pin," he claimed. "The pin landed in Peru. When I collected my month's salary, minus deductions, I had just about enough for deck passage on a native coasting steamer to Callao, the seaport for the Peruvian capital."[68]

In between his days as a shoe clerk in the Canal Zone and his death of pneumonia twelve years later in 1932, Foster would in fact become a prolific travel writer. He wrote seven books about his travel experiences in the tropics of the Americas, Asia, and the South Pacific. His editors at Dodd, Mead & Company would also publish two guidebooks about the Caribbean, posthumously, under his name in 1935 and 1937.[69] Foster became a successful writer. But unlike some of the more famous and enduring authors of his generation, he never earned enough from his publications to just be a

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[68] Ibid. Of course, Foster's ability to simply pick a destination at whim and head in that direction signified a highly privileged travel identity. For travelers of color, or less welcomed nationalities, travel was tightly restricted. See Chapter 2 for a discussion of "desirable" and "undesirable" visitors. For more on travel restrictions and the role of state authority, John Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport: Surveillance, Citizenship and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

[69] Obituary, *New York Times*, March 16, 1932. A list of Harry L. Foster's publications: *If you go to South America* (1937), *The Caribbean Cruise* (1935), *A Vagabond in the Barbary* (1930), *Combing the Caribbees* (1929), *A Vagabond in Fiji* (1927), *A Tropical Tramp with the Tourists* (1925), *A Gringo in Manana-Land* (1924), *A Beachcomber in the Orient* (1923), *The Adventures of a Tropical Tramp* (1922).

writer. He was always running out of money. Often, he resorted to playing ragtime piano in dive-bars in the red-light districts of Panama, Singapore, and other colonial ports.

To support his travels, he also worked as a tour guide. His fourth book, *A Tropical Tramp with the Tourists* (1925), part social critique/ guidebook, drew inspiration from his other career as a tourist man. "Every day an adventure," he joked, "without trouble, danger, worry, or discomfort."[70] Foster's story from soldier to wanderlust writer to tour guide highlights the massive wave of movement that emerged after the First World War. But as Foster acknowledged, he was not the only veteran with the idea of becoming a travel writer, a tropical tramp with stories to tell. The war became a reactionary catalyst for a new generation of disgruntled literary travelers.

Before World War I, many Americans and Europeans believed that progress had conquered time and space and nature for the benefit of humanity. At the turn of the new century, there remained tremendous optimism about the future. Medical professionals had defeated one disease after the next; yellow fever and malaria were no longer the scourge of white men in the tropics (see Chapter 1). Modern science and technology promised health and a wider world to explore in safety. The new networks of travel and communication, dependent on electricity, and steel, and fossil fuel, made the world seem so much closer, more tangible. Although there was a vocal minority suspicious of this highly rationalized and anthropocentric vision, the overwhelming majority of people, as the historian Michael Adas put it, "held to the faith in progress, in the primacy of rationality, and in the unbounded potential of scientific inquiry and technological invention for human improvement which had been dominant throughout the nineteenth century."[71] The young and the old believed in the hope of progress, that is, until the First World War.

In August 1914, the double-edge sword of technology cut through the continents of Europe and the Americas. On the Isthmus of Panama, the *SS Ancon* made the first

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[70] Foster, *A Tropical Tramp with the Tourists.*

[71] Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men*: *Science, Technology, and Ideologies of Western Dominance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 348. For a better understanding of the currents of critical thought that emerged in the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, before the war, see Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

official transit across the Panama Canal. After ten years of dynamite and digging, the canal linking the Caribbean with the Pacific Ocean was finally open for commerce. For the United States, the canal symbolized man's conquest over nature and the infinite possibilities of technology in the twentieth century. "A visit to the Isthmus of Panama," one triumphal author noted, "will make any American proud of his nation. The Canal is the greatest undertaking of the age."[72] The fear of nature's power had begun to erode. But in that moment of confidence, it seemed that the leaders of Western Europe and the United States had overlooked, perhaps forgotten, humankind's ability to destroy itself with technology. As the United States celebrated its canal – its symbol of world progress – Europe entered into an imperial war that would cost over 16 million lives.

A series of inventions in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth century had transformed the way Europeans and Americans experienced the world. In his seminal study *The Culture of Time and Space*, Stephen Kern documented how new technologies like electric light, the telephone and the telegraph, automobiles, steamships, and railroads accelerated speeds of travel and interconnection. "There was a dramatic increase in available energy sources," between 1880 and 1914, Kern tells us, "with both transportation and communication times dropping drastically, which made for the shrinking of lived distance."[73] Technology had reduced the importance of natural barriers like mountains, rivers, and supposedly oceans for the movement of people and goods. "The extension and use of railroads, steamships, telegraphs," the British missionary David Livingstone believed, "break down nationalities and bring people geographically remote into close connection… they make the world one."[74]

In the Americas, the Panama Canal was held up as an example of the benefits of the technological revolution in transportation and communication. To formally open the canal, President Woodrow Wilson famously touched "a button" in the White House that

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[72] Arthur Bullard, *Panama: the Canal, the Country, and the People* (New York: MacMillan Company, 1914), 557. For more on this triumphal narrative, see Alexander Missal, *Seaway to the Future: American Social Visions and the Construction of the Panama Canal* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2008).
[73] Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), xii.
[74] Quoted in Rosenberg, *The World Connecting*, 815.

set off 40 tons of dynamite in Panama.[75] At the same time, improvements in public health dramatically lowered mortality rates among European and Euro-American citizens. Widespread vaccinations, public water supply projects, and sewage systems promoted healthier cities, now able to house more workers and guarantee the health of a generation of labor. The combination of immigration and public health measures increased the population of the United States from 38.5 million in the 1870s to over 100 million by the early 1920s. More people and more discretionary income also translated into huge increases in consumption and new marketing practices within the pleasure and entertainment industries.[76]

Technological advances promised a new of era of freedom and mobility. Yet, they also required an immense amount of raw materials. Industrial production and consumption were outstripping national resources. Marxist predictions about capitalism seemed to be coming true. "The forces of production which capitalism has evolved have outgrown the limits of nation and state," Leon Trotsky concluded in 1914. "The whole globe, the land and the sea, the surface as well as the interior have become one economic workshop, the different parts of which are inseparably connected with each other."[77] Commercial interests spread farther and farther around the globe in search of resources. Empires scrambled for territory. Violent conflicts between European empires and ethnic communities – in Africa, Asia, and Latin America – erupted. "The Great War in Europe became a world war," Emily Rosenberg and many other scholars agreed, "precisely because of the global connections that had been forged in previous decades."[78] Technology and economic growth outpaced society's ability to deal with the consequences.

There were of course also cultural benefits accompanying these radical transformations. Technology inspired an era of creativity and mobility. New ideas, new art, and seemingly new places entered into the public imagination. Steamships and rail

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[75] "Wilson to Press a Button. And the Dynamite Will Do the Rest to Gamboa Dike," *New York Times*, October 10, 1913.
[76] John Soluri, "Empire's Footprint: The Ecological Dimensions of a Consumers' Republic," *OAH Magazine of History* 25 (2011): 15-20.
[77] Leon Trotsky, *The Bolsheviki and World Peace* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1918).
[78] Rosenberg, *The World Connecting*, 12.

lines made foreign locales, thousands of miles from one's home, possible to visit. In the years before the war there was a boom in the leisure travel industry. But with the world war, the state and its military took control of liberating transportation technologies. Travel became an issue of national security reserved for the movement of troops and supplies. The state could restrict the freedom of mobility much faster than it was created. The great steamships that had begun to transcend watery distances between continents were conscripted into the war. The United Fruit Company's passenger line, the Great White Fleet, which had become the premier luxury line in the Caribbean prior to the outbreak of fighting (see Introduction and Chapter 1), became part of the merchant marine fleet sailing back and forth across the Atlantic. Pleasure cruises were suspended.

Technology went from promising "freedom" to destroying it. "Human hordes, gases, electrical forces were unleashed in a free-for-all," the German philosopher Walter Benjamin recounted, "high-frequency shocks ripped through the landscape, new stars appeared in the sky, the airy heights and the ocean depths thrummed with propellers, and everywhere sacrificial shafts were sunk in the earth. This mighty struggle for the cosmos was for the first time fought out on a planetary scale, very much in the spirit of technology."[79] Millions of soldiers became the victims of the power of progress and the state leaders who controlled it. Technology could enrich life or take it away. Telegraphs, newspaper print, highly coordinated mail networks, moreover, and even the new technology of cinema, allowed civilians at home to witness the horror. No longer did loved ones have to wait months to hear news of their husbands and sons on the front lines. Everyone could feel the consequences. "The world," as Kern explained it, "was alternately overwhelmed and inspired, horrified and enchanted" by the technological power that humanity unleashed on itself.[80]

The World War, controlling technology and mobility for destructive purposes, inspired a counter-cultural movement. Four million military personnel in the United States and many more civilians served the war machine. In Europe, the numbers were

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[79] Walter Benjamin, *One-Way Street and Other Writings*, trans. J.A. Underwood (New York: Verso Books, 1997), 114.
[80] Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space*, 130.

even greater: 60 million people mobilized for war. The hypocrisy of national leaders proclaiming both the triumph of progress over the past and, at the same time, the need to preserve the traditional order became painfully apparent. Social reverence for technology and its patron, the nation-state, began to crack. The desire to live and move freely, rather than bow to the dictates of old generals and bosses measuring every move, grew from a small circle of critics into a mass phenomenon. The sentiments of one U.S. military veteran, living in Panama, expressed this rise in opposition to authority. "We civilians who fought in the late war have already forgotten many things," J.K. Baxter wrote, "but there are some things which we ought not to forget." Baxter chastised the nation's leaders: "Now, if by the word, soldier, one means a competent, reliable fighting man, then the trick of standing in a rigid, wooden attitude when a general passes by has absolutely nothing to do with the case… as long as our military pundits are unable to see this and decline to scrap all such obsolete hocus pocus, which has nothing to recommend it but tradition, their intelligence will be subject to question."[81] The brutality of violence, and the indifference of its leaders, inspired an era of liberating cynicism. People emerged from the ruins of war questioning hierarchy and tradition as the necessary order.

It was within this volatile context – the transition from war to peace – that travel for one's own pleasure and curiosities increased in popularity. The ugly forces of war brought about a new era of travel practice. Mobility came to represent a rejection of responsibility and authority. To set out one's own terms became a rebellious reaction to the effects of modern warfare and heightened state power. "Wherever a deep discontent with existence becomes prevalent," as Nietzsche anticipated decades earlier, "it is the aftereffects of some great dietary mistake made by a whole people over a long period of time that are coming to light."[82] The combined excess of technological war and traditional authority incited a new search for freedom and mobility.

The First World War harnessed not only the destructive power of technology on battlefields, but also solidified the rising power of the state over its citizenry at home. "I

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[81] *Panama Star & Herald*, September 24, 1923.
[82] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science: With a Prelude in Rhymes and an Appendix of Songs*, trans. Walter Kaufman (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), 186.

am positive the great war was fought," the travel writer B. Traven criticized, "not for democracy or justice, but for no other reason than that a cop, or an immigration officer, may have the legal right to ask you, and be well paid for asking you, to show him your sailor's card, or what have you. Before the war nobody asked you for a passport. And were the people happy? Wars for liberty are to be suspected most of all."[83] Soldiers, who had been told they were fighting for freedom and democracy, returned home to a highly regulated society. New rules took hold, and at the same time, young people returned home with a new set of eyes, a seasoned perspective, for understanding this societal shift.

Political and commercial leaders in the post-war era committed themselves to creating a socially disciplined and productive capitalist society. The U.S. economy and political authority emerged from the war stronger than ever. While Europe struggled to rebuild, U.S. industry boomed. Accompanying this economic progress, however, was a renewed effort to maintain and spread Puritan social mores and work ethic. For the supposed health of families and the productivity of factories, a coalition of progressives pushed through legislation to regulate public morality. One of the most controversial of these laws was the ban on the sale and consumption of alcohol. Just as the war concluded, Congress passed the Volstead Act of 1919. What the nation's leaders called rational and necessary legislation looked to many like an effort at political and cultural domination. Young people who had already begun to question the authority of their elders, who led them into war, had yet another reason to feel rebellious. "The notion began to spread among writers," according to lost generation author Malcolm Cowley, "that they were an oppressed minority, orphans and strangers in their own country, and that they had better leave it as soon as possible."[84] Foreign travel looked increasingly appealing.

Wandering white male writers, like Hemingway, became spokesmen for post-war social discontent. They believed there was a generational breach between themselves and those in charge. In his novel *The Sun Also Rises*, Hemingway first introduced the notion

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[83] B. Traven, *The Death Ship* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 1991), 41.
[84] Malcolm Cowley, *A Second Flowering: Works and Days of the Lost Generation* (New York: The Viking Press, 1973), 14.

of a "lost generation" to the reading public.[85] The band of expatriates he described spent their days drinking, traveling, and watching violent sport; the running of the bulls in northern Spain. Often his characters drank themselves into a hedonistic stupor. "Hemingway viewed drinking and getting drunk," according to the scholar Jeffrey Schwartz, "as an initiation rite and adventure." His writings expressed "both the communal enjoyment of life and its pleasures and a manner of rebelling against prohibition and its nationalist agendas."[86] Hemingway's mother, who wrote to tell him that his novel was "one of the filthiest books of the year," begged him to get a respectable job back home after the war. Instead, he chose to live a bohemian life, traveling, drinking, and writing.[87]

Fellow lost generation author, F. Scott Fitzgerald, also wrote about his discontent with the cultural obsession with puritan mores and capitalist productivity. He too had an intense desire to escape. Fitzgerald's first novel, *This Side of Paradise,* in a highly autobiographical style, chronicled the misadventures and longings of a young man disillusioned with modern society. "I'm restless. My whole generation is restless," Amory, the main character, tells us. "I'm sick of a system where the richest man gets the most beautiful girl if he wants her, where the artist without an income has to sell his talents to a button manufacturer."[88] Although Amory was a privileged white man, a graduate of Princeton and WWI veteran moving in elite circles, he sees nothing but superficial vice and false authority. He feels "beat-up" by and bitter at the rule-makers. "Progress," he slowly realized, "was a labyrinth… people plunging blindly in and then rushing wildly back, shouting that they had found it… the invisible king – the élan vital – the principle of evolution… writing a book, starting a war, founding a school."[89] Amory was tired of it all. Disgusted by his social surroundings, "he was unbearably lonely, desperately unhappy." Amory, or perhaps Fitzgerald, "wanted to creep out of his body

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[85] Hemingway adopted the phrase, "Lost Generation," from Gertrude Stein. Hemingway, *A Moveable Feast* (New York: Bantam Books, 1965).
[86] Jeffrey Schwartz, "'The Saloon Must Go, and I Will Take It With Me': American Prohibition, Nationalism, and Expatriation in *The Sun Also Rises,*" *Studies in the Novel* 2 (2001): 196.
[87] Carlos Baker, *Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969), 180.
[88] F. Scott Fitzgerald, *This Side of Paradise* (New York: Scribner, 1920), 256.
[89] Ibid, 246.

and hide somewhere safe out of sight up in the corner of his mind."[90] Or if he couldn't hide in himself, he would go abroad where he could indulge in whatever caprice. Fitzgerald wrote:

> He felt an overwhelming desire to let himself go to the devil – not to go violently as a gentleman should, but to sink safely and sensuously out of sight. He pictured himself in an adobe house in Mexico, half-reclining on a rug-covered couch, his slender, artistic fingers closed on a cigarette while he listened to guitars strumming melancholy undertones to an age-old dirge of Castile and an olive-skinned, carmine-lipped girl caressed his hair. Here he might live a strange litany, delivered from right and wrong and from the hound of heaven and from every God (except the exotic Mexican one who was pretty slack himself and rather addicted to Oriental scents) – delivered from success and hope and poverty into that long chute of indulgence which led, after all, only to the artificial lake of death.

Home, in his view, was terribly alienating. "Abroad," whether far away or right across the U.S. border, became a fantasized alternative. (See Chapter 2 for how national elites cashed in on this popular travel desire for escape.)

Lost generation authors were fond of writing about their alcoholic, sexual, and mobile freedom in opposition to prohibition and the rules of home. Their books, even when fictionalized, were often biographical. "They tended," according to Kirk Curnutt, "to write about alienation, unstable mores (drinking), divorce, sex, and different varieties of unconventional identities."[91] All of this was extremely scandalous to the progressive advocates of family values. Even writers, who were less biographical and exhibitionist in their publications, expressed discontent with prohibition and increased state authority. Harry Franck, who wrote twenty-three books about his travels around the world, regularly told of expatriates and foreign hosts ridiculing U.S. prohibition.[92] After serving

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[90] Ibid*,* 15, 27.

[91]"Hemingway, the Fitzgeralds, and the Lost Generation: An Interview with Kirk Curnutt" *The Hemingway Project,* accessed April 3, 2015, http://www.thehemingwayproject.com/hemingway-the-fitzgeralds-and-the-lost-generation-an-interview-with-kirk-curnutt/

[92] For an assessment of Harry Franck's career, see Steven L. Driever's articles, "Geographic Narratives in the South American Travelogues of Harry A. Franck: 1917-1943," *Journal of Latin American Geography* 10 (2010): 53-69; "From Travel to Tourism: Harry Franck's Writing on Mexico (1916-1940)," *Journal of Latin American Geography* 12 (2013): 7-33.

as a lieutenant in the world war, and writing an account of the destruction of Germany, Franck returned to the Americas to tour the Caribbean. In his book, *Roaming Through the West Indies* (1920), he described "prohibition-abhorring visitors from the North" filling up the hotels in Cuba and of locals criticizing the United States for its lack of freedom. "From our point of view," one local journalist told Franck, "the United States is the greatest autocracy in the world; it has no real republican form of government, no real freedom of the people. Take your white slave law and the prohibition amendment, for example; they are abhorrent to our idea of liberty."[93] The travel writer, Harry Foster, noted similar encounters with people disillusioned with the U.S. political system. In Brazil, he met one fellow tropical tramp, who used to work in the United States until prohibition encouraged him to go into self-exile. Over whiskey and singing in a gambling-house, his new friend pronounced, "If the United States wants Frank Glamm back, they got to cut out prohibition."[94]

Whether chronicling their adventures abroad or at home, the writers of the lost generation sought to break social boundaries. They gave voice to a new era of rebellion in the 1920s that came to be characterized by outlaws, speakeasies, and "free" living. Within this new social milieu, travel became the path to experience. "The spokesmen for the new generation," according to Malcolm Cowley, "celebrated the value of simple experiences such as love, foreign travel, good food, and drunkenness."[95] These writers expressed a widespread sentiment. The same social practices embraced by the lost generation became the base of a growing tourism industry rooted in gambling, bars, and unrestricted pleasure (see Chapter 2 as well). Abroad, in contrast to home, promised "great adventure."

Writers born too late to serve in the First World War also found themselves pulled-in by the same type of post-war wanderlust. "We were a generation," Graham Greene explained, "brought up on adventure stories who had missed the enormous disillusionment of the First World War; so we went looking for adventure."[96] Greene's

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[93] Harry Franck, *Roaming Through the West Indies* (Cornwall, New York: The Cornwall Press, 1920), 484.
[94] Foster, *The Adventures of a Tropical Tramp*, 358.
[95] Cowley, *A Second Flowering: Works and Days of the Lost Generation*, 26.
[96] Graham Greene, *Ways of Escape* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1980), 37.

philosophy of travel exemplified a modern obsession with tropical travel between the wars. Later in life, a friend asked him, "but why this interest which you seem always to have shown in Spain and Spanish America?" Unsure, Greene thought, "the answer belonged in the dark cave of the unconsciousness." His interest in Spanish America, he believed, dated back to his childhood. But his friend persisted, "why?" Greene finally theorized: "Perhaps the answer lies in this: in those countries politics have seldom meant a mere alternative between rival electoral parties but have been a matter of life and death."[97] Greene and the generation of writers reacting to the conformity of post-war society believed the tropics offered raw, sensual experience; in short, an adventure.

Paris was the quintessential destination for the lost generation of expatriates. But there were in fact many destinations on the route of wanderlust. The American tropics, and particularly the Caribbean, were also part of the itinerary. If the rules of home encouraged the desire to escape, the tropics and "abroad" fed dreams of freedom. The "exotic" was imagined as a playground for acting out boyhood fantasies. This was a very old colonial tradition; updated for a new century. "The notion that Western civilization has become increasingly restrictive and that the colonies have provided escape hatches from it," the historian Ann Stoler argued, "runs deep in Orientalist traditions and remains resonant in their contemporary popular form."[98] The Caribbean and the American tropics offered this orientalist, this exotic escape hatch, for society's privileged discontent. Travel writers in the early-to-mid twentieth century, often moving ahead of their fellow citizens, helped to interpret what this escape might look like and promise for the escapee.

The great paradox of the era, however, was that the changes the lost generation criticized were the same forces creating the opportunity for self-exile. Technological progress and U.S economic and political power gave writers the means to move faster and more freely. The alienating system that they criticized also supplied the capital and the resources that carried them to distant locales to look back at and pick apart U.S. society. Progress and technology were, in their view, sources of modern slavery, chaos,

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[97] Greene, *Getting to Know the General: The Story of an Involvement* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1984), 14-16.
[98] Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*, 173.

inequality, and alienation. Yet at the same time, they became the means of escaping the domestic consequences of urban industrial growth, war, and state power. Fast moving steamships depended on coal and oil – the bloodlines of industrial progress. The massive wealth that the United States acquired in the post-war era gave tropical tramps and travel writers a social and economic advantage. With the power of their domestic economy behind them, writers could travel and live comfortably while the local population they visited, struggled to survive, and catered to their desires. This paradox of progress seems to still define our contemporary era of travel. "Whether we happen personally to love technology, hate it, fear it, or all three," David Foster Wallace reflected, "we still look relentlessly to technology for solutions to the very problems technology seems to cause."[99] Modernity, which writers in the interwar era often described as "alienating," "bourgeois," "stressful," or "unexciting," assured their social and class privilege abroad. The exiled writer of the interwar period was analogous to a dog trying to run away from his own tail.

Travel Writers as Mediators

There seems to be nothing more emblematic of modern "American" identity than leaving the United States in search of relief abroad. One of the most striking characteristics of the lost generation's countercultural movement was how popular it became in mainstream society. The notion of going abroad, as an escape, soon depoliticized from radical politics. Travel became part of the "culture industry," and in the words of Theodor Adorno and Max Horkeimer, morphed into "the freedom to choose what is always the same."[100] The wave of tourists, who followed in the wake of travel writers, were not nearly as critical of where they came from, and yet they have embraced, at least in part, the liberating sentiments of travel. Writers like Hemingway, who expressed an almost hatred for banks and big government, ironically became heroes for people working for those very institutions. "I wanted to study Cuban cigars, Cuban rum

[99] Wallace, "E Unibus Pluram: Television and U.S. Fiction."
[100] Max Horkeimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *The Dialectic of Enlightenment: Cultural Memory in the Present* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 166-167.

and Hemingway, in that order," one bank president recently claimed about his trip to Cuba.[101] Superficially at odds, travel writers, in search of authentic experience and liberating pleasure, and mass tourism, reproducing "exotic" experiences over and over again, have in fact been mutually generative. As a social group, writers became literary conduits for individual readers bound to a regimented work regime, but longing for new experiences. "Round pegs in square holes," the author Aldous Huxley once wrote, "tend to have dangerous thoughts about the social system and to infect others with their discontents."[102] But in the case of leisure travel, the pegs refitted to complement the squares. The dissent of the lost generation has been anesthetized, assimilated and packaged for mass consumption. It was as if the "rebel without a cause" got a job at the local bank, followed the rules for fifty-two weeks out of the year, but then for two weeks, got to put on his leather jacket and play "rebel" somewhere else. "Just don't do it here, Johnny."

Aldous Huxley, who grew up in England but spent most of his adult life in California and the U.S. southwest, is remembered for his novels, such as *Brave New World*. Huxley, though, was also a prolific travel writer – chronicling his experiences in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Southeast Asia and the Indian sub-continent.[103] But as a traveler, he often condemned the practices he engaged in. He believed travel could numb just as much as it could liberate and educate. His writings criticized the escapist dimensions of tourism. "In conjunction with the freedom to daydream under the influence of dope and movies and the radio," Huxley explained, "it will help reconcile his subjects to the servitude which is their fate."[104] The less political and economic freedom at home, Huxley theorized, the more need for frequent holidays. Elites in ancient Rome spoke of the necessity of "bread and circus" to soften up the people and guarantee stability. In modern U.S. society, new forms of bread and circus were cultivated. The promise of a

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[101] "A banker's holiday in Hemingway's Cuba," *Oakpark.com*, April 24, 2012, accessed April 4, 2015, http://www.oakpark.com/News/Articles/4-24-2012/A-bankers'-holiday-in-Hemingway's-Cuba
[102] Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World* (New York: Harper, 1932), xiii.
[103] Aldous Huxley: *Along the Road: Notes and Essays of a Tourist* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1925); *Jesting Pilate: The Diary of a Journey* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1926); *Beyond the Mexique Bay* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1934).
[104] Huxley, *Brave New World*, xiii.

vacation combined the bread with the circus. The tourism industry offered a necessary and comfortable illusion of freedom.

The fantasy of tropical travel, during the interwar era, became a temporary palliative for dealing with the drudgery of everyday life. Within the transnational culture industry, writers became mediators. Their stories reproduced a modern romance of foreign travel, in part, defining the expectations of a vacation. They participated, in the words of Ricardo Salvatore, in "a representational machine." Their writings and the stories of their own journeys pieced together representational practices for engaging in touristic behavior.[105] Travel writers helped tourists decide when and where to go, what to see, and how to treat the locals. Perceptions of racial difference and interacting with "others," desirable forms of finding pleasure, and the meaning of the exotic were all articulated in travel writing. Neither part of home nor fully incorporated into visiting communities, travel writers operated in between worlds, working as a bridge, an intermediary between hosts and guests. With the pool of potential tourists rapidly growing in the early-to-mid twentieth century, travel writers found themselves in a privileged position. They could be both literary and literal guides for the masses. From the privileged position of consumer, middleman, and storyteller, writers as travelers defined ways of thinking and seeing and interacting for the expanding tourism industry.

Hemingway was certainly the most iconic writer working as a tourist mediator. He has been credited, by some, as spearheading some of the more lucrative tourist economies in the Caribbean (in Key West and Havana) and in Europe (in Pamplona and Paris). Among friends, Hemingway would often say that if he ever gave up this "writing racket," he would become a sport fishing or hunting guide for rich tourists. "Hemingway," one Key West fishing guide claimed, "made this charter-boat business – he brought the fishermen down."[106] The same could be said for the tourism industries in Pamplona, Spain and Havana, Cuba. Bronze statues of the author honor his career and his notable role in bringing tourists to these respective cities (see Chapter 6). "You might

[105] Ricardo Salvatore, "The Enterprise of Knowledge: Representational Machines of Informal Empire," in *Close Encounters of Empire: Writing the Cultural History of U.S.-Latin American Relations*, Gilbert Joseph, Catherine LeGrand, Ricardo Salvatore, eds., 69-104 (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998).
[106] Quoted in Cowley, *A Second Flowering*, 226.

even say," as one journalist recently reported from the festival of San Fermín, "that he forged the modern idea of Pamplona and San Fermín, his celebratory words transforming what had been a provincial party into a global event."[107]

Hemingway legitimated key activities, and gave meaning to the tourist experience. We could analyze any number of the behaviors he reproduced and sanctified that have become part of the tourism industry – such as binge drinking, cultural festivals, big game fishing, sexual exploits. But, for the purposes of exemplification, I will focus on one issue: the question of racial and gendered privilege embodied in his writing and coloring the tourism industry, and in particular tourism in the Caribbean. Toni Morrison, in her book *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*, offered an insightful analysis of how racial difference was employed in Hemingway's writing and how it circulated in popular culture. Morrison showed how the "power" of Harry Morgan, the central character in the novel *To Have and Have Not*, was expressed in relation to the other – that is, the dark skinned, 'Africanist,' Cubans.[108] The white American protagonist, Harry, "is virile, risk-taking, risk-loving, and so righteous and guiltless," Morrison explained, "in his evaluation of himself that it seems a shame to question or challenge it."[109] In Havana, Harry Morgan and his wife have a privileged status as white tourists. "The couple, Harry and Marie, is young and in love with obviously enough money to feel and be powerful in Cuba."[110] But, as Morrison tells us, "into that Eden comes the violating black male making impertinent remarks."[111] Harry reacted to this seeming threat by quickly proving his racial and masculine dominance. He smacked the man, knocking the intruder's straw hat off his head and into the street, where it gets run over by a taxi.

Harry was Hemingway's version of the white-male "Papa." The most powerful and important characters in Hemingway's stories were almost always white men. This literary persona has complemented elite fantasies of foreign travel. To be a tourist was to

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[107] "The old man and the city: Hemingway's love affair with Pamplona," *The Independent*, February 12, 2015.
[108] Ernest Hemingway, *To Have and Have Not* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937).
[109] Morrison, *Playing in the Dark*, 70.
[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid, 78

be someone special. Meanwhile, people of color in Hemingway's writings, and in the dominant tourism industry, have been depicted in servile positions. "Cooperative or sullen, they are Tontos all," Morrison critiqued, "whose role is to do everything possible to serve the Lone Ranger without disturbing his indulgent delusion that he is indeed alone."[112] English-American literature has often presented an archetypical identity for the tourism industry based on white male privilege (see Chapter 3 as well).

Racial difference has been at the heart of the modern tourist experience in the Caribbean. In difference, came the feeling of individuality, of one's special worth. As beloved as Hemingway and his white male characters were and still are within the tourism industry, it is not hard to imagine how an army of white male tourists could try to relive this racial and gendered fantasy over and over again on their travels. (Just imagine ten thousand tourists mimicking Hemingway in Havana or Panama in search of drink, women, the biggest fish, and a fight, and you can begin to understand some of the social problems that have accompanied the rise of tourism in the Caribbean.)

Travel writers, in addition to articulating an identity of privilege, provided more intimate services to tourists. They also worked as formal and informal guides. Although it was common for writers to see themselves as somehow superior to the camera-totting visitors, they nevertheless formed close relationships. In the early 1930s, Hemingway and his second wife Pauline Pfeiffer, for example, complained that Key West was being ruined by the arrival of tourists. As Arnold Samuelson remembered, "Pauline worried about the WPA program turning Key West into a tourist town on account of what it would do to the cost of keeping servants. Tourists would be competing for servants and raising wages."[113] At their home in Key West, the Hemingways had no less than five servants, all people of color. Hemingway expressed his own critical opinions about tourism through his literary characters. "What they're trying to do is starve you Conchs [Key West locals] out of here so they can burn down the shacks and put up apartments and make this a tourist town," the narrator tells Harry Morgan while they drink at the bar. "That's what I hear. I hear they're buying up lots, and then after the poor people are

[112] Ibid, 82.
[113] Samuelson, *With Hemingway*, 20.

starved out and gone somewhere else to starve some more they're going to come in and make it into a beauty spot for tourists."[114] But despite their criticisms, the Hemingways seemed to enjoy hosting visitors in Key West and Havana. Hemingway regularly invited friends and authors like John Dos Passos. "Come on down and steal coconuts," he wrote to Dos Passos, who was in Mexico at the time. He joked about the two of them seceding from the Union and starting the Conch Republic in Key West. "We will be a free port," he wrote, "set up gigantic liquor warehouses and be the most PROSPEROUS ISLAND IN THE WORLD. The PARIS OF THE SOUTH WEST." In another letter, from Havana in 1933, Hemingway wrote to Dos Passos, "Wish to hell you and Katey could come down."[115] When one tourist arrived to Key West, with her family for the Christmas Holidays in 1936, Hemingway even fell in love. He left his second wife and began a tumultuous relationship with the writer Martha Gellhorn. The boundaries separating tourist and travel writer were rather fictitious.

Writers, who did not make enough money to live exclusively off their writing, formed more economic relationships with tourists as well. After the publication of his first book, *The Adventures of a Tropical Tramp* (1922), Harry Foster took a job as a tour guide on a cruise ship. He was not enthusiastic, however, about the work. "If I knew nothing of the conducted traveler," he reasoned, "I certainly had a lot of good prejudices to start with. I had formed them largely from hearsay, usually from other unconducted vagabonds, who pronounced him a provincial, uncomprehending, flag-waving idiot… leaving everywhere in his flying wake a trail of boosted prices."[116] He concluded that the tourist's "desire to be looked after on his travels, to have his itinerary mapped out by some one else, to have his hotel and railway accommodations engaged for him in advance, to have the sights pointed out to him instead of discovering them for himself – all this, to my mind, was a confession of weakness and timidity, if not of downright

[114] Hemingway, *To Have and Have Not*, 96.
[115] Letters from Hemingway to John Dos Passos, from Havana, May 15, 1933; from Key West, April 12, 1932, in *Ernest Hemingway Selected Letters, 1917-1961*, Carlos Baker, ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1981), 357 and 389.
[116] Foster, *The Adventures of a Tropical Tramp*, 17.

cowardice, and certainly of a lack of imagination."[117] He renamed their cruise ship, tellingly, the *S.S. Benedict Arnold*. "Travel in Luxury," he mocked. "Enjoy the convenience of a floating hotel… Tour the globe in the specially-chartered sumptuous steamer." Despite his cynical view, Foster traveled with four hundred wealthy tourists for sixty-five days through the Caribbean, the Panama Canal, and along the west coast of South America. In his account of the experience, *A Tropical Tramp with the Tourists* (1925), we get a glimpse of what it meant to be both a travel writer and a mediator of leisure travel, a tourist man. During the trip, Foster was responsible for pointing out the interesting "sights" and guiding his customers to "authentic" experiences.

When the boat docked in Havana, Foster helped coordinate seventy-two cars to tour passengers around the city. It was a mini invasion of Havana. "Even in the revealing glare of midday the approach to Havana is picturesque," Foster described, "while at sunrise or sunset the dirty old city transforms itself into a veritable fairy paradise." The next day the boat was already departing, and heading south. Whey they arrived next to Panama, Foster again took up his duty as local expert. During their automobile tour, the passengers stopped for lunch at the famous Hotel Tivoli, where, according to Foster, "every tourist stops at the Tivoli at least for dinner, which consists usually of about twelve courses of chinaware and cutlery, wiped, flourished, and served with much ceremony by a score of negro waiters." From the hotel, the touring party drove along the road, parallel to the beach, to visit the ruins of Old Panama, sacked by pirate Henry Morgan in 1671 (see Chapter 2). Later that night, as if they were the conquering Englishmen of centuries ago, Foster organized a group of tourists to visit Panama City's nightlife. "Drinking places," he explained to his guests, "are sandwiched in among the homes of the elite; the lottery office is in the Bishop's Palace… and across the way from the sacred precincts of the Cemetery is the 'Coconut Grove,' one of the world's most famous brothels, in its heyday as notorious as the Barbary Coast and still without the commendation of the clergy."[118]

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[117] Ibid, 19.
[118] All quotes in this section from Foster, *The Adventures of a Tropical Tramp*.

Foster called on his previous travel experiences to give tourists a taste of what he believed to be the "real" thing. He knew the colonial bars and brothels of Panama well. In the red-light district, just across the street from the U.S. Canal Zone, Foster remembered that "it fairly shrieked with the blare of jazz – of jazz from radios, jazz from mechanical pianos, jazz from phonographs… The music might be American, but the dancing was international and sometimes interracial. For this was not a self-respecting town."[119] Then, after several rounds of drinks, the tourists got to witness a bar bawl. With prohibition at its height back home, this was truly a spectacle for the tourists Foster guided. He had done his job.

When Foster could afford it, he sought to break away from the horde of tourists and find what he imagined to be the authentic and real tropics. This did not mean, however, he was interested in keeping his travels a secret. Experience translated into writing material. Although he often tried to leave the tourists behind, he also actively invited them to follow in his footsteps, whether it was to Cuba, Panama, Peru, or the "Orient." To local hosts, Foster may have seemed like a seasoned or rather cocky tourist. Yet to the other tourists, he was an expert who wrote engaging and informative travel books. He was their guide. Travelers, like Foster, prided themselves as being superior to the average tourist. He thought of himself as being a real traveler. But like everyone, he donned multiple hats of identity, depending on the circumstance. Foster was a college graduate, a veteran, a tourist, a travel writer, a musician, and a tour guide.

After spending sixty-five days together, Foster began to admit that although they were often superficial, tourists allowed him to live the life he wanted. The wealthy passengers he toured around, and showed where to drink, and what to think about the sites were more connected to him than he initially wanted to believe. "I found that we had on board," he recounted, "the man whose cigarettes I smoke, the man who manufactures my breakfast food, the man who makes my dental cream, the man whose neckties my friends give me for Christmas, the man whose newspaper soaked my last book, and numerous others whose nomenclature had greeted me in big letters from advertisements

[119] Ibid.

in the subway."[120] These men, these tourists, he recognized, "keep the industrial machine running and give the United States the prosperity which enables the permanent American resident of a foreign country to be where he is, selling American goods, and the travel-writer to gallivant about the globe, poking the finger of ridicule at the standard citizen when he goes touring."[121]

Writing and working for the tourism industry was a "devil's bargain" for independent-minded travelers.[122] This was as true for Hemingway as it was for a less-prosperous travel writer like Foster. Although they continued to write about travel as adventure, the role of writer also included that of tour guide. The first person "I" of the explorer seemed to give way to the third person, "you," or the more objective, the "sightseer will find" and "the traveler will." Tourists or potential tourists, rather than just being armchair travelers, were the consumer base of an emerging travel industry that provided work as guides, writers, and being a representative expatriate abroad. In the early-to-mid twentieth century, metropolitan readers became increasingly interested in learning about the American tropics as a potential vacation destination, not just as a far-off place to visit in dreams. In return for book profits, travel writers, through their publications and sometimes physically as guides, led tourists into the region. Writers as mediators were part of the tourist business.

We should recognize, however, that white men were not the only writers introducing readers to tropical travel. While authors like Hemingway articulated what it meant to be a white American man abroad, they did not necessarily tell readers much about the nuanced practices of local communities. Nevertheless, the reading and travel-hungry public was curious to learn about the beliefs and cultures of communities they hoped to visit. In the 1920s and 1930s, artists, writers, and increasingly tourists were fascinated with what they perceived to be "primitive" culture. "Negro" music, dance, art, and religion in particular became fashionable in intellectual and artistic circles in the

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[120] Ibid, 21.
[121] Ibid, 326.
[122] I borrow the term "Devil's Bargain" from Hal K. Rothman, who uses the phrase to describe the growth of tourism in Las Vegas in *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998).

United States and Europe. The interest spread. It was no coincidence that as the tourism industry expanded so did public interest in cultural practices and musical genres emerging from the Caribbean like jazz, calypso and samba.[123] All things "primitive" were in vogue.

Playing the Game as "Insiders"

The writings of African-American and Afro-Caribbean authors also grew in popularity in the interwar period. "Reading" about Afro-Caribbean culture was particularly popular because, as Mimi Sheller explained, it was "imagined as a form of close contact with 'the other' through the production of an illusion of hearing spoke creole or hints of the oral 'folk' culture."[124] Black writers found an eager and wealthy consumer base among elite white readers. By harnessing white interest in the "other," writers like Zora Neale Hurston gained access to resources for their literary work and their travels.

As discussed earlier, there was a long tradition of privileged European and Euro-American men running away from the conditioned responsibilities of their home societies – often industrialized, hierarchal, and militarized – to look for a more pure, "pristine," or free way of life. It was a hope, a dream. But during the interwar period, people of color, particularly of African descent, had their own set of motivations for escaping the burdens of modern society. Black writers and artists also wanted to get away. "Whether their experience of exile is enforced or chosen, temporary or permanent," as Paul Gilroy argued, "[black] intellectuals and activists, writers, speakers, poets, and artists repeatedly articulate a desire to escape the restrictive bonds of ethnicity, national identification, and sometimes even 'race' itself."[125] Hurston, for example, had her own reasons for wanting to go abroad. "I do not wish," she wrote in her autobiography, "to deny myself the expansion of seeking into individual capabilities and depths by living in a space whose

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[123] Robin Moore, *Nationalizing Blackness: Afrocubanismo and Artistic Revolution in Havana*, 1920-1940 (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997).
[124] Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean*, 186.
[125] Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (New York: Verso, 1993), 19.

boundaries are race and nation."[126]

It was white society (the very system which travel writers of color sought to get away from) that ironically in its interests with the "exotic" provided a material means for writers of color to travel abroad. "Two weeks before I graduated from Barnard," Hurston explained, "Dr. [Franz] Boas sent for me and told me that he had arranged a fellowship for me. I was to go south and collect Negro folk-lore." A few years later, Hurston would travel further south to do anthropological fieldwork and document "folk" music and religious practices in the Caribbean. The trip also gave her the chance to escape a painful and abusive patriarchal romance. "He was the master kind," she wrote of her partner. "All or nothing, for him." In the midst of that failing relationship Huston received a Guggenheim fellowship to study Voodoo and Obeah culture and religion in Haiti and Jamaica. "This was my chance to release him," she recalled, "and fight myself free from my obsession, so I sailed off to Jamaica."[127]

The book she produced from those travels, *Tell My Horse* (published 1938), offered a first-hand account, a travelogue, of the ceremonies and customs of African-descended people in the Caribbean. At times Hurston was rather over-the-top in her anthropological descriptions: "what with the music and the barbaric rituals, I became interested and took up around the place." And at other times, she was highly sympathetic to her research subjects: "they are drenched in kindliness and beaming out with charm."[128] Hurston's book, according to scholar Ifeoma Kiddoe Nwankwo, "is a text written simultaneously from the perspective of an initiated insider and an observing anthropologist as well as from the perspective of a national outsider and a racial insider."[129] As both insider and outsider, Hurston created insightful books for future travelers and tourists to consult. Occasionally, she even worked as an informal tour guide. During her trip, she set up musical performances for elite visitors from the U.S. government and major U.S. corporations such as Pan-American Airways, who wanted to

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[126] Zora Neale Hurston, *Dust Tracks on a Road* (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 243.
[127] Ibid, 188.
[128] Zora Neale Hurston, *Tell My Horse: Voodoo and Life in Haiti and Jamaica* (New York: Perennial Library, 1990), 249.
[129] Ifeoma Kiddoe Nwankwo, "Insider and Outsider, Black and American: Zora Neale Hurston's Caribbean Ethnography," *Radical History Review* 87 (Fall 2003), 63.

hear "African" music. "Everyone who cannot go to Africa," she recommended, "should go to Pont Beudet, Haiti, to hear Cicerone play (the drums)."[130]

Hurston took on the role as mediator between curious white readers and tourists and the black communities she visited and observed. She wielded both her identity as an anthropologist (a cultural outsider) and also her status as a black woman (an insider). She gained access to information that white authors could not get. Throughout Hurston's career, she traveled as a research ethnographer and creative writer and interpreter of black culture, learning and then educating other researchers and also the public back in the United States.[131] Alan Lomax, for example, the well-known collector of folk music for the Library of Congress, first visited the Caribbean on the advice of Hurston and depended on her contacts. In 1936, she invited Lomax to do research with her in Jamaica and Haiti. "Boy," she enthusiastically wrote to him, "there are things here to see and hear! Already since yesterday when your letter came I have made an opening for you here."[132] The two collectors eventually agreed to do a trip together through Florida and coastal Georgia. But soon after, Lomax, at the insistence of Hurston and using her list of contacts, made a trip to Haiti. Hurston, Lomax claimed, was an invaluable guide.[133]

In the 1930s, Hurston spent two years in the Caribbean traveling around, collecting, and writing. Back in New York and Florida, she turned her research into popular performances. "I introduced," she explained, "West Indian songs and dances and they have come to take an important place in America." They "aroused a tremendous interest in primitive Negro dancing."[134] But today, Hurston is remembered, after several decades of obscurity, as a gifted novelist of African American culture in the U.S. south. Few people seem to remember that she wrote her most famous book about life in

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[130] Hurston, *Tell My Horse,* 249.
[131] To learn more about Zora Neale Hurston's role as a mediator between Caribbean communities and the U.S. public, see Ifeoma Kiddoe Nwankwo, "Insider and Outsider, Black and American: Zora Neale Hurston's Caribbean Ethnography," 49-77; Annette Trefzer, "Possessing the Self: Caribbean Identities in Zora Neale Hurston's Tell My Horse," *African American Review* 34 (Summer 2000): 299-312.
[132] Correspondence between Zora Neale Hurston and Alan Lomax, 1936, accessed April 5, 2015, http://www.culturalequity.org/currents/ce_currents_zhn_letters.php
[133] Ibid.
[134] Hurston, *Dust Tracks on a Road*, 141 and 153.

Eatonville, Florida (*Their Eyes were Watching God*) while traveling in the Caribbean.[135] Foreign travel gave her the time, the resources, and perhaps the insights to produce her literary work.

In the 1920s and 1930s, travel writers of color played an important role in the emerging tourism industry. They influenced white American understandings of "local" Caribbean culture. Claude McKay, a Jamaican-born writer, also wrote about life on the move in the Caribbean, the United States, and Europe. "I was gripped by the lust to wander and wonder," he believed, "The spirit of the vagabond, the demon of some poets, had got hold of me."[136] That spirit seemed to draw Langston Hughes to travel as well: "I wanted to be lazy, lie on the beach as long as I liked, talk with whom I pleased, go to cockfights on Sundays, sail with fishermen, and never wear a coat."[137] During his travels, Hughes also wrote poetry.

Writers of color like Eric Walrond were also part of the artistic diaspora linking the United States and the Caribbean. Born in Panama, and living in New York in the 1920s, Walrond looked back at the Caribbean and its relationship with the United States with critical eyes.[138] If there was any doubt about the influence of travel writers of color on the Caribbean's tourism industry, the critiques of prominent African-American leaders like W.E.B. Du Bois seem to affirm their importance. Du Bois claimed that McKay's work appealed to the "prurient demand" of white readers.[139] Walrond's writings, according to another critic, pedaled "the bizarre, the exotic, the sexy, the cabaret side of Negro life for white readers."[140] These criticisms may be unfounded – Du Bois held up a rather bourgeois standard of African-American respectability – but they do highlight the

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[135] Alice Walker, "Looking for Zora," *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens* (San Diego: Brace, Jovanovich, 1983), 83-116.
[136] Claude McKay, *A Long Way from Home* (New York: Arno Press, 1937), 9.
[137] Langston Hughes, *I Wonder as I Wander* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1956), 25.
[138] For Langston Hughes' travels to Cuba, see Frank A. Guridy, *Forging Diaspora.* For a sampling of Eric Walrond's work on Panama and the Caribbean, see his collection of short stories, *Tropic Death* (New York: Liveright, 2013); To get a sense of Claude McKay's many travels, see his autobiography, *A Long Way from Home* (Mariner Books, 1970).
[139] Herbert Aptheker, ed., *The Correspondence of W.E.B. Du Bois: Volume I, Selections, 1877-1934* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997), 374.
[140] J.A. Rogers, "Book Review," *Pittsburgh Courier*, March 5, 1927; Also see, Louis J. Parascandola, introduction to *Winds Can Wake Up the Dead: An Eric Walrond Reader* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998).

imaginative ways white readers likely interpreted their work. Travel writers of color offered a supposed inside look at the "exotic."

The financial and literary rewards for writers of color, however, did not match the accolades and success of white travel writers. Hurston's best selling book, for example, only made her $900 during her lifetime. She spent the end of her days working as a maid for white families in South Florida. Hemingway, meanwhile, got that much and more for his thousand word autobiographical travel "letters." The early Caribbean tourism industry was a white man's fantasy, and it seemed to pay out to authors who embodied that ideal. Tourists, magazine editors, and advertisers supported the stories of travel writers who affirmed their own social, racial, and gendered background.

Tourism was, in many ways, an extension of white colonialism. The role of travel writers introducing the public to foreign lands and cultures, as I mentioned earlier, had a long tradition in the United States and more broadly in the "West." In the nineteenth century, before the closing of the western frontier, writers brought home tales of Indians and wild rivers and mountains. With those territories conquered, writers ventured farther afield (see Chapter 1 and 3 as well). Mark Twain, the classic storyteller of the Mississippi River, was first brought to public attention as a travel writer and lecturer of the Sandwich Islands, that is, Hawaii. "Twain's career, writing, and reception as a national author," according to scholar Amy Kaplan, "were shaped by a third realm beyond national boundaries: the routes of transnational travel, enabling and enabled by the changing borders of imperial expansion."[141]

Famous nineteenth century authors like Herman Melville also wrote stories of distant adventure. In 1841, Melville sailed from New Bedford, Massachusetts to the Isthmus of Panama, and then sailed to the south Pacific, where he worked on a whaling ship and experienced his writing material. Melville and his characters longed for overseas travel. His most famous novel opens with the following passage:

[141] Amy Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 53.

> Some years ago – never mind how long precisely – having little or no money in my purse, and nothing particular to interest me on shore, I thought I would sail about a little and see the watery part of the world. It is a way I have of driving off the spleen, and regulating the circulation. Whenever I find myself growing grim about the mouth; whenever it is a damp, drizzly November in my soul; whenever I find myself involuntarily pausing before coffin warehouses, and bringing up the rear of every funeral I meet; and especially whenever hypos get such an upper hand on me, that it requires a strong moral principle to prevent me from deliberately stepping into the street, and methodically knocking people's hats off – then, I account it high time to get to sea as soon as I can. This is my substitute for pistol and ball. With a philosophical flourish Cato throws himself upon his sword; I quietly take to the ship. There is nothing surprising in this. If they but knew it, almost all men in their degree, some time or other, cherish very nearly the same feelings toward the ocean with me.[142]

Writers traveling between the two world wars did not invent a new literary tradition by focusing on foreign travel experiences. What they brought to readers, though, was a new set of reasons for going abroad. In the past, foreign travel was seen to be a risky endeavor for those in search of god, glory, or gold, that is, to be a hero or get rich. The lost generation of travel writers seemed to forsake those traditional motivations. They sought travel for its own sake – to find freedom in the pursuit of pleasure.

In the twentieth century, the "pleasure principal" became a guiding force for international travel.[143] Several generations of travel writers and tourists have followed this example. The Beat Generation of the 1950s and early 1960s, after wandering around the United States, also went abroad in search of pleasure and, in their words, spiritual growth. Jack Kerouac and his friends "on the road" crossed into Mexico looking for debauched leisure and self-discovery. Kerouac claimed that his time in Mexico "was one of the great mystic rippling moments of my life."[144] His writings convinced many other young people that foreign travel promised them the same freedom for revelry and revelation. "It's a great feeling entering the Pure Land," he told readers, "especially

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[142] Herman Melville, *Moby Dick or The White Whale* (Boston: C.H. Simonds Company, 1892), 7.
[143] For more on the theory of "pleasure principle," see Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents* (New York: Norton, 2005).
[144] For an analysis of Kerouac's time in Mexico and its influence on his literary creativity, Jorge Garcia-Robles, *At the End of the Road: Jack Kerouac in Mexico* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014).

because it's so close to dry faced Arizona and Texas and all over the Southwest – but you can find it, this feeling, this fellaheen feeling about life, that timeless gayety of people not involved in great cultural and civilization issues – you can find it almost anywhere else, in Morocco, in Latin America entire, in Dakar, in Kurd land."[145]

The previous generation, the Lost Generation of writers, provided the spark of inspiration for the Beats. Millions of fellow travelers in the United States would find their stories of wanderlust equally inspiring. Watered-down and packaged versions of their hedonistic quests have become a standard expectation of the Caribbean vacation for a range of tourists – from backpackers in search of the authentic, to spring breakers looking for trouble, to bourgeois tourists in need of a temporary respite, to retirees acting out repressed fantasies. Writers on the move in the early-to-mid twentieth century helped give birth to this new era of leisure travel for pleasure. Dreams had become dangerously possible.

By the 1950s and 1960s, however, the convergence of leisure travel networks (the structure of travel routes and national policies) and the creation of a hegemonic tourist identity (the culture of tourism) was spiraling out of control. It perhaps had grown too big and pervasive. The expansion of U.S. empire into the Caribbean and the willingness of regional elites to build their national economies around foreign desires opened the door to hundreds of thousands of wanderlust tourists seeking to act out fantasies of adventure – whether in tropical nature as explorers (see Chapter 3) or in dark alleys and "seedy streets" as adventurous pleasure junkies. The hotels, and bars, and nightclubs where U.S. travelers and tourists thought they had discovered imperfect paradise turned into scenes of protest, violent street battles, and revolution against white American privilege. The Cuban Revolution, and its revolt against the tourist economy and foreign-owned businesses, is traditionally viewed as a unique example of "Yankee" excess. But as the next chapter shows, the winds of anti-gringo sentiment blew across the Caribbean, from the U.S south through the islands to the Isthmus of Panama. The privileged culture of

[145] Jack Kerouac, *Lonesome Traveler* (New York: Grove Press, 1960). Fellow beat writer, William S. Burroughs, moved to Mexico in the late 1940s. After killing his wife in Mexico City, however, he wandered through Central and South America in search of psychedelic drugs and young boys.

tourism that emerged in the early-to-mid twentieth century became an important target in the fight against U.S. imperialism and racism in the 1960s.

Chapter 5: Burning Privilege

"One day, to everyone's astonishment, someone drops a match in the powder keg and everything blows up. Before the dust has settled or the blood congealed, editorials, speeches, and civil-rights commissions are loud in the land, demanding to know what happened."[1] -James Baldwin

In January 1964, Panamanian nationalists launched an ill-fated attack on the famous Hotel Tivoli. The hotel, built in 1905 in anticipation of President Theodore Roosevelt's overseas tour, had been a symbol of U.S. travel luxury in Panama for almost fifty years (see Chapter 1). On the evening of January 11, Raul Chanis and Manuel Allonca snuck into the Paitilla Airport in Panama City and hijacked a small commercial airplane (with no passengers aboard). The two men, their lawyer explained later, "intended to fly the aircraft, under the cover of darkness, and drop homemade bombs onto the hotel."[2] In the air, however, the plan went awry. Three minutes into the flight the engine cut out, and they were forced to crash-land into the Bay of Panama. The watery crash, according to the local press, attracted "a great quantity of spectators, some of whom tried to rescue the men."[3] Chanis and Allonca survived, but were quickly arrested by the Panamanian National Guard and taken in for questioning. Their revolutionary (perhaps terrorist) mission had failed. Fellow nationalists, though, heralded the two men as "patriots."

The Hotel Tivoli was under attack from the ground and from the air. The Tivoli and its guests were in the middle of a nationalist uprising against the U.S. presence on the isthmus. On January 9, in the late afternoon, angry protesters began to throw rocks and Molotov cocktails at the hotel. Witnesses staying at the Tivoli reported that "rioters were attempting to put a torch to the building."[4] Hotel guests could also see overturned cars "burning fiercely" on Fourth of July Avenue, the main thoroughfare passing by the hotel and the *de facto* border separating the Republic of Panama and the U.S. Canal Zone. On the south side of the street, there was Panama City and the growing crowd of protestors;

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[1] James Baldwin, "The Northern Protestant," *The Price of the Ticket: Collected Nonfiction, 1948-1985* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), 211.
[2] "Iban a Incendiar El Hotel Tívoli," *La Critica*, January 14, 1964. After the attack, Chanis and Allonca planned to "return immediately to Panamanian territory to avoid being shot down by the U.S. military."
[3] "Avioneta robada tripulada por dos panameños cae en la bahía," *La Estrella*, January 12, 1964.
[4] "Panama Eyewitnesses Stress Army Restraint," *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 28, 1964.

and on the north side, was U.S. territory and the Hotel Tivoli. A street named for U.S. Independence, ironically, in 1964 became a battleground between Panamanian nationalists and U.S. armed forces.

What had happened to encourage such violence? And more specifically, why did a hotel catering to civilians become a target in the fight? The story can be traced back to the beginning of the twentieth century and the rise of U.S. empire in the Caribbean. In this chapter, we follow revolt from the grounds of the Hotel Tivoli to Fourth of July Avenue and the streets of Panama to the larger regional scene in the circum-Caribbean to try and make sense of the long history of "close encounters" fueling anti-colonial and anti-racist protest.[5] The chapter describes the cross-cultural relations that motivated protestors, revolutionaries, and nationalists to take to the streets against the United States. The analysis, in particular, pays close attention to the role of U.S. traveling culture in the Caribbean region.

In the 1960s, revolt appeared more personal than diplomatic or geopolitical disagreements. As the attack on the Hotel Tivoli highlights, nationalists and revolutionaries also revolted against the luxuries and comforts of white American culture abroad. The privileged identity of a tourist contributed profoundly to manifesting anti-American sentiments in Latin America and the Caribbean. The culmination of a half-century of travel and tourist inequalities (as described in the previous four chapters) boiled over in the early 1960s.[6]

In front of the Hotel Tivoli, Canal Zone police officers attempted to push back protestors with tear gas and gunfire. The Panamanian press claimed police fired directly into the crowd, killing a number of civilians. U.S. authorities however disputed that charge, arguing that Zone police conscientiously fired warning shots, above the heads of protestors. "I have never seen men act with more restraint and composure," the Zone's

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[5] Much of my inspiration for this chapter comes from the edited collection, *Close Encounters of Empire: Writing the Cultural History of U.S.-Latin American Relations*, Gilbert M. Joseph, Catherine C. LeGrand, and Ricardo D. Salvatore, eds., (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1998).

[6] For a related argument, in the context of Cuba, see Dennis Merrill, *Negotiating Paradise: U.S. Tourism and Empire in Twentieth Century Latin America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009).

District Judge, Guthrie Crowe, told the press.[7] Despite these competing views, it was clear that police and later U.S. military efforts to control the protests actually had the opposite effect. "The criminal actions," of U.S. officials, Panamanians argued, "only made the situation more desperate."[8] The crowd grew larger and more belligerent. Within an hour, between 7pm and 8pm, the crowd more than doubled, from an estimated two thousand to five thousand people. It was a state of war in the streets.[9]

David S. Parker, acting Governor of the Canal Zone, arrived on the scene to investigate. Immediately he ran into trouble. "My car was stoned twice in the vicinity of the Tivoli," he reported, "and by that time a crowd estimated between 5 and 6 thousand was gathering along 4th of July Avenue."[10] Canal Zone police, Parker assessed, would not be able to hold back the "mob"; protestors would overrun the Tivoli within minutes. "Accordingly," Parker explained, "I reported in person to General O'Meara that as Acting Governor I was unable to maintain law and order… and I therefore requested General O'Meara to assume command of the Canal Zone and to seal off the Canal Zone border." U.S. Army units, stationed in the Canal Zone, arrived shortly thereafter. Tanks and armored cars moved in and martial law was declared.[11] Soldiers took over the defense of the hotel. "Hundreds of sandbags," according to an eyewitness, were "carried to the third floor to fortify the [hotel's] wooden structure."[12]

Management at the Hotel Tivoli attempted, initially, to ignore the protest and go about business as usual. A full-course dinner was served to guests on both Thursday and Friday, January 9 and 10. A few precautions, however, were taken. "All the louvre doors were closed and the lights were [made] very dim in the Pergola Bar, the only protected area in the hotel's public rooms." From Panama's side of Fourth of July Avenue,

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[7] *"What Really Happened," Spillway*, *Publication of the Panama Canal*, January 20, 1964.
[8] Quoted in Gregorio Selser, "La explosion del 9 de enero de 1964," *Tareas* 97 (September-December, 1997): 76.
[9] "If they continue to use force to abuse the people," one nationalist explained at the scene, "a million Panamanians will wield the force of history and justice to defend the homeland." Quoted in "Hechos y Verdades," *La Hora*, January 15, 1964.
[10] "Chronology of Events Involving the Acting Governor of the Canal Zone, January 9-10, 1964." RG 185 Records of the Panama Canal, Internal Security Office, Declassified General Correspondence, Box 4. U.S. National Archives, College Park.
[11] Ibid.
[12] "Panama Eyewitnesses Stress Army Restraint," *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 28, 1964.

however, snipers fired at the hotel's windows and open corridors. "Most of the sniper action was directed against the south end of the building," Zone officials reported, "but there was no serious concentration at dinner time."[13] But on Friday after dinner, the shooting intensified. "Civilians as well as Army personnel ran rapidly past openings and constantly ducked from the zing of sniper bullets."[14] One man was shot in the hotel lobby; dozens more were injured. The hotel's manager at that point announced the evacuation of the hotel. "The guests were," reportedly "led through the barbershop and out the back door."[15]

Over the course of three days, rioters attempted to burn, shoot, and even take over the hotel. More than two thousand bullet holes were later found in the Tivoli's structure. The days of the hotel as a tourist destination had finally come to an end. No guests after that January would stay at the famous hotel. The Tivoli, which had stood as a symbol of U.S. travel comfort and luxury in Panama and the Caribbean tourist scene for more than half a century, was condemned and torn down.[16]

Although the Hotel Tivoli attracted the largest number of protestors, it was not the only target. Rioters, according to State Department officials, were "attacking symbols of America."[17] In Panama City, the U.S. Information Agency and the U.S. Embassy, along with the offices of U.S. corporations like Goodyear, Firestone and the Pan-American and Braniff Airlines were attacked. Demonstrators also stoned the Chase Manhattan and National City Bank. Devastating fires occurred at the Pan-Am Airlines and the U.S. Information Agency office, where a number of Molotov cocktails were thrown into the buildings. Both offices were damaged beyond repair. Crowds also attempted to storm the U.S. Embassy building. "They smashed all our windows," officials reported, "and had us

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[13] "Tivoli Buffet Interrupted," *Spillway: Publication of the Panama Canal*, January 20, 1964.
[14] "Panama Eyewitnesses Stress Army Restraint," *Youngstown Vindicator*, January 28, 1964.
[15] "Tivoli Buffet Interrupted," *Spillway: Publication of the Panama Canal*, January 20, 1964.
[16] Walter LaFeber, *The Panama Canal: The Crisis in Historical Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 109.
[17] Donald R. Flynn, "The Battle- An Eyewitness," in George W. Westerman Papers, U.S.-Panama Relations, Box 78, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York. See Westerman collection for first hand accounts of the 1964 riots.

surrounded at times."[18] Embassy staff destroyed important documents and then abandoned the building.

In other parts of Panama City, mobs attacked the U.S.-owned Tropical Radio office and the All America Cables office. Cars suspected of carrying U.S. citizens were also stoned and set on fire. "My cars, they are lying all over town, burned and wrecked," a Hertz rental agent told reporters.[19] Mobs chased anyone who looked "American" off the streets. Hank Suydam, reporting on the protests/riots for *Life Magazine*, claimed "it was necessary to improvise official stickers for our cars and outrageously fraudulent press credentials for ourselves – anything that would identify us as correspondents of any nationality other than American."[20] In that moment, to be suspected as a U.S. official or a tourist had become a dangerous identity.

Riots occurred simultaneously, 40 miles away, at the Caribbean terminal of the Panama Canal. In Colón, violence and property damage were even worse than in Panama City. Sears Roebuck, the Chase Manhattan Bank, and the Y.M.C.A were burned and looted. U.S. government supply stores, known as commissaries, burned to the ground. [21] The most violent attack in Colón concentrated on the Sojourners Lodge of the Masonic Order, an exclusive club for white American men. U.S. troops from the Third Platoon, Charlie Company, Fourth Battalion, defended the building. "Occasionally we could hear," journalists reported from the scene, "the soft sounds of sniper fire, then the louder report of a gas grenade being launched in return from an M-1."[22] Rioting also broke out in the province of Chiriqui, near the Costa Rican border. A spokesman for the Chiriqui Land Company, a subsidiary of the United Fruit Company, described mobs surrounding the homes of U.S. employees, "threatening violence, shouting anti-American slogans, attempting to burn cars, and smearing cars and buildings with paint."[23] It was chaos for several days. The popular catchphrase 'burn, baby, burn,' which became popular with

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[18] Ibid.
[19] Editor's Note, "Covering the Riot ridden Canal," *Life Magazine*, January 24, 1964.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Donald R. Flynn, "The Battle- An Eyewitness," Westerman Papers, Box 78.
[22] Tom Flaherty, "Bullets Fly in Panama Over the Right to Fly the Flag: Inside an Ugly Fight," *Life Magazine*, January 24, 1964.
[23] "Statement," Chiriqui Land Compnay, Unpublished report, January 13, 1964, Westerman Papers, Box 78.

African-American rioters the following summer in the United States, seemed to have a cousin to the south.[24] White American privilege at home and abroad was under siege.

For over fifty years, from 1904 to 1964, Panama had been a hub for U.S. political and economic interests in Latin America and the Caribbean. That was shaken with the riots. Business and foreign investment slowed to a halt. "The most directly affected area of the economy," according to observers, was "the tourist trade."[25] Commercial flights from the United States to Panama were suspended. Nine cruise ships carrying an estimated 5,000 tourists canceled their January visits.[26] Luxury hotels were nearly empty. Taxi drivers could find few, if any, foreign customers. "The once-lush tourist business," the *Miami Herald* reported, "is dead for the present. This is a blow to the businessmen and the government treasury alike."[27] Canal Zone residents, known as Zonians, also stayed home and away from the Panamanian cities. Tourism and the transit-service economy, which accounted for nearly one-third of Panama's gross national product, dried up almost entirely.[28] For months after the riots, Panama City and Colón resembled burnt out urban war zones. One local journalist reported in June of 1964, six months after the riots, that Panama City still looked like "something between a jungle and a cesspool, with all the garbage."[29] Buildings were left in ruin. The tourists stopped coming.

Flag Riots

In the early 1960s, there was a feeling of patriotic heroism, even martyrdom, among young Panamanians. As one university professor put it, "today we feel, more than ever, Panamanian. We will not allow time to erase the injustice and arrogance of the beasts [referring to the U.S]. The young people of our nation deserve our profound admiration and respect because they are no longer men of tomorrow, but are the great

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[24] Robert Richardson, "'Burn, Baby, Burn' Slogan Used as Firebugs Put Area to Torch." *Los Angeles Times*, August 15, 1965. Reprinted in *Reporting on Civil Rights: Part Two, American Journalism, 1963-1973,* Clayborne Carson, ed. (New York: Library of America, 2003).
[25] "Panama's Economy is Shaken by Crisis," *New York Times*, January 16, 1964.
[26] "Desvían Itinerario: 9 Barcos Turísticos Cancelan Viajes Anunciados a Panamá," *La Hora*, January 29, 1964.
[27] "Tourist Desert Country: Panama Economy Stricken as Dollar Flow Dries UP," *The Miami Herald*, January 30, 1964.
[28] LaFeber, *The Panama Canal*, 119.
[29] Quoted in George Westerman, "Let's Clean up Panama City," *Panama American*, June 27, 1964.

men of today."[30] Young people seemed willing to die for the nationalist cause. "I will continue fighting because Panama is sovereign over all its national territory," one protestor told journalists visiting him in the hospital. Alfonso González, twenty-six years old, was shot during the protests. Doctors were forced to amputate to his leg. "My injury," González told the press, "will not stop me from fighting."[31] Panamanians of diverse political persuasions and social backgrounds rallied behind the protests. "No one," Panama's Supreme Court Magistrate lectured, "can fail to admire the heroic attitude of our students when, shaken by patriotic fervor, their fists clenched in outrage, defied death."[32] Differences within the Republic, at least temporarily, were set-aside for the nationalist cause. "We deplore the spilling of blood," Aquilino Boyd told the UN Security Council, "but we know that this sacrifice is the most noble contribution to national aspirations."[33] The tragedy of January 9, 1964, according to Panamanian scholars, "was one of the most important events affirming our identity as a nation." The most violent scene of the protests, Fourth of July Avenue, was appropriately renamed the "Avenue of Martyrs."[34]

During the protests, three U.S. soldiers were killed and thirty-four were wounded. Among Panamanians, twenty-free protesters (mostly students) were killed and more than 500 people were injured.[35] The U.S. government, according to Panamanians and much of the world press, was guilty of "unjustified aggression" against innocent civilians.[36] As an act of political protest, the Panamanian government suspended diplomatic relations with the United States and filed formal grievances with the Organization of American States

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[30] Juan B. Jeanine, "Exhortación al pueblo panameño," *La Estrella*, January 12, 1964.
[31] *La Critica*, January 24, 1964.
[32] Ricardo A. Morales, "Magistrate of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Panama," in *A Letter to a North American Friend*, by Samuel Lewis (Washington D.C.: Publisher Not Identified, 1964).
[33] Quoted in Selser, "La explosion del 9 de enero de 1964," 76.
[34] Ibid.
[35] On the 1964 riots: Michael E. Donoghue, *Borderland on the Isthmus: Race, Culture, and the Struggle for the Canal Zone* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004); Walter LaFeber, *The Panama Canal: The Crisis in Historical Perspective;* Michael Conniff, *Black Labor on a White Canal: Panama, 1904-1981* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburg Press, 1985), 145-171; Alan L. McPherson, *Yankee No! Anti-Americanism in U.S.-Latin American Relations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 77-116; Eugene H. Methvin, "Anatomy of a Riot: Panama 1964," *Orbis* 14 (Summer 1970): 463-489; International Commission of Jurists, *Report on the Events in Panama, January 9-12, 1964* (Geneva: International Commission of Jurists, 1964).
[36] "Rotas las Relaciones," *La Critica*, Janurary 11, 1964.

and the UN Security Council. "These acts of violence," Panamanian diplomat, Miguel Moreno, reported to the Organization of American States, "cannot be concealed nor tolerated."[37] The incident provoked an international outcry against U.S. foreign policy in Panama, and throughout Latin America. The events of January 1964 forced the United States to open new talks with the Panamanian government, "without limitation" to consider "all issues."[38]

The protests, which became known as the "Flag Riots," marked a watershed moment in Panama's struggle for national sovereignty. It was also President Lyndon B. Johnson's first foreign policy crisis.[39] Before Vietnam there was Panama. The U.S. military, fearing an all-out-invasion of the Canal Zone, evacuated the families of military personnel and civilian employees. "Panama," the radical Panamanian politician Thelma King wrote, "will no longer be a satellite of the United States."[40] In the days following the protests, the U.S. Information Agency reported that the U.S. government was "taking a shellacking" in the press in Latin America and Europe because of the riots. "There will have to be some changes made," as one journalist argued and many agreed, "or the Panamanian fire next time will be horrible to see."[41]

The protests came on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the Panama Canal (1914-1964). They also marked the beginning of the end of formal U.S. political domination on the isthmus. "Panama," President Chiari declared during the crisis, "would not resume diplomatic relations with the United States until the North American government formally agreed to carryout negotiations of a new treaty."[42] The negotiations of the Carter-Torrijos Treaty in the late 1970s and the eventual closure of the Canal Zone cannot be understood, and likely would not have occurred, without the events of 1964.

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[37] Selser, "La explosion del 9 de enero de 1964," 71-88.
[38] Carroll Kilpatrick, "LBJ Puts No Limits On New Zone Talks," *The Washington Post*, January 24, 1964.
[39] For a closer read into the way President Lyndon Johnson dealt with the 1964 Panama crisis, see Mark Atwood Lawrence, "Exception to the Rule? The Johnson Administration and the Panama Canal," in *Looking Back at LBJ: White House Politics in a New Light*, Mitchell B. Lerner, ed., 20-52 (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2005).
[40] Thelma King, "Tribuna Popular," *La Critica*, January 14, 1964.
[41] Marguerite Higgins, "1903 Canal Treaty: Is it Valid in 1964," *Chicago News*, January 14, 1964.
[42] Selser, "La explosion del 9 de enero de 1964," 71-88.

At the heart of the dispute was the infamous Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty of 1903, which governed U.S.-Panamanian relations for over sixty years without major revision. The original treaty, pushed through by President Theodore Roosevelt, was signed without a single Panamanian in the room. The Treaty granted the United States the right to build the Panama Canal and control the Canal Zone, a 500 square mile strip of land running from the Caribbean to the Pacific Ocean.[43] The Canal Zone geographically divided the Panamanian nation. On the Pacific side, the Zone bordered the Republic's capital, Panama City, and on the Caribbean coast, the Zone surrounded the port city of Colón. Travelers could not get from one Panamanian city to the other without passing through U.S. controlled territory.

The Canal Zone and its precarious relationship to the Republic, according to historian Michael Donoghue, "became a microcosm of the strains of postwar America and Panama, as well as a mirror for the projection of U.S. power, culture, and ideology abroad."[44] The Zone operated as an overseas colony from 1904 through the 1960s and into the 1970s. Tens of thousands of U.S. military personnel and government employees were stationed in the Panama Canal Zone. The hotels, railways, and restaurants of the Zone also served thousands of U.S visitors every year (see Chapter 1).

U.S. and Panamanian scholars often describe the historic fight for the Panama Canal as a diplomatic and military conflict between two unequal nations (one David, the other Goliath). In this process of remembering, however, everything and everyone else – all the specific details heating up for half a century – became secondary to the story of regaining control of the canal. The history of intimate relations, of racism, of economic inequality, and the pervasiveness of an ugly-American-attitude yielded to a clean-cut history, a struggle between nationalists and U.S. imperialists over who-gets-to-control-the-canal and its transit economy. As the Panamanian General Omar Torrijos expressed, "I don't want to go into history; I want to go into the Canal Zone."[45] The everyday abuses, injustices and frustrations that motivated thousands of Panamanians to take to the streets,

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[43] See, David G. McCullough, The *Path Between the Seas* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1977).
[44] Donoghue, *Borderland on the Isthmus,* 3.
[45] Quoted in Noel Maurer and Carlos Yu, *The Big Ditch: How America Took, Built, and Ultimately Gave Away the Panama Canal* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 255.

to risk their lives and possibly kill, faded from contemporary memory. Today, we are left with the story of political victory over injustice, without intimate context. The cultural history of the United States in Panama and the Caribbean, though, cannot be ignored when studying nationalist and anti-colonial movements. Social beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and personal relations were at the root of U.S. foreign policy and the U.S.-Panamanian crisis. Tourism embodied this cultural clash. "In the case of Panama," one journalist explained, "there has been a long era of neglect of the human side of U.S. relations with the isthmian republic."[46] The "pent-up grievances" of at least three generations of Panamanians (grandparents, parents and children), in close contact with U.S. travel culture, set off the fiery protests.[47] The fight for the Panama Canal occurred in both the smoky rooms of diplomacy and also on the ground, in the streets.[48]

The match that sparked the power keg came, surprisingly, from high school students arguing over a flag. On the afternoon of January 9, around 4:30 pm, 200 students from the National Institute, Panama's most prestigious public school, marched into the Canal Zone carrying the Panamanian National flag. Along the way, the students sang the Republic's National anthem and intermittently, shouted "Yankee Go Home!" Some students also carried banners that read, "Panama is sovereign in the Canal Zone."[49] The protestors were attempting to enforce a diplomatic agreement signed in late 1963 between President John F. Kennedy and Panama's President, Roberto Chiari. The agreement stated that "the Panamanian flag would be flown alongside the U.S. flag on civilian land areas in the Canal Zone wherever the latter [U.S.] flag was flown by civilian authorities."[50] Beginning on January 7, however, a group of U.S. students in the Zone decided to ignore the directive and fly the U.S. flag at Balboa High school, without the

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[46] Gerry Robichaud, "Fuss Over Panama Canal 40 Years in the Making," *Daily Foreign Service*, January 16, 1964.
[47] "The first generation, in short, submits. The second generation protests. The third generation acts," according to author and activist Bryan Edwards. Quoted in Benjamin Muse, *The American Negro Revolution: From Nonviolence to Black Power, 1963-1967* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968), 8.
[48] Dennis Merrill makes a similar argument in his book, *Negotiating Paradise: U.S. Tourism and Empire in Twentieth Century Latin America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009).
[49] "La gesta del 9 de enero," *Tareas* 97 (September-December, 1997); *"What Really Happened," Spillway*, January 20, 1964.
[50] Ibid.

presence of the Panamanian flag. For three days, Zone students stood vigil, singing patriotic songs and guarding the flag from removal. "We students," one Balboa alumni remembered, "had simply stood up for what was right and had been recognized. I don't think that anyone realized then that we had actually given the enemies of the United States just the reason they were looking for to cause trouble."[51] The flag controversy became front-page news in the Republic of Panama, and provoked a rising sense that action needed to be taken.

Just a block from Balboa High School, ten police officers stopped the Panamanian student protestors from going further into the Zone. But after "some discussion," five representatives were given permission to proceed to Balboa High school and raise Panama's flag alongside the U.S. flag. Canal Zone police escorted the student representatives to the school, where a mob of U.S. students and parents greeted them with insults and patriotic slogans. According to Panamanian witnesses, the "students were booed and whistled at by the Zonians and then physically assaulted, pushed and hit, without the protection of the police."[52]

In the confusion, Panama's National flag was torn. Panamanians claimed U.S. protestors damaged the flag. Zone authorities, in contrast, claimed that the student representatives "tore it themselves during the scuffle."[53] The five Panamanian student representatives returned to fellow nationalist demonstrators, waiting a few blocks away, and another verbal dispute broke out between the police and the Panamanian protestors. The news of what had happened quickly spread in Panama City, and people began to pour into the street, onto Fourth of July Avenue directly in front of the Hotel Tivoli. By that evening, there were thousands of protesters in the streets. The shooting began soon after.[54]

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[51] Martha Smith, "The Crisis in Panama- 1964," *The Tropical Collegian* 29, Spring 1964, Panama and the Canal, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, Gainesville.
[52] Selser, "La explosion del 9 de enero de 1964," 75.
[53] "What Really Happened," *Spillway,* January, 20 1964.
[54] "Chronology of Events Involving the Acting Governor of the Canal Zone, January 9-10, 1964." RG 185 Records of the Panama Canal, Internal Security Office, Declassified General Correspondence, Box 4, U.S. National Archives, College Park. The question of who shot or killed first is still open for debate, whether it was Panamanian students, U.S. civilians, communist "agitators," the Canal Zone police, or the U.S.

The seeming childishness of high school students fighting over flags shocked observers unaware of the long running tensions. But for nationalists and revolutionaries, the flag incident symbolized everything that was wrong with the U.S. presence. For over half a century, Panama had been deprived of large swaths of its territory. The U.S. government controlled the most geographically important sections of the isthmus, the canal and the numerous ports and wharves that facilitated global trade. First and foremost, Panamanians wanted the injustice of the 1903 Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty repealed. "We Panamanians," as one protestor expressed, "refuse to continue being exploited under the Yankee boot, because of the existence of a treaty like the 1903 one. Our struggle is about effective and total sovereignty in the Canal Zone and the elimination of the 1903 Treaty."[55] Business owners, in the words of Panamanian historian Marixa Lasso, "had to content themselves with local trade, and with catering to the tourists, sailors, and soldiers who wandered outside of the Canal Zone to shop and find entertainment."[56] The flag incident exemplified the fight for freedom of mobility and economic opportunity. While U.S. soldiers, Zonians, and tourists could freely travel back and forth between Panama, the Canal Zone, and the United States, Panamanians were constantly harassed and rarely allowed such freedom. The Panamanian journalist and novelist, Joaquín Beleño, summed up popular sentiment, declaring: "I am not free in my own country, I am not able to move freely where I want, there is a place of lagoons and islands, of lighthouses and highways and manicured lawns, where I am not able to enter. Is that democracy? Is that freedom?"[57] Thousands of Panamanians went into the streets to voice their frustrations.

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military. In the context of decades of conflict and anger, however, who fired first on January 9, 1964 is a superfluous footnote. The storm was coming.

[55] "Los Zonians deben seguir explotandonos," *La Hora*, January 20, 1964.

[56] Marixa Lasso, "Nationalism and immigrant labor in a tropical enclave: the West Indians of Colón, 1850-1936," *Citizenship Studies* 17 (2013): 551-556.

[57] Joaquín C. Beleño, *Gamboa Road Gang* (Panamá: Ministerio de Educación, Departamento de Bellas Artes y Publicaciones, 1960), 85. For a social history of the zone borderland, see Donoghue, *Borderland on the Isthmus*. Also Patricia Pizzurno,"Zona de contacto y espacio intervenido en Panama, 1904-1955" *Tareas* 138 (May- August 2011).

Ignorance of Empire

White Americans had come to embrace a feeling of racial and national superiority over their neighbors to the south in the Caribbean and Central America. Panamanians responded with widespread disdain for the "gringos." These swirling sentiments dated back to the beginning of the U.S. occupation. Willis Abbot noted as early as 1913:

> Way down in the bottom of his heart the real unexpressed reason for the dislike of the mass of Panamanians for our people is their resentment at our hardly concealed contempt for them…We Americans call him 'spiggotty' with frank contempt for his undersize, his uneducation and above all for his large proportion of negro blood. And the lower class Panamanian smarting under the contemptuous epithet retorts by calling the North Americans 'gringos' and hating them with a deep, malevolent rancor that needs only a fit occasion to blaze forth in riot and in massacre.[58]

From the 1910s to the 1960s, it seemed, little had changed in terms of cultural relations between U.S. visitors and the local Panamanian population. "The long list of complaints, demands, protests, and claims that our country has been making for more than half a century," according to an editorial in the *Panama Star & Herald* published in January 1964, "goes to show with unsurpassed eloquence that the North American mentality – with notable exceptions – has not shown itself to be open and conducive to understanding and comprehension."[59] U.S. Americans, from the Panamanian perspective, had shown themselves to be wholly disrespectful.

Behind nationalist frustrations about unjust treaties and territorial access was U.S. culture abroad. "The Ugly American," which William J. Lederer and Eugene Burdick fictionalized in their 1958 best selling novel, had a real-life equivalent for Panamanians and many Latin Americans. "Something happens," in the words of Lederer and Burdick, "to most Americans when they go abroad."[60] Their insensitivity to local culture, and their feelings of inherent superiority operated as the worst enemies of U.S. foreign policy. This was a regional, perhaps global, problem. "The North American presence," as one radical

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[58] Willis J. Abbot, *Panama and the Canal in Picture and Prose* (New York: Syndicate Publishing Company, 1913), 234.
[59] "La Luz de la Razón," *La Estrella*, January 12, 1964.
[60] William J. Lederer and Eugene Burdick, *The Ugly American* (New York: Norton, 1958), 108.

journalist reported from Colombia in 1963, "is one of the most emotional political questions on the continent."[61] Another journalist in Panama commented: "What antipathy exists among Panamanians toward Americans is but the outgrowth of the latter's arrogance and overlording attitudes toward people of a culture that is not Anglo-Saxon."[62] (See Chapters 3 and 4 for examples of this "overlording" attitude.)

In the United States, the mainstream press tried to pin the blame for the 1964 riots on a small group of "Zonians;" the long term residents of the Canal Zone. It was simpler that way and much easier to resolve. The ignorant behavior of a handful of out-of-touch civilian employees and families living in the Canal Zone, the argument went, had set off a violent and emotional reaction by Panamanians. "The Canal Zone," the *New York Times* argued, "is about the only place in the world where the United States still has citizens with a colonial mentality."[63] The critique stopped there. The Zonians were described as "patriotic but misguided Americans who did not realize they were away from home."[64] Arrogant, ignorant, bigoted, privileged were terms used to characterize the long term residents of the Canal Zone. U.S. journalists depicted them as cultural anomalies.

The organization and the culture of the Canal Zone perpetuated and intensified the conflict between Panamanians and U.S. visitors. In the Zone, white Americans and people of color had separate public facilities – drinking fountains, swimming pools, neighborhoods, shops, housing, clubs, and so on. The U.S. government called these distinctions the gold (white) and silver (people of color) rolls. But in practice, it was no different than Jim Crow segregation in the U.S south. While white Americans lived in luxury on the isthmus, the majority of Panamanians struggled to survive and get basic services.[65] In 1964, the average income for a Panamanian was less than $500 a year.

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[61] Hunter S. Thompson, "Why Anti-Gringo Winds Often Blow South of the Border," *National Observer*, August 19, 1963. Reprinted in Hunter S. Thompson, *The Great Shark Hunt: strange tales from a strange time* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003).
[62] George Westerman, "U.S. War Bases in Panama," Westerman Papers, Box 21.
[63] "Americans in Panama," *New York Times*, January 11, 1964, Westerman Papers, Box 78.
[64] "Bullets Fly in Panama Over the Right to Fly the Flag: Inside an Ugly Fight," *Life Magazine*, January 24, 1964.
[65] See Conniff, *Black Labor on a White Canal*; Donoghue, *Borderland on the Isthmus;* LaFeber, *The Panama Canal.*

Health care, and public education through high school, were inaccessible to the majority of the population. Dozens of patients were turned away daily from Panama City's main hospital for lack of beds.[66]

Meanwhile, the "gringos" lived a country club, vacation lifestyle. "The 'American set' in the Canal Zone live much like the British did in India and other colonies when they were in power," according to union leader, Joseph Curran, who spent years trying to organize on the isthmus. "They erected a sort of fenced-in compound where they lived in luxury while the natives lived in squalor outside. Even without fences to mark off the area, the effect was the same. The Americans enjoy the best of conditions – swimming pools, tennis courts, gardens; while just across the street, in the Republic, the people live in dilapidated shacks."[67] This lifestyle of luxury on the isthmus resembled much the way Americans traveled and lived across the Caribbean region, in de facto colonies and enclaves, whether serving in the military, working for a private corporation, or on vacation. The Zone epitomized an exclusive life of leisure and comfort in the tropics.

But most Americans seemed baffled by Panamanian frustrations. "I've been down here for 24 years," one Zonian housewife told the press, "and this is the worst thing that's ever happened. I've just got into an argument with our maid over this… We've been so generous – we treat our children and the maid's family just the same. I can't see how this country can be aroused to hate when we've been so generous. After all, we've paid our rent."[68] A few Americans on the isthmus, though, understood the cause of the trouble. "Truly," Mary Fairchild wrote to her friend, Bea Wetmore, "were I a well educated Panamanian with a slightly dark skin, or even without one, treated as these particular Canal Zonites have repeatedly treated Panamanians, I would resent Americans." Fairchild, who was now looking to sell her home in Panama, added, "One wonders about the Roman colonies in England hated by the Gauls. Could it have been thus? Certainly far

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[66] Edward P. Morgan, "It's a Specious Kind of Patriotism which defiles that of our Allies," *Panama Star & Herald*, January 27, 1964.
[67] Joseph Curran, "NMU Can Point the Way To a Just Panama Policy," *The NMU Pilot*, January 23, 1964. To better understand British colonial policies in India, see Stephen Legg, *Spaces of Colonialism: Delhi's Urban Governmentalities* (Oxford: John Wiley & Sons, 2008).
[68] Quoted in "Bullets Fly in Panama Over the Right to Fly the Flag: Inside an Ugly Fight," *Life Magazine*, January 24, 1964.

less complicated! Always there has been a feeling of envy and dislike for Americans here… based on inferiority and jealously."[69] It was remarkable that it took so long for the anger to turn into violent revolt.

The feelings of superiority, arrogance, and privilege ascribed to the Zone community also applied to the thousands of other U.S. visitors who annually traveled in the Caribbean and to the isthmus – soldiers, officials, and civilian tourists. The Zonian attitude was not unique; it was part of a widespread traveling culture. The assumption that the Zonians were solely responsible for the troubled "North American mentality" was rather simple. From the Panamanian perspective, the Zonians and other Americans visiting the isthmus were not actually separate social groups. "They were thirty-year tourists," as one Panamanian described the Zone residents. "Most people are tourists two weeks. They visit a country, they buy the hats and T-shirts, and take pictures. And then they go back to the cruise ship and it's over. But a Zonian was here for thirty years – until he got his pension. But they were still just tourists in Panama."[70] The culture of colonial privilege that Zonians enjoyed year around on the isthmus was the same culture enacted by U.S. tourists who visited the region for shorter stays. The archetypical Zonian "hunting, drinking, and whoring" in Panama eerily resembled the white American dream of a tropical vacation.[71] For the Panamanian working in the service sector, they, the "gringos," all looked the same; they were all tourists.

The U.S. people and its government seemed unwilling to recognize the extent of their role in the violence. There had to be someone else to blame. The trouble supposedly was the communists, and Fidel Castro. "The Panamanians could not really hate us," the logic went. After all the United States built the canal, paved streets, conquered malaria and yellow fever, and brought new economic opportunities to the isthmus. CIA director Allen Dulles claimed that "Castro-itis" was spreading across the region.[72] According to one U.S. Representative from West Virginia, the riots were "a carefully calculated move

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[69] Letter from Fairchild to Bea Wetmore, February 5, 1964, Alexander Wetmore Papers, Record Unit 7006, Box 155, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington D.C.
[70] Quoted in Donoghue, *Borderland on the Isthmus,* 77.
[71] Ibid, 58.
[72] Greg Grandin, *Empire's Workshop: Latin America, the United States, and the Rise of the New Imperialism* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006), 56.

of communism against Americanism."[73] The United States had to get tough and hold on. The communists, Sub-Secretary of State George W. Ball told the press, "were taking advantage of the situation, I don't have the slightest doubt."[74] The argument turned into a heated and enduring political debate. From the mid-1960s to the Reagan era, the Republican presidential platform held to the hawkish belief that the Panama Canal was rightfully a U.S. possession. This mentality only fueled greater resentment and further alienated Americans from their neighbors to the south.

A handful of U.S. leaders tried to heed the warning, and awaken the public, but few listened. "There is an inevitable divergence," Senator William J. Fubright lectured in March 1964, "between the world as it is and the world as men perceive it… when our perceptions fail to keep pace with events, when we refuse to believe something because it displeases or frightens us, or because it is simply startlingly unfamiliar, then the gap between fact and perception becomes a chasm, and action becomes irrelevant and irrational." The people of the United States, Fulbright warned, were "clinging to old myths in the face of new realities."[75] U.S. culture abroad clung to many myths, but one of the greatest and most pervasive was that the Caribbean region was, and could remain, a playground for U.S. travel fantasies.[76]

Comfort in the era of revolt

Leisure travel and its network of hotels and transportation infrastructure represented power and privilege. The history of class relations and inequality, as C.L.R

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[73] A.P. Boxley, "Our Readers Speak: Panama Crisis Could Hurt Coal Exports," *The Post Herald*, January 23, 1964.
[74] Quoted in La *Estrella*, January 12, 1964.
[75] William J. Fulbright, "Old Myths and New Realities," United States of America Congressional Record Proceedings and Debates of the 88th Congress, Second Session 110, March 25, 1964, accessed June 1, 2015, http://scipio.uark.edu/cdm/ref/collection/Fulbright/id/312
[76] The U.S. public's reaction to the 1964 riots seemed to offer evidence for Aime Césaire's theory about the dehumanizing affect of imperialism for both imperial citizens and subjects. Cesaire wrote: "colonization dehumanizes even the most civilized man; that colonial activity, colonial enterprise, colonial conquest, which is based on contempt for the native and justified by that contempt, inevitably tends to change him who undertakes it; that the colonizer, who in order to ease his conscience gets into the habit of seeing the other man as an animal, accustoms himself to treating him like an animal, and tends objectively to transform himself into an animal." It was the "boomerang effect" of colonization. Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000), 41.

James theorized, are best understood through the study of mobility, or lack thereof. "I discovered," James explained, "that it's not quality of goods and utility that matter, but movement."[77] Power congealed in the means to travel. To vacation in luxury and stay in the comfortable hotels of the world was and still remains a sign of one's social status – one's wealth, comfort, and mobility. Sociologist John Urry explained that since the late nineteenth century, hotels "were very much public places open to all with money, for wealthy men and women, to see and be seen in."[78] Hotels embodied both wealth and inequality – the mobility and immobility – of modern life.[79] That was what the Hotel Tivoli in Panama symbolized to tourists, and contrastingly, to protestors.

The anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss described this uncomfortable paradox in his travelogue *Tristes Tropiques*. During a trip to Goiania, Brazil, Levi-Strauss visited the main hotel, the biggest building in town. The hotel, he noted, looked like "a bastion of civilization." It was in his mind a "clumsy and unlovely" symbol of modernity. It was "a place of transit not of residence."[80] In that short description Levi-Straus summarized a widespread and critical feeling. To pinpoint what was wrong with society, one only had look to the center of town, to the big hotel and its wealthy tourists. From the-outside-looking-in, exclusive modernity appeared absurd.

The Hotel Tivoli's place in the protests of January 1964 is evidence of tourism's magnetic ability to polarize into violence. The attack on the hotel is part of the history of anti-imperialism targeting tourism. The Tivoli, located on the U.S. side of Fourth of July Avenue, divided white American "haves" from Panamanian "have-nots." The hotel was a sort of temple of U.S. traveling culture. The arc of its history paralleled U.S. expansion abroad. The Isthmian Canal Commission built the hotel in 1905 to serve the influx of tourists expected to visit the Panama Canal construction project (1904-1914). The Tivoli's first guest in 1906 was President Theodore Roosevelt. The Tivoli's reputation only grew after that; tourism emerged as one of Panama's most important industries (see

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[77] C.L.R. James, *Beyond a Boundary* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 113.
[78] John Urry, *Consuming Places* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 131.
[79] James Clifford, "Traveling Cultures," in *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 17-46.
[80] Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Tristes Tropiques* (New York: Penguin Books, 1974), 126.

Chapter 2). Between 1910 and 1914, the number of tourists visiting Panama averaged around 20,000 people annually.[81] The hotel and the tourist trade became a lucrative industry in the Republic of Panama and within the Canal Zone, despite the U.S. government's promise that it would not operate for-profit businesses on the isthmus.

No trip to Panama, guides claimed, was complete without staying at or visiting the Hotel Tivoli. Visitors could eat fresh Bay of Panama lobster or Native Corbina fish at the hotel's upscale restaurant or sip drinks at its Roosevelt Bar, appropriately named and located in the hotel's Empire Lounge.[82] By the 1950s, the *New York Times* noted that "the hotel's register read like an index to a World Atlas or a Who's Who of the last half-century." Guests included kings, presidents, scientists, artists and soldiers, not to mention, thousands of middle and upper class tourists.[83] In the first half of the twentieth century, few hotels in Central America and the Caribbean were as widely known. The hotel, as the *Saturday Evening Post* described, had " a great deal of perverse charm."[84]

From the hotel's big verandah on Ancon Hill, guests could look across Fourth of July Avenue and down at Panama City below. It was a sort of "right of passage" for tourists to stay and dine at the Tivoli and in the evening cross the border into Panama to pursue more sinful pleasures. Panama City's red light district of bars and brothels was located, conveniently, a few blocks from the hotel and the Zone border. "The tourist in Panama," the travel writer Harry Foster explained, "will be troubled mainly by an upset sense of direction. He's never quite sure whether he's in the Canal Zone or in Panama, and can't decide whether he ought to disapprove or have a good time himself."[85] Guests could walk, or take a short taxi ride, from the Canal Zone to Panama City. "The tourist," according to another travel writer, "who abides in the intensely modern and purely United States hotel, the Tivoli, has but to give a dime to a Panama Hackman to be transported into an atmosphere as foreign as though he had suddenly been wafted to Madrid."[86] The

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[81] *The Canal Record*, August 13, 1913.
[82] Donoghue, *Borderlands on the Isthmus*, 245-255.
[83] "Canal Zone Milestone," *New York Times*, January 21, 1951; "A Famous Hostelry and its Host," *The Panama Times*, August 15, 1925.
[84] "Balboa," *Saturday Evening Post*, December 24, 1949.
[85] Harry Foster, *A Tropical Tramp with the Tourists* (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1925), 97.
[86] Abbot, *Panama and the Canal in Picture and Prose*, 224.

Tivoli operated as the comfortable residency for U.S. tourists in search of tropical fantasy and hedonism on the other side of the border.

But for Panamanians, the hotel came to symbolize the culture and economy of U.S. imperialism. For people of color, struggling to survive on the other side of the road, the big hotel represented dreams of prosperity and comfort thwarted by racism and injustice. "It was the American dream to cross the street," wrote Joaquín Beleño. "This dream remained intact despite the fact that the Zone represented the land of hate, of black and white, of insult and sin."[87] Panamanians looked across the street and up at the hotel with envy and increasingly, hate. "U.S. Americans, with their strong commitment to racism and segregation," according to historian Patricia Pizzurno, "created the perfect climate for the emergence of painful preoccupations and sorrow among Panamanians, which only exacerbated over time."[88]

The small community of Panamanian elite, who had closer cultural and economic ties with U.S. interests, also grew to resent the hotel's presence. The Tivoli was unwanted economic competition; a U.S. owned hotel stealing tourist dollars. Until the late 1940s, most international visitors passed through the Canal Zone before venturing into Panamanian territory. The U.S. government controlled the ports where passenger steamships could dock. The Zone, as a result, was also the republic's main tourism competitor. Canal Zone commissaries and hotels lured tourists away from Panamanian-run businesses, who were prohibited from owning shops, restaurants, or any other industry in the Zone.[89] The promise of progress through collaboration with the United States, as Ricardo Alfaro put it, appeared more and more to be "a grand illusion."[90]

The tourist trade was a continual point of debate between U.S. and Panamanian officials. As early as the 1930s, the question of tourism competition entered into formal treaty negotiations. In the famous "Beer and Meat" Treaty of 1936, the Panamanian

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[87] Beleño, *Gamboa Road Gang*, 180.
[88] Pizzurno, "Zona de contacto y espacio intervenido en Panama, 1904-1955," 85.
[89] "Memorandums sobre las actividades comerciales de los comisariatos del gobierno de los Estados Unidos en La Zona del Canal, y sus efectos sobre el comercio de Panama." Asociación del Comercio de Panama a La Tercera Conferencia Comercial Interamericana, Celebrada en Washington, D.C., en Mayo de 1927. Archivo de Ricardo J. Alfaro, Panama City.
[90] Quoted in Pizzurno, "Zona de contacto y espacio intervenido en Panama, 1904-1955," 86.

government pushed back against the tourism industry operating in the Canal Zone. "If the United States of America only would open a race track, a lottery and a few more bars in the Canal Zone," one Panamanian official claimed, "they could put Panama out of business entirely!"[91] Part of U.S.-Panamanian negotiations included the operation of tourist hotels in the Zone. It was not until the early 1950s, however, that the Panamanian government finally convinced the U.S. government to change the name of the Tivoli from the "Hotel Tivoli" to the "Tivoli Guest House," with the hope that more tourists would instead stay in the Republic's accommodations. The change though was rather superficial, and too little and too late. The Hotel Tivoli ambiguously stood as a symbol of U.S. cultural imperialism and also as Panama's principal tourism competitor.

It was no surprise then that the Tivoli became a gathering point for angry protestors. Different social groups in Panama, with different interests and social needs, came together in front of the hotel on Fourth of July Avenue. Panamanians, at least temporarily, united against a shared enemy: white American privilege on the isthmus. "The chickens of President Roosevelt," as the journalist P.L. Prattis claimed, were in 1964, finally "coming home to roost."[92]

Tourism and Black Activism in the Age of Decolonization

In the 1950s and 1960s, "revolt was in the air."[93] From Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco to South Africa, India, and Vietnam, and across the Atlantic to the Caribbean and the southern United States, social movements mobilized against the old order. In the process, the tourism industry found itself in the maelstrom. Prior to World War II, the United States and Europe governed over 700 million inhabitants in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and the Americas. It was, in essence, white rule over the rest of the world. After World War II, however, the contradictions of colonialism became increasingly obvious. Third World nationalists and Black radicals began to interpret Western imperialism and progress as part of the same culture that gave rise to Fascism and

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[91] "Balboa," *Saturday Evening Post*, December 24, 1949.
[92] P.L. Prattis, "Horizon: Conceived in Sin," *New York Courier*, January 25, 1964.
[93] Robin D.G. Kelley, "A Poetics of Anticolonialism," in *Discourse on Colonialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000), 8.

Nazism. "I knew," W.E.B. Du Bois wrote, "that Hitler and Mussolini were fighting communism, and using race prejudice to make some white people rich and all colored people poor. But it was not until later that I realized that the colonialism of Great Britain and France had exactly the same object and methods as the fascists."[94] The war for freedom did not end with the fall of Hitler and the Nazis. After 1945, revolt quickly spread. "The winds of change that have been sweeping through Non-Self-Governing Territories in other parts of the world," the Panamanian journalist George Westerman explained, "are reaching this Continent."[95]

In the Caribbean, the tourism industry was at the center of anti-colonial and anti-racist movements that emerged after WWII. In Cuba, for example, tourism was one of the island's most lucrative industries, and also one of its most controversial. In 1958, over 200,000 tourists visited the island, the overwhelming majority from the United States.[96] The island's elite politicians and businessmen, aligned with U.S. entrepreneurs and corporations, had over the preceding decades converted Havana into a tourist's paradise of hotels, casinos, and cabarets (see Chapter 2). The Cuban State had committed itself to developing the tourism industry. "It would be the perfect moment, by all possible means," according to Cuban officials, anticipating the end of WWII, "to promote tourism development in the country."[97] Following the war, Cuba experienced a second tourist boom, just as it had seen after the First World War. This second phase of tourism growth also depended on U.S. desires and vices, which ultimately helped plant the seeds of the state's undoing. The unequal tourist-host relationship fueled revolutionary sentiments against oligarchic and U.S. imperial rule. "Modern tourism," historian Dennis Merrill wrote, "so misrepresented Cuban culture and diluted local identity that it helped destabilize the country's social order and contributed to the rise of Fidel Castro's

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[94] Quoted in Robin D.G. Kelley, *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002), 56.
[95] George Westerman, "The Passing Review: Jamaica-Trinidad Independence Triumph of Human Liberty," *The Panama Tribune*, July 21, 1962. Panama was very much part of this growing anti-colonial wave. Panama, according to journalists in 1960, contained "all the conditions for a nationalist revolution which will rival the recent upheavals in Cuba and Egypt.'" See, Martin Travis and James Watkins, "Time Bomb in Panama," *The Nation*, April 30, 1960.
[96] Evaristo Villalba Garrido, *Cuba y el turismo* (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1993), 116.
[97] Memoria, Corporación Nacional del Turismo, February 14 to 17, 1942, Box 15, Secretaria de Presidencia, Archivo Nacional de la República de Cuba, Habana.

communist regime."[98]

If anyone wanted an example of the power of U.S. corruption in the Caribbean, they could easily look to the tourism industry – its gambling, brothels, bars, and exclusive hotels and attractions. "Expensive North Americanized hotels," in the words of Merrill, "served as the tourist's equivalent to forward military bases, bastions of comfort and security to which empire-exploring gringos could safely retire at the end of the day."[99] In 1948, a young Fidel Castro visited Panama and witnessed a "depressing and unforgettable sight." An "endless succession of brothels, nightclubs, and other lurid amusements." The same type of vice occurred in his native Cuba and was "the only reason," he concluded, "that Cuba was so well-liked and well-known beyond its frontiers."[100] When the "barbudos" entered Havana, they tellingly took over the Havana Hilton Hotel and renamed it "Free Havana." The imperial era of tourism vice, Castro argued, would end with the triumph of the revolution. After 1959, hotel casinos were shut down, and the flow of U.S. tourists to the island came to an end (because of both Castro's policies and the U.S. embargo).

On the neighboring island of Jamaica, the future of the tourism industry was also in serious doubt. For radical nationalists, tourism represented a pillar of white colonial rule. The newly independent nation was divided about the industry's future. In 1963, the popular broadcast journalist Peter Abrahams discussed "how ambivalent we all are about the whole business of tourism." One listener, he reported, "wanted to know why we should be friendly towards these North Americans. Another listener felt that, all the money notwithstanding, tourism is a corrupting thing and the sooner we packed it up, the better, and yet another listener was of the opinion that until we see tourism as a straightforward business, we would get nowhere, and, he went on to say, in business the customer is always right." The problem, Abrahams explained, was that the majority of tourists to the island were white Americans, "and it is a plain fact that because of America's racial picture there are many Jamaicans who do not want to be friendly to

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[98] Merrill, *Negotiating Paradise,* 4.
[99] Ibid, 77.
[100] Quoted in Christine Skwiot, *The Purposes of Paradise: U.S. Tourism and Empire in Cuba and Hawai'i,* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 157.

Americans."[101]

Following independence, in the 1960s and 1970s, tourism operators such Abe Issa, owner of Hedonism Resort, claimed that Jamaicans were engaging in "anti-social behaviour" toward tourists and therefore hurting the business. Issa worried about the increase in crime, disrespect, and hustling in tourist zones.[102] Colonial reverence had disappeared. Although Jamaicans never engaged in direct and organized attacks on the tourism industry, like protestors and revolutionaries did in Cuba and Panama, the island's industry nevertheless was singled out as a means of showing one's anger and frustration with racism, white privilege, and inequality. Jamaica's tourism industry continued to grow in the post-colonial era, but many observers believed that the rise of all-inclusive resorts and the abandonment of the tourism industry in urban areas, like Kingston, was in direct response to the change in Jamaican racial attitudes.[103]

The unjust social relations of tourism motivated radical protests across the Americas in the 1960s: from the revolution in Cuba to the Panama Canal to the public spaces of the U.S. South. The tourism industry was also entangled in the U.S. Civil Rights Movement. Activists protested the institutions of white privilege, and on many occasions, they focused their collective energy on the travel and tourism industry.[104] In June 1964, for example, Dr. Martin Luther King and thousands of protestors gathered in St. Augustine, Florida. Outside the "big posh lily-while motels" of the oldest town in the United States, African American protestors sang freedom songs.[105] Dr. King and his chief aide, Ralph D. Abernathy, along with sixteen civil rights protestors, were arrested at the

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[101] Peter Abrahams, "Commentaries: Ambivalence about Tourism," December 14, 1963, Statutory Bodies, Record Code: 3/9/1/671, Archives Unit, Jamaica Archives and Records Department, Spanish Town.
[102] "Political Broadcast by Abe Issa," Statutory Bodies, Record Code: 3/9/4/88, Archives Unit, Jamaica Archives and Records Department, Spanish Town.
[103] Kingston's famous Myrtle Bank Hotel, for example, closed in 1959.
[104] Chanelle Nyree Rose, *The Struggle for Black Freedom in Miami: Civil Rights and America's Tourist Paradise, 1896-1968* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2015).
[105] The year before, in the summer of 1963 at the March on Washington, Martin Luther King singled out the issue of travel in his "I have a Dream speech." He lectured: "We can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro's basic mobility is from a small ghetto to a larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their selfhood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating 'For white only.'" Martin Luther King, Jr., *I have a Dream* (New York: Schwartz & Wade Books, 2012).

Monson Motor Lodge. King and Abernathy tried to dine at the hotel and were subsequently charged with violating "Florida's unwanted guest law." The general manager of the hotel, who was also the president of the Florida Hotel and Motel Association, told King and his supporters, "you realize it would be detrimental to my business to serve you here." The manager, then, reportedly turned to the television cameras documenting the scene and commented: "I would like to invite my many friends throughout the country to come to Monson's. We expect to remain segregated."[106] Nevertheless, the controversial publicity that civil rights protestors brought to St. Augustine's tourism industry had the planned effect. "The tourist trade," according to one reporter on the ground, "is already off at least 50 per cent… and many a motel owner is threatened by bankruptcy and foreclosure."[107] Through mass protest, the formal inequalities of the tourism industry were coming to an end.

Three weeks after his arrest in Florida, Dr. King traveled to Washington D.C. to witness the signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which formally banned discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. These anti-racist efforts, however, did not exist exclusively on the national level.

The Civil Rights movement was as transnational as it was "national." Activists across the Americas and the colonial world, calling for racial equality and the end of white rule, were often in close contact. Movement leaders in the United States had strong political and familial connections to the colonial world. Stokley Carmichael, for example, the leader of SNCC (the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee), was actually raised in the Caribbean. His mother was born in the Panama Canal Zone and Carmichael spent his childhood on the island of Trinidad, a British colony. "I left [the island]," Carmichael explained, "at the age when I was just beginning to understand it all, but my impressions are indelible."[108] His early experiences, he believed, helped him to

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[106] John Herbers, "Martin Luther King and 17 Others Jailed Trying to Integrate St. Augustine Restaurant," *New York Times*, June 12, 1964. Reprinted in *Reporting on Civil Rights: Part Two, American Journalism, 1963-1973.*

[107] Stetson Kennedy (as Snow James), "Seeing St. Aug.' Proves Exciting," *Pittsburgh Courier*, June 6, 1964. Reprinted in *Reporting on Civil Rights: Part Two, American Journalism, 1963-1973.*

[108] Stokely Carmichael, *Ready for Revolution: The Life and Struggles of Stokley Carmichael* (New York: Scribner, 2005), 43.

understand and articulate how "bigotry and death over here is no different from bigotry and death over there."[109] Carmichael, in addition to his work with SNCC, spread the idea of "black power," opposed to white privilege and violence. He also inspired the Black Panther Party, which took its name from SNCC's work in rural Alabama.

The revolutionaries of the mid-twentieth century were born in the racially charged encounters of the colonial world. Malcolm X was also linked to anti-racist and anti-colonial movements in the Caribbean. His mother was born in Grenada in the West Indies, and according to Malcolm X, "her father [his grandfather] was white… Of this white father of hers, I know nothing except her shame about it."[110] Malcolm X's parents and his grandmother were active members in the Universal Negro Improvement Association, an organization founded by Marcus Garvey, a black Jamaican who had traveled and worked in Costa Rica, Panama, and the United States (see Introduction). "Being globally educated members of the Garvey movement cognizant of the true origins of the African in the Western Hemisphere," Malcolm explained that his family was "intent on equipping their children with a clear awareness of the seed of their origins and it's ancestral power."[111] In the United States, Malcolm's father, Earl Little, worked as a visiting preacher teaching the lessons of Garveyism to African-Americans. Because of his work toward racial justice, the family was violently targeted by the Klu Klux Klan. In Omaha, Nebraska, their home was burned down, and later in East Lansing, Michigan, they faced repeated attacks. In Lansing, when Malcolm was just six years old, in 1931, the Klan murdered his father.[112]

Malcolm X's and Stokley Carmichael's Caribbean connections were not unusual in the U.S. Civil Rights movement. Anti-colonial and anti-racist organizations emerged out of a long history of diasporic activists traveling U.S. imperial routes.[113] In the interwar era and thereafter, it was a well-known aphorism and joke among the black

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[109] Gordon Parks, "Whip of Black Power," *Life Magazine*, May 19, 1967. Reprinted in *Reporting on Civil Rights: Part Two, American Journalism, 1963-1973.*
[110] *: Part Two, American Journalism, 1963-1973.*
[110] Malcolm X, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (New York: Ballatine, 1999).
[111] Ibid.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Guridy, *Forging Diaspora*.

community that a Harlem radical was "an over-educated West Indian without a job."[114] Panama was also part of this transnational network of black activism. Historian Lara Putnam tells us:

> Panama became a nodal point, where North American, Latin American, and Caribbean circuits overlapped. When the canal's completion in 1916 left tens of thousands of British West Indians on the isthmus without work, ever-greater numbers headed north: to Harlem, in particular, with its burgeoning service sector and white collar opportunities. By 1930 there were roughly 145,000 first- and second-generation British West Indians residing in Spanish-speaking Western Caribbean destinations, and a like number in the U.S.A.[115]

After the canal project, many black West Indians settled in Panama and organized around issues of racial inequality. Garvey's organization had a strong following on the isthmus. In the mid-1920s, UNIA had 49 chapters in Panama. The only other country with a greater number of chapters, outside the United States, was Cuba with 52.[116]

Other civil rights activists from the United States, the Caribbean, and even Africa also visited and organized in Panama. The NAACP took an active role. In 1941, the President of the NAACP Arthur B. Spingarn visited Panama and the Canal Zone. "I was extremely shocked," he wrote in a letter to President Franklin Roosevelt, "by the racial segregation practiced there, which appeared to me to be substantially the same as that existing in the lower south."[117] In the 1950s and 1960s, the NAACP kept in regular contact with anti-colonial and anti-racist activists on the isthmus. *Crisis Magazine*, the official publication of the NAACP, featured a number of stories about racial politics in Panama. The Afro-Panamanian journalist George Westerman offered a critical assessment of the situation for the magazine in 1951 and again in 1953. His article, "America-Panamanian Relations," appeared alongside publications by Carolyn Gaines,

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[114] Louis J. Parascandola, introduction to *Winds Can Wake Up the Dead: An Eric Walrond Reader* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998), 18.
[115] Lara Putnam, "To Study the Fragments/Whole: Microhistory and the Atlantic World," *Journal of Social History* 39 (Spring 2006): 615-630.
[116] Lara Putnam, *Radical Moves: Caribbean Migrants and the Politics of Race in the Jazz Age*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 37.
[117] Letter from Arthur B. Spingarn, President of NAACP, to President of the United of the, September 16, 1941. Westerman Papers, Box 63.

Martin Kilson, and Ralph Ellison, author of the widely acclaimed novel *The Invisible Man* (1952). In his article, Westerman explained to readers:

> In analysis the Canal Zone becomes a paradise for the North Americans and the chosen few, while most Panamanians and the West Indian Negroes (the latter elements brought to the Isthmus by the United States Government by the thousands to give their blood and brawn to help build the Canal) are considered inferior in aptitude, ability and initiative to white American citizens, as well as ignorant, inefficient, and indolent in comparison to the average Caucasian worker.
>
> This condition of 'Yankee superiority' almost in the center of the Western Hemisphere, has led many a Latin American diplomat to look suspiciously at Washington's advocacy of democracy and equality the world over.
>
> The past few years have brought a strong anti-U.S. movement among young Panamanians, especially those of the middle and lower classes, based on an intense and sometimes justified nationalism, which manifests itself with increasing strength in the politics of the country.[118]

Resentment of U.S. cultural and racial attitudes on the isthmus intensified in the late 1940s. Following World War II, Panamanian student groups organized mass demonstrations to pressure their own government and the United States to scale back the U.S. military and cultural presence on the isthmus. There were mass demonstrations in 1947, and mass strikes again in 1958 and 1959. There was even a small-armed rebellion in the style of the Cuban revolutionaries of the Sierra Maestra (which failed). These nonviolent and violent actions fed into the much more intense and widespread protests of 1964.[119]

Decolonization in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East made it much harder for Panamanians to accept U.S. hegemony. Many saw their struggle allied not only with black activists in the United States, but with protestors and revolutionaries throughout the colonial world. In the press, Westerman and other journalists chronicled the rising tide of

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[118] George W. Westerman, "American-Panamanian Relations, *The Crisis* 60 (March 1953): 147-153. He also wrote an article for *Crisis* in April 1951, titled "Canal Zone Discrimination."

[119] Ricaurte Soler, *"La concentración del poder económico en Panamá,"* in *Las clases sociales en Panamá: Grupos humanos, clases medias, elites y oligarquía,* Marco A. Gandásegui, ed., (Panamá: Centro de Estudio Latinoamericanos, 2008), 97-98.

anti-racist sentiments. He described to Panamanian readers that there were only four independent African nations in 1945. But that by 1962, there were thirty-two independent nations on the continent. He concluded:

> These events, like so many others which the world has been witnessing of recent times, is a reflection of the profound changes that characterize our era; the era of disintegration of the old colonial system, and the formation of new national personalities; the era of the right of peoples to the service of constructive achievements in which former colonies and dependent territories are progressing towards freedom and independence at a tempo no one would have thought possible some ten years ago."[120]

The leaders of this transnational revolt also came to the isthmus. Just a month before the riots of 1964, Panamanian activists celebrated the arrival of "a new political exile… but not one of the South American or European variety." Ronald Segal, a writer, lecturer, and activist from South Africa traveled to Panama to speak to fellow activists about racial injustice. Westerman described Segal as "one who has become dedicated to the purpose of destroying all bastions of white supremacy – on the African continent and elsewhere."[121]

In the context of this global revolt, the popular and rather naïve notion that Panama's flag riots of 1964 could be equated to juvenile ignorance or worse, a Castro-communist conspiracy seemed ridiculous. White American and European colonial privileges were under attack, and whether the U.S. public recognized it or not, the networks and luxuries of the tourism industry were understood as part of this unjust system, and thus also under assault.

Aftermath of Revolt

The binary view of white Americans against the oppressed peoples of the world was useful for mobilizing protests. But, it was also a simplistic and somewhat detached

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[120] Geroge W. Westerman "African Freedom Vital Development of the Sixties," *The Panama Tribune*, July 7, 1962.
[121] Westerman "Foe of South African Racist Policies On Visit to Panama," *The Panama Tribune*, December 12, 1964.

interpretation of events. The Panamanian government presented its struggle to the United States and the world as a united front against racism and injustice. There were, however, a number of internal political struggles on the isthmus threatening not only U.S. power but also the status quo within Panamanian society. The protestors of 1964 also aimed at the nation's white elite. "Panamanians picked out two targets for attack," historian Walter LaFeber wrote. "The oligarchy which had long manipulated the country's politics while exploiting its resources, and the United States which dominated Panama through informal colonialism."[122] Panama's President in 1964, Roberto Chiari, was a member of one of the country's richest families. He was part of the old elite – the so-called "rabbi-blancos" – who governed the country, more or less, uninterrupted since 1903. His father, Rodolfo, had served in the administration of Belisario Porras as Vice President, and later in 1924, been the country's president (see Chapter 2 on Porras administration). The family also operated the largest sugar company in the country.

Since 1903 Panama's elite, running the country's government and economy, had a love-hate relationship with the United States. They criticized U.S. control of the transit economy and negotiated for more power in the Canal Zone and in trade relations. But in terms of the social order and the model of development, they were in agreement and aligned with U.S. interests. Simply, they wanted capitalism and access to it. Since the very beginning of the Republic, elite politicians pushed through legislation and development policies designed to "whiten" and "civilize" the nation (see Chapter 2). "The colored people on the Isthmus of Panama," Westerman lamented, "find themselves hemmed in on the Canal Zone by racial bigots who operate a high-geared machinery of discrimination and segregation, and in Panama by dogmas which are scientifically absurd but which have become a powerful and dangerous instrument of power politics."[123] From 1903 through the revolt of 1964, the Panamanian government was often on the wrong side – against the majority of Panamanians – in terms of racial politics.

Colonialism was a synonym for racism in the 1950s and 1960s. And yet the

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[122] LaFeber, *The Panama Canal*, 47.
[123] Westerman, introduction to Linda Samuels, *An Exhibit on the Races of Mankind* (Panama: Isthmian Negro Youth Congress, 1946).

Panamanian government, at the same time it claimed to be against imperialism, continued to discriminate against its own people and travelers of color. Beginning in the 1920s and 1930s, the Republic passed legislation legally prohibiting the immigration of "English-speaking Negroes, Chinese, Armenians, Arabs, Turks, Hindus, Syrians, Lebanese, Palestinians, and North Africans." Meanwhile, Panama's government criticized the United States for racial discrimination. Panamanians of color continually pointed out this contradiction in their nation's politics. How could their government condemn racism by the United States and have such racist laws?

Westerman was closely involved in the effort to put pressure on his government. He wrote articles and editorials condemning the racist policies of both the U.S. and Panamanian governments. He wrote, for example, an open letter to Panama's President, published in national newspapers in 1953. He called on the president to "make a pronouncement on this subject [of racial inequality] so that it will be definitely established that Panama fully respects its international commitments on Human Rights."[124] He focused in particular on the debate around travelers and tourists of color. "Our present policy," he argued, "toward tourists causes resentment which is affecting our democratic standing abroad, at the same time that it is debilitating our friendship with all non-white peoples whose opinion in present world affairs cannot be ignored. Panama must give proof to the outside world that it does not subscribe to a double standard in applying the principles of democracy."[125] These conflicts, although some legislative advances occurred, were still unresolved in the 1960s.

When protests erupted in January 1964, Chiari and his government rushed to claim themselves anti-imperialists, anti-racists and for the people. The Panamanian government had reacted in a similar manner to assuage earlier protests. In 1947, for example, the government signed a controversial agreement to allow U.S. military bases to continue operating outside of the Canal Zone.[126] Student protestors, however, took to the streets and forced the administration to renege. In 1964 it seemed to be happening again.

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[124] Letter from George W. Westerman to President José Antonio Remón, July 30, 1953. Westerman Papers, Box 63.
[125] Ibid.
[126] LaFeber, *The Panama Canal*; Lindsay-Polland, *Emperors in the Jungle.*

Chiari had shown himself to be a good friend of the United States in the fight against Cuba-inspired revolution and international communism. But with the protests, the government had no choice but to condemn U.S. foreign policy. It was either embrace the protestors or get swept away in the tide of revolt. By cutting diplomatic ties with the United States during the protests, Chiari signaled that he was on the side of the people.

At the time, there were also upcoming elections. The Chiari administration and his family were under attack for their close ties with the United States and for their landholdings. Political debates developed and radicalized along class and racial lines. Just three days before the riots of January 9, *La Critica* newspaper ran a story criticizing the President's sugar company. Laborers, the newspaper claimed, were paid low wages and suffered the "sweat of misery" on Chiari's sugar plantations. Life was cut short, "mortgaged to death," so Chiari and his elite friends could live in luxury.[127] The anti-colonial movement threatened to destroy not only white American privileges, but also Panama's domestic social order. Concessions had to be made if Panama's traditional elite wanted to stay in power and continue to profit from the isthmus' transit economy. A swell of popular opposition demanded it.

The Panamanian government's effort to take control of the canal was forced by popular will to also become a movement against racism. But this did not mean economic inequality or luxurious privileges, which protestors and rioters had vehemently attacked in the streets, would also be challenged by the state. Political leaders in Panama did not frame their revolution as a struggle between capitalism and socialism. Rather, they presented the revolt as a nationalist movement designed to overhaul the racist and colonial U.S. presence. The revolution, which scholars later argued was not really a revolution, would fight to open the doors to equality of opportunity. While there was territorial and administrative decolonization, there was far from a decolonization of social and economic values.[128]

Anyone, in this newly decolonized world, could in theory be a tourist or a rich

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[127] "La Zafra," *La Critica*, January 6, 1964.
[128] See Walter Mignolo, *Local Histories/ Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).

man if he tried hard enough. The hotels and ships and tourist attractions of the Caribbean were now open to travelers and consumers of color. The protests of the 1960s paved the way. But, they did little to relieve the economic strains faced by the majority of people. The question remained: what good was "access" if one did not have enough money or power to enjoy it? The lines of inequality shifted from legal racism to more informal and economic forms of oppression. Progress and development would continue under the direction of new masters.

We can begin to understand, in this sense, how tourism survived the anti-colonial moment of the 1960s and found renewed life under nationalist governments in the second half of the twentieth century. "The only privilege of the President," Graham Greene noticed on his visit to meet Panama's revolutionary leader Omar Torrijos, "was to have a reserved parking place for his car at the Panama Hotel."[129]

[129] Graham Greene, *Getting to Know the General: The Story of an Involvement* (London: Bodley Head, 1984), 29.

Chapter 6: The Tourism Industry rolls into the future

"You ask, whose interest? I ask the question: who set it up?"[1] –Michael Manley

The Caribbean's tourism industry in the post-colonial era has its roots in the early twentieth century. Its structure (of infrastructure, policies, and interconnected destinations) and its social practices (of white-male American privilege and adventure) were born in the crucible of U.S. empire building. Contemporary tourists have seemingly forgotten this historical process of assemblage. This does not undercut, however, the fact that history has shaped the Caribbean vacation. Tourists do not need to know where their ideas and behavior come from in order to be influenced by them. History exists below the conscious surface of the vacation experience.

People and events in the early twentieth century produced and reproduced social practices embraced in the modern era of mobility. To acknowledge and understand this history is to travel, finally, with eyes open. Panama, and its connection to vacation destinations in Cuba and south Florida, was fundamentally part of the historical convergence that invented the Caribbean vacation. As the United States expanded further south, "conquering the tropics" through massive engineering projects and campaigns against tropical disease, the U.S. public began to reimagine the tropics as an accessible and desirable place to visit. The building of the Panama Canal was a watershed moment in the region's transformation from disease to desire. Reimagined as an imperial playground, the Caribbean opened to a new host of travelers and developers, who became cultural mediators for tourists seeking tropical leisure. Frontiersmen became tourist entrepreneurs; national elites turned liberal aspirations of progress and desirable immigration into tourism development policies; naturalists and explorers produced knowledge not only for science and U.S. imperial interests but also for tourists in search of adventure and discovery in exotic lands; and travel writers articulated new motivations and means of escape for folks at home tired of the drudgery of modern life.

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[1] Quoted in *Life and Debt*, directed by Stephanie Black (2001; New York: Tuff Gong Pictures, 2003), DVD.

These social groups, acting in a new era of imperial and technological expansion, helped assemble and package key experiences for the modern Caribbean vacation. They also defined the subjective boundaries of who could and couldn't be a tourist. There were moments, as seen in the 1950s and 1960s, when the excluded and oppressed would directly challenge the injustice of tourist privilege. As I show in this final chapter, the defining roots of tourism were attacked, but nevertheless survived, rejuvenated and took renewed hold over the region – its communities, economy, and culture. In the post-colonial and neoliberal era of mobility, the colonial foundations of the tourism industry remain, in altered form. What follows are series of stories that illustrate tourism's contemporary influence in the Caribbean, one deeply linked to the history it sprang from in the early twentieth century.

Why do they smile?

In March 1995, the author David Foster Wallace embarked on a seven-night cruise from south Florida to the Caribbean. In an essay written for *Harper's Magazine* he described the pleasures and discomforts of his vacation experience.[2] It was Wallace's task to report on what he saw abroad ship and at port. The essay, entitled "Shipping Out: On the (nearly lethal) comforts of a luxury cruise," begins with an unusual list of experiences. He wrote:

> I have now seen sucrose beaches and water a very bright blue. I have seen an all-red leisure suit with flared lapels. I have smelled suntan lotion spread over 2,100 pounds of hot flesh. I have been addressed as 'Mon' in three different nations. I have seen 500 upscale Americans dance the Electric Slide. I have seen sunsets that looked computer-enhanced. I have (very briefly) joined a conga line…

Wallace's editor at *Harper's* claimed that "Shipping Out" was so addictively readable it was like "pure cocaine." When the magazine published the piece in January 1996,

[2] David Foster Wallace, "Shipping Out: On the (nearly lethal) comforts of a luxury cruise," *Harper's Magazine*, January 1996, 33-56. The essay was republished in Wallace's essay collection the following year, with the new title, "A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again." The collection takes the same name. See, David Foster Wallace, *A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again: Essays and Arguments* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1997).

"literally everybody," according to another writer, "seemed to be talking about it."[3]

The cocaine analogy, though rather crude, captures the dual power of Wallace's writing: the rich quality of his prose; and in a deeper way, his ability to shed light on the gilded nature of the Caribbean vacation. Cocaine and its power to detach consumers from reality is a fitting metaphor for the culture of travel Wallace described. Luxury tourism - like cocaine – creates the fleeting illusion of grandeur. Both tourism and cocaine also demand a great deal of "behind the scenes" work to deliver their products to consumers. Below the surface of pleasure, layers of production and transport link wealthy consumers with exploited laborers and environments. [4]

In "Shipping Out," Wallace assumed the role of a sober and confused narrator. "I have heard," he wrote, "upscale adult U.S. citizens ask the ship's Guest Relations Desk whether snorkeling necessitates getting wet, whether the trapshooting will be held outside, whether the crew sleeps on board, and what time the Midnight Buffet is." These observations drove the author – a sensitive and hip guy – to "despair." In between forced social engagements, Wallace spent his time huddled existentially in his small cabin, with his mead notebook, trying not to freak out from what he perceived to be the absurdity of it all. "There is something about a mass-market Luxury Cruise," he wrote, "that's unbearably sad. Like most unbearably sad things, it seems incredibly elusive and complex in its causes and simple in its effect."[5] Witnessing fellow Americans indulging in their luxury vacation was difficult for him to handle. There was something "symbolically microcosmic," he believed, about adult tourists enacting vivid fantasies that they did not even recognize as fantasies.

Wallace's sense of gloom in the midst of such much comfort and luxury is, arguably, a symptom of tourism's fundamental relationship and disregard of historical

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[3] "Five days with David Foster Wallace: Colin Marshall talks to author and journalist David Lipsky," *3 Quarks Daily*, July 19, 2010, accessed June 1, 2015, http://www.3quarksdaily.com/3quarksdaily/2010/07/five-days-with-david-foster-wallace-colin-marshall-talks-to-author-and-journalist-david-lipsky.html. Also see David Lipsky, *Although of course you end up becoming yourself: a road trip with David Foster Wallace* (New York: Broadway Books, 2010).

[4] When Harper's editor Colin Harrison called Wallace's essay "pure cocaine," however, he seemed to be referring solely to its literary addictiveness. Simply, he couldn't stop reading.

[5] Wallace, "Shipping Out," 34-35.

consciousness.[6] By the time Wallace went on vacation in the mid-1990s, the Caribbean's history seemed to disappear into packaged timelessness. The tourism industry – from cruise ships to all-inclusive resorts – actively erases and remakes the past and the present into something pleasurable: a vacation. The brochure for the cruise ship, which Wallace traveled on, explained: "INDULGENCE BECOMES EASY and RELAXATION BECOMES SECOND NATURE and STRESS BECOMES A FAINT MEMORY."[7] From the viewpoint of the present, and the historically privileged, the Caribbean has become a tropical paradise awaiting one's leisurely arrival.[8]

Wallace offered an up-close and critical perspective on the social practices of a modern day Caribbean vacation. He has many insights and stories to tell. But one point that troubled him, in particular, concerned the unquestioned vacation package of structured fun and professional smiles. He observed:

> All of the Megalines offer the same basic product. This product is not a service or a set of services… It's more like a feeling. But it's also still a bona fide product – it's supposed to be *produced* in you, this feeling: a blend of relaxation and stimulation, stressless indulgence, and frantic tourism that special mix of servility and condescension that's marketed under configurations of the verb 'to pamper.'[9]

Something was wrong, Wallace reasoned. The crew and the service workers, he kept wondering: why do they smile? This isn't real. This isn't fun or pleasurable for them. "There's something crucially key about Luxury Cruises in evidence here," he suspected: "being entertained by someone who clearly dislikes you, and feeling that you deserve the

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[6] Contrary to popular belief, but in line with a long philosophical tradition, ignorance is not blissful. There are consequences to ignoring reality. The unexamined life is still not worth living. My use of "consciousness" comes from the work of Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Continuum, 2000).
[7] Wallace, "Shipping Out," 36.
[8] Clifford Geertz explains the uniquely powerful ability to forget the social process of landscape creation. He writes: "As a chameleon tunes himself to his setting, growing into it as though he were part of it, just another dun rock or green leaf, a society tunes itself to its landscape… until it seems to an outside observer that it could not possibly be anywhere else than where it is, and that, located where it is, it could not be otherwise than what it is." Geertz, "The wet and the dry: Traditional irrigation in Bali and Morocco," *Human Ecology* 1 (March 1972): 23-29.
[9] Wallace, "Shipping Out," 34.

dislike at the same time that you resent it."[10] If Wallace is correct with this observation, and I believe he is, then what are the causes of this underlying and often hidden resentment? What is the story – the history – behind all those service smiles and all those tourist fantasies?

The author Jamaica Kincaid, as if talking directly to Wallace, offers some sharp comments about this tourist-service dynamic in her book, *A Small Place*. "That the native does not like the tourist," she wrote, "is not hard to explain…[because] every native would like to find a way out, every native would like a rest, every native would like a tour. But some natives – most natives in the world – cannot go anywhere. They are too poor."[11] The meaning behind a professional smile, when contextualized by history and contemporary political-economic relations, is clear: the service smile is a survival tool in the face of centuries of injustice.[12]

Whether on a cruise ship or at port in the Caribbean, whether smiling or not, service workers seem to know their place: and it doesn't look like a vacation or much fun. Yet, in the twenty-first century, the number of global "natives" turning to tourism for work has increased dramatically. The tourism industry is today one of the most profitable and global of trades, alongside its modern counterparts: oil, the arms business, and drugs.[13] Tourism, and its demand for exotic experience and professional smiles, is at the crux of modernity. This combination – to travel in luxury/ to pamper in poverty – is thoroughly and unfortunately representative of the privileges and inequalities, the mobility and immobility, of modern life. The problem of the twenty-first century is the problem of mobility. And the Caribbean tourism industry is a seminal example.

During my research I also participated in and observed the milieu of modern tourism. My time abroad, like most historians, was not exclusively in dusty archives and libraries. On one research trip, for example, I traveled by cruise ship from south Florida to Colón, Panama. For five days I was both tourist and ethnographer, experiencing the

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[10] Ibid, 56.
[11] Jamaica Kincaid, *A Small Place* (New York: Farrar, Strauss, Giroux, 2000), 19.
[12] For a sociological read on the professional smile, see the literature on emotional labor. Amy S. Wharton, "The Sociology of Emotional Labor," *Annual Review of Sociology* 35 (August 2009): 147-165.
[13] Paul Gootenberg, *Andean Cocaine: The Making of a Global Drug* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 4.

fun, and also the despair and frustrations that Wallace and Kincaid so eloquently express. What follows are some "field" notes from that trip, which hint at history's affect on the present.

The smiles and the pampered treatment began as soon as we arrived to Port Everglades in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Police, security, and traffic officials with wand-like things herded us to the cruise entrance. At the terminal entrance, porters greet us with big smiles, and help us with our bags. As we part ways, there is an outpouring of, "enjoy your cruise, sir." Inside the massive terminal, which looks like a giant aircraft hanger, another round of service workers come by with professional smiles, dressed in all white, passing out free lemonade and cookies. To ease my discomfort in the midst of the crowd, I reread Wallace's essay, "trying to summon up," in his words, "a kind of hypnotic sensuous collage of all the stuff I've seen and heard and done." As we wait to board the ship, analysis and observation become coping mechanisms.

There is a cacophony of sounds in port: of jet planes, forklifts, plates clattering against forks and knives on deck, boat horns, a slight breeze, muddled chatter and laughter. Three 10-story cruise ships surround our ship, one to portside; the other, starboard; a third at our stern. In port, there are currently six giant white cruise ships capable of carrying over 2,000 passengers each. Motorboats cruise by. Outside the barrier island, protecting the port, sailboats and more motorboats. From deck, a 40-foot sailboat looks like a raft belonging to a group of nomadic ants. The mangroves, what's left, also border the port. Two worlds: one ecological, and the other made of industrial steel and plastic. As we head out to sea, two mega cruise ships flank us. It looks like a race to vacation. It's an armada of tourists; the modern great white fleet.

Aboard ship, there are 1000 crewmembers and 3000 passengers: a 3:1 tourist to service ratio.[14] Labor in the tourism industry is abundant and cheap. Royal Caribbean pays its waiters and cabin attendants a remarkable $50 a month (the rest of their salary depends on tips). Meanwhile, "utility cleaners" work twelve hours a day and earn $550 a

[14] The worker-tourist ratio on luxury cruise ships puts the U.S. public education system to shame with its 20-to-1-teacher student dynamic. What would public education look like if there were a teacher for every three students?

month, with no tips.[15] No wonder this vacation is so affordable. The company and its cruise competitors search the world for cheap labor. On board ship, a brochure tells us that the *Grandeur of the Seas* is like "a floating United Nations." Crew members, I learn, come from the following countries: the Dominican Republic, Turkey, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Colombia, the Czech Republic, Ghana, Honduras, India, Italy, Jamaica, Latvia, Macedonia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Romania, Panama, Serbia, South Africa, Spain, St. Lucia, Sweden, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, Venezuela, Uzbekistan. Out of the 1000 employees, 24 are from the United States, who mostly work in the ship's officer class or as professional entertainers. (There is a rhythm and blues band on board from Memphis.) Among the crewmembers from Western Europe, they also serve as officers. They are tall, blue-eyed, and blond men looking very Scandinavian, dressed in white officer uniforms appearing stately and in control. Everyone else on the ship appears to work in the galley, below deck, cleaning, or serving food and drinks and making us tourists feel special.

The overwhelmingly majority of the crew has traveled from the four corners of the so-called underdeveloped world to work on this floating luxury resort. Wendell, our waiter who serves dinner in "The Great Gatsby" dining hall, for example, has been at sea for over six months, away from his wife and children in St. Lucia. In a brief moment of conversation, he says wearily, "I've been doing this quite awhile now; I rather be home, I admit, but there's no work there." He has been working on cruise ships for thirteen years. Another crewmember I meet, José, folds at least 500 towels by lunchtime, which doesn't sound too difficult, except for the fact that he has to shape them into a variety of cute animals like swans, elephants, and turtles; that special touch for guests. He explains that he's been away from his wife and child in Bogotá, Colombia for over 5 months. At port, he avoids going to shore and stays on the ship. It's too expensive, he explains; he is working for his family. This is a sacrifice rather than an adventure for him. How many workers share the same fate?

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[15] Jim Walker, "Royal Caribbean: The Rich Get Richer, the Poor Get Poorer," February 26, 2014, accessed May 31, 2015, http://www.cruiselawnews.com/2014/02/articles/crew-member-rights-1/royal-caribbean-the-rich-get-richer-the-poor-get-poorer/

Meanwhile, we the tourists are thoroughly entertained. The buffet never closes, ice cream is bottomless, and performances and fun activities go on late into the evening.[16] Every day we are given a list of things to do. On the last day of the trip, for example, the ship's newsletter *Cruise Compass* informs us that "the most exciting place to be in all of the Caribbean at this very moment is right here. As a citizen of our nation, you're free to roam from deck to deck and ask yourself, why not?" (Of course this freedom does not apply to the crew.) Activities for the day include:

1) International Parade of Flags. It's like a floating United Nations.
2) World's Sexiest Man Competition. Ouh, la, la…
3) Pool Volleyball Guests vs. Staff. Let's get a game started…
4) Royal Cash Prize Bingo. Join a thrilling game of B-I-N-G-O today…
5) 70s Disco Inferno. Join your Cruise Director Rico and the Cruise Director's Staff as we take a journey back to the days when the leisure suit reigned supreme and the big afros were in style.
6) 70s After Party. Enjoy the best 70s music.
   Go Out With A Bang!

"A vacation," as Wallace noted, "is a respite from unpleasantness." By paying attention, however, it becomes very apparent that the tourist's pleasure – as currently practiced – depends on the low-wages and discomfort of service workers from the rest of the world. Pleasure and fantasy on the back of pain.

Making the Fragments Whole

Historical description and analysis offer clues for understanding the "elusive" and "complex" causes shaping contemporary tourist behavior and service labor relations. "History," as the popular aphorism goes, "is what the present wants to know about the

[16] Record levels of ice cream consumption are likely broken while vacationing on a Caribbean cruise. Someone - in fact multiple people – always has a cone in hand, whether in formal dress or bathing suit. No matter morning, afternoon, or night, the ice cream is flowing. It seems to be a similar pattern with beer, coca cola, and fruity drinks.

past." The modern ethos and habitus of Caribbean tourism, as I have argued throughout this dissertation, is rooted in the history of the region's imperial encounter with the United States. Historical structures of economy, imperialism, and racism linking the tourist's home with that of the Caribbean worker have created social, economic and perhaps psychological boundaries difficult to cross. The power and influence of this history can still be seen and felt within today's quintessential vacation.[17]

The experience of being on a Caribbean vacation reminds me of Plato's Cave, retrofitted for modern dwellers willing to confuse the shadowy performance for the truth.[18] Yes, when you are a tourist, that waiter is smiling at you. Yes, you are important to him. Yes, he chose to be here working on this massive cruise ship sailing the Caribbean. But perhaps things are not what you imagine them to be. In the modern era, the terms of confinement have been upgraded: from a crude fire to a fully stocked bar with air conditioning. The general mass of tourists can dream and travel without being aware of the historical relations facilitating their mobile fun. The vacation illusion conceals reality.

The Caribbean, we are told, *used to be* a hotbed of colonialism and imperialism. But those days are supposedly over. Slavery and racism and the era of empire have passed into history. The tourism industry tells us so. Critical scholars, however, have challenged this packaged "Mickey-Mouse" version of history and have tried to remind the public that the past is not yet dead. "We are hardly in a "postcolonial" moment," Robin Kelley argued. "The official apparatus might have been removed, but the political, economic, and cultural links established by colonial domination still remain with some alterations."[19] Although Caribbean communities have experienced the formal end of colonialism, the decolonization of minds and everyday life has yet to happen. The legacy

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[17] A brief disclaimer: what I have outlined above and throughout this dissertation is certainly not the experience of all travelers to the Caribbean. There is a spectrum of experience. What I describe is just *one history* of tourism shaping the present. There are many histories involved. But nevertheless, a significant number – a dominant majority – have acted and continue to engage in at least some of these general and hegemonic traits, which have become part of both U.S. and Caribbean popular tourist culture.

[18] Plato, *Republic*, Chris Emlyn-Jones and William Preddy, eds., (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013). Susan Sontag makes a similar analogy in her discussion of photography. Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1977).

[19] Robin D.G. Kelley, "A Poetics of Anticolonialism," in *Discourse on Colonialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000), 27.

still lives. As James Baldwin observed, history "does not refer merely, or even principally, to the past. On the contrary, the great force of history comes from the fact that we carry it within us, are unconsciously controlled by it in many ways, and history is literally present in all that we do. It could scarcely be otherwise, since it is to history that we owe our frames of reference, our identities, and our aspirations."[20] How tourists travel is no exception. Today's quintessential Caribbean vacation embodies history's ability to continue into the present.

Luxury tourism sells itself as a chance to be pampered, to be thoroughly privileged. Royal Caribbean, the biggest cruise ship operator in the region today, tells its guests: "The Sea is calling. Answer it Royally." To be treated "royally" requires – in fact divinely demands – lots of pampering from servants. (Note: royal is also a synonym for imperial.) Travel in luxury is the message. Think of millions of Queens and Kings annually visiting Caribbean shores, and you can begin to imagine the social relations needed to support that privileged mode of travel.[21] In his cruise ship essay, Wallace viscerally described this unjust social structure in action. He explained his ship's arrival to port:

> I've barely been out of the U.S.A. before, and never as part of a high-income herd, and in port – even up here above it all on Deck 12, watching – I'm newly and unpleasantly conscious of being an American, the same way I'm always suddenly conscious of being white every time I'm around a lot of non-white people. I cannot help imagining us as we appear to them, the bored Jamaicans and Mexicans, or especially to the non-Aryan and hard-driven crew of the *Nadir*.
>
> I cannot convey to you the sheer and surreal scale of everything: the towering ship, the ropes, the anchor, the pier, the *vast lapis lazuli dome of the sky.* Looking down from a great height at your countrymen waddling into poverty-stricken ports in expensive sandals is not one of the funner moments of a 7NC Luxury Cruise…There is something inescapably *bovine* about a herd of American tourists in motion, a certain greedy placidity.[22]

[20] James Baldwin, "The White Man's Guilt," *Ebony*, August 1965.
[21] Nearly everyone would like to be king, but no one wants to be a servant.
[22] Wallace, "Shipping Out," 50.

Leisurely motion in the tourism industry depends on the same kinetic convergence that has historically fed empire: it is the accumulation of resources and energy for the privileged few. The towering ships, ropes, piers, and the low-paid workers from the third world, serve the same master: the imperial citizen.

The Caribbean's tourism industry is the successor of the oppressive economic and social relationships, which enabled the "West" to exploit the region. This oft-ignored legacy, however, goes far beyond the organization of labor relations and access to mobility and transportation technology. Contemporary fantasies also have their roots in the past. Literary and visual representations packaged and consumed by tourists mimic the culture of empire. The never-ending popularity of J.M. Barrie's Peter Pan, for example, fighting pirates and making friends with Indians on an exotic island where he never grows old; Robin Crusoe and his man Friday on a tropical isle; Indiana Jones and his quest for lost treasure; Johnny Depp and his Pirates of the Caribbean living an epicurean fantasy of rootless and amoral tropicality. These stories and images, copied from past tales, guide contemporary vacationers.

The modern culture of tourism is the accumulation of centuries of travel behavior. Today, tourists can dine luxuriously in the "Great Gatsby" hall, drink bottomless coca cola, eat vast amounts of food aboard ship, dance and gamble wildly, and lounge ever after. Meanwhile, on shore, they can tour an old fort or an old plantation, or go on an eco-tour into the rainforest to meet nature and find authentic "natives." There is something deeply colonial about these experiences. These historical roots, however, are often unacknowledged. Past and present inequalities and injustices get white-washed away, and what is left, is a seemingly innocent experience of the exotic and luxurious. Pirates become childhood heroes, slave-owners and racists become dignified aristocrats, explorers and writers in the service of empire become role models of adventure and travel. "Today we see such images from an historical distance [if at all]," Mimi Sheller tells us, "thinking we are free of their condescension, yet much within them is still

sculpted into the living landscape of Caribbean resorts."[23] To be a tourist is still to be part of history; to be a tourist in its popular form is to embrace *empire-as-a-way-of-life*.

The tourism industry recycles and markets historical-cultural patterns, what Louis Althusser would call "the reactivation of old elements."[24] The history of travel patterns has "overdetermined" contemporary tourist culture. When I imagine an archetypical tourist, I imagine the descendant of an archetypical imperialist. The heart of colonialism is also the heart of tourism. At home, this typical tourist is likely a respectable citizen, a caring husband and father, with a well-paid job. He is a family man. But on vacation, responsibilities disappear. In the Caribbean, the respectable citizen is free, at least for a few days. He drinks and gets drunk whenever he pleases; he flirts and sleeps with women he would likely not even talk to at home (even though he's married). He burns through money and alcohol. The locals seem to expect it, even encourage it. (It's good for the economy. "You know, those gringos are crazy anyway.") The tourist dances and behaves like a liberated soul without consequences. He has supposedly gone "wild" and "primitive" embracing his epicurean dreams. Fantasies enacted. This is what a vacation is for him – an escape from the rules and mundaneness of home. An adventure, an escape. All the while, his family waits patiently for his return, to learn of his cleaned-up exotic adventure. Safely returned, his hedonism is reinterpreted into a fishing trip, a relaxing time, with his old buddies.

The tourist's metamorphosis from respectable citizen to vacation heathen is eerily reminiscent of one of colonialism's most infamous literary characters. In the *Heart of Darkness*, Kurtz is a respected official, a prosperous businessman, with an adorning wife at home who worships his every move. But away from home, Kurtz embraces his "wild" and his "dark" side.[25] In the tropics, his metamorphosis is complete. He becomes a ruthless beast. Joseph Conrad's sympathetic narrator Marlowe tells us (implicitly), however, that this behavior is not geographically predetermined, but really something

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[23] Mimi Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean: From Arawaks to Zombies* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 121.
[24] Quoted in Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 160.
[25] Joseph Conrad, *The Heart of Darkness* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2011). For a classic study of Conrad and his relationship to European colonialism, see Edward Said, *Joseph Conrad and the Fiction of Autobiography* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

that Kurtz carries within him on the journey from the metropole to the colonial outpost, and only released in the moment of encounter. Like his fellow colonialists, the darkness is within and looking for a means of escape. The exotic becomes a trope, an imaginary place and culture to let loose psychological and social demons.[26]

Today's tourist has seemed to embrace, though certainly not all of them, an upgraded version of this colonial ability to project and naturalize one's own repressed desires onto an "other" place, another "culture." The tourist drinks because that is what one does on vacation; he womanizes because that is *their* way of being; he gambles because *their* morality is loose. His actions supposedly follow *their* culture, rather than his own. Like Kurtz, the tourist is supposedly adapting to the local surroundings. This behavior, however, is more reflective of the sending culture than the receiving.

Stereotypes continue to be actualized in the twenty-first century. (There are too many deranged white men on vacation in the tropics to think otherwise.) The dominant tourist paradigm maintains its connection to its colonial origins. But, we also have to acknowledge that many things have changed. To make sense of the tourism industry today, "we have to try to understand both things – the continuing traditions and the context that has changed."[27] The industry survived political decolonization in the 1960s and 1970s, somehow preserving the colonial mentality. The face(s) of tourism, however, have changed. No longer do white people exclusively control and enjoy Caribbean vacationing.[28] Tourism development, in theory, is in the hands of new masters. In this sense, tourism follows the lead of post-colonial development more generally. "Countries once treated as colonial underdogs," the scholar Wolfgang Sachs tells us, "now measure up to their masters, and people of color take over from the white man."[29] The owners of tourism in the Caribbean, and the politicians and businessmen who profit, are now just as likely "local" as "foreign."

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[26] For more on the Western imagination and the colonial world, see Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994); Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995).
[27] E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage Books, 1963), 27.
[28] The majority of tourists to the Caribbean, however, are still racially white and hail from North America or Western Europe.
[29] Wolfgang Sachs, preface to *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power* (New York: Zed Books, 2010), vii.

This seeming triumph is really the expansion of an old problem. Formal national and racial boundaries within the tourism industry have eroded, but the end product, the travel feeling and the service, remain very much the same. Tourism in the era of decolonization is not so much about changing the economic system; but rather has refocused on control and access to the fruits of capitalism. It appears as if everyone wanted to be a tourist or the hotel owner. Is it any better, though, for a man of color to act like a pampered prince or a cultural gatekeeper than a white man?

This shift in power confirms the worst fears of anti-colonial activists such as Mahatma Gandhi. "God forbid," he wrote, "that India should ever take to industrialization after the manner of the West. The economic imperialism of a single tiny island Kingdom (England) is today keeping the world in chains. If an entire nation of 300 million took to similar economic exploitation, it would strip the world bare like locusts."[30] Extending that analogy: what would happen if billions of people tried to travel and act like a classic American tourist? This perhaps is already happening. Imagine the levels of consumption, and the number of people receiving low wages and faking smiles to serve the growing mass of tourists. The democratization of the tropical vacation, combined with increasingly cheap and efficient transportation technology, has made everywhere a potential tourist destination.

From Activism to Entrepreneurialism

In the 1960s and 1970s, in the aftermath of anti-colonial revolt, the Caribbean's tourism industry was under threat. Nationalist leaders, however, still considered tourism an important element for development. The drive for self-determination encouraged the promotion of what activists had previously fought against: privilege and luxury. The post-colonial career of one leader, George Westerman, sheds some light on this paradox. Westerman, an Afro-Panamanian journalist and educator (as discussed in the previous chapter), was a committed activist for nearly four decades, from the late 1920s to the late 1960s. He spoke out against racism and inequality in Panama, the Caribbean, and also on

[30] Quoted in Ramachandra Guha, *How Much Should a Person Consume?: Environmentalism in India and the United States* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006), 231.

the African continent. He was a strong advocate for the liberation of colonial-controlled people.[31] For his efforts, he was recognized as a national hero in Panama and awarded a prestigious diplomatic post. In the late 1950s, Westerman was Panama's Ambassador to the United Nations. As one of his colleagues remembered, "During Dr. Westerman's years at the U.N. prior to the independence of West Indian territories, his was the single voice that was constantly raised in support of the aspirations of the West Indies whenever the opportunity arose. His penetrating observations were the source of great concern to the metropolitan powers involved."[32] He dedicated his life to fighting "the problem of the color line" that perpetuated white rule.

Westerman also believed that his insights and his political connections could pay off financially. In addition to his career as a journalist and diplomat, he was a businessman. In the 1960s, Westerman worked closely with developers and capitalists from the United States, Canada, and Panama. For the Canadian construction company, Dalite Corporation, Westerman traveled the Caribbean as their local representative. At home in Panama, he negotiated on behalf of Dalite to build hotels and low-to-middle income housing. He coordinated similar types of projects in Barbados and the U.S. Virgin Islands. "Barbados," one potential investor wrote to him, "has become a very fashionable tourist resort and inspite [sic] of heavy inflation, people still flock in from England, Canada, and the United States. There is a lot to be done yet in developing the European and South American tourist markets."[33] Westerman and Dalite agreed, hoping to turn tourist interest into profitable development. In Trinidad, Westerman also helped negotiate an engineering contract to build a new airport with the Trinidadian Government of Eric Williams. His business plans were numerous. He also partnered, for example, with a liquor distributor in Panama to export rum to the United States. As Jack Cohen, Vice President of Star Liquor Dealers in New York, remembered: "Dr. George W. Westerman, a former United Nations Ambassador from the Republic of Panama, now on his way to

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[31] Michael L. Conniff, "George Westerman: A Barbadian Descendant in Panama," in *The Human Tradition in Latin America*, William H. Beezley and Judith Ewell, eds., 141-150 (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1998).
[32] Letter from Hope R. Stevens to Hon. Erskine Ward, of Barbados, June 23, 1964. Westerman Papers, Box 14.
[33] Letter from S.P.B Magee to George Westerman, September 2, 1974. Westerman Papers, Box 14.

Washington D.C., stopped off in New York long enough to deliver to me two bottles of the most popular rum made by one of the most reliable and well-established distillers in Panama."[34] It's uncertain, however, how successful his efforts were in the rum business. His attention focused on construction and tourism development projects.

As a businessman, Westerman still embraced his role as diplomat and social justice advocate. After a visit to the Bahamas in June 1964 to investigate Dalite's "fashionable Lucayan Beach Hotel," he traveled to Philadelphia where he was a guest speaker of the American Friends Service Committee. He discussed the trip with a business associate: "They enjoyed my talk about US-RP [Panama] problems and want to have me do a lecture tour for them in California sometime in October."[35] Westerman had become a key spokesman for the anti-colonial movement, and at the same time, the new face of Caribbean development. He carried within him the post-colonial combination of old and new. His efforts in business, he anticipated, would bring him the financial success and wealth he had been unable to achieve as a member of an oppressed minority. He also hoped to promote regional development determined by Caribbean leaders, but with the use of foreign capital.

In practice, however, many of the national and racial boundaries of the colonial era were difficult to cross. As Westerman soon learned, things were not working the way he had imagined. He wrote to a friend about his difficulties as a transnational businessman:

> Unless one has lots of money to move around one does not impress most favorably. I have found that the North American business operator likes to feel that he is dealing with someone of rank or influence if he is non-white and from a 'dependent' country. This being so I am perforce obliged to make my moves accordingly.
>
> On the other hand the American Government wishes to use us all as 'their boys.' If you are to be well considered by them you must show little independence of thought and supinely accept all the indignities they shower upon you. If you assert your manly principles then you are viewed as a dangerous person; if you exert

[34] Letter from Jack Cohen to Duncan J.V. Thorne, February 21, 1962. Westerman Papers, Box 14.
[35] Letter from George Westerman to Rex, June 21, 1964. Westerman Papers, Box 14.

> your rights you are said to be non-cooperative. Then when you go along with them you wind up by being rejected by your own people and neglected by them.[36]

Despite decolonization in the political sense, there were still rigid boundaries determining post-colonial power and influence. Questions of nationality, race and class – rooted in the colonial era – still played an important role when it came to development schemes.

Tourism born in colonialism was a template for regional development in the post-colonial era. It remains so today in the neoliberal era. Policymakers, government planners, and development organizations like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund continue to promote tourism "as among the best solutions to the problems faced by the 'developing' world."[37] Development strategies traditionally associated with neoliberal policies like privatization of public utilities, the promotion of massive infrastructure projects, and institutional modernization are being paired with tourism. The era of neoliberal tourism development is following in the footsteps of the era of liberal development in the early twentieth century.

In Panama, the government has adopted a series of generous economic and political policies to attract tourists and foreign retirees to the country. Tourists, if they want to stay, can get fast track approval for Panamanian residency and major tax breaks for home and small business construction. Law 481 passed by Panama's National Assembly in 2012 offers: a 20 year tax exoneration for construction materials used in tourism development; no import tax for vehicles used for 'ecotourism;' 20 year exemption for real estate purchased for tourism; among other incentives. One investment firm, responding to the new law, claimed: "South Florida faces a rising rival in tourism: Panama. Investors are pouring hundreds of millions of dollars in hotels into the small Central American country."[38] History, it seems, is repeating itself in modified form. Tourism appears as a primary vehicle for attracting foreign investment. These state-led

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[36] Ibid.
[37] Quetzil E. Castañeda, "The Neo-Liberal Imperative of Tourism: Rights and Legitimization in the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism," *Practicing Anthropology* 34 (Summer 2012): 47-51.
[38] Quoted in "New tourism law, incentives to promote industry growth," *The Visitor/El Visitante*, November 2012, accessed May 15, 2015, https://www.thevisitorpanama.com/2012/11/new-tourism-law-incentives-to-promote-industry-growth/

efforts are also designed to encourage development in Panama's rural interior and along its extensive coastline. Tourism is no longer centered solely on the urban port areas of Colón and Panama City. Predominantly agricultural communities like Boquete in the mountains and Bocas del Toro on the Caribbean coast have become tourist boomtowns, full of gringos, restaurants, bars, hotels, and service sector jobs.[39]

Between the liberal governments of the early twentieth century and the neoliberal governments of the early twenty-first century, there is remarkable continuity in planning and action. In theory, there is more national and local autonomy, but in practice, the end goals are similar: at all social and economic costs attract foreign direct investment to encourage development and progress. As one government advertisement claims, "with tourism the country wins…[and] we all win!!!"; "More tourism, better country!" But to achieve these development goals, the nation's leaders tell visitors what they want to hear: this place is still a tropical paradise, untapped and underdeveloped, waiting for their discovery.

What follows are a few ethnographic interludes from my own travels that highlight how tourism is experienced on the everyday level: history and development merging into the present.

Authenticity and U.S.-Panamanian Relations

On the Chagres River, just thirty miles from the cosmopolitan city of Panama City, indigenous communities make their living in the tourism industry – selling handicrafts, leading rainforest eco-tours, and entertaining foreigners with traditional music and dance. The Emberá-Wounaan people, an indigenous ethnic group that has fought off foreign intruders for centuries, is now part of the modern tourist economy.[40]

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[39] Ana K. Spalding, "Lifestyle Migration to Bocas del Toro, Panama: Exploring Migration Strategies and Introducing Local Implications of the Search for Paradise," *International Review of Social Research* 3 (2013): 67-86; Renee Alexander Craft, "¡Los gringos vienen!' ('The gringos are coming!'): Female Respectability and the politics of Congo tourist presentations in Portobelo, Panama," *Transforming Anthropology: Journal of the Association of Black Anthropologists* 16 (2008): 20–31; Carla María Guerrón Montero, "'Can't Beat me Own Drum in me Own Native Land:' Calypso Music and Tourism in the Panamanian Atlantic Coast," *Anthropological Quarterly* 79 (2006): 633-663.

[40] Dimitrios Theodossopoulos, "Emberá Indigenous Tourism and the Trap of Authenticity: Beyond Inauthenticity and Invention," *Anthropological Quarterly* 86 (Spring 2013): 397-425.

Visiting Panama tourists can choose from a variety of activities and attractions: to the Panama Canal viewing center; to the country's many beach resorts; to the City's upscale hotels, clubs and restaurants; and to the rainforest and mountains; to visit a supposedly simpler, more pristine way of life. To see the "natives" is part of the vacation package.

In the contemporary milieu of tourism, visiting an indigenous village is a journey back in time. For cruise passengers disembarking at the Caribbean port of Colón, traveling to an Indian village is one of the more popular tours. "Tourists want to see pristine rainforest and primitive indigenous tribes when they come to Panama," as one guide explained. "The Emberá provide that service."[41] After a short drive on the trans-isthmian highway, tourists take motorized canoes up the Chagres River to visit "native" villages. Upon arrival, foreign guests are greeted by Emberá men, women, and children – scantily clad, with painted bodies and bare feet. Tour companies advertise these communities as representative of a timeless past, a more innocent, wild side of man, like Rousseau's "noble savage."

This "primitive" role within the tourism industry, however, does not mean that Emberá communities are somehow separate from the modern world. "We are known on the international level," as one local leader told me. A few years ago MTV came to work and film with one Emberá community for a reality TV program. In the show, a young teenager from Tampa, Florida has to face "jungle/indigenous" type challenges. "Daddy and I are sending you to the jungles of Panama," her parents tell her. "You'll be living with the Emberá people."[42] No phones, no webcams, you'll have to survive on your own, they tell her. (Note: To add to the affect, the show's producers asked community members to put away their generators, electrical appliances, Western style clothes, and modern goods. MTV wanted to present an "authentic" indigenous community.) For the show, and more generally within the tourism industry, Emberá men and women work as tour guides and entertainers. Villagers perform spiritual dances, demonstrate traditional artisan work, take tourists on boat and rainforest tours, and generally try to look friendly

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[41] Carlo Ledo, Tour guide in Panama City, in discussion with author, January 5, 2013.
[42] "Cher: Exiled," Episode 9, Season 1, MTV, 2008, accessed May 15, 2015, http://www.mtvasia.com/shows/exiled-season-1/episodes/exiled-season-1-ep9-cher/video/the-real-deal-317377/

yet mythically intriguing. "We have to be affectionate," an Emberá leader told me, "with these people [the tourists]. So many Americans have been arriving." Meanwhile, the illusion of the tourist's personal discovery of the authentic is preserved. "Wow, this is so epic," MTV's teenage star tells viewers.

Across the river from the community of Emberá Puru, stands the massive Gamboa Rainforest Resort, a high-end hotel in the middle of the rainforest. The hotel opened in 2000 just as the Panamanian government took formal control of the Panama Canal. The Gamboa Rainforest Resort and the surrounding tourist economy represent a historic transition, from U.S dictated development to Panamanian-led efforts. The current site of the hotel was where the U.S. Canal Zone had an employee recreation center. Canal Zone workers and their families could rent boats and leisurely travel the river. In the late 1990s, however, a major Panamanian developer, Herman Bern, with the support of the national government, turned the area into the Gamboa Rainforest Resort.[43] "Escaping into the lush embrace of Panama's Soberania National Park Rainforest," the hotel explains, "sweeps you to a five-star sanctuary of privacy, luxury and solitude. You've arrived at Gamboa Rainforest Resort, one of the most unique resorts located directly on the Panama Canal."[44] Walking the hotel's eco-trail, tourists have the chance to visit six nature exhibits, featuring: 1) snakes 2) fish & crocodiles 3) orchids 4) butterflies 5) view of the Panama Canal and rainforest canopy and 6) Indians. Here, indigenous people are naturalized into the eco-tourist experience (see Chapter 3 for more on this "nature" of tourism).

Emberá communities living along the Chagres River are clearly entangled in the modern tourist economy. But how did these communities, traditionally known for their commitment to small-scale farming and hunting and gathering in the tropical rainforest, become so intimately connected to tourism?[45] In the story of one community's embrace

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[43] The town of Gamboa is also the main port to get to the Smithsonian's Barro Colorado Island in Gatun Lake. Tourism and science are in close proximity here.

[44] "The Experience," Gamboa Rainforest Resort, accessed May 3, 2015, http://www.gamboaresort.com/experience-en.html

[45] For more information on the history and culture of the Emberá people, see Stephanie C. Crane, *The Phantom Gringo Boat: Shamanic Discourse and Development* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994); Julie Velásquez Runk, "Indigenous land and environmental conflicts in Panama: Neoliberal

of tourism, we can see layers of history shaping tourism today: U.S. military and commercial influences in Central America and the Caribbean; conservation efforts in the tropics; the search for "authentic Indians;" and national development schemes linking an earlier era of liberalism with contemporary neoliberalism. The Emberá way of living, despite what guides and tour companies tell visitors, is not rooted in a timeless past.

In January 2013, I met with Antonio Tocamo, chief elder of the community of Emberá Puru. Tocamo is the community's elected official, deciding how the community will develop and change, and in particular, engage in the tourism industry. Emberá Puru was one of the first communities along the river to get involved in tourism. Over the course of our conversation, Antonio Tocamo narrated the community's history and how tourism development first came to the Emberá people.[46]

When Tocamo was a young boy, the community was located hundreds of miles to the east of their current location. The Emberá people have traditionally lived in the Darién region, along the current border between Panama and Colombia. (Many communities are still there.) In the Darién, the community of Emberá Puru resided along one of the many rivers crisscrossing the rainforest. In the alluvial forest, they farmed, hunted and fished. In 1964, however, the community moved to the Chagres River, which is situated in the central part of the nation and part of the Panama Canal watershed. There were various reasons for this migration, according to Tocamo. First, was the issue of access to markets. "In the Darién," Tocamo explained, "the farming is very good, excellent really, but the problem was that there weren't roads to bring food to market. However, here near the City, we could move our goods – like rice, corn, plantains, yucca, beans – to Panama City." The community wanted more than tough subsistence. Second, was the problem of security. In the early 1960s, the Darién was embroiled in the Colombian civil war. Guerrilla groups crossed the border into Panama, avoiding detection from the Colombian army. Later on, the region also became a crossroads for drug traffickers transporting cocaine north to U.S. consumers. Isolated Emberá families

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multiculturalism, changing legislation, and human rights." *Journal of Latin American Geography* 11 (2012): 21-47.

[46] The following narrative comes from Antonio Tocamo in discussion with the author, January 6, 2013. For a short video extract of the interview, see http://soyturismo.org

on the river were vulnerable to these outlaw groups. "They would come to us," Tocamo remembered, "and steal our chickens and food." Emberá Puru's relocation was wrapped up in regional political conflict, tied to U.S. anti-communist concerns and U.S. market demands for illegal drugs.[47] 1964 also marked an important transitional moment in U.S.-Panamanian relations. Violent protests broke out that year in Panama City and Colón (see Chapter 5). In that tense moment, the U.S. government needed more than ever friends and allies in the Panama Canal area.[48] The Emberá people, struggling to deal with their own changing conditions in the Darién, accepted an offer by U.S. military authorities to be relocated into the Chagres River area.

The U.S. military and the Emberá formed a close relationship beginning in the 1950s. Tocamo's father, who was the "central chief" for over 30,000 Emberá people, brokered a partnership with the U.S. military. Emberá men, skilled hunters and gatherers, became instructors in the U.S. military's "Jungle Survival training" program. The Emberá would teach U.S. soldiers how to live off the plants and animals of the rainforest. As one U.S. official remembered, the training was important to military personnel who would be sent to Vietnam. "We were training Navy Pilots," Morgan Smith explained, "as well as… the first cadre of Marine pilots that went to Vietnam."[49] In 1963, NASA astronauts also began to participate in the jungle-training program. A few years later, John Glenn and Neil Armstrong were sent to Panama to learn how to survive in the rainforest, in case of a remote crash. "They wanted this [realistic] training," Smith recalled, "and they got it." Throughout the experience, Antonio Tocamo's father, also named Antonio, was the

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[47] The issue of indigenous displacement continues to be a major issue on both sides of the Panamanian/Colombian border. See, for example, "Panama's Darien teems with FARC drug runners," *Reuters*, May 25, 2010, accessed May 4, 2015, http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/05/26/us-panama-drugs-idUSTRE64P01720100526; "Unos 360 indígenas Emberá Katío desplazados en Colombia por minas de las FARC," Agencia EFE, July 8, 2015, http://www.efe.com/efe/america/portada/unos-360-indigenas-embera-katio-desplazados-en-colombia-por-minas-de-las-farc/20000064-2659723; "Colombia: Embera indigenous leader murdered by FARC," Cultural Surival, http://www.culturalsurvival.org/news/colombia-embera-indigenous-leader-murdered-farc

[48] In this sense, the Embera-U.S. alliance resembled the U.S. alliance with the Guna indigenous people of Panama's Caribbean coast. See James Howe, *A people who would not kneel: Panama, the United States, and the San Blas Kuna* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1998).

[49] Interview with H. Morgan Smith by Rebecca Wright, NASA Johnson Space Center Oral History Project, October 31, 2002, accessed May 6, 2015, http://www.jsc.nasa.gov/history/oral_histories/SmithHM/SmithHM_10-31-02.pdf

astronauts' guide. As Smith remembered, "If anybody got disoriented or lost, somebody with a radio would be there and we'd ask Antonio to bring them in. They did. And he was especially nice with the astronauts, because we told him, 'These people are going to the Moon.'"[50]

As the U.S. government slowly transferred the Panama Canal to Panamanian government control, the Emberá now relocated in the Chagres area maintained close ties with the United States. But the conditions of their relationship changed. In the 1980s, fearing that the Panama Canal watershed might be deforested by land-hungry campesinos migrating from other parts of the country, the Panamanian government (pressured by U.S. authorities) created the Chagres National Park. The park protected close to five hundred square miles. Panamanian and U.S. officials argued that the area had to be protected in order to assure fresh-water supplying the Panama Canal.[51]

From 1964 to the mid-1980s, Emberá communities lived near the lake's headwaters, on the Chagres River, farming, fishing, and hunting. But with the creation of the park that way of life ended. As Tocamo tells it, "we couldn't cultivate, we couldn't hunt anymore." The community had to find another way of living inside the park. In 1990, just after the U.S. invasion to overthrow Manuel Noriega, Panama's National Tourism Authority approached the community of Emberá Puru with an offer. "Look," they said, "you can do this, you can bring tourists here and tourism can provide you with an economy." Initially community elders resisted the proposal, but over time, the offer became more tolerable. It seemed to be one of the few viable options available. "We didn't want to have to move into the city," Tocamo remembered.

During this transitional period, Tocamo and other community members also began to receive training courses in tourism hospitality. USAID organized the courses. Tocamo also got to travel to Arizona for advanced training. "During the course, I learned

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[50] Ibid.

[51] The Chagres River was damned in 1912 and 1913 during the construction area. U.S. engineers diverted the river from its natural course to the Caribbean Sea to create, at the time, the biggest man-made lake in the world, Gatun Lake. The river feeding into the new lake would become the main waterway of the Panama Canal. See chapter 1.

about 'American time,' to be punctual." With all of this new knowledge, he explained, "we formed, what is truly, "tourism."[52]

This rather unusual history, leading from the Darién to U.S. military and astronaut training, to migration and relocation, to the environmental politics of the Panama Canal Watershed, to the neoliberal reinvention of indigenous communities into tourist attractions is buried deep in the subconscious of the modern tourist experience. No one, besides the community, seems to be aware of the layers of history at work. As reality, it may seem too strange to believe. As a metaphor for the history of tourism, it is microcosmically revealing. In the twenty-first century, this same community – which was involved in one of the world's most modern projects (warfare and space travel) – is now presented to tourists as if its people had never been modern, never exchanged with white Americans, nor experienced the trappings of modern technology and society.

Today, Caribbean vacationing is presented as a timeless and natural experience. Layers of history and social experience are hidden from the contemporary traveler. In the next ethnographic vignette, I highlight another aspect of the vacation experience that has survived and reinvented itself in the post-colonial era: tourism as nationalist development, yet dependent on a tourist identity rooted in the history of white male American privilege.

Hemingway's Afterlife in Revolutionary Cuba

At the famous El Floridita bar in Havana, Ernest Hemingway drank in the afternoons with his supposedly one and only Cuban love, Leopoldina Rodríguez (a sex worker). Although the author has been dead for over 50 years, he is still hanging around the bar. Today a life-size bronze statue of Hemingway stands in the corner, in his favorite drinking spot. The memorial, commissioned by the Cuban revolutionary government in 2003, has become a popular tourist attraction. With black-and-white photos of Cuba's glorious past behind them, foreign tourists order expensive daiquiris at the bar, listen to live music, and take pictures with a timeless Hemingway. Tourism, which boomed in Cuba in the early-to-mid twentieth century, is remerging after a long slumber.

[52] Antonio Tocamo in discussion with the author, January 6, 2013.

Although the owners of the Caribbean's tourist economy today are more socially diverse than previous decades, the culture of tourist consumption remains relatively unchanged. Hemingway's enduring presence in revolutionary Cuba offers a clear example of tourism's evolving continuity in the post-colonial era. Political persuasion and national background have seemed to have a minimal effect on the archetypical identity of a visitor. Whether tourism development is in the hands of foreign capitalists, nationalists, or communists, the path and end result looks relatively the same. The drive for power and profit has overshadowed efforts to reform or reimagine social and economic inequality within modern day tourism culture.

The Cuban revolutionary government has returned to a model of tourism, which so many of its people fought against in the 1950s. Tourism revitalization efforts have occurred across the region in communities in south Florida, Jamaica, and Panama. Exclusive privileges challenged in the era of decolonization have remerged in the twenty-first century as part of development planning. Cuba may be the most extreme example.

In the midst of economic crisis on the island in the early 1990s, tourism reentered the development fold. The Congress of the Communist Party, which governs the Cuban nation, declared tourism to be a key part of its national development strategy. "The fundamental objective of tourist activity," according to the official party line, "is the direct acquisition of foreign currency, maximizing the medium income of visitors."[53] The plan seems to be working. The number of tourists arriving to the island has steadily risen over the last two decades. Last year, in 2014, three million tourists visited the island. U.S. citizens, despite the embargo and official travel ban, are also part of the crowd. "Although the Cuban government does not recognize it publicly," explained one industry expert, "the United States, even with the effect of the embargo, is the second greatest source of tourists to Cuba after Canada."[54] Over 170,000 travelers from the United States arrived to Cuba legally in 2014, and many more entered the country illegally, traveling through a third country before arriving to the island.

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[53] "El turismo en la brújula de Cuba," *Granma*, October 12, 2012.
[54] "American Tourists to Cuba on Track to Reach Record High in 2014," *Associated Press*, April 9, 2014, accessed May 3, 2015, http://skift.com/2014/04/09/american-tourists-to-cuba-on-track-to-reach-record-high-in-2014/

In July 2015, the U.S. and Cuban governments restored diplomatic relations and the United States began to loosen aspects of its trade embargo, which in effect, will allow U.S. tourists to visit the island legally for the first time in more than fifty years.[55] This shift in U.S. foreign policy has created an intense tourist buzz about Cuba; everybody it seems wants to visit. "It's the tourist mantra these days," NPR reported. "Get to Cuba before it loses its 1950s nostalgia and turns into a capitalist tourist trap."[56] Tour operators – big and small – are eyeing the economic possibilities. One tour company reported that visits to its website increased 700 percent after the restoration of diplomatic ties. Mega cruise line, Carnival Cruise, announced with much fanfare that it will offer a cruise package from Miami to Havana beginning in May 2016.[57] The old route linking Florida and the Cuban tourist economy seems to be re-forming (see Introduction and Chapter 2).

Eager tourists in the United States are talking about the island as if it were frozen in time, just waiting for their return. This nostalgia is evident in the renewed appeal in all things Hemingway. No U.S. magazine or newspaper reporting on the opening with Cuba, it seems, can forget to mention America's famous expatriate author. State-led development in Cuba is taking advantage of this interest. The first major export of construction materials from the United States to the island (under the new diplomatic agreement) is being used to build a new "state-of-the-art" facility to preserve materials from Hemingway's old home. (TV home improvement guru, Bob Vila, will be overseeing the project.) Finca Vigia, the author's longtime home away from home, is one of the island's most visited museums. At the museum, visitors can also see Hemingway's

[55] For more on the restoration of U.S.-Cuba relations, see the report by the Council on Foreign Relations, accessed May 7, 2015, http://www.cfr.org/cuba/us-cuba-relations/p11113

[56] "Tourists Worry: How Long Before Cuba Loses Its Nostalgic Charm?" *National Public Radio*, July 26, 2015, accessed May 7, 2015, http://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2015/07/26/426372454/tourists-worry-how-long-before-cuba-loses-its-nostalgic-charm Just the other day, I received email from an old friend who I hadn't seen in years. "I was wondering about traveling to Cuba beginning of next year," he wrote. "Could you send me some advice." The subject matter comes up over and over again in conversation with friends and family. "I want to go to Cuba!"

[57] "Carnival's cruise ships are setting sail for Cuba," *Fortune*, July 7, 2015, accessed May 8, 2015, http://fortune.com/2015/07/07/carnival-cuba/ ; "What Will a Carnival Cruise to Cuba Be Like?" *Vice News*, July 11, 2015, https://news.vice.com/article/what-will-a-carnival-cruise-to-cuba-be-like

old boat *Pilar,* stored at the property.[58] Retracing Hemingway's life on the island from his favorite drinking and fishing spots to his private home, which was popular well before the 1959 Revolution, remains amazingly part of the modern day tourist experience in Cuba (see Chapter 4 on Hemingway's role as a travel writer in the early-to-mid twentieth century).

But what will this new twenty-first century boom in tourism mean for Cuba's local residents? Tourist attractions, like the packaged legacy of Hemingway, awkwardly neighbor the poverty of everyday life on the island. The arrival of more and more tourists, rather than reduce income inequality, has made the social divide between the majority of Cuban 'have-nots' and exclusive foreign 'haves' painfully obvious. The hotels and the best restaurants and bars are exclusive sites. Foreigners are allowed in and Cubans are physically and economically kept out.

The afternoon I visited El Floridita Bar, a group of men and women lingered outside the bar's only entrance waiting for foreigners to exit with lubricated pockets. The bar, owned by the Cuban state, isn't really for Cubans. Neither is the Hotel Habana Libre (Free Havana), nor many other tourist attractions in the city. Hemingway's favorite drink - a daiquiri - today costs around $6.50, roughly one-third the average monthly salary ($20) of a Cuban worker. Extreme economic inequality and state policing separate local and foreign access to food, entertainment, and certain "public" spaces within the tourism industry.[59] This social and economic imbalance surrounding the tourist economy, however, is not unique to Cuba. It's a widespread phenomena within communities engaged in the Caribbean tourism industry.

The Cuban Revolution and neighboring anti-colonial movements were supposed to end these types of inequalities between locals and foreign visitors. Tourism in 1950s Havana, many people forget, helped mobilize a nation against dictatorship and U.S.

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[58] "First Big U.S. Investment in Cuba Tourism Is for Hemingway's House," *Associated Press*, June 22, 2015, accessed May 8, 2015, http://skift.com/2015/06/22/first-big-u-s-investment-in-cuba-tourism-is-for-hemingways-house/

[59] For an excellent ethnography of tourism in Cuba, L. Kaifa Roland, *Cuban Color in Tourism and La Lucha: An Ethnography of Racial Meanings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

imperial arrogance.[60] Exclusive and ostentatious tourist privileges had a similar mobilizing effect for anti-racist movements in Panama, Jamaica, and even the U.S. south (see Chapter 5). Yet today, in the face of material and existential uncertainty, with no clear oppressor, nationalist governments and grassroots activists have returned to develop one of their original enemies: luxury tourism. Revolutionary rhetoric and action have parted ways.

At first I was confused how a man like Ernest Hemingway could be so beloved by the Cuban revolutionary government. For all of Hemingway's literary talent, and his sympathy for the downtrodden (fishermen, peasants, war veterans, bootleggers, and Indians), he was still by most accounts a bigoted man. He thought of himself as "Papa"; he even asked his friends and employees to call him by that patriarchal nickname. People of color and women were always inferior to the risk-taking righteousness of Hemingway and his white-male characters. His image of himself was his favorite literary figure. He was the authority, the troubled explorer, looking out on the good, bad, ugly, and also the beauty of the world. He was "Papa."

The Cuban Revolution has created a similar narrative and image of itself. Fidel is still the island's "Papa." The revolution's most revered characters continue to be virile white-men. Che, Camilo, Raul, even Martí. Everyone else is still in the backseat, or serving drinks. While tourism development in revolutionary Cuba may seem exceptional in the Caribbean's history, it, in fact, is emblematic of a broader phenomenon, perhaps contradiction. Post-colonial leaders have allied themselves with an industry and way of travel that emerged from social practices, privileges, and inequalities born in an imperial era. (Every man it seems wants to be King. Every man it seems wants to be Papa. Every man wants to be a tourist.)

Examining the Past to Reimagine the Future

Whether by air or sea, a socio-cultural transformation occurs when tourists arrive to their tropical vacation destination. This transformation is rooted in history. The experiences of past travelers have *prescripted* the expectations, the perceptions, and the

[60] See, for example, Merrill, *Negotiating Paradise.*

travel itineraries of modern day tourists to the Caribbean. As the historians Will and Ariel Durant put it, "the present is the past rolled up for action."[61] The ethics of tourism have been passed down from one generation to the next. Political leaders, writers, naturalists and explorers, southern frontiersmen, businessmen, service workers, family members and friends, and a host of forgotten historical actors have contributed to contemporary traveling culture. Tourism is yet another example of the past "rolled up for [leisurely] action." Following this line of historical reasoning is the second half of the Durants' statement: "the past," when examined closely "is [also] the present unrolled for understanding."[62]

Sometimes past experiences, once understood, must be left behind, buried with the generations who came before. This does not mean, however, that we should forget. Rather, it requires looking deeply, remembering, in order to avoid making the same type of journey. It requires an intense and often uncomfortable analysis of the legacy within. The author F. Scott Fitzgerald in a now famous interview with himself declared, "the wise literary son kills his own father."[63] That was the only way, Fitzgerald reasoned, to create something new. Perhaps, this same type of creative destruction should be applied to the culture of tourism.

The wise traveler must leave behind the teachings and the behaviors of the generation before: all the romance and fantasies of the Caribbean vacation still mimicked and reproduced in magazine stories and tourism advertisements today. Millions of travelers have fallen for illusory tales and believed them true: the Caribbean is a tropical paradise, waiting to be discovered, where anything goes – wild nature, sexual liberation, alcohol, drugs, pure laziness, unquestioned pampered service. Cultural tropes, invented in an era of imperial excess, have twisted into vacation dreams. Many good people have gone off to live these fantasies only to hurt body and soul, and to perpetuate a system of social injustice. Travels organized around illusions are dangerous not only for self, but also for the people and places visited. The dream of a Caribbean vacation enacted is a

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[61] Will and Ariel Durant, *The Lessons of History* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968), 12.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Originally published in the *New York Tribune*, May 2, 1920 and republished in *F. Scott Fitzgerald in His Own Time: A Miscellany*, Matthew J. Bruccoli, ed., (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1971).

microcosm of the cockeyed world we live in. But very few people seem to want to recognize that absurd fact and look deeply into its causes and effects. Reality perhaps is to too cruel and weird for those of us who like happy endings. The history bringing tourists to the Caribbean is anything but pleasant or romantic in the quintessential vacation sense.

None of this is meant to argue that we should stay home, returning to our small towns and cities to never travel. Knowledge begins with experience, and travel is certainly first-hand experience. The author Aimé Césaire articulated it best, when he explained:

> It is a good thing to place different civilizations in contact with each other; that it is an excellent thing to blend different worlds; that whatever its own particular genius may be, a civilization that withdraws into itself atrophies; that for civilizations, exchange is oxygen.

But Césaire also questioned: has the Caribbean really been in "contact" with Europe and North America, "or, if you prefer, of all the ways of establishing contact, was it the best?"[64] In the twenty-first century era of mobility, that may be the big philosophical and ethical question.

Travel, cross-cultural contact, exchange produce the "oxygen" of contemporary life. We must seriously consider, however, is tourism in its current form the best way to facilitate this contact, to support generative exchange? I am far from alone in raising that critical question. Many people are trying to imagine and live an alternative way of travel. Over the last two decades, young people have increasingly sought to travel abroad in a different way than their parents' and grandparents' generation. From the early 1990s to the mid-2000s, the number of U.S. college students studying abroad has more than tripled – from an estimated 75,000 to over 250,000. When I think of these young travelers compared to the archetypical tourist, I feel hopeful. It reminds me of a scene I witnessed in the international airport in Panama City, Panama. Just past Customs in the airport, two streams of disparate travelers poured out. One group of older men and women dressed in

[64] Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000), 33.

tropical colors, Hawaiian shirts, and Panama hats walked through the gate. Their gaze swiveled nervously from one corner of the room to the next, looking for shelter. Panamanian taxi drivers and porters tried to get their attention, with whistles and fragmented English phrases, but the group would have none of it. They huddled close together. Eventually, they made their way through the crowd to a young man and woman dressed in all white holding a sign saying, "Royal Caribbean. Welcome!" The tourists were quickly whisked away on a big air conditioning bus headed for a mega cruise ship waiting for them in Colón.

Around that same time, it seems from the same flight, I saw another group of U.S. travelers make their way through the airport terminal. While their clothing and mannerisms identified them as American, their demeanor was radically different than the first party of visitors. This group of travelers was made up of young people on summer break, who had come to participate in a service-learning project. They would spend a week in Panama City listening to lectures and participating in workshops with professors and teachers versed in Panamanian history and culture, and also U.S. foreign relations. Then, the students would travel east to Panama's Darién region to partner with local community members to start volunteer work on a sustainable farm behind a local public school. For the next several weeks, the students would work with young Panamanian students to dig in the dirt and learn from one another.

These two groups of travelers – from luxurious cruisers to dirty-finger-nailed undergrads – represent perhaps the two poles of modern U.S. traveling culture. I make no claim that what the young undergrads were actually doing and thinking was free from the long-running pitfalls of their history and culture. Some of them, despite their teacher's efforts, came across as secular missionaries intent on saving the "natives." They suffered perhaps from a first world savior complex. Within the social structure facilitating and guiding their experience, however, there did seem to be a cultural bend toward a more respectful and meaningful form of travel.

To put it very simply but dependent on self-reflection: what type of visitor would you prefer in your community? A student who has come to learn history and work? Or an old man, bloated and tired, intent on lounging and gambling and drinking lots of cocktails

while being served by one of the young people from your community? An ideal mode of travel – on a communal scale – has yet to be put into practice, nor fully imagined. But the history of tourism, with all its warts and also its possibilities, offers clues for reimagining the present and future. In this dissertation, I have tried to describe some of the generative roots and routes of today's dominant form of Caribbean travel. Perhaps recognizing and reflecting on these underlying truths will set the next generation of travelers free to wander and wonder in new ways, neither bound nor blind to the history within.

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