

IMAGINING TR: COMMEMORATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS OF
THEODORE ROOSEVELT IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY AMERICA

A Dissertation

by

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ABSTRACT

By examining monuments and memorials dedicated to Theodore Roosevelt in the twentieth century, this dissertation exposes the commemorators' conscious and unconscious perceptions of masculinity and American identity visible in commemorative statuary. The monuments' patrons and artists adapted the nation's collective memory of Roosevelt to suit spatial and temporal variables, including their proposed messages, the monuments' geographic and situational locations, along with their intended audiences. This dissertation illustrates how commemorators employed specific incarnations of Roosevelt's multifaceted personality, from Rough Rider to hunter-explorer to statesman, to produce permanent, prominent, and didactic symbols through which to broadcast their values and ideals to both their contemporaries and future generations of Americans. These monuments are not mere reflections of the eras that produced them, however; they serve as portals into contemporary Americans' sense of self and their understanding of national themes and politics. These visual elements produce evidence not found in textual representations.

Over five chapters, this dissertation explores examples of commemorators' efforts to select a representation of Roosevelt and reveals their use of his image as an example of rugged, vigorous masculinity as well as the embodiment of Americanism. The monuments in this dissertation represent a broad geographical area, from Portland, Oregon, on the west coast to Washington, D.C., and New York City on the east coast, with Minot, North Dakota, and Keystone, South Dakota, centrally located in between. The time frame stretches from immediately following Roosevelt's death in January 1919

through the dedication of the national memorial on Theodore Roosevelt Island in 1967, with most of the commemorative efforts originating in the mid-1920s. Despite the changing historical contexts of the monuments' dedications, these structures illustrate Roosevelt's continued relevance and the transposibility of his image across decades and geographic spaces. Finally, although the intended audiences may have been local, regional, or national, these monuments all express issues of national significance.

Sources examined include newspaper commentary of proposed and constructed monuments; artists' and architects' personal papers, correspondence, and drawings, along with photographs of design models; as well as the materials of the monuments' patrons, particularly personal and government reports, correspondence, and public statements.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

On January 6, 1919, Americans awoke to the news that during the early morning hours, former president Theodore Roosevelt had died quietly in his sleep. Newspapers across the country rushed to eulogize the former president; articles ranged from brief and factual to lengthy and poetic as their bold headlines announced the death of the vigorous, righteous proponent of the strenuous life. Upon hearing the news, many Americans must have shaken their heads in disbelief that such a hardy, energetic, and relentless individual could pass from this world with just a final exhalation of breath. Naturalist John Burroughs captured the sense of latent exuberance that so many identified with Roosevelt: “There was always something imminent about him, like an avalanche that the sound of your voice might loosen. In his presence one felt that the Day of Judgment might come at any minute.”¹ Through the widespread press coverage, Roosevelt’s many incarnations—soldier, author, naturalist, rancher, hunter, explorer, reformer, and statesman, along with a plethora of personal and professional interests—paraded before the American public. In the process, editors and journalists recorded what they considered to be TR’s most admirable character traits, with courage, determination, and energy consistently near the top of the list; they set aside, however briefly, negative adjectives of brashness, boorishness, and recklessness that often plagued him during his lifetime. For many Americans who fondly remembered Theodore Roosevelt, Burroughs

¹ John Burroughs, “‘Roosevelt was a Many-Sided Man and Every Side was Like an Electric Battery,’ Tribute by Naturalist and Writer John Burroughs,” reprinted in *Theodore Roosevelt Association Journal* 19, no. 4 (Spring-Summer 1993-1994): 2-3, 3; Richard H. Collin, “The Image of Theodore Roosevelt in American History and Thought, 1885-1965” (PhD diss., New York University, 1966), 254, 259, 282.

summarized the image best: “Roosevelt was a many-sided man and every side was like an electric battery. Such versatility, such vitality, such thoroughness, such copiousness have rarely been united in one man.”²

The outpouring of grief was immediate and voluminous, but perhaps not terribly surprising. During his lifetime, Theodore Roosevelt appealed to a broad cross-section of the American public through his myriad interests and career choices. TR was beloved by disparate and sometimes opposing segments of the population. As Americans expressed their bereavement in newspaper obituaries, magazine articles, and personal remembrances, their collective eulogies agreed on one thing: Theodore Roosevelt was one of a kind. The former president, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* reported, breathed “the spirit of vigorous, courageous manhood and passionate love of country”; Roosevelt had “left his stamp on the development of the republic by inculcating the feeling of a robust nationalism and in awakening progressive political ideal.”³ Grieving Americans lamented that they would never see his like again in their lifetimes; because of this belief and because of their appreciation for his forthright character, TR’s eulogists declared that Rooseveltian virtues of courage, loyalty, masculine vitality, self-sacrifice, and

² Burroughs, “ ‘Roosevelt was a Many-Sided Man and Every Side was Like an Electric Battery,’ Tribute by Naturalist and Writer John Burroughs,” 3.

³ “U.S. Bulwark Lost in Death of Roosevelt,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, January 7, 1919; Charles Todd Stephenson, “Celebrating American Heroes: The Commemoration of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, and Thomas Jefferson, 1832-1943” (PhD diss., Brown University, 1993), 172; Collin, “The Image of Theodore Roosevelt in American History and Thought, 1885-1965,” 254-255. Collin notes the reaction: “Donald Richberg and Harold Ickes record how chilled they were at the unexpected news of his death, not only personally but from heartfelt doubts at the state of the nation without him.” Collin also remarks that “the extraordinariness of Roosevelt as well as his variousness were at the core of most of the evaluations [of him],” 263.

patriotism must be perpetuated through the vigilant and enthusiastic maintenance of his memory.

When discussing TR, scholars and others consistently mention the many hats he wore; Theodore Roosevelt's versatility offered an attractive array of symbols for a variety of causes. When commemorating TR in monumental statuary, patrons and artists needed to choose among these images. The results are not arbitrary. Commemorators selected representations to suit their needs based on their desired message, intended audience, and geographic location. Americans shaped the memory of Roosevelt by highlighting particular aspects of his personality and career, and through this process, they maintained his relevance to current and subsequent generations. This dissertation, however, does more than recall commemorations of Theodore Roosevelt; it produces a series of snapshots of American society and culture, including perceptions of American identity and masculinity in the twentieth century.

Examining the promotion of Theodore Roosevelt's memory through monumental statuary provides the opportunity to analyze changing historical contexts and their effects on his image at several points throughout the twentieth century. The study of monuments and memorials utilizes visual, tangible, public displays of the nation's collective memory as primary sources through which to assess both the memorializing society and their subjects of commemoration. These commemorative structures, through their physical presence—frequently in conspicuous locations such as courthouse grounds or other civic spaces—illustrate a perceived consensus on the commemorative subject

and its importance to the community, state, or nation.⁴ As historians of commemorative statuary note, there are several reasons to analyze these aspects of the cultural landscape, including the belief that monuments serve as mnemonic devices or as vehicles through which collective memory is transmitted across generations. Additionally, scholars contend that monuments serve specific didactic functions, such as providing visual history lessons, depicting models of virtues and ideals held dear, or “expressing the symbolic urge of a society.”⁵ Because of the sometimes contentious meanings attached to them, debates surrounding the design, construction, location, and interpretation of monuments often contain arguments concerning the memory of the past and its legacy.⁶

For this dissertation, I have chosen to examine the *Rough Rider* statue in Portland, Oregon, (dedicated in 1922), and its replica in Minot, North Dakota (1924); Mount Rushmore National Memorial in the Black Hills of South Dakota (1930, 1936, 1937, 1939); the New York State Theodore Roosevelt Memorial addition to the American Museum of Natural History in New York City (1936, 1940); and the national Theodore Roosevelt Memorial on Theodore Roosevelt Island in the Potomac River

⁴ Kirk Savage, “The Politics of Memory: Black Emancipation and the Civil War Monument,” in *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, ed. John R. Gillis (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 129-131; James W. Loewen, *Lies Across America: What Our Historic Sites Get Wrong* (New York: Touchstone, 1999), 12, 24. See also, Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 37-38. Doss describes the function of monuments as memory aids. Doss also outlines the distinctions between monuments and memorials, although many scholars do not conform to these divisions. As she notes, “Distinctions between monuments and memorials are tenuous: if monuments have traditionally functioned to commemorate great men and moments, memorials . . . have similarly served to remember and honor the subjects they address,” 38. I will use the terms monuments and memorials interchangeably except where one is part of a commemoration’s official name.

⁵ Marvin Trachtenberg, *Statue of Liberty* (New York: Penguin, 1986), 42.

⁶ Barry Schwartz, “Iconography and Collective Memory: Lincoln’s Image in the American Mind,” *Sociological Quarterly* 32, no. 3 (Autumn, 1991): 301-319, 302.

(1967). In addition, I address the failed attempt to construct a monumental memorial dedicated to Theodore Roosevelt in the Tidal Basin area in Washington, D.C. during the mid-1920s. Although passed over in favor of a memorial to Thomas Jefferson, this memorial attempt reveals the commemorators' motives and justifications, which informed later efforts to commemorate Theodore Roosevelt in other prominent national spaces.

The monuments and memorials selected illustrate a range of representations of TR, including soldier, hunter-explorer, statesman-president, and conservationist. The geographic diversity spreads these monuments throughout the nation, from Portland on the west coast to New York City and Washington, D.C. on the east, with North and South Dakota located centrally between the two. As the above dates indicate, the monuments' dedications spread throughout roughly fifty years of the twentieth century, allowing for an examination of Roosevelt's image at distinct points throughout the century. Although these dates generally reflect the completion and dedication of these monuments, the chapter narratives explain the lengthy delays commonly experienced in the design and construction of commemorative monuments. Comparing the broad chronological and geographical focal points identifies continuities in cultural patterns in addition to tracking change over time.⁷ In making these selections, I also relied on such practical considerations as the availability of sufficient archival materials, which varied

⁷ G. Kurt Piehler, *Remembering War the American Way* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), 8-9. See also, Michael Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991), 33. As Kammen states, "Another general characteristic that is commonly shared by tradition-oriented cultures, including the United States after 1870, is the use of monuments, architecture, and other works of art as a means of demonstrating a sense of continuity or allegiance to the past."

greatly depending on the patron, artist, and location; a complete discussion of sources is included in each of the chapter outlines below. Because of the prominent locations, the permanence of the materials, and didactic symbolism, these monuments serve as unique primary sources which identify influences on America's social, cultural, and political landscapes. As historian Daniel J. Sherman attests, "the construction of monuments takes place at the conjunction of a variety of discourses and practices: local and national, commercial and artistic, high and low, and, ultimately perhaps, history and memory."⁸

The field of memory studies serves as the foundation for scholarship on commemoration. Beginning with French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, the concept of collective memory and its relationship with social and cultural studies has become an indispensable component of modern historical research and writing. According to Halbwachs, collective memory is a "constructed" product of social groups that occurs at all social levels, including the family and community, as well as other political, social, economic, and military organizations, and often encompasses multiple generations.⁹

⁸ Daniel J. Sherman, "Art, Commerce, and the Production of Memory in France after World War I," in *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, ed. John R. Gillis (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 187. See also, Barry Schwartz, *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 8. Schwartz provides a useful definition of collective memory: "At this level, collective memory embraces not only events occurring during the lifetime of a population but also events occurring before any member of a population was born. Words referring to individuals' remembering and forgetting, in this sense, are metaphors." Additionally, Schwartz states that "'Remembered' events occurring before an individual's birth are stored not in the mind but in museums, libraries, and schools; history books and biographies; monuments, statues, paintings, and relics." Monuments and memorials act as vehicles for transmitting collective memory across generations.

⁹ Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, ed. and trans. L. A. Coser (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992), Lewis A. Coser, introduction, 22. See also, Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory*; Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds. *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966); Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Pierre Nora, ed.,

During the process of constructing the past, the present generation compares and contrasts the traits and values of their society with those that came before.¹⁰ As present (contemporary) beliefs, interests, and aspirations shape perceptions of the past, the formation of collective memories provides insight into a group's sense of identity at a particular moment. Halbwachs's framework of constructed collective memory influenced other scholars who conceptualized the relationship between the past and present. For example, Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger in *The Invention of Tradition* (1983) argue that a decline in traditional political structures led to the development of "invented traditions" which establish or symbolize social cohesion; establish or legitimize institutions or relations of authority; and inculcate beliefs and values in a community's members.¹¹

Similarly, John Bodnar supports the constructionist vision of collective memory, which he explains through the discourse of "official" and "vernacular" cultural expression.¹² The official component of public memory presents a version of the past that establishes a sense of timelessness and sacredness. Through the political discussion

Rethinking France: Les Lieux de Mémoire, Volume I: The State, trans. David P. Jordan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); David Lowenthal, *The Past Is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); John R. Gillis, ed., *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); Michael Geisler, ed., *National Symbols, Fractured Identities: Contesting the National Narrative* (Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England, 2005); Patrick Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1993); James E. Young, *The Art of Memory: The Holocaust Memorials in History* (New York: Prestel, 1994).

¹⁰ Coser, introduction to Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 24, 25.

¹¹ Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 9. See also, Schwartz, *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory*, 5, 14-15.

¹² John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 13.

and debate that creates public memory, Bodnar argues, the organization and power structure of a society are revealed, along with an understanding of the past and present.¹³ Bodnar's framework allows historians of commemoration to differentiate between commemorative forms that are initiated by "official" sources such as governmental bodies, civic leaders, professionals, and influential businessmen and those "vernacular" commemorations driven by the general public or segments of it. Official commemorations, Bodnar asserts, stress national unity and the values and ideals of the nation, whereas vernacular commemorations place the importance of the monument or ritual within local, regional, or individualized concerns, which may or may not be in conflict with the values of the larger nation-state. National commemorations, therefore, are designed by the upper strata of society to promote loyalty to the state and its leaders; they are constructed (physically, symbolically, and metaphorically) in an effort to maintain the status quo and to impose elite values onto the general population.¹⁴

Also building upon Halbwach's constructionist conception of collective memory, French historian Pierre Nora argues that *les lieux de mémoire* (sites of memory) bridge the separation between history and memory. Whether these sites of memory are "museums, archives, cemeteries, festivals, anniversaries, treaties, depositions, monuments, sanctuaries, [or] fraternal orders," they are "the boundary stones of another age, illusions of eternity." The push and pull between history and memory produces

¹³ Bodnar, *Remaking America*, 14.

¹⁴ Bodnar, *Remaking America*, 41, 136, 165. See also, Albert Boime, *The Unveiling of the National Icons: A Plea for Patriotic Iconoclasm in a Nationalist Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 8-9; Piehler, *Remembering War the American Way*, 6.

sites of memory which are “moments of history torn away from the movement of history, then returned; no longer quite life, not yet death, like the shells on the shore when the sea of living memory has receded.”¹⁵ The sites of memory, therefore, serve as vessels of the constructed interpretation of the historical past; they also furnish historians and other scholars with a framework for analyzing what and how a society chooses to remember and commemorate. Nora’s interpretations of history and memory—as well as the sites that connect the two—provided a foundation for the rapidly expanding field of memory studies in the last decades of the twentieth century and continue to inform scholars in the twenty-first. Some scholars, however, refute the notion that collective memory is “constructed” or “invented,” which makes it overly reliant on the present’s interpretation of the past.

Sociologist Barry Schwartz presents an alternative conception of collective memory from the constructionists who, he argues, place too much emphasis on postmodernism, multiculturalism, and hegemony theory which do not allow the past to serve as a model for the present.¹⁶ Schwartz asserts that collective memory serves two

¹⁵ Pierre Nora, “Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire,” *Representations* 26 (Spring, 1989): 7-24, 7, 8, 9, 12. Nora explains that “memory is a perpetually actual phenomenon, a bond tying us to the eternal present; history is a representation of the past.” Nora states that, “There are *lieux de mémoire*, sites of memory, because there are no longer *milieux de mémoire*, real environments of memory.”

¹⁶ Schwartz, *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory*, ix, x, 8, 9, 15, 301, 302, 314. Schwartz asserts that these perspectives have made collective memory too reliant on the present and do not address the ways in which the past informs the present. See his full description in footnote #14. As Schwartz states, “Believing all realities to be socially ‘constructed,’ a generation of scholars has depreciated collective memory by dwelling on how people differ, individually and collectively, in their interpretations of events and by studying how these differences are influenced by elite programmers,” x. A sampling of Schwartz’s impressive *oeuvre* includes two other books, *George Washington: The Making of an American Symbol* (New York: Free Press, 1987); and, *Abraham Lincoln in the Post-Heroic Era: History and Memory in Late Twentieth-Century America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); in addition to numerous articles: “The Social Context of Commemoration: A Study in Collective Memory,”

functions: as a model of society and a model for society. Disputing what he calls “the theory of the politics of memory,” Schwartz claims collective memory affects social reality by reflecting, shaping, and framing it, rather than by merely reflecting it.

Schwartz proposes revisions to the theory based on his findings concerning the image of Abraham Lincoln in American memory. The established constructionist assumption states that, “Since individuals engage the past as they adapt to changing environments, every turning point in American history has led to a revised Lincoln image.” Schwartz demonstrates, however, that although some scholars “believe that all aspects of the past lose relevance when social conditions change,” the Lincoln image contained “an identity of core elements overlaid by constantly changing peripheral ones.”¹⁷ What Schwartz learned from his study of Lincoln was that, because of the presence of related enduring and changing elements, “separate theories of collective memory—one to explain variation in what is remembered; another to explain persistence in what is remembered—are unfeasible.”¹⁸

Social Forces 61, no. 2 (Dec., 1982): 374-402; “Social Change and Collective Memory: The Democratization of George Washington,” *American Sociological Review* 56, no. 2 (Apr., 1991): 221-236; (with Robin Wagner-Pacifici), “The Vietnam Veterans Memorial: Commemorating a Difficult Past,” *American Journal of Sociology* 97, no. 2 (Sept., 1991): 376-420; “Memory as a Cultural System: Abraham Lincoln in World War II,” *American Sociological Review* 61, no. 5 (Oct., 1996): 908-927; and “Collective Memory and History: How Abraham Lincoln Became a Symbol of Racial Equality,” *Sociological Quarterly* 38, no. 3 (Summer, 1997): 469-496.

¹⁷ Schwartz, *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory*, 18. Reviewing his research questions, Schwartz states that, “We need to know ... why this image’s continuities are as distinctive as its vicissitudes, how change and continuity frame as well as reflect new political realities, how existing conceptions of Lincoln restrain efforts to produce new conceptions, how diversity in his image’s details upholds consensus in fundamentals, and how Lincoln in remembrance has affirmed fundamental aspects of American identity.”

¹⁸ Schwartz, *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory*, xii, 25, 300, 301, 302. Schwartz states that, “Thus, collective memory placed basic revision as new values and social structures replace the old. Theorists of the politics of memory believe, with Lowenthal (1985), that under such conditions ‘the past is

Collective memory, Schwartz posits, is comprised of history and commemoration. The commemorative processes—remembering together—delineate those events believed “most deserving” of remembrance. This concept is significant, Schwartz states, because “commemoration makes society conscious of itself as it affirms its members’ mutual affinity and identity.” The presence of heroic monuments on the cultural landscape, however, does not mean that all of society’s members confirm the assessment; it does mean “that negative sentiments were rarely expressed in major commemorative or historical forms,” as demonstrated with the Lincoln image.¹⁹ But, as Schwartz explains, “Commemoration ... does more than express feelings about the past; it organizes them, makes the past conceivable, intelligible, communicable, and public.”²⁰ Additionally, because commemorators select an image that is already present in collective memory, this representation comes from society (or some part of it); therefore, the “image-makers ... did their work with a definite audience in mind”—one that had already accepted the representation.²¹

a foreign country,” 302. This phrase comes from David Lowenthal’s book, *The Past Is a Foreign Country*; the obverse of this argument comes from “essentialists” like Emile Durkheim “who believe in society as an entity *sui generis* (self-generating and self-maintaining) [who] underestimate the extent to which the code [the symbolic code of society’s memory of its great people] adapts to society’s changing needs and tendencies,” 302.

¹⁹ Schwartz, *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory*, 9, 10. Schwartz states that “Collective memory is a representative of the past embodied in both historical evidence and commemorative symbolism.” In *Memorial Mania*, Erika Doss recounts a more recent trend in commemoration of non-heroic subjects, including the spontaneous temporary memorials at sites of tragedies such as the Columbine school shooting in 1999, along with memorials dedicated to victims of lynching and terrorism.

²⁰ Schwartz, *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory*, 306.

²¹ Schwartz, *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory*, 22, 298, 309-310. As Schwartz states, “Lincoln’s image depended on the people’s readiness to accept entrepreneurs’ [commemorators’] representations, and this readiness included the people’s interpreting reputational enterprise in terms of their own experience.” This was made possible because commemorators used already existing images:

Citing sociologist Emile Durkheim, Schwartz presents the social role of “the great man” within a society’s history and memory as enabling “humanity to distinguish evil from goodness, falsehood from truth, [and] mediocrity from excellence. Great men are venerated to make what they symbolize visible and understandable.”²² Like Schwartz’s study of Lincoln, historians and other scholars of memory and commemoration identify change over time, along with fundamental continuities, through the image of prominent leaders or “great men.” This dissertation places Theodore Roosevelt within this body of literature.

Several aspects of memory and commemoration of great men are particularly relevant to this dissertation. First, most of these scholars examine the multifaceted nature of their subject as a representational “buffet” from which commemorators selected an image. For example, Americans identified the image of George Washington as the Revolutionary leader, the “Father of His People,” or the “Disinterested Patriot”—the Cincinnatus who returned to the plow once he completed his duty to the country; Americans commemorated Abraham Lincoln as the “epic hero” or the “folk hero”; and Thomas Jefferson displayed “a baffling series of contradictions: philosopher and politician, aristocrat and democrat, cosmopolitan and American.”²³ Each of these

“In a literal sense, therefore, portrayals of Lincoln are more than idiosyncratic representations of their creators’ interest and biases; they are collective representations—images that existed in the mind of the entrepreneur because they first existed in certain segments of society.” Additionally, “Because their portrayals reflected at least part of the collective view of the man ... they can be used to estimate how certain elements of the population conceived him and how these conceptions changed over time.”

²² Schwartz, *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory*, 311.

²³ Marcus Cunliffe, *George Washington: Man and Monument* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1958), 7; Schwartz, “Iconography and Collective Memory,” 301; Merrill D. Peterson, *The Jefferson Image in the American Mind* (1960; repr., Charlottesville: Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation and University of

authors asserts that commemorators adjusted these images in the face of changing historical contexts. Additionally, these scholars describe how the living memory and cultural myth surrounding these individuals combine to make a usable past.²⁴ For example, Thomas Connelly, in his examination of Robert E. Lee in *The Marble Man* (1977), utilized literary sources and biographies to trace Lee's evolution from a Confederate general overshadowed by the glory of Stonewall Jackson at the start of the Civil War to a national—as opposed to a sectional—hero in the twentieth century.²⁵ Connelly's analysis of Lee's image reflects the influence and importance of historical context. As the Civil War faded further from contemporary memory, Lee became a symbol through which the South could honor the Lost Cause and the nation could applaud the heroism, courage, and integrity of a distinguished American military man. By placing Lee's image within various historical contexts, Connelly's framework

Virginia Press, 1998), 9. Additional examinations of the memory and commemoration of “great men” that inform this dissertation include Dennis R. Montagna, “Henry Merwin Shrady’s Ulysses S. Grant Memorial in Washington, D.C.: A Study in Iconography, Content and Patronage” (PhD diss., University of Delaware, 1987); Wallace Hettle, *Inventing Stonewall Jackson: A Civil War Hero in History and Memory* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 2011); Thomas L. Connelly, *The Marble Man: Robert E. Lee and His Image in American Society* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977); R. Blakeslee Gilpin, *John Brown Still Lives!: America’s Long Reckoning with Violence, Equality, and Change* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Christopher A. Thomas, *The Lincoln Memorial and American Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); along with Schwartz’s book and article mentioned earlier: *George Washington* (1987) and “Social Change and Collective Memory.”

²⁴ Hettle, *Inventing Stonewall Jackson*, 4-5. See also, Schwartz, *George Washington*, 9; Schwartz, *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory*, xi.

²⁵ Connelly, *The Marble Man*. Other scholars also examine how both people and events are remembered by subsequent generations. See, for example, Michael Kammen, *A Season of Youth: The American Revolution and the Historical Imagination* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978); Alfred E. Young, *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999); Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip’s War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York: Vintage Books, 1999); Carol Reardon, *Pickett’s Charge in History and Memory* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2001); and Michael A. Elliot, *Custerology: The Enduring Legacy of the Indian Wars and George Armstrong Custer* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

demonstrates how the changing social and cultural constructs affected Americans' perception of Lee in the years following his death.

Unlike Lee, Lincoln, and Washington, however, few scholars examine the ways in which Americans remembered and commemorated Theodore Roosevelt after his death, despite the astonishing number of biographies written about his life and times. A limited number of historians and other scholars situate the memory and commemoration of Theodore Roosevelt within the larger historical context, although none has examined a broad range of monuments and memorials constructed in the twentieth century. The discussion of the following four works constitutes the major contributions to the historiography of Roosevelt's memory and commemoration.

In his dissertation, "The Image of Theodore Roosevelt in American History and Thought, 1885-1965," Richard H. Collin traces how Roosevelt appears in historical and popular literature. Collin notes the influence of (then) recent historiography and memory studies, including Merrill Peterson's *The Jefferson Image in the American Mind* (1960) on his conception and organization. Dividing his study chronologically, Collin devotes a chapter to each of the major phases of TR's life: pre-presidential, presidential (one for each term), and TR and the 1912 campaign, along with two chapters on Roosevelt's posthumous image.²⁶ The last two chapters illustrate how the changing

²⁶ Collin, "The Image of Theodore Roosevelt in American History and Thought, 1885-1965," ii, iii. In the chapters corresponding with Roosevelt's life, Collin addresses, as topical considerations, "those [events] that produced the most historical commentary upon Roosevelt's image through the years." He discusses each of TR's pre-presidential careers through the use of both contemporary and later historical accounts. In each of the presidential chapters, Collin focuses on those topics of Roosevelt's terms that are relatively self-contained, but could still be considered "open historical questions," such as the Booker T. Washington dinner, the 1902 coal strike, and the Nobel Peace Prize. In each case Collin examines both contemporary

historical contexts of the 1930s through 1950s shaped scholars' presentations of TR. For example, Franklin D. Roosevelt's popularity in the 1930s combined with Henry F. Pringle's "debunking" of the Theodore Roosevelt legend of the 1920s led to a dramatic decrease in TR's popularity during the decade. As Collin asserts, "It is impossible to overstate the effect Franklin D. Roosevelt's election had upon the image of Theodore Roosevelt. Franklin D. Roosevelt didn't merely downgrade the Republican Roosevelt, he totally eclipsed him; he made him what had seemed impossible, a virtually forgotten man." Conversely, the 1950s, with the publication of the eight volume edition of *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt* (1951-1954), along with the centennial celebrations in 1958, witnessed a "rediscovery" of Theodore Roosevelt.²⁷

Despite his attempts to show how Roosevelt's image changed from his first forays into politics through the centennial of his birth in 1958, Collin does not demonstrate how Americans employed TR's image and memory as tools or frameworks for understanding the important issues of their day. He does not fully address the factors that brought about changes in TR's image, or trace the continuity of elements through the decades. Collin does not describe how Americans used TR's image and memory to describe themselves. Most of these shortcomings are the result of Collin's framework and, therefore, lie outside the scope of his study. In all, Collin effectively corrals the

and later historical narratives, which provide some historical context for the changing nature of TR's image; he also includes a historiographical review at the conclusion of these chapters.

²⁷ Collin, "The Image of Theodore Roosevelt in American History and Thought, 1885-1965," 333, 336. Collin credits the publication of the letters more than on the centennial. Conversely, I assert in Chapter VI that the centennial celebrations profoundly influenced the physical commemoration eventually constructed on Theodore Roosevelt Island.

huge body of literature on Roosevelt's life and times through the late 1950s, although he does not incorporate as much historical context as a factor for change as Peterson does with his study of Jefferson's image.

Collin's study proves valuable for later scholars of Roosevelt's image and memory. He provides a clearly written literary context within which to situate commemorative monuments or examinations of Roosevelt's image in non-textual sources. Collin explains some elements of the changing nature of TR's image and identifies some of the forces that acted upon that image through a broad chronological view, although this area offers the greatest opportunity for expansion.

Alan Havig's article, "Presidential Images, History, and Homage: Memorializing Theodore Roosevelt, 1919-1967," narrates the efforts of the Roosevelt Memorial Association (RMA) to construct a national monument in the Tidal Basin area along the Potomac River during the 1920s. As Havig describes, one of the RMA's three main goals was to "erect a monumental memorial in Washington to rank with the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial." After detailing repeated attempts to secure a site for Roosevelt on the National Mall and the subsequent purchase of an island in the Potomac River, Havig asserts that the RMA's commemorative focus shifted from Roosevelt the nationalist (Tidal Basin) to Roosevelt the naturalist (Analoostan Island) as the result of changes in geographical location and historical context.²⁸ Havig effectively outlines the RMA's intentions and persistence in pursuit of its goal.

²⁸ Alan Havig, "Presidential Images, History, and Homage: Memorializing Theodore Roosevelt, 1919-1967," *American Quarterly* 30, no. 4 (Autumn 1978): 514-532, 522.

In addition to his overview of the events, Havig illustrates the central role the Association's first secretary and director, Hermann Hagedorn, played in the RMA's efforts as well as his zealous focus on the promotion of Americanism and patriotism. Quoting Richard Collin, Havig states that Hagedorn and the RMA, "at times misdirected and over-religious," produced "an unending stream of minutia and idolatry" through which the Association established a one-dimensional Roosevelt legend. Havig explains the features and symbolism of John Russell Pope's design as representing Roosevelt's vitality and energy as well as his "multifaceted Americanism," which he accurately labels as a celebration of Roosevelt the nationalist.²⁹ Recounting the RMA's justifications for the commemoration and the opposition's arguments, Havig concludes that most Americans believed not enough time had passed to determine whether Roosevelt deserved a place on National Mall alongside Washington and Lincoln.

Despite his significant contribution to the scholarship on the memory and commemoration of Theodore Roosevelt, Havig does not acknowledge how or why the RMA selected the nationalist representation as the image to first commemorate TR. Additionally, in stating that the shift from the Tidal Basin site to Analostan Island necessitated a shift in representation from nationalist to conservationist, Havig oversimplifies the transposition of the commemoration. By placing the acquisition of Analostan Island and the eventual construction of a physical memorial as an epilogue to

²⁹ Havig, "Presidential Images, History, and Homage," 518, 522. Havig notes that Hagedorn loved Roosevelt and thought of him as the ideal American, but Hagedorn's bigger quest was to promote Americanism and "American values" to the nation's denizens, especially immigrants who could be reached through their children attending public schools. As Chapter II demonstrates, Hagedorn utilized Roosevelt as a vehicle through which to promote those ideals.

his story, Havig neglects to view the context out of which the final design grew, including the centennial of Roosevelt's birth in 1958. As I demonstrate in Chapter VI, the physical memorial on the island faced opposition, including pressure from conservationist groups who did not want to see it spoiled by development. Finally, Havig mentions that Lyndon Johnson, at the dedication of the memorial statue and plaza, "chose to recall a Roosevelt who could be put to service in the defense of his administration's Asia policy. LBJ called for national unity and resolve by using Roosevelt's words." This statement suggests that Roosevelt's image could be employed, although Havig does not explore this further. Moreover, Havig fails to recognize that it was not TR the outdoorsman—or even a generic "belligerence"—that LBJ summoned in 1967; the island commemorates more than just a conservationist. Havig's article provides a starting point from which to advance discussions of TR's image and memory in the twentieth century.

In his dissertation, "Celebrating American Heroes: The Commemoration of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, and Thomas Jefferson, 1832-1943," Charles Todd Stephenson compares and contrasts the commemorations of these four iconic presidents, concentrating on the formation of memorial associations and their activities in promoting their subjects. As part of his overarching argument, Stephenson asserts that the federal government's involvement in these commemorative projects—particularly the construction of national monumental memorials—increased throughout the twentieth century.³⁰ Additionally, Stephenson describes the trajectory of

³⁰ Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 114, 125.

change in how commemorative or memorial associations organized and raised money for their projects, including public subscriptions and other forms of fundraising and marketing.

As part of his discussion, Stephenson recounts in considerable detail the Roosevelt Memorial Association's organizing and fundraising activities along with its dominating presence over Roosevelt's memory in the years immediately following his death. Although other groups and individuals participated in commemorating Roosevelt, as Stephenson reports, the RMA quickly established hegemony, particularly at the national level as a result of its rapid organization and sizable endowment. Like Collin and Havig, Stephenson acknowledges Hermann Hagedorn's central role in the RMA, although he more clearly articulates Hagedorn's emphasis on Americanism as a motivating factor in many of the RMA's commemorations. Additionally, Stephenson addresses the RMA's efforts to elevate Roosevelt to a level comparable with George Washington and Abraham Lincoln as a way to justify a national memorial on the Tidal Basin. The problem, as the RMA's first president William Boyce Thompson identified, involved choosing from the multifaceted Roosevelt a single image to commemorate. Roosevelt, as Stephenson argues, "appealed to diverse groups of people—such as policemen, Spanish-American War veterans, bird-watchers, and ranchers—for reasons too specific and narrow to qualify him as a national hero." The commemorators, Stephenson articulates, needed to find a simpler, broader Roosevelt, "a forceful epithet" through which to promote him. Settling on "the vague and slippery notion of

‘Americanism’ that defense societies and others had bandied about for years,” led the RMA to emphasize TR’s sense of Americanism and his role as a model American citizen. Allowing the commemorators to define Americanism, Stephenson sets this concept firmly within their historical context. Using this theme, the RMA promoted Roosevelt’s birthday as “Americanization Day” and worked with the Woman’s Roosevelt Memorial Association (WRMA) to reconstruct Roosevelt’s birthplace in Manhattan as a shrine of Americanism.³¹ Stephenson uses his chapter on Mount Rushmore as a conclusion in which he ties the commemorations of these men together in one space. Like the National Mall in Washington, D.C., Stephenson asserts, Mount Rushmore serves as a symbolic pantheon of American heroes.³²

Stephenson’s dissertation valuably contributes to the study of Roosevelt’s image and memory. He accurately identifies the RMA’s intentions in promoting Roosevelt as the model American citizen, the embodiment of Americanism. There are, however, a few drawbacks to his study. First, he only devotes one chapter exclusively to Theodore Roosevelt, and although he covers a wide variety of commemorative acts in the years immediately following TR’s death, his study is limited within this period. His concluding chapter on Mount Rushmore adds another dimension to the narrative, but TR remains only one part in this story. Additionally, while Stephenson correctly gauges circumstances surrounding the failed attempt to construct a Theodore Roosevelt memorial on the National Mall, he comes up short on his interpretation of other

³¹ Stephenson, “Celebrating American Heroes,” viii, 172-173, 183.

³² Stephenson, “Celebrating American Heroes,” 283, 298-299.

Roosevelt commemorations. For example, following Havig's argument, Stephenson asserts that commemorators celebrated TR the naturalist at Theodore Roosevelt Island as well as at the American Museum of Natural History; he mentions these points briefly and casually as if they were unchallenged. He is not completely correct in either case. With Theodore Roosevelt Island, Stephenson, like Havig, appears to consider the island memorial as an epilogue to the RMA's prolonged struggle to instill Roosevelt in the pantheon of American heroes on the National Mall. In the case of the American Museum of Natural History, Stephenson concludes that this memorial is less significant as it was only "one state's memorial to Roosevelt the naturalist."³³ Despite these criticisms, Stephenson's argument that the RMA employed Roosevelt as a model of Americanism assists in the formation of one of the key arguments of this dissertation. As the following chapters demonstrate, I take the connection between Roosevelt and the promotion of Americanism and pull it through all of the commemorative monuments discussed here.

The final study under review, *Theodore Roosevelt: Many-Sided American* (1992), edited by Natalie A. Naylor, Douglas Brinkley, and John Allen Gable contains papers previously presented at the Conference on "Theodore Roosevelt and the Birth of Modern America," in Hempstead, New York, in April 1990. Edmund Morris's prologue sets the stage by addressing the many aspects of the "polygon" Roosevelt. The collection is divided into sections on the Roosevelt family, TR's early career, the presidency—both domestic and foreign policy—the Bull Moose post-presidential years,

³³ Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 208.

and “The Image and Memory” of TR. Additionally, the epilogue contains two useful contributions by Gable: a detailed historiography of Theodore Roosevelt and a selected annotated bibliography.

Under the heading “TR: The Image and Memory,” the contributors present several aspects of Roosevelt’s image after his death, but one chapter requires closer inspection as it nearly crosses paths with my own study of Roosevelt’s memory.³⁴

Kathleen M. Dalton, in “The Bully Prophet: Theodore Roosevelt and American Memory,” examines TR’s memory as “a classic case study in the interpretation of religion and politics throughout U.S. history.” Most significantly, Dalton asserts that, “Roosevelt would serve as a means for Americans to use their past to instruct their present,” and, similar to my statement in this introduction, states that “the symbolic TR has been molded to the needs of different historical eras.”³⁵ Given the flexibility of TR’s image throughout the twentieth century, Dalton questions whether continuities in Roosevelt’s image exist; her conclusion differs greatly from mine. Dalton proclaims that Roosevelt “has been remembered as an inspirational figure, to be honored in markedly sacred language,” and that the use of such language uniquely identifies commemorations of TR. As evidence, she presents certain terms: moral, righteous, reconsecration,

³⁴ Natalie A. Naylor, Douglas Brinkley, and John Allen Gable, eds., *Theodore Roosevelt: Many-Sided American* (Interlaken, NY: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1992), 547.

³⁵ Kathleen M. Dalton, “The Bully Prophet: Theodore Roosevelt and American Memory,” in *Theodore Roosevelt: Many-Sided American*, eds. Natalie A. Naylor, Douglas Brinkley, and John Allen Gable (Interlaken, NY: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1992), 568, 559, 561.

apotheosis, shrine, faith (in democracy), Mecca, pilgrim, virtues, and “bully pulpit.”³⁶

Dalton, however, takes these words too literally; although they may have sacred definitions when used in particular contexts, these terms are commonly used in an effort to emphasize the drama or gravity of the discourse. Rather than address Dalton’s points one-by-one, I offer a few of her assertions as examples.

Dalton draws upon the same quote from naturalist John Burroughs as I do in the introductory paragraph of this dissertation: “In his presence one felt that the Day of Judgment might come at any moment.” According to Dalton, “By summoning images of the prophets, the day of judgment, spiritual rebirth, and immortality, Roosevelt’s followers showed that their conception of him was built upon a religious foundation.”³⁷ Conversely, as the full quote demonstrates, Burroughs—a man with a gift for rhetorical exuberance—captured in dramatic and profound language the energy and charisma of Roosevelt’s boisterous personality.

In another statement, Dalton asserts that “As president he stepped outside the political arena often—preaching a full baby carriage, duty to country, the remasculinization of American culture, both cultural and political nationalism, and a host of other causes.”³⁸ According to historian Gail Bederman, Roosevelt warned about the dangers of the declining birthrate among certain groups in American society, but race, gender, and civilization motivated him more than any religious aspect. “Throughout the

³⁶ Dalton, “The Bully Prophet,” 562, 570. Dalton argues that “As later generations searched for ways to memorialize TR, they repeatedly turned toward religious expressions.”

³⁷ Dalton, “The Bully Prophet,” 563.

³⁸ Dalton, “The Bully Prophet,” 571.

1890s,” Bederman states, Roosevelt, “in his published writings on the imperialistic duty of the manly race and in his private correspondence, TR raised the specter of race suicide.” The issue of race suicide, Bederman argues, was “one of many ways middle-class men addressed their fears about overcivilized effeminacy and racial decadence.”³⁹

As a final example, Dalton proclaims that “Religious uses of TR are primarily found in formal memorializations and in expressions in the realm of political culture.” Dalton concedes, however, that “Since America’s memory of TR is much larger than that, in many other areas of culture the TR image stands for other things.”⁴⁰ Although Dalton stretches to identify a religious component as an element of continuity in Roosevelt’s image and memory in the twentieth century, she correctly concludes that, despite Roosevelt’s remarkable flexibility as a commemorative subject, themes reoccur in his image and memory. As my dissertation demonstrates, the most prominent memorials dedicated to Theodore Roosevelt in the United States contain core elements of TR’s image, but not necessarily those of a religious connotation.

The main themes of this dissertation align with the framework and methodologies of other studies of the memory and commemoration of great men. First, commemorators chose the image they wished to commemorate from the multitude of TR incarnations available to them. Their choice reflected their proposed message, based on their present concerns and needs as part of their historical context. Second, the geographic location of the monument, including its situation within the United States as

³⁹ Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 201.

⁴⁰ Dalton, “The Bully Prophet,” 571.

well as its siting in relation to established or proposed aspects of the built and natural environments, also affected commemorators' choices. Finally, the selection addressed their intended audience, whether it included the people of the community, state, or nation; each example, however, as a result of its message, location, or audience, contains underlying national implications.

As illustrated in the opening paragraphs, Americans viewed Theodore Roosevelt, during his lifetime and after, as a multifaceted individual. Rather than tracing the complex interplay of Roosevelt's many images step by step throughout the twentieth century, this dissertation looks at the physical monuments and memorials that TR's commemorators installed on the civic landscape at various moments in order to extract a broader understanding of their intentions.⁴¹ Through this process, I determine why commemorators chose a particular representation of Roosevelt and how the image

⁴¹ Schwartz, *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory*, 12, 298; Schwartz "Iconography and Collective Memory," 317. Schwartz states that commemorators "accentuated aspects of Lincoln's life no other previous or subsequent era could see as vividly," rather than "constructing" or "reconstructing" Lincoln's image. Generally I agree with Schwartz's assessment that the commemorators selected rather than constructed images of their subjects, although it appears to be a difference in semantics: if commemorators pick and choose aspects of the subject through which to highlight their message, are they not, through this process, essentially constructing or reconstructing a new or alternate view of their subject? In "Iconography and Collective Memory," Schwartz notes that there are limits to what images commemorators can choose: "Commemorative agents do possess autonomy as to how they represent the past, but there are definite limits on the kinds of memories they can convincingly propagate. However imaginative they may be, these agents must confine their portrayals within what Schudson calls 'the available past.' They cannot conceive of Lincoln in a way totally unfamiliar and expect their ideas to be widely understood, let alone accepted," 317. On the issue of representing ideals and values, Schwartz asserts that, "So far as commemoration selects and lifts out of Lincoln's biographical record the episodes embodying fundamental values, Americans commemorating an event in Lincoln's life connect themselves to it, identify with it, and exercise their sense of who they are collectively in terms of it," 12.

aligned with their proposed message, their intended audience, and physical and situational locations.⁴²

Monuments and memorials placed in prominent locations, such as courthouse grounds, state capitol grounds, or the National Mall in Washington, D.C., suggest a consensus on the part of those included in that civic body. In a sense, these prominent locations represent pseudo-sacred spaces on which a community, state, or nation declares its values. Through the commemoration of Theodore Roosevelt, I address the questions concerning a monument's location, including how it influenced the representation of TR in these spaces and how location (combined with representation) affected the commemorators' messages.⁴³ This approach conforms to Bodnar's classification of official commemoration on three levels: the commemorators in this study were generally of a particular classification (white, Protestant, middle- and upper-class; businessmen, professionals, and government officials); they promoted loyalty to the state and its leaders; and they employed essentially conservative artistic elements in their commemorations. Additionally, these locations serve as sites of memory.

⁴² This study narrows the focus to particular moments within the historical narrative. It does not attempt to provide a comprehensive account of the continuities and vicissitudes of TR's image across a variety of media from his birth until the beginning of the twenty-first century. In some regards, scholars have already begun to piece together a continuous narrative. See, for example, Collin, "The Image of Theodore Roosevelt in American History and Thought, 1885-1965"; Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes"; and Naylor, Brinkley, and Gable, eds., *Theodore Roosevelt: Many-Sided American*. Additionally, there are interesting comparisons between the commemorations of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln and those dedicated to Theodore Roosevelt; commemorators also made frequent references to both Washington and Lincoln during the contemplations of Roosevelt's memory. Some of this discussion appears throughout the following chapters; however, a full examination of the comparative commemorations of Washington, Lincoln, and Roosevelt is beyond the scope of this dissertation. For some comparison of Roosevelt's memory and commemoration with that of Washington, Lincoln, and Thomas Jefferson, see Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes."

⁴³ Loewen, *Lies Across America*, 12, 24.

Commemorators intended these monuments and memorials to be places of pilgrimage, where visitors could gain inspiration and enlightenment through the image of Roosevelt and the ideals that he embodied. Although they may not be sites of history, they are sites of memory as Nora defined.⁴⁴

Roosevelt's commemorators did not passively reproduce his image, as monuments do more than merely reflect society's views; commemorators, through their selection, sought to influence and educate their contemporaries and future generations of Americans. TR's image in these monuments and memorials changes over time because changing historical circumstances affect what the present society needs from the past. The commemorators' messages, told through their chosen images of Roosevelt on the selected sites, vary as commemorators employed Roosevelt to voice their views to contemporaries and to posterity. I identify how the historical context affected the commemorators' proposed messages and intended audience, along with the venue from which they made their appeals.

But as Barry Schwartz demonstrates with the image of Lincoln, an examination of commemorative images of Theodore Roosevelt reveals some continuity within the representations—those residual core elements that remained constant despite changing peripheral ones. Therefore, in addition to the three main points stated above, there are two recurring core themes associated with Roosevelt's image in these memorials. As the

⁴⁴ Bodnar, *Remaking America*, 13, 14, 41, 136, 165; Schwartz, "Social Change and Collective Memory," 222-223; Thomas, *The Lincoln Memorial in American Life*, xxiii-xxiv.

Chicago Daily Tribune identified at the time of his death, Roosevelt exuded both “the spirit of vigorous, courageous manhood and passionate love of country.”

Many scholars reporting on gender and masculinity in the United States note the transformation of American masculinity at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. Significantly, this period of change overlaps Theodore Roosevelt’s life and career. In many ways, as these scholars demonstrate, Roosevelt influenced, and was influenced by, dramatic social and cultural changes, particularly aspects of American masculinity. Given Roosevelt’s contributions to this discourse, several scholars employ Roosevelt as an example through which to illustrate the shifting conceptions of manhood and masculinity in this era. It is this conception of masculinity that commemorators invoke through Roosevelt’s image during moments of crisis in the twentieth century.⁴⁵

Sociologist Michael Kimmel traces the turn-of-the-century transformation of masculinity back to the Industrial Revolution, which, in the United States, coincided with the American Revolution. Kimmel argues that prior to the development of the market economy American manhood had been a stable balance of the two archetypes of

⁴⁵ In setting up the definition of masculinity, manliness, and manhood, this dissertation is informed by those set forth by gender history scholars. See, for example, Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 4, 89. As Kimmel notes, “At the turn of the century, *manhood* was replaced gradually by the term *masculinity*, which referred to a set of behavioral traits and attitudes that were contrasted now with a new opposite, *femininity*. See also, Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 18. Bederman states that “Until about 1890, literate Victorians rarely referred to individual men as ‘masculine.’ Instead, admirable men were called ‘manly.’ After 1890, however, the words ‘masculine’ and ‘masculinity’ began to be used far more frequently—precisely because they could convey the new attributes of powerful manhood which middle-class men were working to synthesize.” Bederman explains that “manliness” meant “Victorian ideals of manhood,” which included such traits as “sexual self-restraint, a powerful will, [and] a strong character.” Throughout the early decades of the twentieth century, “masculinity” displayed a mix of “masculine ideals,” such as “aggressiveness, physical force, and male sexuality.”

masculinity. After the economic, political, and social upheaval, however, American manhood became unstable—no longer rooted in landownership (the genteel patriarch) or workplace autonomy (the heroic artisan)—and required a near-constant effort to demonstrate or to “prove” one’s manhood.⁴⁶ The resulting fragility of masculinity forced men to “salvage, revitalize, and resurrect it,” especially when confronted with moments of crisis.⁴⁷

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Kimmel asserts, represents one of those periods of crisis as waves of immigrants arrived on American shores, thousands of southern African Americans moved north, and women began to “invade” men’s public spaces of work and politics.⁴⁸ Historian Kristin Hoganson describes the turn-of-the-century crisis to include the dwindling supply of “manly” Civil War veterans who forged their manhood in the crucible of war and brought a strong sense of civic virtue to American politics. Without the presence of these soldier-heroes, American politics would be marred by “divisiveness, corruption, and weakness.” Women’s increasing involvement in electoral politics, Hoganson argues, also caused alarm as “bicycle-riding,

⁴⁶ Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 6-7. Kimmel explains that the American manhood demonstrated by the genteel patriarch was rooted in landownership, whereas that of the heroic artisan built around “the self-possession of the independent artisan, shopkeeper, or farmer.” The genteel patriarch, Kimmel argues, “represents a dignified aristocratic manhood, committed to the British upper-class code of honor and to well-rounded character”; he embodied “love, kindness, duty, and compassion, exhibited through philanthropic work, church activities, and deep involvement with his family,” 13. Kimmel describes the heroic artisan as “independent, virtuous, and honest.” “On the family farm or in his urban crafts shop, he was an honest toiler, unafraid of hard work, proud of his craftsmanship and self-reliance,” 13.

⁴⁷ Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 5, 7. Kimmel states that “American men have been afraid that others will see us as less than manly, as weak, timid, frightened. And men have been afraid of not measuring up to some vaguely defined notions of what it means to be a man, afraid of failure.” I refer to this concept as “the fragility of masculinity.”

⁴⁸ Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 67, 74, 89-90.

bloomer-wearing, college-educated, job-holding New Women refused to serve as foils to traditional masculinity” by maintaining the established separation of spheres in Victorian society.⁴⁹ During the turn-of-the-century, historian Gail Bederman contends, American men (especially middle- and upper-class men) were “engaging in the process of remaking manhood,” and employed a variety of strategies to do so, including adopting elements of the “rough working-class masculinity.”⁵⁰ Assimilating alternative constructions of manliness, therefore, helped middle-class American men adapt to changing circumstances. A more systematized examination of these response strategies reveals the roles Theodore Roosevelt played in the metamorphosis of masculinity and the implications for future generations of Americans.

Michael Kimmel describes three general categories of responses to crises in masculinity: self-control, exclusion, and escape. Theodore Roosevelt actively participated in all three at various points in his life, and through his message and

⁴⁹ Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 3, 10, 12, 200. As Hoganson summarizes the Victorian concept of separate spheres, “Men were thought to be well-suited for ‘public’ endeavors, chief among them politics, and women for the ‘private’ realm of family and home.” Additionally, Hoganson notes that “Because political power was associated with manhood, political leaders faced considerable pressure to appear manly in order to maintain their political legitimacy,” 3. See also, Arnaldo Testi, “The Gender of Reform Politics: Theodore Roosevelt and the Culture of Masculinity,” *Journal of American History* 81, no. 4 (Mar., 1995): 1509-1533, 1522. As Testi states, “The New Woman of the new century seemed to constitute a concrete threat to these men’s power and security, in family relations as in public life and, more intimately, in the sphere of sexuality.” For additional information, see Gerald Franklin Roberts, “The Strenuous Life: The Cult of Manliness in the Era of Theodore Roosevelt” (PhD diss., Michigan State University, 1970), 18, 63. Roberts cites the complexities of urban-industrialized civilization, the disappearance of the frontier, and the rising power and influence of women as the causes for the masculinity crisis at the close of the nineteenth century.

⁵⁰ Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 6, 7, 11, 15, 17-18. Bederman states that her study “is based upon the premise that gender—whether manhood or womanhood—is a *historical, ideological process*,” 7. Emphasis in the original. Although Bederman notes that middle-class men in this era were “unusually obsessed with manhood,” she “hesitates to call this obsession a ‘crisis.’” No matter the label, Bederman states that “by 1890 a number of social, economic, and cultural changes were converging to make the ongoing gender process especially active for the American middle-class.”

example, others found new avenues through which to demonstrate their masculinity. The first strategy, self-control, Kimmel explains, involves men's attempts to gain control over their bodies and their lives.⁵¹ A staple topic within biographies of Theodore Roosevelt, scholars recite his experiences as a frail child plagued by asthma and other ailments.⁵² Even though his efforts to build up his body through vigorous exercise, including boxing, swimming, rowing, and hiking dramatically improved his health, TR discovered that he had not avoided the crisis of masculinity. According to Bederman, although Roosevelt considered himself a "manly man," it became painfully obvious during his first term in the New York state assembly that, because of his "dandy" attire and mannerisms, "others considered him effeminate."⁵³ Roosevelt, it appeared, needed another avenue through which to remake his image.

Kimmel's second category of responses, exclusion, involves both excluding others from the definition of masculinity as well as projecting fears of emasculation onto others. As Kimmel explains, "American manhood had earlier been grounded upon the exclusion of blacks and women, the nonnative-born (immigrants), and the genuinely

⁵¹ Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 6, 21. In the mid-nineteenth century, Kimmel states that "cultural observers venerated a 'romantic consumptiveness' as the preferred male body type—composed of a thin physique, pale complexion, and languid air." Muscular bodies, Kimmel asserts, "were snubbed as artisanal, a sign of a laborer."

⁵² Testi, "The Gender of Reform Politics," 1515. See, for example, Edmund Morris, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt* (New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1979); David McCullough, *Mornings on Horseback* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981); and H. W. Brands, *TR: The Last Romantic* (New York: Basic Books, 1997). See also, Monica Rico, *Nature's Noblemen: Transatlantic Masculinities and the Nineteenth-Century American West* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 168-170. Rico reports that Roosevelt's parents, in consultation with doctors, determined that young Theodore suffered from depleted "nerve energy" due to his sheltered life. Doctors also recommended fresh air, travel, and exercise as ways to build up his "vital force."

⁵³ Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 170.

native-born (Indians), each on the premise that they weren't 'real' Americans and couldn't, by definition, be real men."⁵⁴ Occasionally exclusion came in the form of fraternal orders and societies, such as those popular at the turn of the century. Exclusive membership in such organizations not only literally excluded undesirables, but also defined the lodge or hall as an exclusively masculine space, one free from the perceived over-feminization of the Victorian home. Another organization, however, more fully illustrates the exclusion and projection onto others commonly found in this era: the Ku Klux Klan. As Kimmel asserts, "a resurgent Ku Klux Klan deliberately linked fraternal brotherhood to a violent vision of American manhood dedicated to expunging 'aliens'.... Klan rhetoric was soaked with masculine imagery."⁵⁵

Bederman also connects race and gender through the "discourse of civilization."⁵⁶ Using the 1893 Chicago World's Fair as an example of the ways in which "Americans deployed discourses of civilization and race to construct gender. Ostensibly, the exposition used civilization to assert white male hegemony." Furthermore, Bederman argues, "The White City, with its vision of future perfection and the advanced racial power of manly commerce and technology, constructed civilization

⁵⁴ Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 6, 48, 67-68.

⁵⁵ Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 125, 127. Kimmel's placement of the rebirth of the Klan is slightly off; the Klan reinstated itself as an organization in 1915. For more on the gendered rhetoric and activities of the Second Ku Klux Klan, see Kathleen M. Blee, *Women of the Klan: Racism and Gender in the 1920s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991) and Nancy MacLean, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry: The Making of the Second Ku Klux Klan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

⁵⁶ Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 20, 24-25. Bederman argues that "In a variety of ways, Americans who were trying to reformulate gender explained their ideas about manhood by drawing connections between male power and white supremacy," 20.

as an ideal of white male power.”⁵⁷ Returning to the example of Theodore Roosevelt, Hoganson describes how TR and other “jingo” articulated the connections between gender, race, and civilization through the debates surrounding the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars; discussion of these conflicts also leads through the third and final category of responses: escape, either to the mythical frontier with its regenerative power, or through fantasy harnessed in escapist literature.

The theme of escape, Kimmel explains, had many early proponents, including Henry David Thoreau who argued that Americans needed the “tonic of the wilderness,” as an antidote to the confusion and materialism of America’s increasingly industrialized and urbanized landscape. Additionally, as Bederman observes, “Interest in camping, hunting, and fishing—seen as virile survival skills of primitive man—flourished as never before.”⁵⁸ But a more dramatic example of escape than the occasional camping or

⁵⁷ Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 40, 42. I disagree that the architecture of the White City represents a “vision of future perfection” as neoclassicism, by definition, harkens back to an earlier era. I do agree with her conclusion, however, that the White City illustrates—and the fair’s emphasis on commerce and technology supports—a particular vision of civilization based upon the “ideal of white male power.” This topic is revisited in Chapter V. Bederman sums up her argument that “When nineteenth-century Americans began to synthesize new formulations of gender, hegemonic discourses of civilization explained concisely the precise relation between the male body, male identity, and male authority.” See also, Rico, *Nature’s Noblemen*, 11; Robert Connell, *Masculinities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995). Rico describes the framework of hegemonic masculinity put forth by Robert Connell in which the dominant masculinity had the ability to deny “true masculinity to others, such as Native American men,” as well as the Africans that big game hunters and other imperialists encountered on safari. The relative masculinity of Native American and African men is discussed more fully in Chapter V.

⁵⁸ Thoreau quoted in Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 45-46, see also 100. Thoreau believed that men needed liberation, Kimmel reports. Francis Parkman was another early advocate for escape to the wilderness. Kimmel states that “The rugged outdoors was consistently trumpeted as restorative of the flagging manhood of modern civilized men,” 100. See also, Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 23; Roberts, “The Strenuous Life,” 107-109, 111. Roberts also notes that the American view of the wilderness was changing during this period as well. Wilderness had previously been viewed as virgin land to be conquered and assimilated; now, the uncultivated wilderness was a place to be preserved and protected, a place for recreation and relaxation. For more on Americans’ changing understanding of the land, see

fishing trip was the removal or escape to the frontier. Kimmel argues that these individuals “ran away to the frontier, to the West to start over, to make their fortunes and thus to remake themselves, to escape the civilizing constraints of domestic life represented by the Victorian woman.”⁵⁹ For Theodore Roosevelt, the frontier, the last of the wild spaces in the American West, served as the refuge from his grief and as an escape from the effeminate dandy ridiculed in the New York assembly. American Studies scholar Richard Slotkin’s trilogy examines the historical development of the myth of the frontier, including the idea of regeneration through violence as a structuring metaphor of the American experience.⁶⁰ Additionally, the metaphor of regeneration influences Americans’ use of the West in an effort to call attention to excessive, corrupt, and effeminate elements of American society, culture, and politics at particular moments in the twentieth century. Through his description of Americans’ regeneration through violence, Slotkin also illustrates the importance of the wilderness/civilization dichotomy. As easterners traveled westward, they shed the values and ideals of an overcivilized

Thomas R. Wellock, *Preserving the Nation: The Conservation and Environmental Movements, 1870-2000* (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 2007).

⁵⁹ Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 32, 65-66. According to Kimmel, “The late nineteenth century was full of commentary on how the frontier made men. If the workplace could not inspire the ‘manly independence of the earlier Heroic Artisan, escape to the primitive conditions of existence on the frontier might do the trick.” The West was seen as a predominantly male space. See, for example, Testi, “The Gender of Reform Politics,” 1518; Roberts, “The Strenuous Life,” 144.

⁶⁰ Richard Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment: The Myth of the Frontier in the Age of Industrialization, 1800-1890* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1994); Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1973), 5; Richard Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998). Slotkin states that “The first colonists saw in America an opportunity to regenerate their fortunes, their spirits, and the power of their church and nation; but the means to that regeneration ultimately became the means of violence, and the myth of regeneration through violence became the structuring metaphor of the American experience.”

society and returned to the primitive and uncorrupted ideals of the frontier. Like Daniel Boone, Davy Crockett, and Andrew Jackson before him, Roosevelt shaped his image through his association with western lands and people.⁶¹

Theodore Roosevelt became a vocal advocate for the hardy life on the plains. Hunting in the West was another way in which Roosevelt developed strong ties with the masculine essence he believed the West portrayed. Although TR had been hunting since he was an adolescent, the West opened up exciting new opportunities. Big game hunting in particular—the combination of large and potentially dangerous animals along with their rugged and forbidding habitats—gave hunters access to a primitivism that served as a regenerative agent for masculinity.⁶²

The perceived closing of the West meant that new frontiers for escape must be found. Through literature, hunting, and Roosevelt's advocacy of "the strenuous life,"

⁶¹ Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation*, 14, 83. On February 14, 1884, Roosevelt's wife and mother died in the same house hours apart. Testi, "The Gender of Reform Politics," 1517; Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 175; Rico, *Nature's Noblemen*, 9, 166; Roberts, "The Strenuous Life," 138, 142; Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 133. As Rico notes, "Roosevelt's cowboy imagery has often obscured the way in which his image as a rugged American man of the West satisfied his need to resolve the anxieties that beset his patrician New York upbringing," 9. See also, G. Edward White, *The Eastern Establishment and the Western Experience: The West of Frederic Remington, Theodore Roosevelt, and Owen Wister* (1968; repr., Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989), 91, 93. The image of Roosevelt as a cowboy of the West will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter III.

⁶² Rico, *Nature's Noblemen*, 173, 178-179. Rico explains that "Sport hunting combined two aspects of national culture. On the one hand it bestowed upon its adherents the rugged glamor of manly backwoodsmen like Daniel Boone. On the other it looked toward Great Britain, the source of refinement and gentility," along with privileges that the hunter's aristocratic background afforded him in the sport. The American West offered what no other location could—the bison—although their numbers were dwindling rapidly by the time TR went west in the 1880s. As Rico states, "Vast bison herds exemplified the abundance of the American continent in the national mythology, and hunting bison was the ultimate way of making oneself into an authentic westerner." For those who could not (or chose not) to escape to the West, there was the virtual escape through literature. For further discussion on the importance of literature as a mode of escape, see Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 112; Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 174.

Americans found new challenges through which to test and prove their manhood.⁶³ Having remade his masculinity on the frontier, Roosevelt turned to the possibility of war to regenerate the men of his class, and through them, the entire nation.⁶⁴ In an 1899 speech, Theodore Roosevelt advocated for the American imperialistic cause in the debate over the acquisition of the Philippines following the Spanish-American War. But as TR's contemporaries inferred and later scholars observe, "the strenuous life" contained elements of the era's masculinity crisis.⁶⁵ Roosevelt believed, Hoganson argues, that the maintenance of an overseas empire would build American character, which his friend Henry Cabot Lodge proclaimed had happened with Englishmen.

⁶³ Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 82, 112. Kimmel notes that "other men sought to revive manhood in the real jungle. If the frontier was closed, some reasoned, why not extend its boundaries beyond the borders of the continental United States and create new frontiers where men could test and prove their manhood?" According to Kimmel, authors like Jack London and Edgar Rice Burroughs transported the frontier to a variety of places, including the Alaskan Klondike and the African jungle. Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation*, 51, 53, 56. As Slotkin states, "The problem for a post-frontier America is how to preserve and develop those leadership virtues that were fostered by hunting and Indian-fighting in a world without wilderness or savages," 53. See also, Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 23.

⁶⁴ Testi, "The Gender of Reform Politics," 1523; Roberts, "The Strenuous Life," 207-208. See also, Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood*, 11, 39; Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 190; Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 134. Hoganson argues that, "Fearing for the future of the nation, jingoists regarded war as an opportunity to shore up the manly character of American politics." According to Gerald Roberts, "The strenuous life characterized both Roosevelt and America at the turn of the century. Both displayed an adolescent nervousness and anxiety with an impulse for action that revealed a desperate need to prove themselves—Roosevelt as a man, and America as a nation," 207-208. Bederman supports this idea, explaining that, "The 1898 outbreak of the Spanish-American war—for which he had agitated long and hard—let Roosevelt remake himself into colonel Roosevelt, the fearless Rough Rider," 190. Kimmel concurs: "The formation of the Rough Riders catapulted TR into the hallowed halls of American myth even during his lifetime," 134. The role of the cowboy-Rough Rider image in commemoration of Roosevelt is the topic of Chapter III.

⁶⁵ Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 134; Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood*, 139, 143, 145. Hoganson states that "In the period after the Spanish-American War, Roosevelt, in his capacities as candidate, governor, vice president, and president, often spoke on behalf of imperial policies and what he called the strenuous life." Hoganson argues Roosevelt worried that the short Spanish-American War "had not permanently rectified the softness wrought by industrialization," therefore, "Roosevelt turned to empire as a more lasting remedy," 139. See also, Roberts, "The Strenuous Life," 210; Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 184, 186, 187.

Spokesmen for British imperialism, Hoganson reports, “heralded manhood as one of the greatest benefits accruing to Britain from empire.”⁶⁶

European conceptions of empire’s benefits, combined with one of TR’s favorite sports, brought out another aspect of his strenuous life: big game hunting in Africa. Monica Rico asserts that British men often preferred to test their masculinity and hunting skills in places like the American West, “where British upper-class men could naturalize the social hierarchy that seemed so fragile at home.” This “fantasy of self-sufficiency” appealed to those who wished to experience the thrill and challenge of hunting “without the gamekeepers, servants, bearers, and other usual support staff that accompanied British hunters at home or in India.”⁶⁷ Rico explains that “hunters in India and Africa were constrained by the complex cultural requirements of enacting imperial mastery.” Conversely, Americans hunting in India and Africa took on those imperial trappings, because of their political and social connections with members of the British aristocracy along with their shared Anglo-Saxon heritage.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood*, 10, 139, 145, 147.

⁶⁷ Rico, *Nature’s Noblemen*, 7, 8.

⁶⁸ Rico, *Nature’s Noblemen*, 8, 18, 166, 198-199. According to Rico, “Roosevelt identified this colonial space [Kenya] as a ‘white man’s country,’ likening it to the American West. He was not merely pointing out some similarities in the landscape. Kenya was a place where savagery met civilization, a frontier and thus a proving ground for white men.” Finally, Rico states that “the continual presence of dangerous wild animals marked Africa as a wild place that would never attain civilization without the intervention of whites. The savagery of the indigenous inhabitants and that of the animals mirrored one another.” See also, Annie E. Coombes, *Reinventing Africa: Museums, Material Culture and Popular Imagination in Late Victorian and Edwardian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 2-3; Ruth Mayer, *Artificial Africas: Colonial Images in the Times of Globalization* (Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England, 2002), 1, 5, 50, 76; Donna Haraway, “Teddy Bear Patriarchy: Taxidermy in the Garden of Eden, New York City, 1908-1936,” in *The Haraway Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 192, footnote 4; Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 44; Testi, “The Gender of Reform Politics,” 1528. Theodore Roosevelt, as these scholars demonstrate, served as an example of masculinity to his contemporaries by embodying contradictory models of manhood; he also illustrated the balance between the two. As

As many scholars note, TR provides a colorful example of the significant changes for American masculinity during his lifetime and as a lens through which to discover motives, fears, and actions of men of his era, class, and race. This dissertation transfers these concepts to monumental representations of TR to subsequent generations. In some of the monuments, the emphasis on TR's masculine example is overt; in others, it is understated. Despite these variations, in each of the commemorations, patrons and artists clearly intended to hold up Theodore Roosevelt as an example of American masculinity. As their words and images indicate, they highlighted many of the same characteristics that TR contemporaries (and later scholars) used to describe Roosevelt as the embodiment of American masculinity in the early twentieth century and a conception of manhood they believed continued to be relevant through the century.

But Roosevelt not only served as an example of American masculinity, he also embodied many Americans' conception of nationalism, which they frequently explained through the language of "Americanism." Historian George Mosse provides a connection between masculinity and nationalism; Mosse states, "The ideal of masculinity was invoked on all sides as a symbol of personal and national regeneration, but also as basic to the self-definition of modern society." Mosse argues that "the male body continued to perform this function until it became in the twentieth century one of the most powerful

Bederman states, "one source of his vibrant virility was Roosevelt's talent for embodying two contradictory models of manhood simultaneously—civilized manliness and primitive masculinity." Testi remarks that part of this embodiment was a conscious decision on Roosevelt's part: "In his autobiography, as in his articles written from the 1880s on, Roosevelt clearly tried to give credibility to the image of the upper-class politician capable of happily combining the rough manliness of party democracy with the lofty intellectual ideas of the reformers."

means of national ... self-representation.”⁶⁹

Michael Geisler, in the introduction to *National Symbols, Fractured Identities: Contesting the National Narrative* (2005), explains that national symbols take on important roles during the process of nation-building and help to maintain nationalistic feelings. National symbols are also particularly significant in “fusing a nation to a state.” Geisler asserts that “national symbols generate the feeling of ‘large-scale solidarity’ which keeps us from opting out of the nation either physically or ideologically.”⁷⁰ Therefore, national symbols express significant didactic qualities. With these roles in mind, Geisler argues that national symbols “typically are not ‘folk’ symbols,” but rather, as John Bodnar explains, they are “official” commemorations designed to promote and maintain loyalty to the nation and its leaders; they are “invented traditions” in Eric Hobsbawm’s terminology. In this regard, Geisler includes major national monuments in the category of important national symbols.⁷¹

For the United States, national symbols helped to create a nation out of a state, which Michael Kammen argues “preceded a clearly articulated sense of history and

⁶⁹ Mosse, *The Image of Man*, 3, 27, 53, 192. Mosse asserts that, “during the French Revolution, as part of its self-representation, the structure of the male body itself became a symbol of a healthy nation and society.” Mosse argues that, “it was always nationalism that exalted the male stereotype as one of its means of self-representation.” According to Mosse, “Modern masculinity and modern national consciousness had grown up at the identical time, and while the image of the warrior was needed, the nation itself looked beyond was to an ideal type, a living symbol, that like other national symbols might breathe life into an abstract concept.”

⁷⁰ Geisler, *National Symbols, Fractured Identities*, xvi. National symbols work to make denizens forget the “accident of birth” which brought them into the nation. National symbols—taught to every generation of schoolchildren—assure loyalty to the state and act as “historical bookmarks” that continually remind us of the nation’s traditions and ideals.

⁷¹ Geisler, *National Symbols, Fractured Identities*, xxi, xxiii.

national identity by nearly two generations.” Hobsbawm describes the role of “invented traditions” and national symbols in the United States around this issue: “Americanism is an act of choice”; unpatriotic Americans could be labeled “un-American” in a way that did not apply to unpatriotic Englishmen or Frenchmen.⁷²

In the introduction to a collection of essays on Americanism, Michael Kazin and Joseph A. McCartin state that “Americanism” has two meanings: “It signifies what is distinctive about the United States ... *and* loyalty to that nation, rooted in a defense of its political ideals.” Americanism, therefore, is an ideology which is the basis for American nationalism; it has been rooted less in a shared culture than in shared political ideals, including self-government, equal opportunity, freedom of speech and association, along with a belief in progress. But as Kazin and McCartin explain, Americanism is not a static concept, it is malleable and flexes with changing circumstances.⁷³

Reviewing the vision of Americanism over the timeframe of this dissertation, the 1920s through the 1960s, reveals periods in which components of American society—because of internal or external crises or pressures—promoted Americanism to the broader public through the image of Theodore Roosevelt. These commemorators, either subtly or overtly, defined Americanism through Roosevelt’s image; they hoped to instruct and encourage their contemporaries and future generations of Americans to

⁷² Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory*, 8; Eric Hobsbawm, “Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914,” in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (1983; repr., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 280. Some historians, however, argue that American colonists developed a sense of “Americanness” prior to the American Revolution.

⁷³ Michael Kazin and Joseph A. McCartin, eds., *Americanism: New Perspectives on the History of an Ideal* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 1. For example, in the years since the American Revolution, the political ideals have expanded to include full social equality.

conform to these ideals and values, which varied with the context of the discussion. As Stephenson notes in his chapter on Roosevelt, the concept of Americanism is “vague and slippery,” depending heavily on circumstances and context. Therefore, the commemorators’ words and images demonstrate their understanding of the concept, along with elements of Americanism they wished to promote.⁷⁴

Chapter II, “Remembering TR: The Roosevelt Memorial Association and the Failed Monumental Memorial,” outlines the formation and early efforts of the RMA to commemorate Theodore Roosevelt in the years immediately following his death. Building on the earlier work of Havig and Stephenson, this chapter examines how the RMA dominated Roosevelt’s memory in the years after his death. Additionally, this discussion includes Hermann Hagedorn’s central role as secretary and director of the RMA, and reveals how Hagedorn used TR’s image to express his devotion to Americanism in RMA commemorations. As the centerpiece of the RMA’s commemorative activities, John Russell Pope’s design for a monumental memorial, along with its siting on the National Mall, promoted Americanism through TR’s image. Although the RMA tried to maintain this representation through its selection of an alternate site after it failed to secure the Tidal Basin, it resorted to promoting TR as a naturalist on Analoatan Island. The island’s national memorial to Roosevelt is not an epilogue to the RMA’s story, however; it is a new chapter within the nation’s commemorations of TR. The sources for this chapter include the Roosevelt Memorial Association’s annual reports, various newspapers accounts of the RMA’s activities,

⁷⁴ Stephenson, “Celebrating American Heroes,” 173.

along with materials from the Theodore Roosevelt Collection at the C.W. Post Campus of Long Island University in Brookville, New York.

Chapter III, “Commemorating the West: Equestrian Statues in Portland and Minot,” examines Henry Waldo Coe’s memorialization of the American West in the early 1920s through the image of Theodore Roosevelt as a Rough Rider. Located in Portland, Oregon, and Minot, North Dakota, the bronze equestrians by acclaimed artist Alexander Phimister Proctor symbolize an uncomplicated version of a Spanish-American War soldier during a time of anxiety brought about by the urbanization, immigration, and industrialization of the early twentieth century. Through the image of TR as the embodiment of rugged masculinity forged on the Great Plains of the West combined with the example of TR’s brand of Americanism, the patron and the artist promoted a symbol through which to regenerate American masculinity and to unite the disparate segments of American society. This chapter discusses the connection between TR and the West through the patron and artist and demonstrates the utility of the cowboy as an example of rugged masculinity. The sources for this chapter include Henry Waldo Coe’s papers at the University of Oregon in Eugene, along with newspaper accounts, especially those in Portland and Minot.

Chapter IV, “Commemorating Democracy: Gutzon Borglum, Mount Rushmore, and the Apotheosis of Theodore Roosevelt,” outlines the efforts of sculptor Gutzon Borglum and South Dakota promoters to construct a monumental icon to draw visitors to the state. As the only monument in this dissertation with a significant historiographical background, this chapter builds on previous scholars’ narratives. Interestingly, most of

the authors (along with the numerous others who include the story of Mount Rushmore as part of broader themes) fail to adequately connect Borglum's politics to his ambitious efforts on Mount Rushmore. In an article published in 1968, Walker Rumble examines Borglum's work as part of "the American tradition" of democratic politics, "the spirit of a people's Government." According to Rumble, "Borglum recognized that spirit as a combination of the agrarian ideals of 19th-century Populism and those values commonly associated with the Progressive movement."⁷⁵ Borglum used Mount Rushmore as a vehicle to express and promote those ideals. Theodore Roosevelt's presence, therefore, is significant. In outlining Borglum's agrarian views, Rumble connects him to Roosevelt's Progressive Party, the Ku Klux Klan, and the Non-Partisan League (NPL). Similarly, Ronald F. Briley traces Borglum's work with the NPL as an effort to influence the League to remain within the Republican Party as opposed to creating a third party which would divide the Republican votes, ensuring a Democratic win; it would also remove what Borglum believed to be a viable reform element of the Republican Party. In this chapter, I utilize the background and timeline of previous scholars' studies of Borglum and Mount Rushmore and push Rumble's and Briley's arguments to the forefront. The TR that made himself a symbol of Americanism personified Borglum's political philosophy; therefore, Roosevelt's inclusion on Mount Rushmore employs TR as a symbol of American democracy.⁷⁶ In addition to the sizable

⁷⁵ Walker Rumble, "Gutzon Borglum: Mount Rushmore and the American Tradition," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 59, no. 3 (Jul., 1968): 121-127, 121.

⁷⁶ Schwartz, *George Washington*, 193. As Schwartz notes with Washington, some Americans tied democracy to their leaders through veneration. See also, Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes,"

collection of secondary sources, this chapter utilizes Gutzon Borglum's papers housed at the Library of Congress.

Chapter V, "Commemorating Imperialism: TR and the American Museum of Natural History," examines the memorial addition to the museum's Central Park façade in New York City. The addition, including the bronze equestrian statue designed by James Earle Fraser dedicated in 1940, celebrates Roosevelt's adventures as naturalist, hunter, and explorer. The sculptural group depicts Roosevelt in the garb of a hunter accompanied by two pedestrian guides representing America and Africa. Constructed as New York State's memorial to a native son, this image recalls Roosevelt's exploits on safari, his love of nature and the outdoors, his continued association with the American West, as well as his dedication to the advancement of natural history and conservation. Furthermore, this commemorative image reveals Roosevelt's belief in the United States' economic, political, social, and cultural superiority over pre-industrial societies as well as paternalistic attitudes toward American Indians and Africans. The juxtaposition of the guides' semi-nudity with the fully-clothed muscular Roosevelt further illustrates the dominance of the masculine adventurer over not just the natural environment, but the indigenous inhabitants as well. The sources for this chapter include materials from the American Museum of Natural History library and archives in New York City, along with the James Earle Fraser Papers held at Syracuse University.

Chapter VI, "Commemorating Conservation: Theodore Roosevelt Island and the Sanctuary of the Free Spirit," describes the culmination of the Roosevelt Memorial

viii. Stephenson states that Mount Rushmore, like the National Mall in Washington, D.C., was "a symbolic pantheon of American heroes."

Association's struggle to construct a national memorial within the District of Columbia. Located on what was Analostan Island in the Potomac River, the Roosevelt Memorial is near, but not within, the monumental core of the nation. After rejecting the original designs of architect Eric Gugler and Paul Manship, the Association—now called the Theodore Roosevelt Association (TRA)—approved a portrait statue within an extensive plaza on the island. The nation's memorial to Theodore Roosevelt grew out of the centennial of Roosevelt's birth in 1958; the proposed bridge across the island connecting downtown Washington, D.C. to the growing suburbs in Virginia also affected the memorial's development. Although framed to honor Roosevelt the conservationist, many of the memorial's elements maintain the centenary connection to TR's image as a leading proponent of Americanism. Sources for this chapter include Eric Gugler's papers at the Smithsonian Institution's Archives of American Art, the National Park Service records at the National Archives in College Park, Maryland, the Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Commission's reports and records gathered from the National Archives and the Theodore Roosevelt Center, along with Washington, D.C.-area newspapers.

As Roosevelt scholars explain, TR was many things to many Americans. In their efforts to memorialize the man, commemorators revealed their ambitions and fears; they employed Roosevelt as an example of, and an inspiration for, a robust, strenuous Americanism and a rugged assertive masculinity as solutions to the nation's most pressing problems. Roosevelt, the many-sided man of John Burrough's description, proved flexible enough to conform to commemorators' agendas, while retaining the core

elements of his personality and image. The collective commemorations discussed here illustrate how the intended audience, the proposed message, and the geographic location affected representations of Theodore Roosevelt in the twentieth century.

CHAPTER II

REMEMBERING TR: THE ROOSEVELT MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION AND THE FAILED MONUMENTAL MEMORIAL

Within days of Theodore Roosevelt's death, his friends and admirers came together during a meeting of the Republican National Committee under the direction of Chairman Will H. Hays. Although many in the Republican Party had planned to rally behind Roosevelt in 1920 as the country tackled the pressing issues of the day, they found opportunity to employ TR's memory for the party's cause. Chairman Hays opined that "the ideals for which Roosevelt spent his life shall not fail ... The lesson of Roosevelt's patriotism shall not be forgotten."¹ Through a formal resolution, the assembled group established themselves as the Roosevelt Permanent Memorial National Committee with the expressed purpose of commemorating Theodore Roosevelt.² The non-partisan group of eighty men and women—representing every phase of Roosevelt's multifaceted life—selected as chairman, William Boyce Thompson, a mining magnate and philanthropist.³ Thompson's first priorities involved promoting the new

¹ "U.S. Bulwark Lost in Death of Roosevelt," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, January 7, 1919; Hays quoted in "Roosevelt is Dead, But Will Guide the G.O.P.," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, January 10, 1919; Richard Collin, "The Image of Theodore Roosevelt in American History and Thought, 1885-1965" (PhD diss., New York University, 1966), 272.

² Edward J. Reneham, Jr., "A Brief History of the Theodore Roosevelt Association," *Theodore Roosevelt Association Journal* 27, no. 1 (2005): 25-26, 25; "The Theodore Roosevelt Association: An Organizational History," *Theodore Roosevelt Association Journal* 23, no. 3 (1999), 18; *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1919-1921* (New York: Roosevelt Memorial Association, Inc., 1921), 10; "Picks Leaders to Honor Roosevelt," *New York Times*, February 3, 1919.

³ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1919-1921*, 10; *The Theodore Roosevelt Association, A Brief History* (New York: Theodore Roosevelt Association, n.d.), n.p., Theodore Roosevelt Association Collection, Special Collections, B. Davis Schwartz Memorial Library, C.W. Post Campus, Long Island University, Brookville, New York (hereafter cited as TR Collection); "Picks Leaders to Honor Roosevelt," *New York Times*, February 3, 1919.

organization and initiating a memorial fund by calling on Roosevelt's esteemed friends and colleagues to lend their names to the enterprise. In making public its purposes, the Committee stated that "the memorial which the American people ultimately dedicate to Theodore Roosevelt must not be merely a thing of stone and bronze. Like Theodore Roosevelt himself, it must be dynamic ... In some way it must help to build the new and better America."⁴ The commemoration of TR, therefore, must not be a static, lifeless tribute, but rather an outpouring of enthusiasm employing Roosevelt's memory for the betterment of the nation. As the Committee proclaimed, "Roosevelt the man is dead; but Roosevelt the energizing spirit is very much alive. It is the aim of the Memorial Committee, with the aid of Colonel Roosevelt's friends and supporters all over the country, to find some way of putting that spirit to work."⁵ In response, notable Roosevelt contemporaries swelled the ranks of the organization: John Burroughs, General Leonard Wood, Professor Albert Bushnell Hart of Harvard University, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, Henry L. Stimson, William Dean Howells, and Charles Evans Hughes, just to name a few.⁶

In pursuit of its goals, this collection of Roosevelt's friends and admirers founded the Roosevelt Memorial Association (RMA), an organization without precedent in

⁴ "Move to Keep Alive Spirit of Roosevelt," *New York Times*, February 4, 1919; Charles Todd Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes: The Commemoration of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, and Thomas Jefferson, 1832-1943" (Ph.D. diss., Brown University, 1993), 174-175.

⁵ "Move to Keep Alive Spirit of Roosevelt," *New York Times*, February 4, 1919.

⁶ *The Theodore Roosevelt Association, A Brief History*. For a full list of charter members, see "List Committee for Memorial to Roosevelt," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, February 3, 1919.

American history. The RMA's ability to organize nationally and to propagandize relentlessly solidified the group's hegemony over Roosevelt's memory in the first ten years after his death.⁷ The RMA's virtual monopoly on TR commemorations laid the foundation for subsequent interpretations of Theodore Roosevelt. Through its actions, the RMA, led by its indefatigable secretary and director Hermann Hagedorn, ensured that Theodore Roosevelt remained viable and relevant to future generations of Americans. Although the Association ultimately failed to situate a monumental memorial to Theodore Roosevelt on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., it constructed a nearly impenetrable fortress in the form of the Rooseveltian legend. The RMA attempted to apotheosize TR's ostentatious, energetic, and complex personality in the nation's collective consciousness through its manipulation of Roosevelt's memory and the establishment—or attempted establishment—of national sites of memory. Moreover, the RMA itself served as a commemoration of Roosevelt through its active perpetuation of his memory.

The newly formed Committee of Eighty settled into their headquarters at One Madison Avenue in New York City and met for the first time on March 24, 1919, launching what would become a nation-wide program to promote Roosevelt's memory. In an effort to ignite enthusiasm for Theodore Roosevelt, the Committee called for a week of special exercises across the country, culminating on what would have been

⁷ Collin, "The Image of Theodore Roosevelt in American History and Thought, 1885-1965," 261. Collin remarks that "Almost spontaneously there rose up at Roosevelt's death memorial groups pledged to perpetuate his name, which they succeeded in associating with innocent patriotic and moralistic aphorisms, apparently with more success than any other historical pressure group associated with a single person." See also, Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 181-201. Stephenson notes the wide variety of commemorative activities in the first few years after TR's death.

Roosevelt's sixty-first birthday.⁸ The Committee adopted a three-pronged approach to the long-term commemoration, including the construction of a monumental memorial in Washington and a memorial park in Oyster Bay, New York, along with activities "to perpetuate the ideals of Theodore Roosevelt by spreading the knowledge of his character and career."⁹ To achieve these objectives, the Committee reorganized as the Roosevelt Memorial Association and elected William Boyce Thompson as its first president. The newly minted RMA would be a "living memorial, built on the personality of Theodore Roosevelt and making available his wisdom and understanding," in addition to issuing "a spiritual challenge to the leadership of coming generations."¹⁰ The Association quickly authorized branches in every state of the union, setting up a national framework for its proposed national audience. The RMA pressed the American people to observe October 20-27, 1919, as "Roosevelt Week."¹¹ Thompson realized that the Association's

⁸ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1919-1921*, 11; Reneham, "A Brief History of the Theodore Roosevelt Association," 25. See also, "The Theodore Roosevelt Association: An Organizational History," 18; "Adopt Memorials to Col. Roosevelt," *New York Times*, March 25, 1919. The Committee collected the suggestions for memorials made by the public in a slim book published in early 1919, called *Memorials to Roosevelt: A Book of Suggestions* (New York: Roosevelt Permanent Memorial National Committee, 1919). The first chapter grouped together those suggestions that sought to employ Roosevelt's image and memory in the task of promoting Americanization in American society and culture through the establishment of foundations, societies, or schools of patriotism and Americanization. For more information see Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 175-177; Collin, "The Image of Theodore Roosevelt in American History and Thought, 1885-1965," 272-273.

⁹ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1919-1921*, 9-10; Reneham, "A Brief History of the Theodore Roosevelt Association," 25; "Adopt Memorials to Col. Roosevelt," *New York Times*, March 25, 1919.

¹⁰ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1919-1921*, 19; "Form Permanent Body to Honor Roosevelt," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, January 30, 1919.

¹¹ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1919-1921*, 10-11. "The Theodore Roosevelt Association: An Organizational History," 18: "William Boyce Thompson served as president of the Association 1919-1924, presiding over the raising and investment of the memorial fund, and the successful launching of the new organization." See also, "Adopt Memorials to Col. Roosevelt," *New York*

success or failure depended on its ability to effectively disseminate its plans and purposes to the American public.¹² The Association, Thompson declared, must

preserve for all the people of the United States the inspiration that flamed in the heart of Theodore Roosevelt and guided his statesmanship. Unless the movement for the creation of Roosevelt memorials kindles in the souls of his fellow Americans great devotion, more loyalty and deeper faith, it will have accomplished only a small part of what it was intended to do. Not only among the native but also the foreign-born American citizens must this patriotic feeling be fostered.¹³

With its agenda and purposes set, the Association initiated its plan to reignite the spirit of Roosevelt in American hearts.

Beginning with ten regional meetings to coordinate the efforts, the RMA mobilized the state and local branches to drum up support for the exercises. In assisting in the organization of state branches, Illinois's Governor Frank Lowden presided over the first regional meeting and proclaimed that "Never was there a more opportune time for the inauguration of this movement. This proposed memorial will serve to bring back [to] the American people the example of the robust citizen so needed today."¹⁴ The new network proved astonishingly effective as thousands of Americans participated in

Times, March 25, 1919; Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 184. According to Stephenson, the RMA benefited from changing understanding of how groups advertise and raise money.

¹² Roosevelt Memorial Association, *The Importance of Publicity to the Campaign* (New York: RMA, n.d. [1919]), n.p., copy in Box 86, Folder: Roosevelt Memorial Association, Gutzon Borglum Papers 1895-1960, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (hereafter cited as Borglum Papers).

¹³ Roosevelt Memorial Association, *The Importance of Publicity to the Campaign*.

¹⁴ "West Asks T. R. Memorial in Aid of Americanism," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 15, 1919. There appears to be some effort to include African Americans in the memorial organization's activities, see for example, "Campaign on Foot to Erect Memorials to Col. Roosevelt," *Philadelphia Tribune*, August 16, 1919; "Brilliant Young Orator Speaks at Roosevelt Memorial: Being the Only Colored Speaker on the Occasion at the Chicago Meeting," *Philadelphia Tribune*, January 25, 1919; "Race Interested in Roosevelt Monument," *Philadelphia Tribune*, September 27, 1919. The *Philadelphia Tribune* was an African American newspaper.

organizational meetings across the country. The significance and necessity of commemorating Theodore Roosevelt became more acute as the summer faded into fall and Americans anxiously watched the growing tide of labor crises and radical terrorism.

The increased incidents of labor radicalism in 1919 led many to fear that the Bolshevik Revolution would soon be replicated on American soil. In the spring of that year, Seattle Mayor Ole Hanson requested federal troops in response to the Seattle Central Labor Council's appeal for a general strike in support of Seattle's shipyard workers. Mayor Hanson condemned the strikers as communist revolutionaries who "wanted to take possession of our American Government and try to duplicate the anarchy of Russia."¹⁵ On April 28, 1919, the first of dozens of mail bombs sent to prominent American citizens arrived at Mayor Hanson's office. When a bomb destroyed part of Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer's Washington, D.C., home, the retaliation against supposed radical revolutionaries began in earnest with the creation of the General Intelligence Division headed by J. Edgar Hoover.¹⁶

In an address at an RMA luncheon, Leslie M. Shaw, Theodore Roosevelt's Secretary of the Treasury, exclaimed that "Americanism [was] face to face with the most dangerous foe it has ever encountered." It was time, Shaw declared, for American leaders to follow TR's forthright example. "Do you ask where Theodore Roosevelt would stand on this issue?" Shaw queried; "then recall the incident when he is reported

¹⁵ David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 288. Kennedy cites Robert K. Murray, *Red Scare: A Study in National Hysteria, 1919-1920* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1955), 63, as the basis of his account of the Red Scare in 1919. See also, Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 176.

¹⁶ Kennedy, *Over Here*, 289.

to have told the president of the American Federation of Labor to go straight to hell, and, shaking his fist in his face said: ‘I want you to understand, Mr. Gompers, that I will fight labor exactly as quick as I will fight capital if it does not obey the law.’”¹⁷ Other leaders supported Shaw’s sentiments. With Roosevelt Week just around the corner, the American Defense Society appealed to 250 mayors to cooperate with the RMA in celebrating Roosevelt’s birthday on October 27. According to the *Washington Post*, many of the mayors responded encouragingly, expressing the belief that a widespread celebration of Rooseveltian Americanism “would offset radical agitation.”¹⁸ In this period of trial in the nation’s history, “more than at any other,” the *Washington Post* lamented, “Roosevelt is missed by his fellow citizens.”¹⁹ Roosevelt’s absence on the national stage, commemorators argued, left a nearly tangible void in the nation’s leadership. But the solution to the crisis, it seemed, lay in the RMA’s organized maintenance of his memory. The nation’s enthusiastic participation in Roosevelt Week is evident in the reports which flooded into the Association’s headquarters:

In Oregon 400 cities and villages held meetings in honor of Theodore Roosevelt; every city, town, college, and public school in New Mexico had special exercises; mass meetings and school assemblies were held in nearly every locality in the Midwest and New England; in New Jersey it

¹⁷ “Hopes Radicals Win: Their Rule of Labor Would Bring Crisis, L. M. Shaw Says,” *Washington Post*, October 19, 1919. Shaw also served as the governor of Iowa. See also, Stephenson, “Celebrating American Heroes,” 171. Stephenson notes that 1919 was a year of uncertainty: “A series of radical strikes, riots, and bombings caused some Americans to search harder for a usable past to glue together an apparently unraveling society.” As Stephenson asserts, for many, Theodore Roosevelt would be an important adhesive component.

¹⁸ “Taft Appeals for Roosevelt Day,” *Washington Post*, October 23, 1919.

¹⁹ “Roosevelt Memorial,” *Washington Post*, October 24, 1919.

was reported that 1,000,000 men, women, and children attended Roosevelt meetings.²⁰

In Illinois, Governor Lowden led the effort to make Roosevelt's birthday a new national holiday, to be celebrated as "Americanization day," a name that Woodrow Wilson previously awarded to the Fourth of July during the early years of World War I in an attempt to unify Americans increasingly agitated by the conflict in Europe. The RMA asked teachers to make October 27 "Roosevelt Day" in the nation's schools "so that definite opportunity may be given to inspire the school children of America with a lesson from the life and services of Theodore Roosevelt."²¹ A special focus of the celebrations in Chicago included inculcating Rooseveltian values in the hearts and minds of the city's youngsters. Miss Sadie E. Meyers, a first grade teacher, remarked that her students "have already learned more of America through studying for Roosevelt day than they would have learned in a week. It is impossible to teach them love of Roosevelt without teaching them love of their country."²² Although the meetings varied in length,

²⁰ "The Theodore Roosevelt Association: An Organizational History," 18. Additional descriptions of the first Roosevelt Week are included in *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1919-1921*, 10-15. See also, "Thousands Honor Roosevelt Memory," *New York Times*, October 26, 1919.

²¹ Roosevelt Memorial Association, *Standard Plan of Campaign Organization for Use of the Campaign Committee in the Local Community* (New York: Roosevelt Memorial Association, n.d. [1919]), 7, copy in Box 86, Folder: Roosevelt Memorial Association, Borglum Papers; Jonathan Hansen, "True Americanism: Progressive Era Intellectuals and the Problem of Liberal Nationalism," in *Americanism: New Perspectives on the History of an Ideal*, ed. Michael Kazin and Joseph A. McCartin (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 73. See also, Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 189-190.

²² "Spirit of T. R. to Guide Many Little Hands," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, October 27, 1919; "City's Homage Marks Birth of Roosevelt," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, October 28, 1919; "T. R. Memorial Association is Organized Here," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, February 7, 1919; "Illinoisans Aid \$10,000,000 T. R. Memorial Plan," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, May 27, 1919. Frank Lowden was also a member of the Republican National Committee; he gained nationwide stature for his handling of the Chicago race riot in 1919. "Honors to Roosevelt: Sixty-first Anniversary of His Birth to Be Observed Today," *Washington Post*, October 27, 1919. Interest in the exercises was not limited to the United States; see, for example,

format, and detail, the RMA maintained some unity across the country by providing meeting templates and suggestions for local speakers in the materials it sent to state and local branches.

The RMA's *Standard Plan of Campaign Organization* communicated the Association's objectives and outlined the group's organization to include state, county, and local campaign chairmen. "It is hoped," the RMA expressed, "that the organization will be effected in every community so that a great national demonstration in honor of Colonel Roosevelt's memory may be made on this day."²³ Led by the RMA, "America would honor Roosevelt the man in order that his manly qualities may be fused into the life and spirit of the American youth." These qualities—"courage, energy, unselfish service, love of country, honor and square dealing, righteousness, wisdom, [and] fearless fighting"—and Roosevelt's embodiment of them, the RMA asserted, demonstrated the necessity of constructing a permanent memorial through which to instruct future generations. The RMA encouraged "All citizens, regardless of party, who believe that the memory of such a man will inspire the future generations of America, are earnestly invited to assist by their energy and their gifts."²⁴ Taking up the RMA's challenge,

"Cubans give \$100,000 to Roosevelt Fund," *New York Times*, July 30, 1920, along with *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1919-1921*, 15-16.

²³ Roosevelt Memorial Association, *Standard Plan of Campaign Organization for Use of the Campaign Committee in the Local Community*, 3 and 7; Roosevelt Memorial Association, *Suggested Program for Roosevelt Memorial Meeting, October 27, 1919* (New York: RMA, n.d. [1919]), n.p., copy in Box 86, Folder: Roosevelt Memorial Association, Borglum Papers; Roosevelt Memorial Association, "Bulletin on How to Make Use of Speakers in the Local Community Roosevelt Memorial Association" (New York: RMA, n.d. [1919]), n.p., copy in Box 86, Folder: Roosevelt Memorial Association, Borglum Papers; Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 184.

²⁴ RMA, *Standard Plan of Campaign Organization*, 1.

prominent and influential citizens participated in the organizational efforts. Former President William Howard Taft, for example, served as the chairman of the Connecticut state committee and called upon noted sculptor and political activist, Gutzon Borglum, to organize efforts in his home township of Stamford.²⁵ The widespread enthusiasm for these activities also boosted the Association's membership and memorial fund.

According to the RMA, disparate groups came together in remembrance of Theodore Roosevelt: "Old enmities were forgotten. The men who had fought at Roosevelt's side seemed scarcely more enthusiastic than the men who had fought against him."²⁶ New York Rabbi Herbert S. Goldstein of the Institutional Synagogue proclaimed to his congregation that Theodore Roosevelt was the American prophet. "He served as a watchman," Goldstein said, "pointing the way to moral safety for the people of our country. We may have gone with him the whole [way], we may have gone with him only a part of the way, but he had always shown the way."²⁷ For rich and poor, urban and rural, black and white, Jews and Christians, East and West, the RMA billed Roosevelt as the cohesive force necessary to bring the nation together. And although his earthly body had expired, his spirit and the memory of his convictions maintained his adhesive quality.

²⁵ Letter from William Howard Taft to Gutzon Borglum, October 4, 1919; Letter from Borglum to Taft, October 8, 1919; Letter from William F. Whitmore to Borglum, Box 86, Folder: Roosevelt Memorial Association, Borglum Papers. Borglum's commemoration of Theodore Roosevelt on Mount Rushmore is the topic of Chapter IV.

²⁶ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1919-1921*, 14. According to the RMA, "October 27th was a great day of forgiving and forgetting for the common good of all. Black men and white men spoke from the same platform; Protestants, Catholics and Jews joined in the singing of Roosevelt's favorite hymn, 'How firm a foundation.'"

²⁷ "Thousands Honor Roosevelt Memory," *New York Times*, October 26, 1919.

At the Rocky Mountain Club dinner held October 27, 1919, Elihu Root appealed to his audience to hold up Roosevelt as a spiritual, moral, and political example for the nation:

Review the roster of the few great men of history, our own history, the history of the world; and when you have finished the review, you will find that Theodore Roosevelt was the greatest teacher of the essentials of self-government the world has ever known.... What we are here for is to perpetuate that teaching, lift it up, striking the imagination, enlisting the interests of the country and the world, by signally perpetuating the memory of our friend, the great teacher.²⁸

Roosevelt's exemplary leadership did not end with his death; Roosevelt's friends and supporters, through the mechanism of the RMA, would see his memory carried forth through the ages.

Through Rooseveltian imagery, the organizers and admirers encouraged the public to celebrate a particular vision of Americanism. By all accounts, Roosevelt Week was a spectacular success, as millions of individuals took time out of their week to pay tribute to the former president as an inspiration for civic mindedness and patriotic fervor. Roosevelt Week proved to the RMA that Theodore Roosevelt would remain a powerful symbol of energetic citizenry and patriotic duty. As Elihu Root explained: "The future of our country will depend upon having men, real men of sincerity and truth, of unshakable conviction, of power, of personality, with the spirit of Justice and the fighting spirit through all the generations; and the mightiest service that can be seen today to accomplish that for our country is to make it impossible that Theodore

²⁸ "Extract from an address made by Elihu Root at the Rocky Mountain Club dinner, October 27, 1919," included in *Presentation of the Purpose and the Accomplishments of the Theodore Roosevelt Associations* (New York: Roosevelt Memorial Association, Inc., 1935), 1.

Roosevelt, his teaching and his personality, shall be forgotten.”²⁹ It was imperative, in other words, that the nation as a collective, and Americans as individuals, cling to the wisdom, vision, and example of Roosevelt to maintain the path of enlightened self-government. The magnitude of the nation’s response to Roosevelt Week surprised and encouraged the RMA organizers while the success justified for them the necessity of a national memorial organization.³⁰ Roosevelt Week proved to organizers that Rooseveltian imagery remained a dynamic force through which to inspire and to bind the discordant groups of Americans divided by ideology, geography, and social and cultural differences. And it turned out to be a profitable venture for the Association as well. When the final tallies came in, donations and membership fees from the hundreds of thousands of new members contributed an astounding \$1,753,696.97 to the memorial fund which formed the basis of the Association’s endowment.³¹

Motivated by this success, the Roosevelt Memorial Association formally incorporated as a non-stock, non-profit corporation through an Act of Congress on May 31, 1920. In its resolution, Congress charged the RMA with perpetuating “the memory of Theodore Roosevelt for the benefit of the people of the United States and the world.”

²⁹ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1919-1921*, 10-15; “Extract from an address made by Elihu Root at the Rocky Mountain Club dinner, October 27, 1919,” 1; “Roosevelt’s Ideals Set Before Nation,” *New York Times*, October 28, 1919; Roosevelt Memorial Association, *Roosevelt Memorial Association: Outline of its Purposes and Work to be Done by its Local Representatives* (New York: RMA, n.d.), n.p. See also, Alan Havig, “Presidential Images, History, and Homage: Memorializing Theodore Roosevelt, 1919-1967,” *American Quarterly* 30, no. 4 (Autumn 1978): 514-532, 517; Stephenson, “Celebrating American Heroes,” 191. As Havig and Stephenson first observed, promotion of Americanism was first and foremost on the RMA’s agenda. Both Havig and Stephenson also note Hermann Hagedorn’s central role in this regard.

³⁰ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1919-1921*, 14.

³¹ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1919-1921*, 18.

The charter also included the Association's three original objectives: "to erect a monumental memorial in Washington to rank with the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial; to improve the land that is to be given at Oyster Bay for a Roosevelt Memorial Park; and to perpetuate the ideals of Theodore Roosevelt by spreading the knowledge of his character and career."³² These three aims allowed the Association "to focus the light that was Theodore Roosevelt" as a heroic beacon for Americans and coming generations. The formation of the RMA through an Act of Congress also promoted the sense that the Association spoke for the nation as it remembered Theodore Roosevelt; Congressional authorization decreed a national consensus on Roosevelt's memory from the start and portrayed the RMA as the rightful keeper of that memory. "This memorial association, incorporated under the laws of the federal government," the RMA asserted, "is properly organized to interpret and present to coming generations the great truths he lived and preached."³³ The nation's collective memory of Theodore Roosevelt, the RMA determined, fell squarely and exclusively within its domain.

³² *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1919-1921*, 9-10, 16-17; *The Theodore Roosevelt Association, A Brief History*; "The Congressional Charter of the Theodore Roosevelt Association," *Theodore Roosevelt Association Journal* 24, no. 1 (2000): 6-8, 8; Reneham, "A Brief History of the Theodore Roosevelt Association," 25-26. Although the promotion of the park in Oyster Bay, New York remained one of the Association's main goals, the impact of the memorial park was decidedly local, especially compared to the other two objectives. The RMA dedicated the park in Oyster Bay in 1928. Not all of the RMA's supporters favored the establishment of a park in Oyster Bay; in "Roosevelt Memorials," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 15, 1919, an unidentified author stated that "the suggestion that a park or playground be created in Oyster Bay should have no place in a national organization's plans. That is something for Oyster Bay or New York to attend to." See also, Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 199-200. "The Congressional Charter of the Theodore Roosevelt Association," also mentions a fourth objective, "The donation of real and personal property, including part or all of its endowment fund, to a public agency or public agencies for the purpose of preserving in public ownership historically significant properties associated with the life of Theodore Roosevelt," which the Association accomplished through the acquisition of the Roosevelt Birthplace, Sagamore Hill, and, much later, the cabin retreat at Pine Knot, Virginia.

³³ *Presentation of the Purpose and the Accomplishments of the Theodore Roosevelt Associations*, 5.

Moreover, the organization's creation within days of Roosevelt's death put into place a framework and bureaucracy that could effectively harness Americans' zeal for the recently departed former president. Had the organization waited until one of the significant TR anniversaries to form—such as his birthday or death day—it may not have been so successful. As it happened, however, Americans' enthusiasm, sparked in part by the work of the new association, remained high at the first anniversary of TR's death in 1920 with over 300,000 memorial meetings held in the United States and around the globe.³⁴

Of the Association's three goals, the aim of perpetuating the memory of TR throughout the nation was arguably the most ambitious and the most ambiguous. As early as February 1919, the group appealed to those from all aspects of Roosevelt's life and career to contribute their anecdotes and personal recollections. "It seems important," the organizers explained, "that this material now so widely scattered and so unshaped should be brought together, classified, and published in a volume somewhat like 'Stories of Lincoln.'"³⁵ At the first meeting of the Committee on the Perpetuation of Roosevelt Ideals held in January 1920, the group recommended that the RMA "assemble a comprehensive scholarly collection on the life and times of Theodore Roosevelt," as a

³⁴ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1926* (New York: Roosevelt Memorial Association, Inc., 1926), 4; Havig, "Presidential Images, History, and Homage," 516. Havig notes that "more than 85 years elapsed between the death of George Washington and the completion of the monument dedicated to him; 57 years passed between Lincoln's assassination and the dedication of the Lincoln Memorial. Perhaps to avoid such delays, Roosevelt's friends quickly organized after his death."

³⁵ "Wants Roosevelt Stories," *New York Times*, February 6, 1919. See also, Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 200.

way to consolidate the nation's history and memory of TR.³⁶ Through these activities, the RMA served as the collector and processor, thereby filtering individual memories into a cohesive whole. The following November, the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees, in response to the Committee's recommendation, established the Bureau of Roosevelt Research and Information, "To collect all available biographical matter concerning Theodore Roosevelt, from public documents, newspapers, and magazines, and directly from the men and women who were close to Colonel Roosevelt during his life, or during some period of it ... To publish from time to time as the Trustees of the Memorial Association may decide, authoritative works dealing with the life of Theodore Roosevelt."³⁷ The Bureau of Roosevelt Research and Information, therefore, constituted the nation's first presidential library, although credit for primacy is more commonly given to the other presidential Roosevelt—Franklin Delano.³⁸ Additionally, when the

³⁶ *The Theodore Roosevelt Association, A Brief History*. See also, *Presentation of the Purpose and the Accomplishments of the Theodore Roosevelt Associations*, 8; "Wants Roosevelt Stories," *New York Times*, February 6, 1919.

³⁷ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1919-1921*, 19-20. Other goals of the bureau included: "to collect the best photographs of Theodore Roosevelt, his friends, his opponents and scenes connected with the most striking events of his career"; "To issue, on request, authoritative information to school-teachers and lecturers concerning the character and career of Theodore Roosevelt." Some of the RMA-sponsored works include Hermann Hagedorn's *Theodore Roosevelt in the Bad Lands* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1921); the National and Memorial Editions of *Roosevelt's Works*, edited by Hermann Hagedorn (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1923-1926); and the *Theodore Roosevelt Cyclopaedia*, edited by Albert Bushnell Hart (New York: RMA, 1941). The openness of the RMA's collections to researchers led to many more.

³⁸ John Allen Gable, "'He Loved the Soaring Spirit of Man': The Life and Work of Hermann Hagedorn," *Theodore Roosevelt Association Journal* 3, No. 3 (Fall 1977): 9-13, 10. Benjamin Hufbauer, *Presidential Temples: How Memorials and Libraries Shape Public Memory* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005), 5-6. According to Hufbauer, "It is not a coincidence that [Franklin] Roosevelt, the first president to garner the kind of power—and celebrity—that we expect of a modern president, was also the first to have a federal presidential library. In fact, FDR invented the presidential library as we know it by thinking of his life as a tourist attraction and heritage site." See also, Collin, "The Image of Theodore Roosevelt in American History and Thought, 1885-1965," 276-278. Collin, a strong critic of the RMA's attempts to apotheosize Roosevelt, remarked that "the work of the Roosevelt Memorial Association, while at times

RMA learned that it would take the federal government several years to process and arrange TR's voluminous public and private papers—especially his abundant correspondence—the Association assisted in the endeavor. In order to make the materials readily available to researchers in the Library of Congress, the RMA hired, at its own expense, an experienced librarian to catalog the collection.³⁹ The RMA ambitiously expanded its control over the maintenance of Roosevelt's memory.

One of the driving forces behind the new association was its Secretary and Director, Hermann Hagedorn, whose dedication and devotion to Roosevelt's memory never faltered during his lifetime. Born in Brooklyn, New York, to wealthy German immigrants from Hanover, Hagedorn believed he grew up in two worlds at once. With his father working as a cotton broker at the New York Cotton Exchange, Hermann's family was affluent enough to afford to hire German servants and to attend private schools with the children of other German-American families, thereby maintaining a strong connection to their German heritage. According to Hermann, "It was a German world in which we lived," surrounded by "German speech, music, servants, food, and festivals."⁴⁰ Despite the strong German ties, Hermann, Sr. reportedly became an

misdirected and overreligious, proved to be valuable, at least indirectly. There is something to be said for its extensive collection of documents and books and memorabilia, although it can be disconcerting to the scholar to find items included that have but hopelessly marginal relevance to Theodore Roosevelt." The library and collection were transferred from Roosevelt House to the Harvard University libraries in 1943.

³⁹ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1926*, 27. According to the RMA, "The employment of Mrs. Fitzpatrick has meant not only the assurance of a technically correct piece of work but also the interested co-operation and supervision of Dr. Fitzpatrick." Mrs. Fitzpatrick was the wife of the Assistant Curator of Manuscripts of the Library of Congress, Dr. John C. Fitzpatrick.

⁴⁰ Gable, "'He Loved the Soaring Spirit of Man': The Life and Work of Hermann Hagedorn," 9; Hermann Hagedorn, *The Hyphenated Family: An American Saga* (New York: Macmillan Company,

American citizen during the Prussian absorption of Hanover to avoid compulsory military service and to give his sons “the protection of the American flag” against the same.⁴¹ During his adolescent years Hagedorn developed a deep appreciation for the United States. While attending boarding school, Hermann recalled that “I was gaining my first firm foothold in that America which is an orientation of the spirit rather than a specified area of land and water, rivers, mountains and plains.”⁴² The break within the Hagedorn family finally came when Hermann’s father retired from the Cotton Exchange and prepared to return to Germany. In his autobiography, *The Hyphenated Family* (1960), Hermann described the moment of clarity in choosing the American path: “I might easily have become a diluted German or, worse, a man of two countries, who did not know in which he belonged, and really belonged to neither.”⁴³ Having made his decision, Hermann dedicated himself wholeheartedly to the cause of Americanism.

While he was a student at Harvard, Hermann Hagedorn met Theodore Roosevelt for the first time in the office of the *Harvard Advocate*.⁴⁴ Although the two men did not speak during their first encounter, Roosevelt soon had a great impact on Hagedorn’s life

1960), 41, 81, 88. See also, “Hermann Hagedorn Centennial,” *Theodore Roosevelt Association Journal* 8, no. 3 (Summer 1982): 8.

⁴¹ Hagedorn, *The Hyphenated Family*, 57, 67. Hermann, Sr. maintained a strong connection to his homeland probably because of his overbearing mother to whom he had vowed to keep himself “foot-free” so that he was able to return to Germany whenever he chose. As the younger Hagedorn noted, “We always lived in rented houses. Father would never buy a square foot of real estate in America.”

⁴² Hagedorn, *The Hyphenated Family*, 154.

⁴³ Hagedorn, *The Hyphenated Family*, 136. Hagedorn’s mother saved him from this fate when she convinced her husband to allow Hermann to remain in the United States while the rest of the family relocated to Germany.

⁴⁴ Hagedorn, *The Hyphenated Family*, 171. Hagedorn later supported Roosevelt’s bid for the presidency in 1912.

and philosophy. During the early years of the First World War, as Hagedorn struggled with the divided allegiance created by his German-American heritage, Roosevelt's voice cut through the cacophony. "What he said was simple and clear," Hagedorn recalled, "and he said it in words which anyone could understand and which meant exactly what people understood them to mean." Roosevelt was a beacon, Hagedorn believed, guiding the nation through troubled waters. The former president's message rang especially true for Hagedorn on the subject of foreign-born devotion to the United States. "As for German-Americans," Roosevelt's message proclaimed, "Be loyal. No fifty-fifty allegiance here. America is no polyglot boardinghouse." Although Hagedorn admitted in his autobiography that Roosevelt's language was, at times, extreme, "his forthrightness and his passionate devotion to his country were exhilarating," Hagedorn explained.⁴⁵

In May 1916, through an invitation extended by *Outlook* publisher Lawrence F. Abbott, Hagedorn had his first opportunity to sit down with Roosevelt at Sagamore Hill.⁴⁶ During the encounter, Hagedorn answered inquiries about his family background and his views on the developing crisis between the United States and Germany. Roosevelt, always game for stimulating conversation on the world's most pressing issues, asked Hagedorn to return in a week or two with his wife to continue the discussion. Over the next several months, Hagedorn frequently met with Roosevelt at Sagamore Hill or at the Harvard Club in New York City. The meetings—which often

⁴⁵ Hagedorn, *The Hyphenated Family*, 228-229.

⁴⁶ Hagedorn, *The Hyphenated Family*, 229.

included other men of German heritage—provided the former president with German-American perspectives on the war and America’s possible role in it. At one of these gatherings, Roosevelt reportedly took Hagedorn aside and asked the younger man to write a biography for the *Harpers* series for adolescents on the lives of notable Americans. The resulting volume, *The Boys’ Life of Theodore Roosevelt* (1918), was the first of several works on TR that Hagedorn would write or edit.⁴⁷

Hagedorn, who had earned his living as a writer, turned to the subject of Americanism early in his career. Prior to the start of the First World War, Hagedorn organized the Vigilantes, a group of writers “whose aim was to bring the issues confronting the nation clearly before the public through articles, poems and stories syndicated to newspapers all over the country.” As Hagedorn explained in his autobiography, “we had cherished the dream of awakening the public, especially in schools and colleges, to the need of education for citizenship.” To this end, Hagedorn penned *You Are the Hope of the World!: An Appeal to the Girls and Boys of America* (1918) in which he challenged the nation’s youth to prepare themselves for their future roles as strong, upstanding, moral, vigilant citizens.⁴⁸ With the coming of the war, however, the Vigilantes’ work narrowed as the group concentrated on arousing American citizens, especially immigrants and the children of immigrants, to assert their

⁴⁷ Hagedorn, *The Hyphenated Family*, 229, 238; Hermann Hagedorn, *The Boys’ Life of Theodore Roosevelt* (New York: Harper, 1918); Havig, “Presidential Images, History, and Homage,” 517.

⁴⁸ Hagedorn, *The Hyphenated Family*, 233, 239; Hermann Hagedorn, *You are the Hope of the World!: An Appeal to the Girls and Boys of America* (New York: Macmillan, 1917).

loyalty to the nation.⁴⁹ The Vigilantes, with nearly four hundred active writers, countered German propaganda in the United States and attempted to sway the allegiances of German-Americans. Hagedorn expressed special concern for this group, not only because of his own heritage, but because he believed that the tardy switch of German-American newspapers from a pro-German stance in the prewar period to “a poisonous pseudo patriotism” left many German-Americans without proper guidance during the war years. The hyphenation of many Americans, combined with “all the foes of our own household, open and covert, [and] all the forces working against national unity,” presented the most dangerous threats, in Hagedorn’s estimation.⁵⁰ During the war, Hagedorn hoped to inspire the divided German-Americans in *Where Do You Stand?: An Appeal to Americans of German Origin* (1918) to refocus their allegiances from the distant land of origin to the soil, the flag, and the government of their new land.⁵¹ He called upon them to follow his lead in demonstrating an uncompromised loyalty to the United States. Hagedorn, who had grown up in a German world, succeeded in living an un-hyphenated life. For him, his father’s world was “a dying world”; it was a place of “kings and aristocrats, of immemorial social customs and traditions; of titles, caste, [and] position.” America, however, Hagedorn declared, “is the free association of people, recognizing and basing their lives upon these absolute

⁴⁹ Hagedorn, *The Hyphenated Family*, 233.

⁵⁰ Hagedorn, *The Hyphenated Family*, 234.

⁵¹ Hagedorn, *The Hyphenated Family*, 244, 249. Hermann Hagedorn, *Where Do You Stand?: An Appeal to Americans of German Origin* (New York: Macmillan, 1918). Roosevelt reportedly used the book as the basis of his own appeal to citizens of German descent.

standards of human contact that are pure metal smelted from the experience and dedicated thinking of the most profound and socially-minded spirits on the five continents, through ten thousand years of human history.”⁵² The need to bolster the patriotic Americanism of his fellow citizens became the driving force in Hagedorn’s life.

After Roosevelt’s death in 1919, Hagedorn grasped the opportunity to honor his hero and to utilize his memory to instill in the nation’s citizens the sense of pride, duty, and righteousness that he so closely associated with Theodore Roosevelt. Hagedorn worked tirelessly in the Association for thirty-eight years, during which time his level of commitment to Americanism and to Roosevelt shaped the organization to reflect his own deeply held philosophies, goals, standards, and ambitions. Hagedorn successfully steered the Association into an entity that promoted Americanism and Rooseveltian values. But Hagedorn’s influence on the Association and his public proclamations on Americanism through an uncritical celebration of Roosevelt’s memory were not without opposition.⁵³ In 1927, for example, historian James C. Malin denounced the creation of a “Roosevelt Legend,” by TR’s friends and idolaters, which overshadowed the historic Roosevelt. “There are two Roosevelts,” Malin complained, “one, the man of history; the other, an heroic image created by the Roosevelt Legend. The first is all but unknown ...

⁵² Hagedorn, *The Hyphenated Family*, 162, 261-262.

⁵³ Havig, “Presidential Images, History, and Homage,” 517. According to Havig, “Hermann Hagedorn, Director of the R. M. A. for many years, directed the tangible and intangible resources of the Association during the 1920s. Hagedorn served the memory and interpreted the meaning of Theodore Roosevelt with remarkable devotion.”

The Legend has so completely overgrown the facts of Roosevelt's career that it is next to impossible to distinguish and separate the false from the true."⁵⁴

While Hagedorn's principles drove him to personally perpetuate TR's memory, he also felt it was the responsibility of his generation, those who had contact with Roosevelt during his lifetime, to lead the commemorative cause. As he informed the RMA's Board of Trustees, "We fortunate ones who walked in the vital sun of his friendship and were inspired by his matchless courage, carry a great responsibility. The responsibility of taking our friend out of the pages of history and bringing him into the lives of the young citizen, the political leader, and the workday statesman of every coming generation." Roosevelt's contemporaries, therefore, would lay the foundation for the inculcation of Roosevelt's values in future generations of Americans; it would be through the RMA that Americans would receive this information. Additionally, the Trustees expected Roosevelt's friends to contribute financially; by bequeathing money to the RMA, they would "render available to future citizens the spiritual legacy he gave us. In this manner his friends can help carry on in perpetuity the principles Theodore Roosevelt personified for them."⁵⁵ By cementing the memory of TR in the hearts and minds of the American public through their generous financial donations, friends and admirers would create much more than a physical memorial; they would secure their

⁵⁴ James C. Malin quoted in Collin, "The Image of Theodore Roosevelt in American History and Thought, 1885-1965," 288-289; Havig, "Presidential Images, History, and Homage," 518. As Havig reports, the editor of the *Nation*, Oswald Garrison Villard, criticized Hagedorn and the hagiographic interpretation of Roosevelt presented to the public through the RMA. Villard satirized the RMA's work as without basis on the "truth of history."

⁵⁵ *Presentation of the Purpose and the Accomplishments of the Theodore Roosevelt Associations*, 5, 13, 15.

own small place in the annals of history. “Each legacy, providing funds for carrying on any activity,” the RMA assured, “would be carried in the name of the donor and could serve thus to perpetuate his friendship and association with Theodore Roosevelt.”⁵⁶

Protecting Roosevelt’s memory guaranteed the lasting memory of the benefactor through his or her connection with TR.

In addition to soliciting funds, Hagedorn encouraged the RMA to work closely with the Woman’s Roosevelt Memorial Association (WRMA), an independent organization created in January 1919, and incorporated in the State of New York.⁵⁷ With the expressed purpose of commemorating “the life of Theodore Roosevelt by establishing and maintaining a permanent memorial in the City of New York,” the women set out to purchase and reconstruct Theodore Roosevelt’s birthplace at 28 East Twentieth Street in Manhattan “as a living memorial and a civic center,” a site of memory where visitors could commune with Rooseveltian ideals. In 1921, First Lady Florence Harding applauded the WRMA’s efforts with Roosevelt House “as a fitting memorial of that great man’s Americanism.”⁵⁸ Through its various activities, therefore,

⁵⁶ *Presentation of the Purpose and the Accomplishments of the Theodore Roosevelt Associations*, 18.

⁵⁷ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1919-1921*, 15; “Roosevelt Museum Site Selected,” *New York Times*, October 28, 1922. In the spirit of cooperation, the RMA and the WRMA created a Joint Committee “to consider means by which any appearance of rivalry might be eliminated” and cooperate on various projects while insisting on their independence. The RMA assisted in the reconstruction of Roosevelt House by appropriating \$165,000 to the project. Hagedorn reported to the RMA’s Board of Trustees that, “it is a pleasure to record that the relations of the two Associations during the first year of ‘co-operation’ have been completely harmonious.”

⁵⁸ Renham, “A Brief History of the Theodore Roosevelt Association,” 25. See also, “The Theodore Roosevelt Association: An Organizational History,” 18; Elizabeth Ogden Wood, “The Mission of the Roosevelt House,” *Roosevelt Quarterly* 1, no. 1 (Spring 1923), n.p. The existing material evidence does not seem to suggest that the Roosevelt Memorial Association excluded women from membership; the original Committee of Eighty included both men and women. See, for example, “List Committee for Memorial to Roosevelt,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, February 3, 1919; “Adopt Memorials to Col. Roosevelt,

the WRMA utilized Roosevelt's image and example in creating a standard by which America's youth and their devotion to their country would be measured. In their endeavors, the women targeted the youngest Americans, those with no personal recollections of the man or his ideals. The goal for the WRMA was "to so impress upon the minds of the young what a great privilege it is to be an American citizen so that, like Roosevelt, they will be American not only by birth but by conviction."⁵⁹ It was not enough for people, particularly the foreign-born, to declare themselves citizens; they must, according to the WRMA, earn that title. The WRMA employed Roosevelt's memory to promote their brand of Americanism, with its heavy emphasis on duty and service, to the nation's youth.⁶⁰

For its part, the RMA dramatically expanded activities related to the third aim, perpetuating Rooseveltian ideals. To publicize Rooseveltian values to the average

New York Times, March 25, 1919. It appears that the WRMA was a group of civic-minded women who wished to encourage the emulation of Theodore Roosevelt by the nation's youth. Mrs. Harding quoted in "Roosevelt Day Brings Tribute of Thousands' Love," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, October 28, 1921; Collin, "The Image of Theodore Roosevelt in American History and Thought, 1885-1965," 274-275. Collin is hypercritical of the WRMA's work: "if the committee [RMA] made Rooseveltism seem like a religion, the Woman's Roosevelt Memorial Association made of it an even more violent crusade." See also, Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 178. Stephenson asserts that the WRMA, like the RMA, labored enthusiastically to promote "Americanism" through the image of TR; their efforts were frequently criticized as being overly shrill. Stephenson reports that Americans in 1919-1920 were aware of the relationship between American women and the preservation of the homes of great leaders, including Andrew Jackson, Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson, and George Washington. The WRMA celebrated the opening of Roosevelt House on October 27, 1923.

⁵⁹ Wood, "The Mission of the Roosevelt House," *Roosevelt Quarterly* 1, no.1 (Spring 1923), n.p.

⁶⁰ Wood, "The Mission of the Roosevelt House," *Roosevelt Quarterly* 1, no. 1 (Spring 1923), n.p. "The Affiliated Roosevelt Clubs 'Service,'" The WRMA acknowledged that "Frequently the new clubs were merely the old 'outside activities' under a new title," but that "sometimes the pupils were stirred by the magic of the name to undertake some especially important bit of service for the school; the sort of thing they knew Roosevelt would have approved." See also, Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 198. Stephenson notes that although the WRMA came into contact with thousands of schoolchildren in New York, "their projections of expanding out into the rest of the country were overly optimistic."

citizen, the RMA established the Theodore Roosevelt Distinguished Service Medal in 1923 honoring those ordinary citizens engaged in outstanding service in one of the fields reflecting Roosevelt's work and interests. By acknowledging the exemplary deeds of contemporary Americans, the Association aspired "to keep alive TR's spirit of selfless service, strenuous endeavor, patriotic idealism, and practical accomplishment."⁶¹

Awarding from one to three gold medals per year, the RMA recognized accomplishments in seven (later eight) fields, including the administration of public office, the development of public and international law, and the conservation of natural resources.⁶² The variety of the categories allowed the Association to cast a wide net for recipients and to preserve the multi-dimensional nature of the RMA's commemorations.

The RMA also took advantage of the global enthusiasm for Theodore Roosevelt in assisting the Rough Riders Association and the Rotary Club of Santiago de Cuba in the construction and dedication of a memorial to TR on the island. On December 14, 1924, a large crowd gathered as members of the Rough Riders Association, the Roosevelt Memorial Association, and the Rotary Club joined government officials from

⁶¹ John Allen Gable, "Theodore Roosevelt's Distinguished Service Medal: A Brief History," *Theodore Roosevelt Association Journal* 28, no. 1 (Winter 2007): 37-39, 37; Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 201-202. James Earle Fraser designed the Distinguished Service Medal for the Roosevelt Memorial Association. Fraser's involvement in the commemoration of Theodore Roosevelt in New York City is the subject of Chapter V.

⁶² *Presentation of the Purpose and the Accomplishments of the Theodore Roosevelt Associations*, 12. For more on the recipients of the Roosevelt Medals, see Gable, "Theodore Roosevelt's Distinguished Service Medal: A Brief History," 38-39; "Theodore Roosevelt Distinguished Service Medal Recipients," *Theodore Roosevelt Association Journal* 26, no. 1 (2004): 9-13; *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1923* (New York: Roosevelt Memorial Association Inc., 1923), 5-6. "These fields are: 1. The administration of public office. 2. The development of public and international law. 3. The promotion of the national defense. 4. The promotion of industrial peace. 5. The conservation of natural resources. 6. The promotion of the welfare of women and children. 8. The development in the American character of those qualities of courage, foresight, initiative and patriotism associated with Roosevelt's name."

the United States and the Cuban Republic in dedicating the memorial designed by sculptor James Earle Fraser and Henry Bacon, the architect of the Lincoln Memorial. The American contingent included the ex-governor of Kansas, Henry J. Allen, representing the Roosevelt Memorial Association along with the Director of the RMA, Hermann Hagedorn, serving as the special representative of the RMA's Board of Trustees. Making the trip to Cuba for the occasion, Roosevelt's widow, Edith, unveiled the memorial to her husband by drawing aside the American flag that shrouded the bust and background.⁶³ One enthusiastic *Washington Post* writer lamented that the momentous occasion had not been given broader coverage in the American press. "The simple pedestal, with its bronze bust, which now stands on the road to the battlefield of San Juan," the author concluded,

represents the gratitude of millions to one who helped set them free.... Among the many Americans who championed their righteous cause during the dark years of their oppression, none was more ardent than the great man who now personifies the virtues of his countrymen. With no motive save to see justice dealt to all men and "the square deal" given to the down trodden, this gallant Rough Rider hurried down from the north to fling himself valiantly in the fight for "Cuba libre." He did what seemed to him a simple duty; he gave, in fact, an illustration of courage

⁶³ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1925* (New York: Roosevelt Memorial Association, Inc., 1925), 28-29. The honor guard of the U.S.S. *Galveston*, sent by the Navy Department, was also in attendance. The memorial consisted of Fraser's bust of Roosevelt and a pedestal and backdrop created by Bacon. Fraser met TR while the latter was President of the United States and modeled the bust from life. The portrait bust was intended as the addition to the Senate's collection of vice presidential busts, but it was rejected in favor of a more sedate image of Roosevelt, also sculpted by Fraser. For more on Fraser's interactions with TR, see Chapter V. The memorial in Santiago proved to be one of Bacon's last works; he died prior to the dedication. The American contingent expressed their appreciation for Cuban hospitality by later presenting a collection of books on and by Theodore Roosevelt to each of the normal and high schools in Cuba, in addition to the University of Havana. Wood quoted in "Honor Roosevelt at San Juan Hill," *New York Times*, December 15, 1924; "Mrs. Roosevelt Going to Cuba," *Washington Post*, December 1, 1924; "Roosevelt Praise Sung at Unveiling of Santiago Bust," *Washington Post*, December 15, 1924.

and knightly courtesy to which a grateful people will turn with wonder in the years to come.⁶⁴

The Cuban people, the author explained, had paid sufficient homage to TR for his contributions to their enlightenment through the dedication of their memorial; the American people, however, had not yet adequately commemorated the glory of TR's accomplishments and ideals in stone or bronze.

As for the RMA's own memorial project, it got off to a good start when the Association secured congressional permission to use the area in Potomac Park known as the Tidal Basin as the site for a design competition for a national Theodore Roosevelt memorial; Congress, however, made no guarantees that the land would be set aside for the Association to build its memorial.⁶⁵ An RMA committee, made up of C. Grant La Farge, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., and Lorado Taft, called for a competition to include a limited number of designers to submit plans for a proposed national Roosevelt memorial. On October 6, 1925, the RMA announced architect John Russell Pope as the winner,

⁶⁴ "Roosevelt at Santiago," *Washington Post*, January 4, 1925.

⁶⁵ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1924* (New York: Roosevelt Memorial Association, Inc., 1924), 5-7, 11-12; *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1925*, 3-7, 5-10; Havig, "Presidential Images, History, and Homage," 519. From the *RMA Annual Report 1924*: "It is worth emphasizing that the Association did not ask Congress for the definite cession of the site in question, but merely for permission to hold a competition with this site in mind. Certain opposition within the Committee, however, made it necessary to modify still further the Association's extremely moderate demands." The Congressional Resolution stated: "That permission is hereby given to the Roosevelt Memorial Association to procure at its own expense plans and designs for the erection of a permanent memorial to Theodore Roosevelt ... That no authority to proceed with the execution of such plan or with the erection of the memorial shall be deemed to be conferred upon the Roosevelt Memorial Association unless or until the plan and design shall first have been approved by the Congress." The act was Public Resolution No. 49, 68th Congress, S.J. Res. 135. It passed the Senate on December 30, 1924, and the House of Representatives on February 3, 1925; President Calvin Coolidge signed it February 12, 1925. See also, "Seek a Memorial for Col. Roosevelt," *New York Times*, April 6, 1925; "Roosevelt Memorial Here Given Impetus in Report," *Washington Post*, January 29, 1925; "T. R. Shrine at Capital to be Near Lincoln," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, January 19, 1925; Collin, "The Image of Theodore Roosevelt in American History and Thought, 1885-1965," 301; Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 208-210.

although the Association decided not to make the design public until it was presented to Congress later in the year.⁶⁶

John Russell Pope established a reputation on the American architectural scene shortly after his graduation from Columbia University in 1894. Following a fellowship at the American School of Architecture in Rome, Pope studied at the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Paris. Pope's style of American neo-classicism, which incorporated architectural forms from Greece and Rome, dominated his monumental and residential designs. The appropriation of Greek and Roman motifs visually demonstrated imperialistic expressions of American power through the architecture of government buildings and grand private residences.⁶⁷ In designing homes for America's elite, Pope asserted that neo-classical architecture was

the healthy symbol of American race consciousness and pride in the achievements of our people, intensified since the Great War, which has brought with it the realization that the mode of building that took form in this country contemporaneously with our own development into a separate people, is the most nearly perfect expression that has been devised of the traits of character and mode of life that we like to call American.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ "Roosevelt Design of J. R. Pope Chosen," *New York Times*, October 7, 1925; "Pope is Roosevelt Memorial Designer," *Washington Post*, October 7, 1925; Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 210. Three months earlier, the State of New York had selected Pope to design the Roosevelt Memorial Addition to the American Museum of Natural History in New York City; the addition is the topic of Chapter V.

⁶⁷ Steven McLeod Bedford, *John Russell Pope: Architect of Empire* (New York: Rizzoli, 1998), 118. See also, Robert A. M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin, and Thomas Mellins, *New York 1930: Architecture and Urbanism Between the Two World Wars* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications Inc., 1987), 20-21, 135.

⁶⁸ Pope quoted in Bedford, *John Russell Pope*, 87.

Although Pope referred specifically to the Americanization of the Georgian or English country house style, much of the same argument explains Pope's public buildings and monumental architecture.⁶⁹ Throughout his lengthy career, Pope maintained his dedication to American neo-classicism; his numerous public works, including the National Archives and the National Gallery of Art, serve as prominent examples of the genre. Pope's connections with leaders in American business, industry, and politics ensured many commissions in both the public and private sectors.⁷⁰

The mystery surrounding the design fueled the debates already swirling around the proposed location and the memory of Theodore Roosevelt. By placing the Roosevelt memorial in this space, the proposed structure created a triangular conversation with the Lincoln Memorial to the northwest and the Washington Monument to the north. This placement claimed an equitable relationship among Roosevelt and the Founder and the Savior of the nation.⁷¹ The significance of the site on the southern terminus of the axis created by the White House through the Washington Monument was not lost on the RMA. As Milton B. Medary, Jr., the RMA's architectural advisor, pointed out, "The site selected places upon the designers the weighty responsibility of solving a many-sided

⁶⁹ Steve Bedford, "Museums Designed by John Russell Pope," *The Magazine Antiques* 139, no. 4 (Apr., 1991): 750-763, 752.

⁷⁰ Bedford, *John Russell Pope*, 118, 152.

⁷¹ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1926*, 6-8; Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 172. According to Stephenson, "The central problem faced by [Roosevelt's] commemorators was to find a forceful epithet on the same level as 'the Founder' attached to Washington's name or 'the Preserver' (and, among some people, 'the Emancipator') tied to Lincoln's name." See also, Havig, "Presidential Images, History, and Homage," 523-524. Hagedorn stated that "just as Washington founded the Republic and Lincoln united it, so did Roosevelt consolidate it and revitalize it," 524. The Ulysses S. Grant Memorial is also located on the National Mall, but most commentators, then and now, overlook this point.

and complex problem of the first magnitude, permanently establishing the only remaining cardinal point of the great composition around which the Capital of the United States is developing.”⁷² The *New York Times* captured the importance of the location: “Here in a sense—symbolically at least—is the heart of the nation, and any appreciable change in its aspect is a matter of national interest and concern.”⁷³

To many, however, not enough time had passed since Roosevelt’s death to warrant the construction of a national memorial. Even parties friendly to the RMA’s goals questioned the plan; naturalist John Burroughs criticized the RMA’s “indecent haste” to build a monument. “Give the grass time to grow on his grave,” Burroughs advised, “before we pile up the marble.”⁷⁴ Burroughs was not alone in his criticism; many felt as though history had not been given adequate time to evaluate TR’s memory and legacy. Even those heralded as truly great upon their deaths were not so expeditiously commemorated, they argued.⁷⁵ Some denounced the design as a violation of Pierre L’Enfant’s plan for the city, although Hagedorn and others defended the memorial’s siting as the fulfillment of that plan. Moreover, the argument went, because

⁷² *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1925*, 8-9. Nor was the possible cost of the project outside the RMA’s ability to support, as the Association set aside one million dollars for the project, along with a willingness “to raise such funds in addition as may be necessary to realize a worthy design.” See also, “Seek a Memorial for Col. Roosevelt,” *New York Times*, April 6, 1925.

⁷³ “Roosevelt Memorial Stirs Up a Dispute,” *New York Times*, November 22, 1925.

⁷⁴ Burroughs quoted in Havig, “Presidential Images, History, and Homage,” 517.

⁷⁵ Havig, “Presidential Images, History, and Homage,” 516.

of Roosevelt's involvement in the Senate Park Plan of 1901, it was especially appropriate to honor TR in this space.⁷⁶

On December 12, 1925, the RMA presented the winning design to the public upon its submission to Congress for construction approval. James R. Garfield, president of the Roosevelt Memorial Association, in his presentation of Pope's design, described its main features:

At the centre of an island of white granite, set in a circular body of water, flanked by majestic colonnades, a living shaft of water rises with prodigious power 200 feet. At the base of the fountain, symbolical ships carry the message of Roosevelt's life to the four points of the compass. The island from which the fountain rises is 280 feet in diameter, the basin 600 feet; the colonnades themselves are each 670 feet long and 60 feet high.⁷⁷

The 200-foot-high "spout of living water" shooting from the center of the memorial would be "the symbol of that source of inexhaustible vitality that Roosevelt was noted

⁷⁶ Arthur Sears Henning, "Memorial to Roosevelt to Grace Potomac," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 13, 1925; Hermann Hagedorn, "The Roosevelt Memorial: Association's Purpose is to Carry Out, Not Alter, the L'Enfant Plan," *New York Times*, November 24, 1925. Hagedorn was responding to an earlier article, "Roosevelt Memorial Stirs Up Debate," *New York Times*, November 22, 1925. In this article D. Everett Waid, President of the American Institute of Architects, stated that the original plan of Washington should not be "altered" for the Roosevelt Memorial. As the *New York Times* reported, a broad cross-section of the American public opposed the plan, including architects who wished to see the L'Enfant plan fulfilled by placing the Supreme Court on this site. According to Waid, "the New York and Chicago Chapters of the institute already have adopted resolutions protesting against the erection of such a memorial on that site." See also, Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 213; Havig, "Presidential Images, History, and Homage," 523, 526. According to Havig, the RMA went as far as to secure a statement from Chief Justice William Howard Taft showing that the justices had no desire to be located so far from the Library of Congress. Havig also notes that the architectural community was split on the issue.

⁷⁷ "Congress to Decide Roosevelt Site," *New York Times*, December 13, 1925; *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1925*, 9-10; Havig, "Presidential Images, History, and Homage," 522; *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1926*, 6-8. Pope's Jefferson Memorial now occupies the site. See also, "Seek a Memorial for Col. Roosevelt," *New York Times*, April 6, 1925.

for.”⁷⁸ The memorial design, in addition to allowing for conformity with the Senate Park Plan in maintaining the vista from the White House to the Virginia shore, also illustrated the symbolism of Roosevelt as a unifier of the nation: the curving colonnades serve as a gateway between the North and South and “that final closing of the breach between the sections.”⁷⁹ The RMA proclaimed that “It is Roosevelt, the American, exemplar of patriotic devotion, that this design is dedicated, not to exalt an individual, but to recall the basic American principles which that individual upheld and defended.”⁸⁰

With the design’s submission to Congress, the public finally had an opportunity to weigh in on the RMA’s hagiographic interpretation of Roosevelt’s memory. Articles and editorials continued to criticize, in particular, the monument’s proposed location on the southern terminus of the National Mall’s north-south axis in Potomac Park. The topic proved even more contentious than the rumored five million dollar price tag of Pope’s design.⁸¹ Some critics offered alternatives to Theodore Roosevelt as more appropriate subjects of a national memorial on the last cardinal terminus of the Mall. Andrew Jackson or Thomas Jefferson came to some minds, although Democrats in Congress were rumored to favor one of their comrades—Grover Cleveland, perhaps?

⁷⁸ “Congress to Decide Roosevelt Site,” *New York Times*, December 13, 1925; *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1925*, 9-10.

⁷⁹ “Congress to Decide Roosevelt Site,” *New York Times*, December 13, 1925. As the *New York Times* reported, many Roosevelt supporters saw him as a unifier of the sections in addition to a unifier of the classes: “the son of a Northern father and a Southern mother became President of a ‘more perfect union.’”

⁸⁰ James R. Garfield’s description quoted in “Memorial for Roosevelt to Grace Potomac,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 13, 1925. See also, Stephenson, “Celebrating American Heroes,” 209-212.

⁸¹ “200-Foot Fountain Plan of Memorial Here to Roosevelt,” *Washington Post*, December 13, 1925. See also, Havig, “Presidential Images, History, and Homage,” 520-522; Stephenson, “Celebrating American Heroes,” 209.

Maybe the nation should honor recently departed Woodrow Wilson for his valiant struggle for righteousness and the League of Nations?⁸² In the face of rising opposition, the Association continued its campaign for the memorial, although it did change its strategy. Instead of actively pushing for the memorial, the Association resolved to “let the beauty and fitness of Mr. Pope’s design exercise their potency in mute persuasion.”⁸³ But clearly the situation did not look good for the RMA.

Outside of the controversy over the proposed memorial, the Association steamed ahead in promoting Roosevelt’s ideals to the nation throughout the mid-1920s. In 1925, despite the bleakness of its chances against Congress and vocal opponents, the RMA engaged in a struggle over the nation’s collective memory of TR against another federal entity, the Navy Department, in order to maintain its hegemony over Roosevelt’s memory. In 1922, the Navy Department declared October 27 to be “Navy Day” to celebrate America’s naval fleet on the birthday of one of the department’s staunchest supporters.⁸⁴ The controversy began October 24, 1924, when Hermann Hagedorn issued

⁸² *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1926*, 8; Havig, “Presidential Images, History, and Homage,” 524-525. Havig notes that “while the controversy did not become a raging national debate, and while the full Senate and House never had the opportunity to discuss or vote on the memorial proposal, substantial opposition to the plan developed.”

⁸³ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1927* (New York: Roosevelt Memorial Association, Inc., 1927), 3-4.

⁸⁴ For a full account of the origins and first Navy Day celebrations, see Ryan D. Wadle, “‘The Fourth Dimension of Naval Tactics’: The U.S. Navy and Public Relations, 1919-1939” (PhD diss., Texas A&M University, 2011), 146-159. According to Wadle, Navy Day originated with the Office of Naval Intelligence and not with Navy League president Robert Kelley, as the traditional narrative suggests. Wadle argues that the Navy Department needed it to look as though the idea came from the Navy League in order to avoid the appearance of “a blatant attempt at self-promotion,” 146-147. See also, “Birthday is Celebrated, Navy Day Exercises Also on Sea, Land and in Air,” *New York Times*, October 28, 1922; Stephenson, “Celebrating American Heroes,” 203. Stephenson also recounts the RMA’s push against Navy Day as an effort to maintain control over TR’s memory.

a plea to the Navy to move its celebrations to another day because of the limiting effect the linking of Roosevelt's birthday and Navy Day had on the nation's remembrances of this many-sided individual. "The readers of newspapers get a picture of Roosevelt as a patron saint of the navy, and that is all," Hagedorn complained; "the figure of Roosevelt is not augmented by the celebration of Navy Day on his birthday; it is restricted, diminished. His true significance is obscured."⁸⁵ The RMA could not allow a one-side interpretation of Roosevelt to dominate the day on which it wished to promote Rooseveltian virtues to all Americans—not just those who supported the Navy. "There are 364 other days in the year," Hagedorn argued, "let the nation devote one of the other 364 to the navy, to be the navy's own ... But let October 27 be and remain Roosevelt's own."⁸⁶ Responding to Hagedorn's letter, Marion Eppley, the National Chairman of the Navy Day celebrations, countered that "Oct. 27 was selected as the day best suited to call attention to the services of the navy to our country because President Roosevelt was the most eminent American who by work and act emphasized the part our navy plays in maintaining peace." Moreover, Eppley asserted, "The Navy League in making its choice of a day felt a personal linkage with President Roosevelt, since he was one of its founders in 1902. He thought so well of its purposes that sixteen years later he gave to it

⁸⁵ Hermann Hagedorn, Letter to the Editor of the *New York Times*, October 4, 1924.

⁸⁶ Hermann Hagedorn, Letter to the Editor of the *New York Times*, October 4, 1924; "Roosevelt Day and Navy Day," *Washington Post*, September 30, 1924. The *Washington Post* appears to support the RMA's position: "Navy Day without memories of Roosevelt would be a mockery. But Roosevelt Day confined to naval interests would be a dwarfed observance. Our patriotic calendar is not yet so overcrowded with memorial rubrics that we cannot afford room for two such splendid dates."

a portion of his Nobel Peace Prize.”⁸⁷ Even though the Navy Department and the Navy League held legitimate claims to Roosevelt’s memory, the RMA continued its efforts to force the Navy to make a change.

The following year, the RMA, worried that Navy Day ceremonies would eclipse the public’s perception of a many-sided Roosevelt, passed a formal resolution urging the Navy Department to choose another day:

the Board of Trustees of the Roosevelt Memorial Association, while expressing its entire sympathy with the efforts of the Navy Department to uphold the national defenses, call attention to the possible effect on the public mind of linking Mr. Roosevelt’s name on the anniversary of his birth with only one of many phases of the nation’s activities in which he exercised a beneficent and far-reaching influence.⁸⁸

Acting Secretary of the Navy Theodore Douglas Robinson replied that because of the advanced notice necessary to move the fleet for various celebrations, it would not be possible for the Navy Department to acquiesce to the Association’s request at this time.⁸⁹

Despite the brushoff from the Navy, the RMA insisted that the connection between Navy Day and Roosevelt’s birthday was not a trivial matter as the dual celebration would

⁸⁷ Marion Eppley, Letter to the Editor of the *New York Times*, October 20, 1924. Eppley continued that Roosevelt’s “personality was too powerful, his interest too wide, and his achievements too great for it to be possible to detract from them by celebrating Navy Day on his birthday.”

⁸⁸ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1925*, 30. The resolution states: “Whereas, the anniversary of the birth of Theodore Roosevelt has, at the request of the Navy Department, been widely observed in recent years as Navy Day, and Whereas, before the designation of October 27th as Navy Day, the anniversary had for several years been observed as a rallying day for all the friends of Roosevelt’s many-sided life and work, especially the girls and boys, and an occasion for consecration of their personal lives to the ideals of that true, well-rounded Americanism to which he gave himself throughout his great career, and Whereas, the observance of the anniversary as Navy Day naturally and inevitably tends either to push Roosevelt into the background or to emphasize one of many achievements at the expense of the others.”

⁸⁹ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1925*, 30. Theodore Douglas Robinson was TR’s nephew; he was the son of Douglas and Corinne Roosevelt Robinson.

effectively distill the bounty of Roosevelt’s personality and endeavors, especially for children who had no personal memories of the man: “The warm, many-sided personality, the wise statesman, the protagonist for national unity, for justice, for purity of public life, will gradually be overshadowed by a Big Stick.”⁹⁰ Although the Navy Department continued to celebrate Navy Day on October 27, the overt connection dwindled in later years and the RMA dropped its public opposition.

With the struggle against the Navy Department over Roosevelt’s birthday, the expansion of the Roosevelt Library, and the continuation of the Roosevelt Medals, the RMA had seemingly defended its hegemony over Roosevelt’s memory, but it still could not persuade Congress that the Roosevelt memorial belonged on the Tidal Basin site. In order for Pope’s design to assert its “beauty and fitness,” the RMA sent the design on a goodwill tour, but the persuasion was hardly “mute.” While its resolution languished in the Congress’s Committee on the Library, the RMA commissioned the construction of a scale model of Pope’s proposed memorial and placed it on exhibit for several months in its booth at the Sesqui-Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. To ensure the proper interpretation of the memorial and its heroic elements, the RMA employed Ms. Martha Miller, formerly of the staff of the WRMA, to explain the details and to distribute printed materials describing the RMA, its aims, and its activities. The model included a working miniature fountain whose delightful bubbling drew visitors to the booth. The Association earned a gold medal from the Sesqui-Centennial Commission for its efforts

⁹⁰ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1925*, 30-31. The quote continues: “Without reflecting in the slightest on the useful qualities of such a weapon, it is worth calling attention to the fact that it is not a Big Stick which appears on the Association’s official seal as a symbol of Roosevelt, but a Flaming Sword.”

along with a Diploma of Award for “Memorializing a great American, attractively presented.”⁹¹ After its successful exhibition in Philadelphia, the model of Pope’s design traveled to Washington, D.C., where the Association hoped it could persuade lawmakers to support its construction. Meanwhile the RMA exhibited Pope’s original drawings at the New York Architectural Exposition, the Trenton Architectural Exposition, the Philadelphia T Square Club, the Chicago Architectural League, and the University of Washington-Seattle, in an effort to encourage the nation’s professional architectural community—and Pope’s colleagues—to enter the fray on the side of the design.⁹²

Just when the RMA was enjoying its successes at the Philadelphia Exposition and the model and drawings were cultivating increased press coverage in various parts of the country, the RMA suddenly lost its bid for the Tidal Basin site. Representative John J. Boylan of New York City led the charge for a national memorial for Thomas Jefferson, a movement sparked by the RMA’s push to commemorate Theodore Roosevelt on the National Mall. “When I brought to the attention of the committee the neglect of the Congress to honor Thomas Jefferson appropriately,” Boylan explained, “the action carried no thought of disparagement to the memory of President Roosevelt.” But as a *New York Times* reporter interpreted from the debate, two main issues came to the forefront: first, Theodore Roosevelt had not been dead long enough; and, second, he

⁹¹ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1926*, 6-8; *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1927*, 16-17. For their part in the effort, John Russell Pope and John Donnelly & Sons—makers of the model—earned silver medals. See also, Collin, “The Image of Theodore Roosevelt in American History and Thought, 1885-1965,” 301. For more on the architectural community’s objections, see Havig, “Presidential Images, History, and Homage,” 524-526.

⁹² *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1927*, 3-4.

did not rank with the likes of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln and, therefore, did not deserve a place on the National Mall. Thomas Jefferson, however, possessed the lofty credentials necessary to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with America's greatest. The rediscovery of Thomas Jefferson gave Congress a viable alternative and allowed it to bypass TR without overtly rejecting him. The campaign to commemorate Roosevelt on the Tidal Basin came to an abrupt halt as Congress formally reserved the site for a memorial to the sage of Monticello.⁹³

Over the next several years, the Association continued to promote its activities and Roosevelt's memory throughout the country, but it had also quietly resolved to search for another option in its attempt to build a national Theodore Roosevelt memorial in the District of Columbia.⁹⁴ In the 1929 *Annual Report*, Hermann Hagedorn reiterated the necessity of a physical monument: "Such a memorial will transcend the personality of Roosevelt as the Lincoln Memorial transcends the personality of Lincoln, becoming a

⁹³ "Jefferson Monument to Have Precedence," *New York Times*, July 4, 1926; "Halt Memorial to Roosevelt," *New York Times*, May 14, 1926. Boylan stated: "This being the centenary year of Jefferson's death, as well as the 150th anniversary of his writing of the Declaration of Independence, many important men and women in all parts of the country noted the imminence of these two Jeffersonian anniversaries, and were impressed by the fact that, after a century and a half, Washington is still without a memorial to the great sage of Monticello." See also, Michael Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991), 449-450. One of the reasons Thomas Jefferson reappeared in the nation's consciousness at this time may be because of the publication of Claude G. Bowers's *Jefferson and Hamilton: The Struggle for Democracy in America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1925).

⁹⁴ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1928* (New York: Roosevelt Memorial Association, Inc., 1928), 9: "The situation in regard to the proposed Memorial in Washington is unchanged and has been made the subject of a special report to the Board." *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1929* (New York: Roosevelt Memorial Association, Inc., 1929), 5: "The project for a monumental memorial to Mr. Roosevelt in the national capital has been made the subject of a confidential report." *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1930* (New York: Roosevelt Memorial Association, Inc., 1930), 5: "Regarding the Monumental Memorial, a confidential report has been submitted to the Trustees."

symbol not of a man, a career or a list of achievements, but a point of view, a spiritual challenge.”⁹⁵ Theodore Roosevelt expressed in monumental form, Hagedorn asserted, would serve as a beacon to guide Americans on the path of righteousness.

In 1930, the RMA finally found its site. When Congress selected Jefferson over Roosevelt for the Potomac Park location, the RMA called upon the National Capital Park and Planning Commission and the Commission of Fine Arts to suggest other sites in the District of Columbia with the potential to host a national monumental memorial.⁹⁶ The commissions suggested several sites around the District, including (among others) a location near the terminus of East Capitol Street to the east of the Capitol Building; a high point on North Sixteenth Street at or near the junction of Alaska Avenue in the vicinity of Walter Reed Hospital; and Anolostan Island in the Potomac River between Arlington Memorial Bridge and Francis Scott Key Bridge.⁹⁷

On the opposite side of the Capitol from the National Mall, the East Capitol Street location possessed the potential for future expansion and was already home to several small parks and circles. Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital U. S. Grant, III, informed the RMA of a possible scheme to construct state buildings in the area, along with an industrial museum and athletic stadium on the

⁹⁵ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1929*, 18.

⁹⁶ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1931* (New York: Roosevelt Memorial Association Inc., 1931), 1-3. Letter from Charles W. Eliot to Hermann Hagedorn, June 8, 1929, Folder: Roosevelt Memorial (11/1923-12/1932), Box 36, National Capital Region, Subject Files, 1924-1951, Records of the National Park Service, Record Group 79, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD (hereafter cited as NPS Records).

⁹⁷ Letter from U. S. Grant, III to Hermann Hagedorn, September 23, 1929, Folder: Roosevelt Memorial (11/1923-12/1932), Box 36, National Capital Region, Subject Files, 1924-1951, NPS Records.

axis to the east of the Capitol Building, although no plans had been finalized at that point. A Roosevelt memorial at this location had the potential to pull the symbolic (pseudo-sacred) space of the National Mall through the Capitol and expand it further to the east. It could potentially connect Thomas Ball's *Emancipation Monument* (1876) to the Mall. In this context, the RMA would fulfill its desire to commemorate TR as a symbolic unifying force in American society. The East Capitol Street location, however, was the least desirable of the three main possibilities.⁹⁸

The site on the hilltop of North Sixteenth Street intrigued many as a more attractive option; it was also one that the Commission of Fine Arts had suggested prior to the RMA's selection of the Tidal Basin. The intersection of Sixteenth Street and Alaska Avenue sits on the northern end of the Tidal Basin-Washington Monument-White House axis, and its location near Rock Creek Park seemed especially appropriate, as the park was one of Theodore Roosevelt's favorite haunts during his presidency; he frequently hiked and rode horseback through its many wooded acres. Milton Medary, the Roosevelt Memorial Association's architectural advisor, hoped that the Association would seriously consider this location with its commanding view of the city. As Medary

⁹⁸ Letter from M. B. Medary to Charles Moore, June 14, 1929, Folder: Roosevelt Memorial (11/1923-12/1932), Box 36, National Capital Region, Subject Files, 1924-1951, NPS Records. As the chairman of the Commission of Fine Arts, Charles Moore wrote to Milton B. Medary, "Experience tells me that the States will not build in Washington until they have satisfied their needs at home ... Also, that when the industrial museum comes it will be under the Smithsonian and will be located south of the Mall, perhaps on the cross-axis." Medary replied that any construction of state buildings in the area "would require a very considerable widening of East Capitol Street and a change in the intervening square, if any vista relating it with the Capitol was to be expected." Medary remained doubtful that the state buildings would be constructed as a concentrated scheme: "L'Enfant's proposal to scatter them about the city was frankly stated by him as a means of starting development over the whole area by stimulating these centers through state interest. To build such structures in a row suggests too strongly the exposition idea." For more on Thomas Ball's statue, see Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 77-84.

asserted, the site “would eventually be an important entrance to Washington from the north ... both down the great axis to 16th Street or informally through Rock Creek Park.”⁹⁹

Both the Sixteenth Street and East Capitol Street locations, however, lay outside of “the center of interest to visitors at the present time,” as these areas had yet to be significantly developed.¹⁰⁰ According to Medary, “As far as I could learn, the [RMA’s] only objection has been based on looking at the map and concluding that it was too far out of the center of interest in Washington.”¹⁰¹ The RMA, which had hoped to place the memorial to Theodore Roosevelt in the very heart of the nation’s capital, refused to relegate him to the periphery of the city in an area not frequented by tourists and where future development was unclear.

Analostan Island, on the other hand, possessed several attractive qualities. First, the McMillan Commission of 1901 included the island in its program as an area of particular interest, as did the National Capital Park and Planning Commission. As U. S. Grant, III, noted, “The adoption of the Arlington Memorial Bridge and the Mount

⁹⁹ Letter from M. B. Medary to Charles Moore, June 14, 1929, Folder: Roosevelt Memorial (11/1923-12/1932), Box 36, National Capital Region, Subject Files, 1924-1951, NPS Records.

¹⁰⁰ Letter from M. B. Medary to Charles Moore, June 14, 1929, Folder: Roosevelt Memorial (11/1923-12/1932), Box 36, National Capital Region, Subject Files, 1924-1951, NPS Records.

¹⁰¹ Letter from M. B. Medary to Charles Moore, June 14, 1929, Folder: Roosevelt Memorial (11/1923-12/1932), Box 36, National Capital Region, Subject Files, 1924-1951, NPS Records; Charles Moore to M. B. Medary, June 12, 1929, Folder: Roosevelt Memorial (11/1923-12/1932), Box 36, National Capital Region, Subject Files, 1924-1951, NPS Records. As Moore stated, “In seeking a new site they [the RMA] have reached only a negative conclusion—that they will not accept the suggestion of the Fine Arts Commission in favor of the Sixteenth Street site between Rock Creek Park and the Medical Education Center [Walter Reed Hospital]. I go there frequently and am constantly impressed by the mistake the Roosevelt Commission are making in not securing it. However, that is their business.”

Vernon Memorial Highway projects, both terminating on Columbia Island, have made absolutely necessary the rescue of the adjacent Analostan Island from the industrial development from which it was originally zoned.”¹⁰² Additionally, the wooded island served as the backdrop for the Lincoln Memorial, thereby protecting the beauty and grandeur of the civic landscape of the National Mall. Finally, the island could be preserved in its natural state as an appropriate memorial to Theodore Roosevelt, the nation’s first modern conservationist president and a man who found joy, renewal, and solace in the world’s wild places.

The RMA remained skeptical, however, and Hermann Hagedorn questioned the island’s relation to the other Potomac parks. In an effort to situate the island within the National Capital Parks, Medary recalled explaining “at some length its relation to Columbia Island and the possible extension up river through a corner of Roslyn and also the complete connection of Rock Creek Park with Potomac Park.” As Medary described, “Rock Creek Park would swing directly out of the mouth of the Creek along the Potomac to the Lincoln Memorial, and that all park driving from Potomac to Rock Creek Park would pass in full view of a memorial on Alalostin [sic] Island.”¹⁰³ Unlike

¹⁰² Letter from U. S. Grant, III, to Mrs. Edward R. Padgett, December 1, 1931, Folder: Roosevelt Memorial (11/1923-12/1932), Box 36, National Capital Region, Subject Files, 1924-1951, NPS Records; Letter from U. S. Grant, III, to Attorney General, May 31, 1932, Folder: Roosevelt Memorial (11/1923-12/1932), Box 36, National Capital Region, Subject Files, 1924-1951, NPS Records. As Grant wrote to the Attorney General, “This Island was considered so essential a part of the park system that the National Capital Park and Planning Commission first attempted to purchase it from its owners, the Washington Gas Light Company.” The Washington Gas Light Company had planned to use the island as the site for storage tanks. See also, Arleyn A. Levee, “An Enduring Design Legacy: Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. in the Nation’s Capital,” in *Civic Art: A Centennial History of the U. S. Commission of Fine Arts*, ed. Thomas E. Luebke (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Commission of Fine Arts, 2013), 52-53.

¹⁰³ Letter from M. B. Medary to Charles Eliot, June 11, 1929, Folder: Roosevelt Memorial (11/1923-12/1932), Box 36, National Capital Region, Subject Files, 1924-1951, NPS Records.

the East Capitol Street and Sixteenth Street locations, therefore, Analostan Island, Medary noted, “would be directly in the center of interest, and ... it would remove a menace on the one hand and add another element of importance to the park development of Washington.”¹⁰⁴ Former Chairman of the Commission of Fine Arts Charles Moore suggested that “If a large area of several acres were taken it might be an interesting project to make a development so fine and so unusual as to command respect and admiration.”¹⁰⁵ In other words, the island offered the space to make a statement and the location put it in view of the National Mall.

With a meeting of the Board of Trustees coming up in October 1929, the Roosevelt Memorial Association needed to make a final decision on whether or not to pursue a memorial for Theodore Roosevelt in Washington, D.C. After consulting architect John Russell Pope on the island’s memorial potential, the RMA made its choice.¹⁰⁶ By January of the following year, with the blessings of the National Capital Park and Planning Commission and the Commission of Fine Arts, the RMA purchased Analostan Island with the purpose of constructing a national memorial to Theodore

¹⁰⁴ Letter from M. B. Medary to Charles Eliot, June 14, 1929, Folder: Roosevelt Memorial (11/1923-12/1932), Box 36, National Capital Region, Subject Files, 1924-1951, NPS Records.

¹⁰⁵ Letter from Charles Moore to M. B. Medary, June 12, 1929, Folder: Roosevelt Memorial (11/1923-12/1932), Box 36, National Capital Region, Subject Files, 1924-1951, NPS Records; Letter from Anson Phelps Stokes to Hermann Hagedorn, December 7, 1931, Folder: Roosevelt Memorial (11/1923-12/1932), Box 36, National Capital Region, Subject Files, 1924-1951, NPS Records. Stokes cautioned against a huge memorial: “The island itself becomes the main memorial with ... some extremely beautiful monument with appropriate inscriptions, but any attempt to make something very impressive through its size on Analostan Island would in my judgment almost inevitably be a failure.” Emphasis in the original.

¹⁰⁶ Letter from T. J. Young to Charles W. Eliot, October 25, 1929, Folder: Roosevelt Memorial (11/1923-12/1932), Box 36, National Capital Region, Subject Files, 1924-1951, NPS Records.

Roosevelt.¹⁰⁷ “Under present plans,” the *Washington Post* reported, “the island will be kept in its rustic simplicity in keeping with the simplicity of the late President.” In May 1932, the *New York Times* announced that “It is the present intention of the trustees [of the RMA] to preserve as much of its wild and wooded character as possible, opening up footpaths and bridle paths only, and affording no access to automobiles, which in these latter days swarm like lobbyists about the capital. Birds will be welcome, however, as Roosevelt would have wished.”¹⁰⁸ As these reports suggest, the change of venue for the Roosevelt memorial from a cardinal point on the National Mall to a wild, uninhabited island in the Potomac River immediately altered the commemorators’ representation of Roosevelt from the great unifying nationalist to the bird-loving conservationist.

In the East Room of the White House, President Herbert Hoover formally accepted the island as a gift from the RMA to the American people in December 1932.

¹⁰⁷ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1932* (New York: Roosevelt Memorial Association, Inc., 1932), 1-3. The RMA purchased the island for \$364,000 in October 1931. *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1931*, 1-3; “Island in Potomac to Honor Roosevelt,” *New York Times*, October 14, 1931; “Analostan Island is Officially Sold to Memorial Body,” *Washington Post*, October 14, 1931; “\$364,000 Sale of Analostan Island Signed,” *Washington Post*, October 4, 1931. On the condemnation proceedings, the *Washington Post* reported: “Some time ago proceedings were started against the island by the Attorney General’s office at the request of the National Capital Park & Planning Commission, which wanted to assure itself that the island would become a part of the Federal park development scheme.” The government dropped the condemnation suit upon the finalization of the RMA’s purchase of the island. *RMA Annual Report, 1932*: “In the plans for the development of Washington the Island is regarded in a sense as a gateway to the wild territory along the river which was the scene of President Roosevelt’s favorite tramping trips. It lies, in fact, directly opposite the mouth of Rock Creek. The Island is largely solid rock and provides, therefore, excellent footing for any structures which might be designed for it.” See also, Havig, “Presidential Images, History and Homage,” 529-530; Stephenson, “Celebrating American Heroes,” 214. Both Havig and Stephenson note the transition in representation from nationalist to naturalist.

¹⁰⁸ “Analostan Island Deed to be Given President Today,” *Washington Post*, December 12, 1932; “Roosevelt Island,” *New York Times*, May 22, 1932; “Analostan Island, Named Roosevelt, Accepted by U.S.,” *Washington Post*, December 13, 1932; “Roosevelt Shrine Deed to Nation,” *New York Times*, December 13, 1932. Edith Roosevelt is reported to have called the new site for her husband’s memorial “a dream come true.”

The newly renamed Roosevelt Island would be maintained “as a natural park for the recreation and enjoyment of the public.” The bill also ensured that the Roosevelt Memorial Association would be permitted to construct a memorial on the island—with the approval of the Commission of Fine Arts and the National Capital Parks and Planning Commission. Additionally, the bill required the RMA’s consent for any improvements on the island.¹⁰⁹ In an intimate ceremony attended by First Lady Lou Hoover, Alice Roosevelt Longworth, Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson, and General John J. Pershing, along with members of the Roosevelt Memorial Association, President Hoover proclaimed that Roosevelt’s “accomplishments will bulk large in the pages of history but equally he will be remembered for his personality and his character. His was a virile energy, an abundant optimism and courage, a greatness of vision and a faith in his country’s future which knew no boundaries of limiting doubts.” The island memorial, Hoover declared, was a fitting tribute to a man who loved nature and the outdoors. Moreover, Hoover stated, “This wooded island, set in the midst of the Potomac, is forever within view of the Lincoln Memorial, the Washington Monument, the Capitol and the White House.”¹¹⁰ Although the RMA could not secure a place for Roosevelt on the National Mall, it selected a space within view of the symbolic heart of the nation, thereby maintaining the connection.

¹⁰⁹ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1932*, 2-3.

¹¹⁰ “Analostan Island, Named Roosevelt, Accepted by U.S.,” *Washington Post*, December 13, 1932; “Roosevelt Shrine Deed to Nation,” *New York Times*, December 13, 1932; “Roosevelt Island,” *Washington Post*, December 14, 1932.

But the winds of change were already blowing and ominous storm clouds of economic depression had begun to darken much of the nation.¹¹¹ With the island itself secured as a living memorial to Theodore Roosevelt in the District of Columbia, the Association faced a lull in its prominence and ability to promote the ideals of TR to the nation. In early 1933, Herbert Hoover, the outgoing president, signed a bill officially changing the island's name to "Theodore Roosevelt Island," to distinguish its honoree from the President-elect. Another Roosevelt, the new occupant of the White House, dominated headlines as the Association struggled to maintain TR's relevance during the Great Depression.¹¹²

The Association continued its activities, but the Annual Reports revealed the comfortable monotony of the Association's output and yet, a lingering vigilance, as the Association began losing its founding members to death with increasing rapidity. Hagedorn warned of the uncertainty of the future: "This Report marks the conclusion of the first constructive period of the Association. What later years may bring no member of the Board would be bold enough to predict."¹¹³ With all three aims essentially achieved, the RMA settled into a period of "mellow uniformity of middle age."¹¹⁴ The

¹¹¹ "Roosevelt Island," *Washington Post*, December 14, 1932: "When the Nation is in financial straits, as at present, it is difficult to give attention to national shrines."

¹¹² "House Names Island 'Theodore Roosevelt,'" *Washington Post*, February 8, 1933; "An Oft-Named Island," *New York Times*, May 7, 1933. See also, Collin, "The Image of Theodore Roosevelt in American History and Thought, 1885-1965," 333. Collin argues that "it is impossible to overstate the effect Franklin D. Roosevelt's election had upon the image of Theodore Roosevelt."

¹¹³ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1932*, 11.

¹¹⁴ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1936*, 1; Collin, "The Image of Theodore Roosevelt in American History and Thought, 1885-1965," 341-342. Collin notes that 1930 was the last year that the RMA printed the Annual Report; after that year, it was mimeographed. "But though lean

story of the Association and its quest for a national monumental memorial to Theodore Roosevelt does not end here, however; after a period of dormancy brought on by the Great Depression and World War II, it would pick up the topic again during the nation's celebration of the centennial of Roosevelt's birth in 1958. A new series of trials and tribulations greeted the Association as it resumed its mission.

The RMA served (and continues to serve) as a living memorial to Theodore Roosevelt.¹¹⁵ With its branches spread across the country and its impressive endowment, the Roosevelt Memorial Association had the ability to influence millions of Americans and the network through which to shape the nation's collective memory of TR. Because the organization formed quickly after Roosevelt's death, the RMA succeeded in establishing itself as the gatekeeper to his memory and recognized its mission as a duty to the American people:

Millions, in whose hearts the ideals of Roosevelt burn brightly, and who deeply feel the need of memorials which shall be shrines and points of pilgrimage, nevertheless look to this Association for something besides a monument, a park or a museum. They look to it for leadership; not political leadership, but moral leadership. They want to see more of Roosevelt's spirit in American life, and they want the Memorial Association to lead them in putting it there.¹¹⁶

The Association used Roosevelt as a symbol through which to educate the public on the nature of citizenship, Americanism, and civic mindedness. By exalting Roosevelt, the

years had descended on the Roosevelt Memorial Association," Collin remarks, "1940 and the clouds of crisis seemed to revive the old evangelistic fire and with the imminent publication of *The Theodore Roosevelt Cyclopaedia*."

¹¹⁵ *Presentation of the Purpose and the Accomplishments of the Theodore Roosevelt Associations*, 19. "This living memorial, built on the personality of Theodore Roosevelt and making available his wisdom and understanding, should become a spiritual challenge to the leadership of coming generations."

¹¹⁶ *The Roosevelt Memorial Association, A Report of Activities, 1919-1921*, 35-36.

RMA promoted values it believed to be waning in American society, culture, and politics: unselfish service to humanity, devotion to country, and integrity in personal action. Working with the WRMA, the RMA inculcated Rooseveltian ideals in the nation's children. For the RMA, "The timelessness of his wisdom, the reservoir of his moral and physical courage, the warmth of his charm, the onrush of his force, the depth of his understanding and his insatiable quest for justice, give us a rich, colorful personality of heroic model, around which character building may be carried on for countless generations."¹¹⁷

The RMA had the mechanisms in place to challenge alternative interpretations and one-sided simplifications of TR's life and work. In an effort to attract as many Americans as possible to the message of Rooseveltian virtues, the RMA encouraged a conception of Roosevelt as a complex, many-sided individual. The broad banner made room for Americans from all walks of life. The scope and volume of the RMA's enterprises drowned out other voices of remembrance until the 1930s when Franklin Roosevelt overshadowed Theodore Roosevelt. But the ambition to create a national monumental memorial to TR in the District of Columbia re-emerged in a new era.

¹¹⁷ *Presentation of the Purpose and the Accomplishments of the Theodore Roosevelt Associations*, 19; Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 173.

CHAPTER III

COMMEMORATING THE WEST: EQUESTRIAN STATUES IN PORTLAND AND MINOT

When novelist Owen Wister penned his tribute to his friend Theodore Roosevelt, he remarked, “It is the great West to which I often think he belongs more than to the East where he was born.”¹ In this statement, Wister captured the popular American sentiment that—despite his privileged upbringing in the eastern centers of learning and culture; his travels to South America, Africa, and Europe; and his associations with royals, aristocrats, and diplomats—Roosevelt was a denizen of the great expanse of the mythic American West, the legendary home of romanticized cowboys and unrestricted vistas. Wister’s placement of Roosevelt in the land of sagebrush and cattle epitomizes Americans’ representation of TR as the cowboy president and confirms the long-established connection between Roosevelt and the West. That the Roosevelt who was born in the East and educated at Harvard became overshadowed by the man who sought regeneration and rehabilitation in the West testifies to the influence his experiences in the region had on both the remainder of his life and Americans’ collective memory. Wister’s homage to Roosevelt and the West also reflected in the sculptural commemorations of TR the Rough Rider—the cowboy removed from the West in service to his country.

¹ Quoted in John A. Barsness, “Theodore Roosevelt as Cowboy: The Virginian as Jacksonian Man,” *American Quarterly* 21, no. 3 (Autumn 1969): 609-619, 611; Owen Wister, *The Story of a Friendship, 1880-1919* (New York: Macmillan, 1930), 73.

By emphasizing Roosevelt's connection with the West through the image of the mounted Rough Rider, the patron and artist of these equestrian statues bridged elements of the East and the West. This balance enabled the patron, artist, and the American public to juxtapose the East in the 1920s—the rapid industrialization and booming business environment—with the seemingly unchanging status of the American West. Although the “closing” of the frontier and the perceived loss of the West represented for some a diminishing of the counterbalancing force necessary to moderate the excesses of the East, the maintenance of a mythical western Roosevelt illustrates the continued ability of the region to influence American society and culture. The growing popularity of the outdoors and regenerative sojourns to the West also played key roles in combatting the degeneracy of modern urban society, the perceived decay of American masculinity, and the anxiety of post-World War I America. This is not the tale of TR, the gallant Rough Rider, whose courageous martial exploits helped to ensure American victory during the Spanish-American War. Rather it is the story of how Americans used the western image of TR to express their concerns over the rapidity of change in the 1920s, especially nostalgia for the closing of the West, along with anxiety of postwar American society, culture, and politics. In two western cities, the patron and artist illustrated the values they believed the West represented and presented this image to contemporary and future generations; through these didactic devices, they wished to regenerate American society and masculinity just as TR had regenerated himself in the West and in war. Commemorators employed the memory of the western Roosevelt to bond their modern America to a familiar but oft-embellished tale of the Old West—as

revealed with special clarity by a longtime friend from his days in Dakota Territory—Dr. Henry Waldo Coe of Portland, Oregon.

Henry Waldo Coe was born November 4, 1857, in Waupun, Wisconsin, and spent his boyhood in Morristown, Minnesota. After studying at the University of Minnesota, Coe completed his medical training at the University of Michigan and Long Island College Hospital in New York. In 1880, Coe relocated to Mandan, Dakota Territory where he began his medical practice. In addition to numerous medical organizations, Coe was active in politics, serving as mayor of Mandan as well as the first member of the territorial legislature from west of the Missouri River. During his time in Mandan, Coe first met Theodore Roosevelt. Like many, Coe found Roosevelt extremely amiable and it did not take long for the pair to discover a shared love of politics and the outdoors. Consequently, Coe traveled occasionally to Little Missouri (Medora) to hunt with Roosevelt on his ranches in the western part of the territory.²

In 1891 Coe moved his family to Portland, Oregon, where he continued to be involved in various medical associations, the Scottish Rite and Shrine Orders of Masonry, and the Congregational Church. Coe's progressive ideas about medicine led him to establish Oregon's first sanitarium for "nervous and mental diseases," Morningside Hospital, which operated into the middle of the twentieth century. Remaining active in politics in his adopted state, Coe served as Portland's state senator

² "Biographical Sketch," Box 1, Folder 2, Henry Waldo Coe correspondence, Ax112, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon Libraries, Eugene, Oregon (hereafter cited as HWC Papers); Howard Roberts Lamar, *Dakota Territory, 1861-1889: A Study of Frontier Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966). Dakota Territory was organized in 1861 and included large portions of present-day Montana and Wyoming. In 1868, the Territory was reduced to the current boundaries of the Dakotas; the states of North and South Dakota were admitted to the union on November 2, 1889.

and attended five consecutive Republican national conventions as either a delegate or an alternate. Coe also maintained his relationship with Roosevelt during his presidency and visited the White House on several occasions. At Roosevelt's urging, Coe actively raised funds in Oregon for William Howard Taft's 1908 presidential bid. His only separation from the Republican Party occurred in 1912 when he followed Roosevelt out of the Republican National Convention to participate in the first Progressive National Convention in Chicago. In 1916, Coe reluctantly joined the other Progressive committeemen in endorsing the Republican nominee, Charles Evans Hughes, after an unsuccessful attempt to persuade Roosevelt to accept a second Progressive Party nomination for the presidency.³

Within months of Roosevelt's death, Coe conceived of a plan to erect a memorial statue to portray his friend and hero.⁴ Although Coe initially wished to depict Roosevelt as he knew him in Dakota, he soon discovered that most Americans conjured up not the scrawny, sickly young man Coe remembered from the Badlands, but rather the robust reformer who served the country as soldier, statesman, and president. Following consultations with the Roosevelt family, Coe determined that the best compromise was to commemorate Roosevelt as a Spanish-American War soldier. By portraying Roosevelt in this manner he would be able to "retain the spirit and life of the west and

³ "Biographical Sketch," HWC Papers, Box 1, Folder 2, HWC Papers. See also, Henry Waldo Coe to Theodore Roosevelt, June 12, 1916, Box 1, Folder 3, HWC Papers.

⁴ "Statue of Theodore Roosevelt to be Unveiled Here Soon," (Portland) *Oregonian*, April 30, 1922. Coe was also a charter member of the Roosevelt Memorial Association.

still incorporate the characteristics of the man, who served the public so long.”⁵ Coe would leave it to others to honor Roosevelt the statesman, the president, and the conservationist. Explaining his selection from Roosevelt’s multifaceted personality, Coe told the [Portland] *Oregonian*, “There have been a hundred different Roosevelts from youth to the day of his death. Others will depict him in his better-known years, but I selected the military period when he led his troops out of the west to set Cuba free.”⁶ By commemorating this Roosevelt, Coe combined the ethos of the West with one of the most celebrated and recognizable incarnations of the man.

The 1898 outbreak of the Spanish-American War allowed Roosevelt to strengthen his association with the West as a leader of the Rough Riders.⁷ Reporting on the portrayal of Roosevelt the soldier, the *Oregonian* emphasized the connection between the Rough Riders and westerners: “As a rough rider of the plains, Roosevelt is presented to the eye in the character that has endeared him to western hearts. As the rough-rider balks at no obstacles and flinches from no hardships, so did Roosevelt take his course through life.”⁸ From the effeminate dandy to the rugged individual living the strenuous life on the plains, Roosevelt and his biographers contributed to the story of his adaptation to the challenging environment and his interactions with westerners.⁹

⁵ “Statue of Theodore Roosevelt to be Unveiled Here Soon,” *Oregonian*, April 30, 1922.

⁶ Henry Waldo Coe, “Roosevelt Family Help with Advice on Statue,” *Oregonian*, November 12, 1922.

⁷ Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 190.

⁸ “Statue of Theodore Roosevelt to be Unveiled Here Soon,” *Oregonian*, April 30, 1922.

⁹ Richard Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), 37-38. As Slotkin states, “the mythic subtext of Roosevelt’s

Roosevelt's experiences as a northern plains rancher—widely publicized in his numerous books and articles, including *Hunting Trips of a Ranchman* (1885) and *Ranch Life and the Hunting Trail* (1888)—were reduced by time and simplicity of storytelling into the image of the cowboy hero.¹⁰ Throughout his political career, Roosevelt emphasized his brief residency in the West, his connection with the hardy frontiersman, and the philosophical and ideological changes that resulted from his exposure to the unforgiving plains environment.

Ultimately, however, it was the image of the wild and wooly cowboy that struck a chord with the American public—a representation that for good or ill clung to Roosevelt for the rest of his life and highlighted after his death.¹¹ TR was proud that he had tested himself against the western environment and had held his own with the hardened men of the region. He embraced both the image of the prototypical western

account is a version of the theme of regeneration-through-regression—here, the passage of a highly civilized man through a revivifying return to the life of an earlier historical ‘stage.’” For more on how Roosevelt's image as a western rancher, cowboy, and soldier were held up as a model for America's youth, see Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 97, 170, 209; Gerald Franklin Roberts, “The Strenuous Life: The Cult of Manliness in the Era of Theodore Roosevelt” (PhD diss., Michigan State University, 1970), 138, 142, 144. On the development of the Roosevelt legend in the 1920s, see Richard Collin, “The Image of Theodore Roosevelt in American History and Thought, 1885-1965” (PhD diss., New York University, 1966), especially Chapter 5.

¹⁰ Barsness, “Theodore Roosevelt as Cowboy,” 610. See also, Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation*, 36, 38. Slotkin cites TR's multi-volume *The Winning of the West* (1889-1896), *The Wilderness Hunter* (1893), and *Theodore Roosevelt: An Autobiography* (1913) as additional examples. Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 176; G. Edward White, *The Eastern Establishment and the Western Experience: The West of Frederic Remington, Theodore Roosevelt, and Owen Wister* (1968; repr., Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989), 152. White describes how TR used his books to promote a connection with the West.

¹¹ Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation*, 38. The image of TR the cowboy was more frequently used in political cartoons than any other representation, both during his lifetime and after. See also, White, *The Eastern Establishment and the Western Experience*, 144.

masculine hero, as well as that of the mythic cowboy.¹² During the post-Civil War era, the cowhand who worked the open range had a less than favorable reputation, but as Americans in the late nineteenth century began to wax poetic about the spiritual and mythic significance of his disappearing region, the cowboy benefited from a romanticized whitewash of his faults. The cowboy (with a little help from Theodore Roosevelt, Owen Wister, Frederic Remington, and others) became the knight of the prairie, “the aristocracy of the plains.”¹³

Roosevelt played a significant role in altering the image of the American cowboy through his publications and speeches. During one of his first trips out west, Roosevelt described the average ranch hand: “They are smaller and less muscular than the wielders of ax and pick; but they are hardy and self-reliant as any men who ever breathed—with bronzed, set faces, and keen eyes that look all the world straight in the face without flinching as they flash out from under the broad-brimmed hats.”¹⁴ Later in life, TR vividly (or romantically) recalled the hardy plainsmen: “Sinewy, hardy, self-reliant, their life forces them to be both daring and adventurous, and the passing over

¹² Barsness, “Theodore Roosevelt as Cowboy,” 610-611, 617. As Barsness argues, Roosevelt “defined his personal image as that of the western hero—not only the western hero of the physical and public image but the mythic image for which the cowboy . . . has come to stand.” Additionally, Barsness connects Roosevelt, especially as portrayed by his biographers, to the image of Owen Wister’s *The Virginian* (1901): “The image of Roosevelt in the guise of the cowboy, is already constructed, ready-made to the hand of the scribes, centered about the figure of the hero of San Juan Hill, who is only the cowboy removed from the West in defense of his country. And this hero, in all the accounts, is a dead ringer for the Virginian—except for the spectacles.” The American public may have more readily subscribed to the image of TR as the frontier/western hero because of the precedent of an earlier trailblazing leader of men, Andrew Jackson.

¹³ Robert B. Athearn, *The Mythic West in Twentieth-Century America* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1986), 23, 257; Wister, quoted in Roberts, “The Strenuous Life,” 151, see also, 148.

¹⁴ Roosevelt quoted in Roberts, “The Strenuous Life,” 148.

their heads of a few years leaves printed on their faces certain lines which tell of the dangers quietly confronted and hardships uncomplainingly endured.”¹⁵ How the lowly cowhand became a knight in chaps and boots is a bit of a mystery. Dime novels of the late nineteenth century introduced the type and were soon followed by the enormously popular western novels of Owen Wister, Zane Grey, and others, who reconstructed the cowboy into the hero of the plains.¹⁶ The supposed closing of the frontier at the turn of the century, along with nostalgia for the West that remained strong well into the 1920s, transformed the cowboy’s image permanently. By associating himself with the frontiersmen and cowboys of the plains and including them in the First Volunteer Cavalry, Theodore Roosevelt employed the shiny new image of the knight on horseback, the gentlemen of the plains, in contrast with the real ranch hands of the West—underpaid, uneducated, and unsophisticated.¹⁷

Roosevelt frequently expressed his admiration not only for the cowboys, but for the other hardy residents of the West as well. During a vice-presidential campaign stop in 1900, Theodore Roosevelt confessed to a crowd in Bismarck, North Dakota that “I had studied a lot about men and things before I saw you fellows, but it was only when I

¹⁵ Roosevelt quoted in H. W. Brands, *T.R.: The Last Romantic* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), 187, 209. According to Brands, the West gave TR a sense of romance—a myth shared by much of the American population.

¹⁶ Roberts, “The Strenuous Life,” 148-150; Athearn, *The Mythic West in Twentieth-Century America*, 168, 177, 265. Athearn describes how the cowboy’s image improved from an illiterate wage-earner to the nobleman of the plains. On the contributions of Roosevelt, Wister, and Remington, see Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation*, 95; White, *The Eastern Establishment and the Western Experience*, 200. On Zane Grey and other western novelists, see Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation*, 211.

¹⁷ Barsness, “Theodore Roosevelt as Cowboy,” 612.

came here that I began to know anything or to measure men rightly.”¹⁸ Although this seems to be the kind of rhetoric that a skilled politician would use to curry favor with a population of voters who prided themselves on their hardiness, individualism, and manliness, it also illustrates Roosevelt’s firmly held belief that the men of the West were truly men. It was against this standard that TR measured not only the men of his class in the East, but himself as well.¹⁹ For Roosevelt, the mythic West represented the undisputed realm of men, where men competed with one another and collaborated against the grueling environmental conditions.²⁰

In selecting the western cowboys, ranchers, and frontiersmen for the First Volunteer Cavalry, Roosevelt acknowledged these men as the heirs of the masculine

¹⁸ Roosevelt quoted in David H. Burton, “The Influence of the American West on the Imperialist Philosophy of Theodore Roosevelt,” *Arizona and the West* 4, no. 1 (Spring 1962): 5-26, 24; White, *The Eastern Establishment and the Western Experience*, 83. White claims that Roosevelt’s careful observations of the western landscape and people were part of his conscious effort to become a westerner.

¹⁹ Arnaldo Testi, “The Gender of Reform Politics: Theodore Roosevelt and the Culture of Masculinity,” *Journal of American History* 81, no. 4 (Mar., 1995): 1509-1533, 1517. Testi argues that, “The men with whom he wished to measure himself were not of his social class. They were neither his fellow Harvard students nor the young upper-class friends from New York who shared his lifestyle and intellectual habits. The ‘real’ men were the coarse boys who had humiliated him in the carriage during his adolescence, his boxing and riding instructors, the Rough Riders he would lead in Cuba, the lower-class party politicians from the metropolitan slums, the prairie cowboys.” See also, Brands, *T.R.*, 59, 61, 83. Brands describes how TR measured himself against other men.

²⁰ Testi, “The Gender of Reform Politics,” 1518; Athearn, *The Mythic West in Twentieth-Century America*, 228-229. According to Athearn, it is not clear whether the big rivers of the West—the Mississippi and Missouri—acted as a screen, only filtering through those manly, hardy souls who could survive or if the climate and landscape could shape even the scrawniest, effete specimen of humanity into a rugged, weathered individual. Edward Tabor Linenthal, *Changing Images of the Warrior Hero in America: A History of Popular Symbolism* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1982), 4. The masculine nature of the cowboy was not limited to the influence of his surroundings, however; it also included an element of masculine ideals passed down from generation to generation through the image of the man on horseback—be he chevalier or cowboy. According to Linenthal, the “chevalier,” or man on horseback, is one of the archetypal warriors, one found repeatedly throughout history. George L. Mosse, *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 3-4, 23, 34-35, 115.

Indian-fighting tradition that had developed on America's retreating frontiers.²¹ The term "Rough Riders" had been used to describe the skilled, daring, and slightly unruly western horsemen in dime novels prior to 1880; Buffalo Bill Cody later adopted the label for The Wild West's European tour, thereby distinguishing his horsemen as part of an American tradition.²² The inclusion of western cowboys in the regiment emphasized the unique qualities and values of westerners as well as the identification of cowboys as products of the American experience.²³ In his book on the unit, Roosevelt praised the Rough Riders, especially the western cowboys, as the embodiment of the western spirit: "They were accustomed to the use of firearms, accustomed to taking care of themselves in the open; they were intelligent and self-reliant; they possessed hardihood and endurance and physical prowess, and, above all, they had the fighting edge, the cool and resolute fighting temper."²⁴ Although volunteers from across the country served as Rough Riders, the inference of mythic cowboys riding out of the West to liberate Cuba

²¹ Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 191; Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1973); Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation*, 14. As described in Chapter I, Slotkin's trilogy describes the regeneration through violence on the frontier. An important aspect of the Frontier Myth is the borderlands where Indian/White and wilderness/civilization come together.

²² Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation*, 79. Buffalo Bill Cody used the term, "Rough Riders" to describe his "White American horseman." See also, Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 191; White, *The Eastern Establishment and the Western Experience*, 158-159. Although Roosevelt's regiment was not officially called the "Rough Riders," Americans bestowed the nickname on the unit acknowledging the connection between the mounted riflemen of the West and the imperialistic fighters heading off to Cuba and the Philippines.

²³ White, *The Eastern Establishment and the Western Experience*, 158-159, 164. White notes that, "newspaper correspondents and other commentators of the times focused upon the cowboy volunteers both as products of the western experience and as sons of the American heritage." According to White, the egalitarian and ruggedly individualistic cowboy volunteers—the "sons of the American heritage"—became symbols of American democracy and society. See also, Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation*, 101.

²⁴ Roosevelt quoted in "Statue of Theodore Roosevelt to be Unveiled Here Soon," *Oregonian*, April 30, 1922; Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899).

led Roosevelt, Coe, and other Americans to perceive the unit as a product of the American West.

The war with Spain occurred nearly simultaneously with the apparent closing of the frontier. When the 1890 census declared that no discernible frontier line existed within the continental United States, historian Frederick Jackson Turner argued that one of the defining features of American society, culture, and civilization was gone and that a new chapter of American history would begin.²⁵ Additionally, Turner submitted that certain traits were representative of frontier life, including individualism, strength, ingeniousness, materialism, and exuberance.²⁶ For many Americans after 1900, these traits still persisted in the land out west, uncorrupted by modernity, urbanization, mass immigration, or industrialization. But the closing of the frontier implied a threat to the status quo; the increasing scarcity of free land may lead to even more devastating effects on American civilization, including a decline in the democratic ideals of Americans—virtues that had been reinforced by the continuing presence (if constantly retreating) frontier.²⁷

²⁵ Roberts, “The Strenuous Life,” 134. There is considerable debate on a number of issues: whether or not the frontier settlement period was actually over; whether Turner was correct in his assessment of the frontier’s influence on the shaping or development of American society; and whether Turner had or had not implied that the frontier West served as a safety valve for the urban areas of the East. For the purposes of this dissertation, it is sufficient that Americans in the first decades of the twentieth century *believed* that the frontier had closed, shutting off certain opportunities for unlimited expansion.

²⁶ Athearn, *The Mythic West in Twentieth-Century America*, 234-235. According to Athearn, the accessibility of free land created “conditions of equality, freedom, and even individualism historically equated with frontier democracy.” Athearn pulled a more fulsome list from Turner’s essay: “The academic father of frontier historians, Frederick Jackson Turner, saw traits that he thought were representative of frontier life, among them democracy, individualism, freedom, coarseness, strength, acuteness, ingeniousness, materialism, exuberance, and optimism.”

²⁷ White, *The Eastern Establishment and the Western Experience*, 1, 186. White sums up the relationship between this region and the American nation as a whole: “The West, far more than the other regions, has

Coe's experiences in the West encouraged his recollections of Roosevelt in that venue, although few others could conjure an accurate image of TR when he was there: frail and heartbroken. The western Roosevelt Americans recalled had taken on the trappings of the western cowboy, who also benefited from Roosevelt's transformation from an eastern dude to a hardy, masculine westerner. The participation of both in the Spanish-American War solidified the myth of the stoic aristocratic cowboy and the vigorous masculine Roosevelt. Coe then permanently encased the image in bronze as a testament to the virtues and values of the West.

When it came time for Henry Waldo Coe to secure an artist for the equestrian statue of his friend, nostalgia for the fading West informed his selection. His consultations with the most prominent sculptors in the country led him to New York City where he visited the studio of acclaimed artist Alexander Phimister Proctor. After viewing several pieces, including a bronze relief portrait of fellow Oregonian William

tended to elicit imaginative responses, which stress the distinctiveness of its regional heritage while closely identifying that heritage with the intrinsic 'Americanness' of American civilization." Also, Barsness, "Theodore Roosevelt as Cowboy," 617. Barsness describes the significance of Roosevelt's emergence on the national scene just as the frontier was closing: "The period surrounding 1898 in American social development was even more of a watershed—a time of the disappearance of the heroic pastoral image of the yeoman, requiring a new hero, a new image which Roosevelt came to represent at the same time he defined it—at 'the very moment of its formulation.'" Gerald D. Nash, *Creating the West: Historical Interpretations, 1890-1990* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1991), 156, 208. In the 1920s, nostalgia for the lost West was prevalent in historical writings as Nash observes, "brought on by the supposed closing of the frontier and the exhaustion of free land." Many of these historians, Nash argues, reinforced the idea of the mythical West, a place where the values and character traits contrasted sharply with their own. The "crass materialism, selfishness, cowardice, deceit, and increasing reliance on government" of the industrial urban centers of the East, are held against the virtues of self-reliance, hardiness, courage, and fortitude displayed by westerners of an earlier, simpler era. Academic interest in the West is also demonstrated in the development of courses dedicated to the American West and the frontier at colleges and universities across the country as well as the formation of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association. Athearn, *The Mythic West in Twentieth-Century America*, 161-162, 167. The Mississippi Valley Historical Association was founded in 1907 in Lincoln, Nebraska; in 1965 it became the Organization of American Historians. See also, Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation*, 29-36.

Hanley, Coe was struck by the way in which Proctor captured the character of his subject and immediately selected the sculptor. It is probable that Coe encountered Proctor's work before he arrived in New York as the artist's first major exhibition in a western city was held by the Portland Art Association at the Portland Art Museum in 1911. Also, by the time he received the Roosevelt commission, Proctor had produced the *Pioneer* monumental statue for the University of Oregon campus in Eugene in addition to smaller statues and bas-reliefs of prominent Oregon businessmen and politicians, as well as individuals Proctor met at the Pendleton Round-Up. Proctor believed he was uniquely qualified for the task as he had known Roosevelt since the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, where Roosevelt, along with other members of the Boone and Crockett Club, had erected a cabin on the grounds.²⁸ After admiring the artist's work, Roosevelt invited Proctor to attend the club's annual dinner and meeting in the cabin prior to the Fair's official opening. At Roosevelt's suggestion, Proctor was elected as a member of the club and later sculpted the club's mascot, a bear's head. During his presidency, Roosevelt commissioned Proctor to create two models of buffalo heads for the fireplaces in the White House's State Dining Room. In 1908, Roosevelt's "tennis cabinet" presented one of Proctor's pieces, a crouching panther, as a gift to the outgoing president. Finally, Roosevelt served as the honorary vice president of the Buffalo Bill Memorial Association that wished to erect a monumental sculpture of Buffalo Bill Cody in Denver. Although Roosevelt

²⁸ Peter H. Hassrick, *Wildlife and Western Heroes: Alexander Phimister Proctor, Sculptor* (Fort Worth, TX: Amon Carter Museum, 2003), 67-73, 201.

recommended Proctor for the commission, the project stalled during the planning process.²⁹ Regardless of the Roosevelt connection, however, Proctor's own association with the American West cemented Coe's decision.³⁰

Although he was born in eastern Canada, Proctor spent most of his childhood in Denver, a western city with stunning mountain views and an abundance of wildlife just outside the city limits. Demonstrating an early affinity for art, Proctor took his initial training with Denver artist, J. Harrison Mills, a proponent of the naturalistic school.³¹ Like other young men in the West, Proctor embraced the bountiful adventure of the outdoors and enjoyed frequent hunting and camping expeditions into the mountains and high plains of Colorado.³² During his years in and around Denver, Proctor came into contact with local characters who regaled the young artist with tales of the early frontier West. In many ways, Proctor's western role models—Antelope Jack Warren and “Old

²⁹ Hassrick, *Wildlife and Western Heroes*, 62, 73, 201. Alexander Phimister Proctor, *Sculptor in Buckskin: The Autobiography of Alexander Phimister Proctor*, ed. Katharine Ebner, 2nd ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009), 111; “Statue by Proctor is Declared to be Virile Record of Theodore Roosevelt,” *Oregonian*, November 12, 1922; Vivian A. Paladin, “A. Phimister Proctor: Master Sculptor of Horses,” *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 14, no. 1 (Winter 1964): 10-24, specifically 15-16.

³⁰ Coe remarked that “the fact that Mr. Proctor is a western man first attracted me,” “Statue of Theodore Roosevelt to be Unveiled Here Soon,” *Oregonian*, April 30, 1922. Hassrick, *Wildlife and Western Heroes*, 80-81, and 201. According to Hassrick, “many observers endorsed Coe's choice for that reason as much as for Proctor's stature as an artist.” Proctor had also produced the lions for the William McKinley Monument in Buffalo, New York. Despite the pressure from some to represent Roosevelt symbolically in animal form—especially Carl E. Akeley at the American Museum of Natural History—Coe preferred the equestrian and Proctor agreed wholeheartedly.

³¹ Proctor, *Sculptor in Buckskin*, 20.

³² Peter H. Hassrick, “The Oregon Art of Alexander Phimister Proctor,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 104, no. 3 (Sept., 2003): 394-413, specifically 394; Proctor, *Sculptor in Buckskin*, 20. Mills encouraged Proctor to “live the life he intended to depict.” See also, Hassrick, *Wildlife and Western Heroes*, 23 and 33. Hassrick argues that, “Some of their appreciation for the outdoors came from a Thoreauvian need to be at one with a domain beyond civilization.” The backcountry provided a place for communing with nature, recharging mental and artistic energies, as well as escaping the demands of modern, industrial society.

Avery,” among others—resembled the weathered characters that had guided Charles M. Russell and Frederic Remington in the ways of the West and provided them with the perception of legitimate connections to the “authentic” western experience.³³

Throughout his life, Proctor remained an avid big game hunter and outdoorsman, and these passions influenced his art. Proctor left the West to continue his formal art training in Paris and New York.³⁴ Although he settled in the east, Proctor returned to the region in search of inspiration and regeneration in the wide-open spaces and natural environments of the West. In its coverage of the artist, a Chicago newspaper described Proctor’s desire to replenish his spirit: “Housed in the narrow walls of schools and studios, the old yearning for the mountains would sweep over him with almost irresistible power, and every summer found him again in the saddle ... followed by a pack mule or two and some faithful dogs.”³⁵ Proctor’s association with the West was evident not only in his choice of subjects, but also how he portrayed himself as an artist; his frequent trips were intentional for those reasons. Like Russell and Remington,

³³ Proctor, *Sculptor in Buckskin*, 15-18, 21; Hassrick, *Wildlife and Western Heroes*, 24; Wayne Craven, *Sculpture in America* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1968), 516, 521.

³⁴ Hassrick, “The Oregon Art of Alexander Phimister Proctor,” 395. According to Hassrick, Proctor quickly developed a reputation for combining the French *Beaux-Arts* style of romanticized naturalism with Augustus Saint-Gaudens’s ideals of nobility, simplicity, and dignity. Craven, *Sculpture in America*, 522. As Craven notes, Proctor did not succumb to the abstract themes of the Parisian schools. See also, Maureen Barraclough, *Sovereigns and Soldiers on Horseback: Bronze Equestrian Monuments from Ancient Rome to Our Times* (Ipswich, MA: The Ipswich Press, 1999), 183, 185, 218. Proctor’s equestrians also align with those of other prominent American sculptors including Augustus Saint-Gaudens, Henry Kirke Browne, and John Quincy Adams Ward, in which artists celebrated their American heritage by using “simple and direct naturalism” in their works.

³⁵ “About the Studios, Phimister Proctor is a True Natural Sculptor,” *Chicago Sunday Inter Ocean*, January 1, 1893, quoted in Hassrick, *Wildlife and Western Heroes*, 32-33. As mentioned, Hassrick suggests an ulterior motive for Proctor’s purifying trips to the West, maintaining his credibility.

Proctor owed part of his success to his real-life western experiences.³⁶ Even though Proctor grew up in the West, his western sojourns reconfirmed his association with the manly, isolated area, and maintained his credibility as a product of the West, and like Russell, Remington, Wister, Roosevelt, and Coe, Proctor lamented the perceived loss of the West.³⁷

For Proctor, even his early work at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago illustrated his desire to commemorate the region of his youth and the end of an era. He produced white plaster images of a buckaroo and an Indian, along with the numerous species of western animals.³⁸ The Columbian Exposition displayed the dichotomy of past and future; the nostalgia surrounding the disappearance of the Old West allowed Americans to reminisce about the closing of the frontier with Frederick Jackson Turner's essay, and to celebrate the West through the modernization of Chicago as part of the advancement American civilization.³⁹ In an effort to judge the significance

³⁶ Hassrick, *Wildlife and Western Heroes*, 45. As Hassrick notes, "He sold himself not simply as a sculptor of developing talent but as a man of uncommon experience." See also, Hassrick, "The Oregon Art of Alexander Phimister Proctor," 411. Another of Proctor's patrons, Joseph N. Teal remarked, "Mr. Proctor breathes the spirit of the West. He is true to its life and to its traditions. A western man himself, fond of all that made it glorious, of its traditions [and] its history."

³⁷ Hassrick, *Wildlife and Western Heroes*, 33. "Without his trips of renewal, though, Proctor feared losing credibility and connectivity. He understood that his inspiration came as much from his oneness with the western wilderness as from the artistic muse.... Countering the common view of artists' studios as feminized spaces, Proctor took great pains to prove that his was not."

³⁸ Hassrick, *Wildlife and Western Heroes*, 38. Hassrick notes the stark contrast of Proctor's figures with the only avant-garde structure at the Fair—Louis Sullivan's Transportation Building. For more information on the Chicago World's Fair, see Robert W. Rydell, John E. Findling, and Kimberly D. Pelle, *Fair America: World's Fairs in the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 2000). The World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 is commonly referred to as the Chicago World's Fair.

³⁹ Craven, *Sculpture in America*, 513-514. Craven argues that residents and visitors in Chicago were also "acutely aware of the future of the expansive and rich American West," and the role that this vibrant city would play in that future.

of the ending era, artists joined historians and other scholars in seeking to understand the region, its place within American history and memory, and its impact on American national identity.

After receiving Coe's commission, Proctor and his wife Margaret traveled with Secretary and Mrs. Stimson to visit Edith and Kermit Roosevelt at Sagamore Hill, the Roosevelt family home in Oyster Bay, Long Island. Mrs. Roosevelt loaned the sculptor two of her late husband's Spanish-American War uniforms along with various accoutrements including his sidearm, tack, and hat. In addition, Mrs. Roosevelt provided numerous photographs, Proctor recalled, and "told me incidents of the Colonel's life which she thought would help me in portraying her husband's character." Proctor selected a young soldier approximately Roosevelt's height, weight, and girth at the time he led the famed Rough Riders to model on a horse carefully chosen by the artist in consultation with Roosevelt's friend and fellow Spanish-American War veteran General Leonard Wood.⁴⁰

Proctor's initial sketches depicted Colonel Roosevelt in his cavalry uniform mounted on a spirited horse striding majestically into action.⁴¹ The boldness, energy, and fearlessness of the horse and rider seemed an appropriate representation of Roosevelt, his sensational personality, and unquestioned masculinity. But with the model, uniform, and horse in place, Proctor's vision for this piece shifted to a more

⁴⁰ Proctor, *Sculptor in Buckskin*, 185-186; "Statue by Proctor is Declared to be Virile Record of Theodore Roosevelt," *The Oregonian*, November 12, 1922; Hassrick, *Wildlife and Western Heroes*, 201. According to Hassrick, the horse was described as "a northern range horse with a strain of thoroughbred."

⁴¹ Hassrick, *Wildlife and Western Heroes*, 201.

sedate composition: “The rider is in control and the horse’s feet are well under him, ready for instant action.”⁴² The new concept illustrated a sense of the controlled energy of the subjects combined with the disciplined alertness of a well-trained cavalry soldier and his horse (see figure 1). As Proctor stated,

I wanted to give the world ... the impression of Roosevelt as I knew him—as, indeed, I always think of him. I most admired his fearlessness, his courage, and the energy always waiting to spring into action. I never thought of him as a man of hasty, ill-considered action. All his exuberance, all his restlessness, was only the surface that covered a quiet dignity and reserve. The popular idea of him is that he never was in repose. I wanted to show him as he appeared to me, with all his magnificent energy held in check.⁴³

By presenting Roosevelt as disciplined and controlled, Proctor and Coe presented a refined version of the characteristics that Roosevelt’s adversaries labeled impulsive and rash. Proctor hoped to emphasize Roosevelt’s vitality and energy but also avoid the theatrical, or worse, a repetition of the caricatures so frequently promoted by Roosevelt’s critics.⁴⁴

With the horse’s head held high, ears pricked forward, muscles quivering, and nostrils flaring, the sculpture exudes a sense of virility generally attributed to

⁴² Proctor quoted in Hassrick, *Wildlife and Western Heroes*, 81, 201.

⁴³ “Statue by Proctor is Declared to be Virile Record of Theodore Roosevelt,” *Oregonian*, November 12, 1922. See also, Hassrick, *Wildlife and Western Heroes*, 62, 202. According to Hassrick, Proctor’s decision to show Roosevelt in “repose” may have been influenced by the failed attempt to secure the commission for the George A. Custer memorial in Monroe, Michigan in 1908. Proctor’s initial sketch of the statue emphasized Custer’s flamboyant personality by showing him waving his hat in his outstretched hand. Colonel George G. Briggs of Grand Rapids, Michigan, who served as the memorial commission’s chairman, persuaded Mrs. Custer that the figure should be one of “repose” stating that the image of Custer “will become alive to those who behold it and in their imaginations not only will action be suggested but there will be the added vision of a great soldier.”

⁴⁴ Hassrick, *Wildlife and Western Heroes*, 81.

Roosevelt's indefatigable spirit. The forward sweep of the mane and tail suggest that the pair have come to an abrupt halt after what one could image was an exhilarating dash across open terrain. But Roosevelt's comfortable seat in the saddle, hand on his hip, and firm but relaxed grip on the reins conveys his mastery over both his mount and his own impulses. The overall composition broadcasts energy, exuberance, and eagerness through the spirited depiction of the horse along with the rider's steady, disciplined reserve. The horse's slightly open mouth and the taut reins would seem to suggest a forceful containment of the powerful animal, but the neutral position of the bit communicates efficacious compliance rather than brute physical restraint. The drama of the piece is one of controlled masculinity.⁴⁵

Proctor's configuration of Roosevelt and his horse contributes significantly to the canon of American equestrian monuments. Americans in the early Republic viewed equestrian statues as symbolic of the powerful monarchies and aristocracies of Europe, and, therefore, criticized or avoided the form.⁴⁶ Indeed, the first equestrian statue erected on American soil, the leaden statue of King George III by Joseph Wilton (1770), was one of the first casualties of the American Revolution as colonists asserted their

⁴⁵ I would like to thank Jared R. Donnelly for sharing with me his knowledge of horsemanship and equine behavior.

⁴⁶ Donald M. Reynolds, *Monuments and Masterpieces: Histories and Views of Public Sculpture in New York City* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1988), 113. Art historian Donald Reynolds notes that "the equestrian statue dates to antiquity. At different times in the history of art, it has served as a portrait symbol of authority and power, a funerary memorial, and a tribute to Christian virtues. As a monument portraying a great leader, the equestrian goes back to the Greeks and Romans." See also, G. Kurt Piehler, *Remembering War the American Way* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), 71.

independence through the symbolic beheading of the monarchy.⁴⁷ One of the earliest surviving examples of this form of commemoration in the United States is Henry Kirke Brown's equestrian statue of George Washington in New York's Union Square (dedicated in 1856), which demonstrates the quiet dignity and composure commonly associated with the Revolutionary War hero.⁴⁸ Showing Washington at the moment of his triumphal return to New York City, Brown depicts Washington's horse striding forward with its left foreleg raised high, an ancient symbol of victory (see figure 2). The horse's dramatically arched neck displays his power and energy, which Washington skillfully restrains.⁴⁹ Washington exudes the nobility and serenity that became an

⁴⁷ Craven, *Sculpture in America*, 48 and 168. According to Craven, "An overzealous citizenry, upon hearing the Declaration of Independence read aloud on July 9, 1776, pulled down the 'George III' and dismembered it. Most of it was taken to the home of Governor Wolcott in Litchfield, Connecticut, where its lead was melted down and converted into bullets for the Revolutionary Army. The base of the statue, still showing the marks of the four hooves, was for some reason spared from the melting pot and, along with the horse's tail, may be seen at the New York Historical Society." For more on the statue of George III, see Arthur S. Marks, "The Statue of King George III in New York and the Iconography of Regicide," *American Art Journal* 13, no. 3 (Summer 1981): 61-82. Piehler, *Remembering War the American Way*, 39 and 71. Piehler notes that the use of equestrian statues "in commemorating [Ulysses S.] Grant and other generals, North and South, reflected a shift in attitude toward war and toward the role of the military in society." Additionally, Piehler states that with the popular acceptance of the principle of Manifest Destiny and the willingness of Americans to expand their borders with military force if necessary, equestrian monuments became appropriate commemorations of America's expansionist leaders. In other words, as the United States developed the interest and ability to assert itself beyond its boundaries, the mounted equestrians translated the tradition of European imperialism into homage to newly imperialistic America.

⁴⁸ Reynolds, *Monuments and Masterpieces*, 114-115. Reynolds states that Brown's *Washington* retains a gesture from the ancient equestrian model of Marcus Aurelius—the extended right arm as a symbol of authority—"even if Brown did not fully understand the symbolism." See also, Craven, *Sculpture in America*, 169. The European equestrian statuary traditions will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter V as part of the artistic influence of James Earle Fraser's equestrian statue of Roosevelt in front of the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. There is an abundance of equestrian statues dedicated to Civil War military commanders erected during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many of these monuments make interesting or noteworthy contributions to equestrian monument traditions in the United States, particularly Augustus Saint Gaudens's *General Sherman* in New York City, which will also be discussed in greater detail in Chapter V.

⁴⁹ Reynolds, *Monuments and Masterpieces*, 82, 113, 115. According to Reynolds, the symbolism of the raised foreleg in an equestrian monument dates back to ancient equestrian statues: "A figure of a bound captive was usually crouching beneath the horse's upraised front leg, symbolizing victory over his

increasingly important aspect of normative masculinity in the United States and Europe during the eighteenth century.⁵⁰ Proctor duplicated to some degree the quiet strength of Brown's *Washington*, which moderated Roosevelt's signature flamboyance and lends a measure of decorum to his exuberance. By replicating these features in the *Rough Rider*, Proctor acknowledges the need to sedate Roosevelt's ostentation in an effort to present a more decorous, yet masculine, composition. But in order for TR to illustrate the rugged and vigorous masculinity of the West as an inspiration and example, Proctor's representation could not imitate completely Washington's stately presence; he needed to incorporate the verve of western masculinity, such as that expressed in Clark Mills's statue of Andrew Jackson.

Dedicated in Washington, D.C. in 1853, Mills portrays Jackson as a man of action competently controlling his rearing horse. Doffing his hat with his right hand, the hero of the Battle of New Orleans maintains a stable seat in the saddle while presumably acknowledging the cheers of a crowd (see figure 3). Jackson, the westerner of his time, conforms to the traditional image of a spirited western horseman—one continually on the edge of explosive action. In contrast to Washington's quiet dignity, many Americans viewed Jackson as hotheaded and impulsive—a man whose passions were readily apparent and whose anger was easily sparked. Like Roosevelt's admirers, Jackson's

enemies and his power. In succeeding ages the crouching figure disappeared, but the horse's leg remained raised as a symbol of victory." The position of the horse's legs does not reveal how the rider died, despite the persistence of the myth of secret symbolism in equestrian statuary.

⁵⁰ Mosse, *The Image of Man*, 34-35; Linenthal, *Changing Images of the Warrior Hero in America*, 4. Linenthal, in his examination of the images of the warrior hero in America, referred to George Washington as the epitome of the New World warrior, one who was "perfectly balanced." This hero, Linenthal suggests, did not need to have his spirit or personality contained.

supporters rebutted these arguments by emphasizing his values through a western lens. Impulsiveness was decisiveness; hotheadedness was symbolic of masculine power and honor; passion for one's country and what one believed to be right were manly virtues to be upheld, not faults to be deplored. Each of these attributes was necessary in the life or death situations of a frontier military leader. In his portrayal of Roosevelt the Rough Rider, Proctor emphasized western masculine virtues as well. Proctor's equestrian, therefore, synthesizes the propriety of Washington and the animation of Jackson.⁵¹

One final equestrian statue provides context for Proctor's *Roosevelt* as it was dedicated just seven months prior—the Ulysses S. Grant Memorial in Washington, D.C.⁵² A collaboration between sculptor Henry Merwin Shrady and architect Edward Pearce Casey, the Grant Memorial includes three groups of sculpture on a wide plaza at the foot of Capitol Hill facing the Washington Monument. For the northern end of the plaza, Shrady sculpted an animated group of cavalry charging into battle; the chaos and disorder of war is vividly illustrated in the tangle of soldiers and horses. On the southern end, a group of artillery soldiers on a caisson drawn by four horses bounce precariously to a stop on the battlefield. The grit and determination of the soldiers in these groups are

⁵¹ Craven, *Sculpture in America*, 169; Barsness, "Theodore Roosevelt as Cowboy," 610-611, 617. Barsness notes that, "Like New Orleans, San Juan Hill came to stand for the ultimate triumph of the agrarian ideal of violent action, with a hero who like [Andrew] Jackson was the man on horseback come to purify the nation." A replica of the Jackson statue was placed in Jackson Square in New Orleans in 1856. Mills's statue of Jackson is noteworthy in that it was the first successful attempt by an American sculptor to depict a rearing horse.

⁵² Dennis R. Montagna, "Henry Merwin Shrady's Ulysses S. Grant Memorial in Washington, D.C.: A Study in Iconography, Content and Patronage" (PhD diss., University of Delaware, 1987), 1, 59. Congress appropriated funds for the Grant Memorial in 1901, but the memorial itself was not dedicated until April 27, 1922.

readily apparent—stark contrast to the bland and passive “standing soldiers” at parade rest that had sprung up across the country throughout the late nineteenth century.⁵³

The memorial’s central feature is the equestrian statue of Grant with his greatcoat wrapped securely around him; his broad-brimmed hat is set low on his forehead. Grant and his horse brace themselves against a cold wind as they sagaciously observe the unfolding battle in the distance (see figure 4). The statue is perched on a pedestal high above the surrounding plaza; four lions recline at the corners of the base.⁵⁴ As with Brown’s statue of George Washington, Shrady’s *Grant* accentuates those traits embodied in the normative masculine ideal. The Grant equestrian also illustrates a shift in monumental representations. After Americans in the early twentieth century criticized the ubiquitous reproductions of the generic sentry standing at parade rest, artists and patrons incorporated features suggesting strength, valor, and the spirit of selfless service into Civil War monuments.⁵⁵ This shift to naturalism also appears in Proctor’s depiction of Roosevelt the Rough Rider. Although the Grant Memorial was

⁵³ Montagna, “Henry Merwin Shrady’s Ulysses S. Grant Memorial in Washington, D.C.,” 136, 145-146. See also, Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth Century America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997); Thomas J. Brown, *The Public Art of Civil War Commemoration, A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2004); Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 15. As Doss notes, the proliferation of the standing soldiers contributed to “statue mania” that gripped the United States and many European nations in the late nineteenth century.

⁵⁴ Montagna, “Henry Merwin Shrady’s Ulysses S. Grant Memorial in Washington, D.C.,” 15, 33, 119. Montagna notes that Shrady modified his design for the lions to express strength and power rather than ferocity. Descriptions of the Grant equestrian underscore the “nobility,” “reserve power,” and “quiet strength” of the Union general. It is important to note that the Grant Memorial commemorates Grant as a military leader rather than as president or statesman. Montagna addresses this issue in Chapter 3 of his study, especially 126.

⁵⁵ Montagna, “Henry Merwin Shrady’s Ulysses S. Grant Memorial in Washington, D.C.,” 151. These arguments were also made as a response to the proliferation of World War I doughboy statues.

not dedicated until April 1922, Shrady's model was known well before this time; it is unclear, however, whether his design influenced Proctor's portrayal of Roosevelt.⁵⁶

Proctor's statue captures the essence of Roosevelt's rugged masculinity visually expressed through the powerful horse and his disciplined rider. In his depiction of Roosevelt, however, Proctor carefully avoided critical interpretations of TR as reckless or careless. The balance of these two aspects of Roosevelt's image can be illustrated through the *Rough Rider's* two equestrian predecessors, Washington and Jackson. Proctor's Roosevelt also displays a naturalism similar to its contemporary, Shrady's *General Grant*. The representation of the western Roosevelt acquires additional symbolic value when placed on sites in two very different western cities. Finally, the expanding anxiety and hostility of the Red Scare during the immediate post-World War I years led many to search for usable unifying American symbols through which to rally the nation's citizens. For many Americans, the nation's strength and stability could still be represented in the American West.

With a balance of energy and reserve captured in the final concept, Proctor reproduced the image in clay and then in plaster. Henry Waldo Coe, having been an active participant in the design process, continued his involvement and approved the artist's work at every stage. Members of the Roosevelt family were called in to view the plaster model and provide additional commentary on the piece. In the summer of 1922, Corinne Roosevelt Robinson, Theodore Roosevelt's sister, sent an enthusiastic letter to

⁵⁶ Henry Waldo Coe traveled to Washington, D.C. to attend the Grant Memorial dedication; but by this time, Proctor's model was already well along.

Coe praising the statue and Proctor's attention to detail: "Yesterday I was able to see Mr. Proctor's wonderful equestrian statue of my brother, Colonel Roosevelt. I cannot tell you how greatly it has surprised me. The figure of my brother—and the face also—are both unusually like the original, and there is a mixture of energy and repose about the whole composition that is remarkably characteristic of Theodore Roosevelt."⁵⁷ Through Robinson's letter, the Roosevelt family informally approved Proctor's depiction of TR as a Rough Rider, as a product of the West, and as an example of masculine virtue.

After Proctor sent the model to the Roman Bronze Works in New York, the bronze statue was shipped to Portland via the Panama Canal for its dedication. According to the *Oregonian*, "Shipment of the Roosevelt statue through the Panama Canal by steamer was specified as a tribute to Roosevelt's work in making intercoastal shipments possible via this route, but also because of the factor of safety which special stowage aboard the steamer insures."⁵⁸ For Proctor, the Portland site seemed perfectly suited for a tribute to a man from the East who often made his home in the West: "I like Portland better than any other city," Proctor stated, "The people are charming and the art appreciation here is keener and more discriminating than in any other Western city that I ever visited. Of course, I like Denver ... but Portland is different, it has the breadth and breeziness of the West and the culture of the East, and that, as you may well [know], is a rare combination."⁵⁹ In Proctor's estimation, Portland, like Roosevelt, combined the

⁵⁷ Corinne Roosevelt Robinson to Henry Waldo Coe, May 12, 1922, Box 1, Folder 4, HWC Papers; Hassrick, *Wildlife and Western Heroes*, 201.

⁵⁸ "Floridian Bringing Roosevelt Statue," *Oregonian*, September 9, 1922.

⁵⁹ Proctor quoted in Hassrick, "The Oregon Art of Alexander Phimister Proctor," 396

best elements of the eastern and western portions of the country in a way that made it remarkable and unique.

While Proctor worked diligently on the model of Roosevelt in New York, Coe busily negotiated a site for the statue in Portland, where it would be prominently displayed and blend harmoniously with its surroundings. After months of discussions, Coe finally secured the section of South Park Blocks bordered by Madison, Jefferson, Park, and West Park streets near downtown. The park included numerous trees and formal flower gardens, providing a serene setting in the midst of the bustling city—a beautiful site for the statue and an appropriate tribute to a man who loved nature as much as Roosevelt did.⁶⁰

In the weeks and days leading up to the dedication, local newspapers, including the *Oregonian*, reminisced about Roosevelt’s life and accomplishments and made a case for Roosevelt’s unique connection with the people and the lands of the American West:

We of the west, of a western city, delight to think of Theodore Roosevelt as a westerner, and find in his depiction as a rough rider an apt illustration of the virile and indomitable spirit we admired in the living man. . . . Though his labors as a statesman were as untiring and strenuous as his days in the saddle, and fully as gallant, we may be forgiven our fondness for remembering him as he was when he staked his life upon the nobility of America.⁶¹

According to the *Oregonian*, Proctor’s statue captured the essence of the man: “There is a vigor in the bronze, admirably displayed by the subdued though restless horse, with reins tautened and flanks ridged with contracted muscles; vigor in the gloved hand, the

⁶⁰ “Site Selected for Statue of T. R.,” *Oregonian*, March 7, 1922.

⁶¹ “Roosevelt the Rider,” *Oregonian*, August 16, 1922.

firm jaw, the steady eye beneath the brim of the campaign hat. He is Teddy of old days.”⁶²

The dedication exercises, having been pushed back by a series of delays, were finally held in conjunction with Armistice Day ceremonies on November 11, 1922. Efforts to commemorate the recent war developed swiftly in the United States, led by veterans who formed groups in order to establish networks with fellow veterans.⁶³ In February 1919, Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., and twenty officers of the American Expeditionary Force met in Paris and formally organized the American Legion. This collection of veterans resolved as their purpose the preservation of “the memories and incidents of our association in the great war ... to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship.”⁶⁴ One of the organization’s first actions was to advocate for the annual observance of Armistice Day on November 11. By encouraging the singing of hymns and reciting of prayers, the American Legion hoped the peaceful nature of the ceremonies would promote harmony and unity as a way to remember the dead. World War I was the first attempt by the federal government to encourage unity beyond the

⁶² “Roosevelt the Rider,” *Oregonian*, August 16, 1922.

⁶³ Jennifer D. Keene, *Doughboys, the Great War, and the Remaking of America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001). Keene examines the experiences of American soldiers and veterans. For an examination of the formation of post-World War I veterans’ groups in Europe, see George Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Antoine Prost, *In the Wake of War: ‘Les Anciens Combattants’ and French Society, 1914-1939* (Oxford, UK: Berg, 1992).

⁶⁴ Purpose of the American Legion quoted David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 217-218. Kennedy also connects the West to the First World War: “Like the legendary American West, wartime France was a place where men lived in the open, on the move, in the intensely male comradeship of adventure and misery and threatening violence. Like the frontier West, ‘over there’ was a distant land, where men could give vent to dangerous impulses that must be suppressed in civil society.”

borders of class, ethnicity, region, and race; in particular, the government was concerned with creating a collective memory that healed the social wounds caused by the war.⁶⁵ As a day set aside for remembrance of those lost in the Great War, Armistice Day provided the opportunity for Americans of all walks of life to participate in community activities. But as important as a day of remembrance was to communities, a need existed for “lieux de memoire,” sites of memory—places which channeled and collectivized the nation’s remembrances of the war.⁶⁶

The popularity of soldier sculpture in the years after the First World War symbolizes the desire of many Americans to remember the war as a national cause. These monumental representations of the doughboy also address the struggle to come to terms with the changing nature of war, and, therefore, the altered conception of the soldier.⁶⁷ Although Woodrow Wilson sent America’s sons to the battlefields of France

⁶⁵ Piehler, *Remembering War the American Way*, 4; Kennedy, *Over Here*, 363. Kennedy also notes that despite its rhetoric championing the observance of Armistice Day, “the Legion principally busied itself since the Armistice in promoting 100 percent Americanism and badgering Congress for privileged access by veterans to the public purse.” For an account of the efforts of British veterans and civilians to commemorate Armistice Day, see Adrian Gregory, *The Silence of Memory: Armistice Day, 1919-1946* (Oxford, UK: Berg, 1994).

⁶⁶ Jennifer Wingate, “Over the Top: The Doughboy in World War I Memorials and Visual Culture,” *American Art* 19, no. 2 (Summer 2005): 26-47, 31. Wingate asserts that “laying a wreath on Armistice Day or marching in the dedication parade while dressed in the costume of one’s native country helped religious and ethnic groups, fraternal societies, veterans’ organization, and schoolchildren foster a sense of connection with the town’s memorial.” See also, Lisa M. Budreau, *Bodies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America, 1919-1933* (New York: New York University Press, 2010), 92; Pierre Nora, “Between History and Memory: Les Lieux de Memoire,” *Representations* 26 (Spring 1989): 7-24, 12, 19.

⁶⁷ Piehler, *Remembering War the American Way*, 111. Piehler states that “most communities selected mass-produced memorials representing and commemorating the average soldier. The average soldier was usually a doughboy dressed in full battle gear, charging into battle or standing at attention.” See also, Wingate, “Over the Top,” 27-28. Linenthal, *Changing Images of the Warrior Hero in America*, 94-95; Keene, *Doughboys, the Great War, and the Remaking of America*, 2. Whereas Spanish-American War soldiers viewed themselves as crusaders on a mission to liberate Cubans from Spanish misrule, World War

in support of a moral cause—a war to end all wars—the reality of trench warfare and the destructive capabilities of modern weaponry led many to question the applicability of traditional views of soldiers and their experiences. In the early postwar years, however, one symbolic figure allowed Americans to memorialize the war in a traditional manner—the Unknown Soldier.⁶⁸

In 1921, the United States followed Great Britain and France in designating a tomb to the Unknown Soldier. The dedication of Proctor’s *Rough Rider* in Portland occurred as Americans contemplated their collective memories of the Great War as well as previous foreign military engagements. The focus of Americans’ post-World War I collective memory emphasized victory, as opposed to the massive and horrifying death toll, thereby favoring an older commemorative element in the face of modern warfare. The one nameless, faceless figure who memorialized the thousands lost provided a coping mechanism for American mourners.⁶⁹ But many Americans in the post-World War I era remained unconvinced that victory justified the enormous loss of life and the catastrophic destruction witnessed in the recent war. The Spanish-American War, on the other hand, represented a decisive American victory on foreign soil without the

I soldiers were transitional figures—still crusaders, but now also workers filling in their assigned cogs in the modern war machine. Keene argues that much of this change was the result of conscription.

⁶⁸ Keene, *Doughboys, the Great War, and the Remaking of America*, 1; Linenthal, *Changing Images of the Warrior Hero in America*, 111-112. The soldier-dead now appeared less as gallant warriors and more as faceless, nameless victims of a seemingly fruitless effort. In speaking of the unknown soldier, Linenthal contends that, “in one sense he was yet another unknown in the mechanized world of modern warfare; in another he was a triumphant symbol of traditional romantic war images: protection, sacrifice, devotion to country.”

⁶⁹ Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 101-102. According to Budreau, the burial of an Unknown Soldier at Arlington Cemetery “represented the primary official means by which the United States collectively memorialized the war.”

devastating human casualties and political and economic disruption witnessed in the Great War.

In this spirit of remembrance, the dedication of the *Rough Rider* began with what a local newspaper contended was “the most elaborate military parade in the history of the city,” as veterans, members of auxiliary organizations, civic groups, and children paraded through downtown Portland on their way to pay homage to Roosevelt.⁷⁰ The procession’s diversity reveals the community’s efforts to bring together discordant populations under one banner. The dominating presence of veterans, including members of the American Legion, may have led some to recall the outburst of violence during the nation’s first Armistice Day commemorations in 1919.

America’s transition from a wartime to a peacetime economy was anything but smooth—the country experienced waves of labor strikes in 1919, as workers demanded relief from wartime price and wage controls. Bombings and riots became uncomfortably common, a terror intensified by rumors reporting a multitude of communist radicals spilling out of post-revolutionary Russia on their way to the United States. As anarchists, communists, and radical labor leaders replaced the dreaded Huns as America’s newest bogeymen, reactionary elements in American society saw it as their patriotic duty to eliminate the threat to American democracy. On November 11, 1919, during the first Armistice Day observances in Centralia, Washington, the American Legion planned its parade route to pass directly in front of the union hall of the Industrial

⁷⁰ “Novel Fete Due on Armistice Day,” *Oregonian*, October 25, 1922. It is interesting that the *Oregonian* referred to the procession as a “military parade.” This may have been the result of the prominence of veterans’ organizations and its occurrence on Armistice Day.

Workers of the World (IWW). As suspected, the legionnaires used the parade as an opportunity to raid the hall. Newspapers across the country covered the story of violence in Centralia, a community roughly one hundred miles north of Portland. Although Henry Waldo Coe, like most Portland residents, would have been aware of the violence so near the city, there is no evidence to suggest that Coe planned the Roosevelt memorial or purposefully altered the dedication date in response to the incident in Centralia. These violent events illustrate, however, the heightened tensions between various populations within American society in the immediate postwar years and the motivations of some to find usable unifying symbols.⁷¹

Despite the recent disturbances, residents of Portland turned out in droves on Armistice Day 1922. A crowd, many thousands strong, flocked to the parade route and to the South Park Blocks to hear the dedication speeches honoring Roosevelt and inspiring those present as well as future generations to follow Roosevelt's example.⁷² Coe, in dedicating the statue to the youth of America, proclaimed that the "statue will ever be an inspiration to the youth of Oregon. It will summon them to turn weakness into strength by exerting their will to endure hardness. It will teach them to scorn difficulty in striving for their goal. It will, by recalling the great events of Roosevelt's life, prompt them to seek their highest pleasure in work for their country and their

⁷¹ On the incident in Centralia, Washington, see Keene, *Doughboys, the Great War, and the Remaking of America*, 1; Linenthal, *Changing Images of the Warrior Hero in America*, 168-169; and Wingate, "Over the Top," 28-30. Concerning violence in other western cities during the postwar years, see Athearn, *The Mythic West in Twentieth-Century America*, 60-61; Charles Todd Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes: The Commemoration of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, and Thomas Jefferson, 1832-1943" (PhD diss., Brown University, 1993), 171.

⁷² "Armistice Honored by Great Parade," *Oregonian*, November 12, 1922.

fellowmen. He was what the nation most needs—a leader of men.”⁷³ The man who had led the Rough Riders to victory in the jungles of Cuba was needed in these troubled times as a didactic image for America’s youth.

In his dedication speech, Clark C. Bissett, dean of the law department at the University of Washington, emphasized the principles for which Roosevelt stood “and for which at any moment of his life he was ready to die.” The death of Roosevelt, Bissett opined, “was not so much the passing of an individual as it was the lowering of the vitality of American ideals. There have been three, each in his time—Washington and Lincoln in theirs, and then this man, who defined America in terms of flesh and blood.”⁷⁴ Confronting the disillusionment and uncertainty that resulted from the Great War and America’s changing position in the world, the images of Roosevelt and the Rough Riders symbolized America’s strength and stability embedded in the rugged individualism and egalitarianism of the American West.

Furthering the themes of the day, city commissioner Sylvester Pier declared the statue “to be a perpetual reminder to the youth of Portland and America of their duties toward the nation.” Pier asserted that “It should be to them an ever present urge toward love of country, toward the fullest development of those lives, in study or play, to their country’s needs.” According to *Oregonian* reporter Ben Hur Lampman, Portland Mayor George Baker appealed “for more of Roosevelt in the daily life of the nation.... If we

⁷³ “Roosevelt, the Typical American,” *Oregonian*, November 11, 1922.

⁷⁴ Bissett quoted in Ben Hur Lampman, “City Dedicates Statue of Rider,” *Oregonian*, November 12, 1922. The grouping of Roosevelt with Washington and Lincoln represents an attempt by Roosevelt’s commemorators to secure his place in the “national pantheon of heroes.” See Stephenson, “Celebrating American Heroes,” 170.

had more men like Roosevelt this land would truly be America.”⁷⁵ Theodore Roosevelt’s image as the model citizen-soldier, therefore, would guide America’s youth and provide an example of service, patriotism, and dedication and bolster the country through difficult times, a theme echoed by the current president.

Although he was unable to attend the ceremonies in person, President Warren G. Harding sent a telegram to be read at the dedication:

I desire to assure you of my great interest in the occasion and my conviction that wherever such commemorations of our great national figures are erected, we will be setting up altars of patriotism which will certainly be an inspiration to the future.... As the years pass, may this statue serve to remind the youth of our land of the leader who was unafraid and whose love for children inspired in them an affection that endures to safeguard the republic. Himself an exemplar of all the civic virtues, Theodore Roosevelt could have no finer memorial than the dedication of the Rough Rider in bronze to the children of America.⁷⁶

The statue, as a didactic representation of Roosevelt’s values, was meant to inspire children to uphold those civic virtues embodied in western ideals for subsequent generations. As a site of memory—or an altar of patriotism—Roosevelt’s statue would stand for those unequivocally American values that each child would do well to emulate. These values were not yet lost, commemorators declared; they could still be found in the ethos of the American West.

Reporting for the *Oregonian*, Lampman summed up the bond between Roosevelt and the western lands he loved: “Roosevelt re-entered a city of the west, his own province, to be the inspiration of long-distant centuries ... Here was neither the

⁷⁵ Quoted in Ben Hur Lampman, “City Dedicates Statue of Rider,” *Oregonian*, November 12, 1922.

⁷⁶ Warren G. Harding telegram quoted in Ben Hur Lampman, “City Dedicates Statue of Rider,” *Oregonian*, November 12, 1922.

statesman nor the president, but the character that most endeared itself to America ... the man who led a certain famous regiment, athletes, adventurers, cowpunchers, prospectors, patriots and sportsman all, to certain famous fields of Cuba.”⁷⁷ More so than his accomplishments as statesman or president, Lampman concluded, Roosevelt’s actions as a soldier and as an element of the West were worthy of commemoration and remembrance. It was the image that Roosevelt carefully cultivated during his lifetime, and through this bronze representation, it would be an image of Roosevelt that would endure.

Even before Coe dedicated the Portland statue, he initiated negotiations with the city of Minot, North Dakota, to place a replica in Riverside Park. Several cities vied for a monument to the state’s adopted son, but Coe selected Minot because of the city’s devotion to “progressive ideas of park construction.”⁷⁸ In addition to the city’s beautiful and extensive park system, another factor in Coe’s decision was the lobbying of longtime friend James Johnson. Coe and Johnson served together in the North Dakota state legislature and Johnson was instrumental in securing Minot as the replica’s site.⁷⁹ In December 1922, the Minot park board officially voted to rededicate Riverside Park as Roosevelt Park during the statue’s unveiling ceremonies.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Ben Hur Lampman, “City Dedicates Statue of Rider,” *Oregonian*, November 12, 1922.

⁷⁸ “Coe Dedicates Statue of Theodore Roosevelt,” *Minot Daily News*, September 11, 1924. For additional information on progressive approaches to park construction, see William H. Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

⁷⁹ “Unveiling of Roosevelt Statue at Portland was Notable Event,” *Minot Daily News*, November 13, 1922.

⁸⁰ “Minot’s Famed Recreation Center will be Renamed Roosevelt Park,” *Minot Daily News*, December 7, 1922.

As the time for the ceremonies approached, the Minot Roosevelt statue dedication committee called upon area schoolchildren to attend the dedication exercises. James Johnson, chairman of the committee, stated, “We only wish that it were possible for all the young people of the state to be here and receive the inspiration that those who attend will surely get.”⁸¹ Like the Portland statue, the Minot replica would be dedicated to the children of the state so that they would be conscious of the spirit and example of Roosevelt’s life and service. In addition to local schoolchildren, the statue’s dedication ceremonies included units of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), Spanish-American War veterans, and the American Legion, along with cowboys from western North Dakota ranches.⁸²

Although cast from the same mold as the Portland statue, the Minot statue generates unique opportunities to re-examine the image of Roosevelt the westerner, particularly in a city that did not boast of connections to the cosmopolitan East. Both statues are sited in prominent city parks in which visitors are able to view the statues from all angles, but the differences in their presentations contribute to differences in the overall presence of each piece. The Portland *Rough Rider* is situated on a high granite base which elevates the statue to a height that complements its heroic presence, as it places Roosevelt above the viewer’s eye level (see figure 5).⁸³ Additionally, the South

⁸¹ “Children Specially Asked to Dedication,” *Minot Daily News*, September 3, 1924.

⁸² “Dedication of Statue and Rodeo Following will Attract Throng,” *Minot Daily News*, September 3, 1924.

⁸³ Reynolds, *Monuments and Masterpieces*, 113. According to Reynolds, “Roman leaders placed their equestrian statues on high podiums in public places to honor themselves and serve as symbols of their authority.”

Park Blocks—only 100 feet by 200 feet each—serve as interconnected oases of green in the middle of downtown Portland; but given their relatively small size, the sights, sounds, smells, and movement of the city are just steps away from the statue. As a progressive western city with artistic and political ties to eastern centers of learning and culture, the Oregon statue blends the rugged western aura of the equestrian with the sophistication and traditions of the East.⁸⁴

Some argue, however, that Portland’s association with the East and geographical location beyond the Rocky Mountains disqualified it from the label of “western.” Residents of the West Coast, separated by the Sierra Nevadas and the Cascades, developed an economy and culture distinct from the region between the Rocky Mountains and the Mississippi River; the agricultural products, climate and rainfall, along with the cosmopolitan sophistication distinguish the West Coast cities of Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, and Los Angeles from their more centrally located counterparts.⁸⁵ The siting of the replica in Minot, North Dakota, however, left no doubt that westerners were celebrating their heritage and values through the image of the Rough Rider.

⁸⁴ Eventually each of the Park Blocks would be home to a piece of art. Henry Waldo Coe donated a bronze statue of Abraham Lincoln by George Fife Waters in 1926; the Lincoln statue is located on the block adjacent to the one occupied by the equestrian Roosevelt.

⁸⁵ Athearn, *The Mythic West in Twentieth-Century America*, 19. According to Athearn, “The Sierra Nevadas and the Cascades curtained off a West Coast people who had developed an economic and cultural empire of their own. They enjoyed greater rainfall, raised different crops than did those who farmed further east, looked seaward in their thinking, and came to constitute a separate if somewhat provincial society that was more eastern than western, if one accepts the ‘frontier’ as a way of life.” See also, Earl Pomeroy, *The Pacific Slope: A History of California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Utah, and Nevada* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965). Pomeroy addresses the issue of whether or not the Pacific slope can be identified as “western.”

Unlike the Portland statue's high granite pedestal, the Minot statue is situated on a base of layered rock designed to replicate the rugged landscape of the western North Dakota Badlands—the area where Roosevelt's ranches were located. The low naturalistic plinth puts this *Rough Rider* closer to eye-level, a presentation that showcases the egalitarian western horseman who achieved fame for service to his country (see figure 6). A *Minot Daily News* reporter observed: "Adding another realistic touch in the intention of creating a typical western environment are the cactus plants which have been planted at random in the immediate vicinity surrounding the base of the statue," a stark contrast to the cultivated gardens of the South Park Blocks.⁸⁶ Additionally, Roosevelt Park includes more acreage than the Portland Park Blocks. While still adjacent to the downtown area, the vast open spaces of Roosevelt Park provide greater distance between the statue's location and the surrounding city; the statue's visitors are sufficiently detached from the commotion and noise of the bustling prairie town. The sight and smell of trees, flowers, and shrubs dominate the senses and allow for contemplation of the statue without interference from the surrounding urban environment. Continuing the western theme, the Minot dedication ceremonies included western cowboys and a rodeo roundup in the days following the unveiling.⁸⁷ These defining elements of the North Dakota statue are not complicated by associations with

⁸⁶ "Bronze Figure of Roosevelt Depicts Famed Rough Rider as Soldier in Spanish War," *Minot Daily News*, September 8, 1924. Sometime between its dedication and 2010 when I visited this statue, the base was changed; no extent records of the Minot Parks and Recreation Department reveal when the change occurred. The plantings have since been changed as well.

⁸⁷ "Dedication of Statue and Rodeo Following will Attract Throng," *Minot Daily News*, September 3, 1924.

the East, but focus instead on the unrefined natural beauty of the western landscape and the modest elegance of its people.

The speeches given at the Minot unveiling echoed those from Portland as speakers praised Roosevelt's character and accomplishments and urged children and others to follow his example. But the Minot speakers also emphasized Roosevelt's brief residence in Dakota Territory as justification for their commemoration—a claim that those in Portland were unable to make. Tracy R. Bangs, U.S. Attorney for the District of North Dakota, announced, “today we dedicate this statue of one of the greatest citizens of all time to the children of North Dakota, and in so doing we speak briefly of him and his days, but any words of ours are inadequate to fitly portray his character.” Bangs asserted that,

Children have more need of models than of critics, and an event such as the dedication of the Roosevelt statue whereby there is called to the minds of the children of the country the wonderful success of this man, brot [*sic*] about, not by over-mastering brilliancy but by rugged honest, untiring energy and faithful adherence to right and justice, will do more for the children who come within its influence than a library full of critical writings or many folios of dismal sermons.⁸⁸

It was not so much Roosevelt's connection to the eastern centers of American learning, society, or culture, Bangs suggested, but rather his embodiment of western ideals of honesty, persistence, and justice that children should emulate. Speaking specifically of the relationship between Roosevelt and the West, Bangs noted, “It was left for his life in Dakota to supplement the athletic work of the gymnasium and build the strength that

⁸⁸ “Impressive Ceremony in Minot Park Marks Acceptance of Gift,” *Minot Daily News*, September 11, 1924.

was necessary to carry him thru [*sic*] the exhausting years that were to come.”

According to Bangs, Roosevelt’s interaction with “mankind in a free untrammled state” prepared him for future political contests upon his return to the East.⁸⁹ Bangs, like many North Dakotans, promoted the notion that Roosevelt’s brief residence in the West provided him with a broader understanding of the spirit and fortitude westerners believed they possessed—characteristics they celebrated through Roosevelt’s nationwide image.

Finally, Bangs emphasized the strength of Roosevelt’s leadership as further embodiment of his western characteristics: “Many events for which Roosevelt was responsible stand and will continue to stand as monuments to his magnificent statesmanship. Roosevelt was always an example. He never pushed people onward—his policy was to lead them.” Commenting on contemporary government and society, Bangs declared, “We have run into a period of guardianship that is not at all consonance with his idea of independence of action—with his strong notion of one’s duty to fight his way through life but today the spirit of Roosevelt is helping throughout this land in bringing people back to a better understanding of individual responsibility and the necessity for personal and individual effort.”⁹⁰

Henry Waldo Coe also spoke to Roosevelt’s character, spirit, and connection with the state: “As I saw this week the photographs of this statue in place, I could not

⁸⁹ “Impressive Ceremony in Minot Park Marks Acceptance of Gift,” *Minot Daily News*, September 11, 1924.

⁹⁰ “Impressive Ceremony in Minot Park Marks Acceptance of Gift,” *Minot Daily News*, September 11, 1924.

help but feel that here sits Roosevelt, reigning in his horse upon some lookout point, watching the approaching of the cowboys and rough riders answering his call and coming to join him, marching out of the west, in the war to free Cuba.” Coe, recalling Roosevelt’s gratitude to the land and people, proclaimed that “the success which came to Theodore Roosevelt, he freely and at all times admitted, followed his life in North Dakota.” His time in the West, Roosevelt observed, brought him into contact with a different type of landscape and people than he was familiar with in the East; the experience broadened his perspective and understanding and regenerated his spirit. Shifting the focus to the children, Coe remarked, “He believed the greatest privilege an American boy or girl could have was to have the right to work out his own program of life with the greatest possible personal freedom, without injury to his fellow man.”⁹¹

Continuing the themes of the day, North Dakota Governor R. A. Nestos declared that, “The development of a strong and noble character in the boys and girls of today gives the highest guaranty of the future greatness of our commonwealth. The character, ideals and achievements of Theodore Roosevelt constitute a great inspiration to our boys and girls for the development of those traits of character most desirable in our coming men and women.” Nestos explained the bond between the people of North Dakota and Theodore Roosevelt:

While breathing the health-restoring air of Dakota his character was forming; into it were woven the strong and beautiful strands of honor, of loyalty to friends, of love of liberty, and of courage to fight for truth and justice. He came to us weak and dispirited. He left us a man of action,

⁹¹ “Impressive Ceremony in Minot Park Marks Acceptance of Gift,” *Minot Daily News*, September 11, 1924.

full of power and resolution to perform daily his civic duties and to do also the great tasks destiny had reserved for him; a man of clear perception of right and wrong; a man of courage to follow the path of right and honor without regard to consequences.⁹²

The Roosevelt that achieved success and earned the admiration of the American public, therefore, was forged in the West. The frontier experience allowed Roosevelt, the hero of the tale, to cast off the trappings of eastern civilization and regenerate his spirit in the wilderness of the West. Through these western travels, men like Roosevelt regressed into the primitive environment which enabled them to rehabilitate and regenerate far removed from the complicated sophistication of modern urban society.⁹³ The sojourns to the West, therefore, gave Roosevelt the opportunity to present himself as an easterner who had shed the effeminacy and overcivilization of the region in favor of the rugged individualism, egalitarianism, and manliness of the West. The western image of Roosevelt provided the portal through which the entire nation could regenerate; the commendable qualities of western life that Roosevelt symbolized—individualism, personal responsibility, and effort—were necessary to pull the country through difficult times.

Emphasis on the West during the Rough Rider statues' dedication speeches serves as an extension of the nostalgic emotions surrounding the "Old West" that were so prevalent during the early decades of the twentieth century. Through the imagery and

⁹² Nestos quoted in "Impressive Ceremony in Minot Park Marks Acceptance of Gift," *Minot Daily News*, September 11, 1924; <http://history.nd.gov/exhibits/governors.html> (accessed October 10, 2010). Norwegian-born Ragnvold A. Nestos was voted in as North Dakota governor during the recall election of Governor Lynn Frazier who represented the Nonpartisan League branch of the Republican Party. Nestos served from 1921 to 1925; he was a Republican (Independent Voters Association).

⁹³ Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation*, 14.

symbolism of Roosevelt as a product of the West, these statues commemorate the region that helped create the TR Americans admired. Proctor's equestrians demonstrate the efforts of western artists to capture and commemorate a vanishing way of life. Through their roles as storytellers concerned with the preservation of their national heritage, western sculptors captured and preserved an element of American history and culture soon to be found only in legends and myths.⁹⁴ Commemorating the West became a commemoration of American values and virtues, as the homage to Roosevelt the Rough Rider demonstrates.

Individually, the Portland and Minot statues are local commemorations. Each celebrates its individual representation of Theodore Roosevelt through the image of a Spanish-American War soldier. Portland, Oregon, the cosmopolitan city of the West, maintains connections to the centers of learning and culture of the East as reflected in its museums and university. Oregon is also home to the Pendleton Round-Up, which glorifies cowboy culture through its annual rodeo; additionally, the West asserts itself through Coe's philanthropy and Proctor's work, which are visible on the urban landscape. The commemoration of Theodore Roosevelt as a Rough Rider, therefore, is a fitting tribute, as this representation combines both the East and the West. Minot, North Dakota, on the other hand, makes no overt connections with the East, although the city did adopt elements of the City Beautiful movement into its park planning. North Dakota, unlike Oregon, claimed Roosevelt through his temporary residence in the area, a

⁹⁴ Patricia Janis Broder, *Bronzes of the American West* (New York: Harry Abrams, 1974), 13; Craven, *Sculpture in America*, 521. As Craven asserts, Proctor "brought to the attention of the world the strength and beauty" of America, attributes he discovered in the American West.

connection amplified by TR's assertions that the people of the West (Dakotans in particular) helped him build himself up into the hardy, masculine, formidable person he became. Through this association, the Minot statue appropriately honors the image of the western horseman, the cowboy who left his ranch to serve his country as a soldier in a spirited and successful adventure so different from the chaos and bloodshed of the world's more recent conflict. The collection of the two statues, however, is greater than the sum of its parts. Together, the Portland and Minot statues focus the attention of the commemorations, not on separate localities, but on the region as a whole.

The nostalgia for the West inspired the representation that gave birth to the legend of the Rough Riders and made the regiment's leader famous. Roosevelt's triumphant return to the United States following the war solidified his image as a leader of men, the epitome of masculinity, and a product of the American West.⁹⁵ Coe and Proctor employed the image of Roosevelt to commemorate the American West, extend western interpretations of masculinity, and respond to the anxieties of postwar America. Although the "Old West" of their youth had vanished and the Great War had altered visions of war and the warrior, these men turned to an image of Roosevelt to commemorate the man, but also the region they loved so dearly.

⁹⁵ Roberts, "The Strenuous Life," 210, 228.

CHAPTER IV

COMMEMORATING DEMOCRACY: GUTZON BORGLUM, MOUNT RUSHMORE, AND THE APOTHEOSIS OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT

Within days of Theodore Roosevelt's death in January 1919, noted American sculptor and political activist, Gutzon Borglum lamented the passing of the former president and his personal friend in a moving letter to his local newspaper, the *Stamford Advocate*. "No man in the past century," Borglum opined, "so inspired and will continue to inspire his countrymen with the duty, the delight and the citizen necessity of personal courage."¹ Five years later, Borglum became the focus of a nationally publicized project to carve colossal figures into a mountain in the scenic Black Hills of South Dakota; he reveled in the opportunity to pay homage to his political hero on a national stage. Inaugurating the work on Mount Rushmore on August 10, 1927, President Calvin Coolidge announced that, "We have come here to dedicate a cornerstone that was laid by the hand of the Almighty." This memorial, Coolidge proclaimed, "will be another national shrine to which future generations will repair to declare their continuing allegiance to independence, to self-government, to freedom, and to economic justice."²

¹ Gutzon Borglum, manuscript copy for *Stamford Advocate* (CT), n.d., included in Box 38, Folder: Theodore Roosevelt, Gutzon Borglum Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C. (hereafter Borglum Papers).

² Calvin Coolidge's speech is included in the Mount Rushmore National Memorial Commission Bill, 70th Congress, 1st Session, Senate Document No. 1176 (1928), copy located in Box 38, Folder: Doane Robinson, Borglum Papers. See also, Albert Boime, *The Unveiling of the National Icons: A Plea for Patriotic Iconoclasm in a Nationalist Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 136-137. According to Boime, Coolidge was the first person to refer to Mount Rushmore as a "national shrine." Gutzon Borglum and later promoters frequently referred to the memorial as America's "Shrine of Democracy," as the artist had hoped to house the nation's most valuable and defining documents within a Hall of Records carved into the mountain.

Over the next fourteen years, the memorial's sculptor competed with the harsh South Dakota winters and a chronic lack of funding in order to fulfill his mission. Although conceived as a spectacle to draw tourists and their dollars to the Black Hills of South Dakota, Mount Rushmore's champions, through their grandiose rhetoric, quickly elevated the objectives of the colossal carving to that of a "national shrine" of democracy.

Borglum fulfilled the memorial's stated purpose to "commemorate the founding, expansion, preservation, and unification of the United States" with colossal depictions of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and Theodore Roosevelt. The selection of the first three of these distinguished American statesmen produced relatively little controversy, but the inclusion of Roosevelt proved problematic due to his recent death, as Americans questioned his yet-to-be-determined legacy and his worthiness for an American pantheon. A closer examination of the arguments issued by the sculptor, project supporters, and Roosevelt followers justifying his inclusion reveals how this group of TR commemorators employed the nation's collective memory of the twenty-sixth president in order to promote their political views and social and cultural values.³ In order to commemorate Roosevelt nationally and for Roosevelt to "fit" on

³ Mount Rushmore National Memorial Commission Bill, Borglum Papers; Rex Alan Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1985), 129-130. Smith states the question quite bluntly: "the choice of Roosevelt was challenged and questioned then, continued to be challenged throughout its carving, and is often questioned, although more mildly, even today. 'How *did* Roosevelt come to be carved on Rushmore? people ask, 'and why?'" (emphasis in the original). Charles Todd Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes: The Commemoration of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, and Thomas Jefferson, 1832-1943" (PhD diss., Brown University, 1993), viii. Stephenson makes the connection between Mount Rushmore and Washington, D.C.: "As the project in South Dakota gained publicity, many Americans came to realize that Rushmore, along with the Mall in Washington, was a symbolic pantheon of American heroes."

Mount Rushmore, supporters selected the statesman-presidential iconography over alternate representations of TR as cowboy, Rough Rider, reformer, explorer, or naturalist. Although a case could be made for each of these Rooseveltian incarnations, the “shrine of democracy” message and the intended national—as opposed to local or regional—audience forced commemorators to emphasize Roosevelt’s bold presidential actions and embodied Americanism to sell him as a commemorative symbol of democracy and Mount Rushmore as a permanent and prominent record of the greatness of the American civilization.

In 1924, South Dakota historian Doane Robinson, inspired by sculptor Gutzon Borglum’s gigantic bas-reliefs then in progress on Stone Mountain in Georgia, proposed a grand memorial for the Black Hills.⁴ Robinson’s motive had less to do with an appreciation of colossal art or the engineering feats necessary to carve figures on a mountain; his main objective was to draw visitors to the Black Hills, thereby expanding the lucrative tourist industry in the predominantly agricultural state. South Dakota experienced hard times in the 1920s; the effort to increase agricultural production during the First World War forced the cultivation of thousands of acres of marginal land. The postwar drop in commodity prices and drier weather patterns revealed the folly of the aggressive planting strategy.⁵ The sharp decline in prices and export markets along with

⁴ “Mount Rushmore National Memorial, A Monument Commemorating the Conception, Preservation and Growth of the Great American Republic,” n.d., copy located in Box 107, Folder: Works: Mount Rushmore, Borglum Papers; Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 22 and 24; Jeffrey Ostler, *The Lakotas and the Black Hills: The Struggle for Sacred Ground* (New York: Viking, 2010), 145.

⁵ John Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers: The Story of the Obsessive Quest to Create Mount Rushmore* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2002), 45.

the devaluation of property hit South Dakota farmers hard; grasshopper infestations, drought, and crop failures compounded the misery.⁶ In order for the Black Hills to attract tourists motoring across the country, the area needed a spectacle that would siphon them off routes leading to other sites of natural beauty, including the Grand Canyon, Pikes Peak, Yellowstone, Yosemite, and Glacier National Parks, already popular in the western states. South Dakota, located in the geographical center of North America and north of established transcontinental roadways, did not have the heritage tourism of the eastern states or the Spanish and ancient Native American sites of the Southwest to lure tourists in.⁷ According to Robinson, visitors needed more than the simple beauty of nature. “Tourists soon get fed up on scenery,” Robinson argued, “unless it has something of special interest connecting it to make it impressive.”⁸ In what he later claimed to be an “illuminated flash” of inspiration, Robinson revealed his grandiose plan to a tourist-promotion group called The Black and Yellow Trail Association in Huron, South Dakota: “a colossal monument ... carved in the granite of the Black Hills.”⁹

⁶ Herbert S. Schell, *History of South Dakota*, 3rd ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975), 277, 282; Richard Lowitt, *The New Deal and the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984), 13, 38.

⁷ John Milton, *South Dakota: A Bicentennial History* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1977), 3. Milton notes that the Sioux, like many of the immigrant farming and mining families, were relative newcomers to the area. Additionally, their nomadic lifestyle did not create permanent villages for twentieth-century tourists to visit.

⁸ Robinson quoted in Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 46, 52.

⁹ Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 24. Smith notes that Robinson’s private papers reveal that he had been thinking of ways to drum up tourism in South Dakota for some time. After seeing newspaper reports of Gutzon Borglum’s gigantic relief figures on the side of Stone Mountain in Georgia, Robinson recalled the granite formation known as the Needles which might be carved in the round. The Black and Yellow Trail Association was so called because it promoted “the Black Hills and Yellowstone Highway” as a scenic roadway connecting the regions.

Robinson contacted acclaimed American sculptor Lorado Taft in December 1923 about the possibility of carving the granite outcropping near Harney Peak, commonly referred to as the Needles. In a letter to the sculptor, Robinson proposed his idea: “It has occurred to me that some of these pinnacles would lend themselves to massive sculpture, and I write to ask if in your judgment human figures might be carved from some of them as they stand.”¹⁰ The aging sculptor replied that he was suffering from poor health and it would be “unlikely” that he would be able to participate in such a strenuous proposal.¹¹ Undeterred, Robinson penned another letter to the sculptor in which he outlined additional details for his consideration: “Near the summit is a little park through which the highway passes.... It is studded with column after column of these pinnacles and in my imagination I can see all the heroes of the old west peering out from them; [Meriwether] Lewis and [William] Clark, [John] Fremont, Jed Smith, [Jim] Bridger, Sa-kaka-wea, Red Cloud, and in an equestrian statue [Buffalo Bill] Cody.” Robinson’s proposed figures emphasized the area’s not-so-distant past as a wild and woolly mining region on the frontier of civilization. Although Robinson remained in

¹⁰ Doane Robinson to Lorado Taft, December 28, 1923; letter included in Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 25. Robinson chose to contact Taft because the artist had previously created a colossal sculpture known as the “Big Injun.”

¹¹ Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 25; Howard Shaff and Audrey Karl Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time: The Life and Times of Gutzon Borglum Sculptor of Mount Rushmore* (Sioux Falls, SD: The Center for Western Studies, Augustana College, 1985), 210.

contact with Taft throughout 1924, it became apparent that the sculptor was unwilling or unable to participate in the scheme.¹²

Nearly a year after first contacting Lorado Taft, Robinson turned to Gutzon Borglum, the ostentatious and outspoken sculptor of Stone Mountain:

In the vicinity of Harney Peak in the Black Hills of South Dakota are opportunities for heroic sculpture of unusual character. Would it be possible for you to design and supervise a massive sculpture there? The proposal has not passed beyond mere suggestion, but if it would be possible for you to undertake the matter I feel quite sure we could arrange to finance such an enterprise.¹³

Robinson's letter reached Borglum at a fortuitous moment, as his association with the Confederate memorial at Stone Mountain was swiftly unraveling. The proposal, and Borglum's acceptance of it, would take him back to his roots in the American West.

Gutzon Borglum's father Jens had been introduced to Mormon missionaries from the United States during his childhood in Denmark. In 1864, after his conversion to Mormonism at the age of twenty-five, Jens (later called James) abandoned his work as a wood carver to join other Danish converts relocating to the "New Zion" in Salt Lake City, Utah.¹⁴ Prior to departure, James married a twenty-two-year-old acquaintance and fellow Mormon, Ida Mikkelsen (Michelson). The couple settled first in Salt Lake City and within a year Ida's younger sister, Christina, joined them in Utah. Within weeks of

¹² Robinson quoted in Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 26-27. See also, Ostler, *The Lakotas and the Black Hills*, 145-146; Shaff and Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time*, 212, 226; Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 282-283; Milton, *South Dakota*, 3, 27, 138.

¹³ Robinson to Gutzon Borglum, August 20, 1924; letter included in Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 27. See also, Shaff and Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time*, 210; Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 54.

¹⁴ Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 47; Shaff and Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time*, xiii, 9-13.

her arrival, James took Christina as his second wife, and the family moved on to an isolated Mormon outpost in Ovid, Idaho, where John Gutzon de la Mothe Borglum was born to James and Christina on March 25, 1867. Eventually the family relocated to Fremont, Nebraska where James attended medical school and became a country doctor. The internal and external pressures of the plural marriage, however, led Christina to part ways with her husband and children. His mother's departure devastated five-year-old Gutzon who would later speak of her as if she had died.¹⁵

The frontier environment of Fremont provided an exciting and relatively carefree place for Gutzon and the other children to explore and grow.¹⁶ In 1912, Borglum acknowledged the influence of the American West on his art and his life: "I am convinced," he wrote, "that whatever is good in my art came from my mother and the old Danish race to which she belonged, but whatever gives my art strength, which makes it prevail here, comes from the courage imparted by the west." Borglum enjoyed the wildness and the freedom of the frontier and would later draw upon this inspiration in his art.¹⁷

In the early 1880s, Borglum left Nebraska for California where he took painting lessons from Elizabeth "Liza" Jaynes Putnam; in 1889, Gutzon and Liza—who was

¹⁵ Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 46-49. Later in life, Borglum frequently gave his birth year as 1871 in order to appear younger. See Shaff and Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time*, 3, 7. According to Shaff and Shaff, after Christina's departure, Gutzon and his full-brother Solon took to calling Ida "mother."

¹⁶ Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 49; Shaff and Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time*, 23. Both Gutzon and Solon Borglum became artists and the western environment influenced their art. It was Solon Borglum, however, who became known for his western-themed sculptures.

¹⁷ Borglum quoted in Shaff and Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time*, 7.

nearly twenty years his senior—married.¹⁸ After deciding to continue his education in Europe, the Borglums made their way eastward from California. Along their journey, Gutzon benefitted from a previous social and professional contact, Jessie Benton Frémont, who provided the couple with letters of introduction into prominent eastern social circles; she also wrote to her friends and acquaintances encouraging them to purchase the Borglums' paintings so they could fund their trip abroad.¹⁹ To date, Gutzon had concentrated on painting, but shortly after arriving in France, he tried his hand at sculpting western figures.²⁰ In 1891, his statuette of a dead Indian and his horse titled *Death of the Chief* won his admittance to the *Société Nationale des Beaux Arts* in Paris. During his time in France, Borglum also became a student and a friend of renowned French sculptor, Auguste Rodin. During his nearly three years abroad, Borglum's paintings and sculpture maintained a distinctly western flavor in homage to his homeland.²¹

¹⁸ Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 49-50; Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 68-71.

¹⁹ Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 50. In 1888, Borglum won a commission to paint the portrait of legendary explorer, General John Charles Frémont. More importantly for Borglum's career, however, was the friendship and patronage of Jessie Benton Frémont, the general's wife.

²⁰ Shaff and Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time*, 39-40, 118. Shaff and Shaff note that "the West was still very much a part of him. He thought of himself as a western artist and dreamed of cattle, horses and open spaces."

²¹ Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 50; Shaff and Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time*, 39; Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 118. Although Gutzon's marriage to Liza did not survive their return to the States, her presence and support shaped his early artistic career. Borglum later wed Mary Williams Montgomery in 1909 and had two children, Lincoln and Mary Ellis. On Borglum as a western artist, see Walker Rumble, "Gutzon Borglum: Mount Rushmore and the American Tradition," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 59, no. 3 (Jul., 1968): 121-127, 121; Shaff and Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time*, 39-40; Patricia Broder, *Bronzes of the American West* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1974), 64-65. According to Broder, "Gutzon was greatly influenced by the art of Rodin. From his study of Rodin's sculpture, he developed a feeling for sculptural mass and texture. The roughness of the surface gave viewers an understanding of spontaneity of creation." See also, Wayne Craven, *Sculpture in America* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company,

Returning to the United States in 1902, Borglum, determined to assert himself upon the American art scene, became a vocal opponent of the perceived subordination of American art and culture to that of Europe. “America,” Borglum chastised, “must cease being a slavish mimic of European standards of art and establish its own standard.”²² Borglum’s forceful personality and stubbornness frequently led him into confrontations with fellow artists. After disputes with the National Academy of Design and other established artists, including Augustus Saint-Gaudens and John Quincy Adams Ward, Borglum embraced his image as an artistic rebel and joined like-minded artists to form the Association of American Painters and Sculptors (AAPS).²³ The group of young, avant-garde painters and sculptors repeatedly criticized the National Academy of Design’s conservative nature. In the opening meeting in December 1911, Henry Fitch Taylor acknowledged the group’s desire to “take active steps toward the formation of a national association of painters and sculptors—an association of live and progressive men and women who shall lead the public taste in art rather than follow it.”²⁴ The younger artists initially welcomed Borglum’s involvement because he was, by then, one of the best-known artists in the country. Since his return to the United States, art critics

1968), 488-489. Craven states that, “though scorning the highly decorative element of French sculpture, Borglum absorbed much of the art of Rodin.”

²² Borglum quoted in Rumble, “Gutzon Borglum,” 121.

²³ Milton W. Brown, *The Story of the Armory Show*, 2nd ed. (New York: The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1988), 50-51. Brown states that “Gutzon Borglum was perhaps the best-known artist in America, partly because of many important public commissions, but mostly because of his flamboyant and pugnacious personality. He was always in the news, for one reason or another, and he loved a fight and usually kept the press informed of his side of the affair through blow-by-blow letters or interviews.”

²⁴ Brown, *The Story of the Armory Show*, 49.

and the public responded favorably to his *Seated Lincoln* unveiled in Newark, New Jersey in 1911; his equestrian monument of General Philip Sheridan established his reputation as a monumental sculptor.²⁵ For his part, Borglum saw his association with the group as a continuation of his personal vendetta against real or imagined snubs by members of the Academy. But Borglum's presence within the group was something of an aesthetic anomaly; leaning heavily toward conservative, academic art, Borglum's tastes conflicted with the AAPS's mission of introducing the American public to the avant-garde. The society's platform (which Borglum proposed) stated its goals: "For the purpose of developing a broad interest in American art activities of the best contemporary work that can be secured, representative of American and foreign art."²⁶ For the majority of AAPS members, this meant introducing the American public to the broad spectrum of the avant-garde, including Post-Impressionists and Cubists. Borglum, however, had in mind more prominent, established sculptors who represented the best in American art. When the other members of the AAPS turned down his suggestions—including such academic stalwarts as Daniel Chester French—Borglum denounced the selections and refused to participate in the exhibition. In typical Borglum fashion, Gutzon flamboyantly broke ties with the group in a letter published two weeks before the show's scheduled opening. Although short-lived, the AAPS, without Borglum's

²⁵ Shaff and Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time*, 102. The equestrian statue of General Sheridan was erected in the center of Sheridan Circle in Washington, D.C. in 1908; a replica was placed in Chicago's Lincoln Park in 1923.

²⁶ Brown, *The Story of the Armory Show*, 49, 51, 53, 99. As Brown notes, Borglum's "longstanding feud with the Academy had led him to make common cause with this group of younger radical artists while, for their part, he served as a symbol of status and respectability."

assistance, shook the American art establishment and succeeded in confronting the American public's conservative sensibilities at what would be the group's only public exhibition, the famed Armory Show of 1913 in New York City.²⁷

Despite the publicity surrounding his professional and personal disputes, Borglum continued to produce popular and critically-acclaimed art. His work reflected his belief that "Art in America should be American, drawn from American sources, memorializing American achievement." He despised what he considered to be "stale, derivative classicism."²⁸ Borglum wanted to ensure that American art was grand enough and bold enough for the young energetic nation and that it distanced itself from the influence of decaying European artistic traditions. Art, according to Borglum, should be democratic, approachable, and accessible to all; it must "be one with life and service."²⁹ He aspired to create "a monument as large and as grand as America herself." For Borglum, size mattered. "A monument's dimensions should be determined by the importance of the events commemorated," Borglum argued. Although he had made a name for himself as an artist, Borglum bemoaned that America's greatness had yet to be

²⁷ Shaff and Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time*, 99. Borglum rebelled against established procedures surrounding the awarding of sculptural commissions. See also, Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 128; Brown, *The Story of the Armory Show*, 101-103.

²⁸ Borglum quoted in Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 21. See also, Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 288; Jesse Larner, *Mount Rushmore: An Icon Reconsidered* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press/Nation Books, 2002), 114; Gilbert C. Fite, "Gutzon Borglum, Mercurial Master of Colossal Art," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 25, no. 2 (Spring, 1975): 2-19, 7.

²⁹ Borglum quoted in Rumble, "Gutzon Borglum," 125.

expressed in art.³⁰ Soon, however, he had the chance to commemorate at least one of the nation's regions on a truly monumental scale.

In 1914, Helen Plane, founder of the Atlanta chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, wrote to Borglum about constructing a Confederate memorial on Stone Mountain, located a short distance from Atlanta. Borglum's elaborate plan involved five groups of figures in deep relief spanning twelve-hundred feet of the mountainside. The principle group consisted of Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, Jefferson Davis, Albert Sydney Johnston, and Jeb Stuart. As Borglum told the *New York Times*, "My reason for composing this subject in this manner was to respect the granite mountain as much as possible, both for economy's sake and to maintain its wonderful contour."³¹ Through a series of fits and starts, Borglum's work on the mountain continued until he completed the carving of Lee's head in time for the one hundredth anniversary of the general's birth in 1924. Shortly thereafter, however, Borglum's relationship with the Stone Mountain Memorial Association soured as the group and the artist battled over financial matters and artistic control, which ended in Borglum's destruction of his models and his flight to North Carolina to escape possible arrest.³²

³⁰ Borglum quoted in Shaff and Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time*, 1; Rumble, "Gutzon Borglum," 125. As Rumble notes, the lack of monuments to America's success perturbed Borglum immensely. See also, Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 21; Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 288; Lerner, *Mount Rushmore*, 114; Fite, "Gutzon Borglum, Mercurial Master of Colossal Art," 7.

³¹ Borglum quoted in Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 154-157.

³² Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 181, 195-205. For additional information on Borglum's work on Stone Mountain, see Shaff and Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time*; Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*; David B. Freeman, *Carved in Stone: The History of Stone Mountain* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997).

Given his precarious situation in Georgia, Borglum agreed to meet Doane Robinson to discuss his proposal and to examine potential sites. In late September 1924, Borglum traveled to South Dakota accompanied by his young son, Lincoln, and his Stone Mountain assistant, Major J. G. Tucker. Upon meeting Robinson, the sculptor announced his opposition to Robinson's plan for carving western characters. Borglum contended that more prominent, national figures commemorating America's founders and builders would be needed to draw visitors to the state. In place of Buffalo Bill and Red Cloud, Borglum declared that he would carve George Washington and Abraham Lincoln—the nation's two greatest heroes in his estimation—because no other subject would attract the funding or tourists necessary to pull off the enterprise.³³

After his trip to South Dakota, Borglum wrote,

I know the West ... yet I know of no grouping of rock formation that equals those about this mountain in the Black Hills of South Dakota, nor do I know of any so near the center of our country that is so available to the nation or so suitable for colossal sculpture.... The large ledges to the rear, near and to the south of Mount Harney are available and should be examined for definite historical portrait characters, preferably national in the largest sense.³⁴

³³ Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 31-32, 129. According to Smith, Borglum opposed carving western characters in the Black Hills because he believed they were too local; the carving should be a grant national monument, Borglum asserted. See also, Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 291.

³⁴ Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 57; Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 77-103. Borglum returned to the Black Hills to inspect various mountain specimens more thoroughly, eventually selecting Mount Rushmore for its size, its southern and eastern exposure, and the quality of its granite.

In late October, Borglum sent Robinson a written report and a sketch of standing figures of Washington and Lincoln. Borglum also suggested they be accompanied by Theodore Roosevelt together with “large bas-reliefs of [George Armstrong] Custer and others.”³⁵

In the project’s early stages, it mattered little what Borglum carved on the mountain—the promoters proposed it to assist them in reaching individual goals: South Dakotans wanted a spectacle that would bring recognition and tourist dollars to their economically depressed state; Borglum wanted a colossal masterpiece that would bring him “artistic immortality.”³⁶ South Dakota Senator Peter Norbeck expressed to Robinson his initial impression of Borglum: “He is a peculiar combination of a promoter, publicist, politician, and, last but most important, he is one of the greatest artists in the world. The most remarkable trait ... is probably the fact that he is not one of the artists who are going to die and wait a century or two for recognition. He is going to get a good deal of it as he goes along.”³⁷ In response, Robinson reiterated his enthusiasm for the sculptor and the project: “it is unparalleled and it is doubtful if it ever could be surpassed.... [and] it will ‘sell’ the Black Hills and [Custer State] Park as nothing else could.” Robinson must have known that the promotion of Custer State Park would stir Norbeck’s conservationist heart.³⁸

³⁵ Borglum quoted in Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 36.

³⁶ Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 128; Fite, “Gutzon Borglum, Mercurial Master of Colossal Art,” 7.

³⁷ Peter Norbeck to Doane Robinson, January 20, 1925, quoted in Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 61. See also, Justin J. Mayer, “Historical Memory of Mount Rushmore” (master’s thesis, University of North Dakota, 2010), 31-32.

³⁸ Robinson to Norbeck, quoted in Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 62.

The ostentatious sculptor envisioned a national memorial through which to celebrate, on a colossal scale, American society and culture. The project provided Borglum the opportunity to reconnect with the American West and to literally leave his mark on the landscape. Although conceived as a regional attraction, the colossal sculpture presented Borglum and other supporters, particularly Senator Norbeck, with a national venue on which to engrave their political philosophies permanently and prominently.

Peter Norbeck, a successful businessman in the community of Redfield, South Dakota, aligned himself early in his career with the progressive wing of the Republican Party. During the Taft-Roosevelt feud, South Dakota's progressives did not abandon the GOP as others had done following William Howard Taft's nomination in 1912. Instead, the state's progressives gained control of the Republican Party's machinery and steered it toward their goals. Norbeck's allegiance to progressivism assisted his climb up the Republican ladder. In 1916, Norbeck beat out his Republican rivals in the primary contest on his way to winning the governor's seat in the general election that fall. Although he was a staunch progressive, many Republicans viewed Norbeck as an acceptable compromise; he served, therefore, as a unifying force within the South Dakota Republican Party.³⁹ Norbeck's progressive tendencies are clearly visible in the wide ranging and far-reaching agenda he sent to the state's legislature; he urged the creation of a state-sponsored system of hail insurance for farmers, along with state-

³⁹ Schell, *History of South Dakota*, 263-265. For more on Norbeck's life and career, see Gilbert C. Fite, *Peter Norbeck: Prairie Statesman* (Columbia: University of Missouri, 1948).

owned coal mines and terminal grain elevators. He also called for studies analyzing the feasibility of constructing hydroelectric dams on the Missouri River as well as various conservation measures, including the establishment of Custer State Park in 1919. In 1920, South Dakotans elected Norbeck to the United States Senate, a position that enabled him to assist in the fulfilment of Borglum's vision.⁴⁰

Convinced of the endeavor's advantages, Senator Norbeck wrote to Borglum with a suggestion: "I feel that the Washington and Lincoln busts should form the complete preliminary scheme.... There will be a dignity and grandeur about those two figures on top of the world which, it seems to me, would be minimized by extension."⁴¹ But sometime between 1924 and mid-1925, the presidential duo became a quartet as Borglum augmented the design to include Thomas Jefferson and Theodore Roosevelt. After selecting Washington and Lincoln for the colossal monument, Borglum determined that, in order to be successful, it needed to be more than an enormous sculpture; it must be a monument "to" something. With the twin figures of Washington and Lincoln, developing a theme appeared relatively simple: the foundation and preservation of the United States. The addition of Jefferson and Roosevelt required some revision to that theme. Highlighting Jefferson's presidential role in the Louisiana Purchase, which brought vast new territories under the authority of the United States, Borglum shaped the theme to include the "expansion" of the U.S. Roosevelt, however,

⁴⁰ Schell, *History of South Dakota*, 265-266; Robert L. Morlan, *Political Prairie Fire: The Nonpartisan League, 1915-1922* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1955), 124; Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 45. For more on Norbeck's conservationism, see Fite, *Peter Norbeck*, 143-151.

⁴¹ Norbeck to Borglum, quoted in Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 36.

presented a dilemma: how could commemorators emphasize aspects of TR's multifaceted personality and career to fit within the proposed theme, or should the theme be altered to fit the memory of Roosevelt?⁴² Borglum, choosing the former, submitted as evidence of Roosevelt's worthiness TR's intervention in Panama and the construction of the Panama Canal: "Roosevelt completed the dream of Columbus, opened the way to the East [and] joined the great East and West seas." With Roosevelt, therefore, the theme of American expansionism came full circle from the earliest westward movement to overseas conquests.⁴³ In a letter to Senator Norbeck, Borglum announced the final selection of the figures to be carved: "The portraits should be of Washington and Lincoln, the founder and the savior ... [along with] portraits of Jefferson, who is the first great expansionist and Roosevelt who completed commercial control by securing the Panama Canal."⁴⁴ By emphasizing Roosevelt's role in the construction of the Panama Canal, Borglum effectively promoted TR's bold presidential action as evidence that his presence bolstered the memorial's theme.⁴⁵

⁴² Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 131. Smith posed the question, "Should the theme be tailored to fit Roosevelt, or should Roosevelt be tailored to fit the theme?" According to the initiating legislation for Mount Rushmore, the stated purpose was the "founding, expansion, preservation, and unification of the United States." The "unification" portion appears to refer in part to Lincoln's "preservation" of the union during the Civil War; it has also been connected to Roosevelt's actions in uniting America's disparate regions and social classes. In some cases, it is left out as an element of the theme.

⁴³ Borglum quoted in Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 131. See also, Rumble, "Gutzon Borglum," 126.

⁴⁴ Gutzon Borglum to Peter Norbeck, March 14, 1925, quoted in Shaff and Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time*, 228. See also, Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 97. Stephenson suggests that Jefferson and Roosevelt were added to the concept sometime between 1924 and mid-1925. Borglum announced in the summer of 1925 that the figures to be carved would be those of "George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and Theodore Roosevelt."

⁴⁵ Borglum quoted in Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 253; Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 131; Boime, *The Unveiling of the National Icons*, 155. Boime argues that Borglum selected these four

Despite his careful articulation of the project's purpose, Borglum feared that, like the mysterious colossal heads on Easter Island, Mount Rushmore's viewers might interpret it as a novel curiosity with unknown significance rather than as an inspirational icon for America's democracy. As a result, Borglum proposed an "entablature" addition to the four busts, thereby demonstrating his intention for Mount Rushmore to have a prominent and permanent place within the nation's history and culture.⁴⁶ The proposed entablature would provide an abridged version of the nation's history outlined in the shape of the Louisiana Purchase. The narrative focused on nine major events, seven of which involved expanding the borders of the United States, including the Louisiana Purchase, the annexation of Texas, and lands gained by the Mexican Cession. Although never added to the memorial, the suggested entablature placed increasing emphasis on the memorial's national nature.⁴⁷

Given the controversy surrounding Roosevelt's inclusion on Mount Rushmore, Borglum, who usually claimed more credit than he was due, deflected criticism by

presidents because "each had a role in the founding and consummating the myth of America's manifest destiny." See also, Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 90. Although little has been said about when Thomas Jefferson became part of the Mount Rushmore project, few questioned the appropriateness of his inclusion on the national memorial. Jefferson had experienced a revival in popularity as the nation celebrated the sesquicentennial of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the centennial of his death in 1926. "Jefferson's place in this memorial is more important than even Washington's," Borglum asserted in a letter to an affluent Democrat. "By that I don't mean that he eclipsed Washington one iota, but Jefferson purchased the Louisiana Territory, in the center of which, on a spur of the Rocky Mountains, this memorial is located."

⁴⁶ Mayer, "Historical Memory of Mount Rushmore," 59-60; Larner, *Mount Rushmore*, 120, 125. As Larner notes, "Without an Entablature or Hall of Records, perhaps whoever or whatever is living on earth in the twilight of Rushmore's existence will see in these stone heads a work as inscrutable, as lacking in context as the stone heads that British sailors found on Easter Island. This was Borglum's worst fear and an example he often cited."

⁴⁷ For more on the controversies surrounding the entablature, see Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 240.

stating that Peter Norbeck proposed the addition of TR to the memorial. Norbeck, a progressive Republican and a Roosevelt enthusiast reportedly wanted Roosevelt included on “any monument that might be carved.”⁴⁸ In a 1931 letter, however, Doane Robinson recalled that “the selection of Roosevelt was solely Mr. Borglum’s doing” and that Robinson and Norbeck “discussed many times the hazards of immortalizing any man until he had been dead for at least fifty years.”⁴⁹ In fact, Borglum’s political history as a progressive Republican and an ardent Roosevelt supporter constituted the dominant factor in the decision. Borglum met Roosevelt through his early patron Jessie Benton Frémont while TR served as police commissioner in New York City; the pair met again in 1909 when Borglum exhibited his bust of Lincoln at the White House.⁵⁰ During Roosevelt’s presidency, Borglum enjoyed easy access to the president and took advantage of his White House visits to initiate connections within Washington’s social

⁴⁸ Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 130; Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 206. Some scholars argue that Roosevelt was included because his ranch had been located two hundred miles north of the Black Hills; others state that promoters believed his presence would encourage large donations from the wealthy Roosevelt family. The initial South Dakota legislation permitting the memorial’s construction specified Washington and Lincoln, but there is some indication that Borglum considered replacing Washington with Roosevelt; “Teddy and Lincoln . . . belong so much more to the West,” he argued. See also, Fite, “Gutzon Borglum, Mercurial Master of Colossal Art,” 11. Shawn Krush, “Roosevelt and Rushmore: A Controversial Choice?” <http://moh.tie.net/content/docs/RooseveltandRushmore.pdf> (accessed October 31, 2013). Shawn Krush’s short essay designed to help South Dakota educators teach American history through the story of Mount Rushmore lists three main reasons why Borglum, Norbeck, and Robinson chose TR for the memorial: conservation, trust busting, and the Panama Canal. Rumble, “Gutzon Borglum,” 126-127. Rumble suggests that the emphasis on western expansion (and its continuation through overseas imperialism) left Washington, and not Roosevelt, as the odd man in the group.

⁴⁹ Letter from Doane Robinson to Hon. Franklin B. Morgan, quoted in Teresa Bergman, “Can Patriotism be Carved in Stone? A Critical Analysis of Mount Rushmore’s Orientation Films,” *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 11, no. 1 (2008): 89-112, 109, footnote 41.

⁵⁰ Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 50, 57; Shaff and Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time*, 51, 87; Lerner, *Mount Rushmore*, 7; Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 107. Borglum also carved a set of eagles for Roosevelt’s home in Oyster Bay, New York.

and political circles.⁵¹ Roosevelt and Borglum seemed to be energetic kindred spirits: both expressed connections with the American West along with the desire to combat the effeminacy and degeneration they believed to be pervasive in American culture and society at the turn of the century. Additionally, Borglum admired Roosevelt's activism, spirit, and determination as complementary to his own.⁵²

Although Borglum did not attend either the Republican or Progressive national conventions in 1912, he supported Roosevelt's split with the Republican Party and campaigned tirelessly for the former president.⁵³ Less than a month after the first Progressive Party convention, Borglum assisted in the creation of the National Progressive Party of Connecticut and spent the summer and fall of 1912 stumping across the state for Roosevelt and local Progressive Party candidates.⁵⁴ Roosevelt's loss to Woodrow Wilson did little to diminish Borglum's enthusiasm for his political hero:

⁵¹ Shaff and Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time*, 98.

⁵² Boime, *The Unveiling of the National Icons*, 177; Lerner, *Mount Rushmore*, 7; Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 136-137. According to Taliaferro, "Like hundreds of thousands of other Americans, Gutzon Borglum was entirely enamored of the image, the force, and the substance of Theodore Roosevelt." See also, Rumble, "Gutzon Borglum," 122.

⁵³ Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 57, 130; Shaff and Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time*, 137; Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 136-137. According to Taliaferro, "Borglum was perfectly suited to the melodramatic posturing and high moral stakes of Roosevelt's Bull Moose campaign." See also, Ronald F. Briley, "The Artist as Patron: Gutzon Borglum and North Dakota Politics, 1922," *South Dakota History* 20, no. 2 (Summer 1990): 120-145, 124; Rumble, "Gutzon Borglum," 122. Rumble notes, however, that Borglum's "values and attitudes were at variance with many of the accepted Progressive ideals. Basic to much of Progressivism had been a faith in the people, in the majority; this provided the justification for typically Progressive responses, such as the initiative, recall, referendum, woman suffrage, direct election of senators, and direct primaries—'more democracy' in general. Borglum, at one time or another, believed in most of these things. But he retained one significant reservation: he was unable to place his faith entirely in the people."

⁵⁴ Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 138-139; Rumble, "Gutzon Borglum," 121-122. Borglum served as the chairman of the Stamford Progressive Association in addition to his involvement at the state and national levels.

“What an inspiration the life of Roosevelt affords me! To put into stone a great man—a typical American! My ambition will certainly be satisfied when I have executed in the ‘imperishable’ the features and figures of the greatest man of his time.” Three months after the election, Borglum demonstrated his continued commitment to Rooseveltian ideals in the *New York Herald*: “I have been thinking,” Borglum opined, “of attempting what should be the masterpiece of my life. I am planning a heroic statue of Theodore Roosevelt.” Through the lessons of the failed campaign of 1912, however, Borglum realized the impotence of third parties, although it did not dilute his enthusiasm for progressive politics or his desire for substantive change in American politics and society.⁵⁵

Borglum came to believe that the progressive exodus from the Republican Party resulted not only in the election of Woodrow Wilson, but also in the weakening of the reform element within the party—a tradition that the artist traced back through Roosevelt to Abraham Lincoln.⁵⁶ Borglum recognized the progressive movement’s Populist roots which, combined with his relationship with the West as a region, informed his perception of the western farmers as the embodiment of Jefferson’s yeomen and the

⁵⁵ Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 141-143. Borglum hoped that Roosevelt would accept the Progressive nomination in 1916 or endorse General Leonard Wood in his place. When Roosevelt failed to respond to Borglum’s repeated telegrams, the sculptor became despondent and angry but soon recovered. See also, Shaff and Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time*, 156; Boime, *The Unveiling of the National Icons*, 174; Briley, “The Artist as Patron,” 124, 144; Rumble, “Gutzon Borglum,” 122. Rumble states that “disillusioned with the [Progressive] party’s impotence, he decided that success in American politics demanded adherence to the traditional two-party structure, a belief which he maintained thereafter.” Borglum did not support LaFollette’s Progressive Party nomination in 1924, although many progressives did.

⁵⁶ Briley, “The Artist as Patron,” 127-128.

foundation of American democratic society.⁵⁷ A growing political storm on the northern plains presented Borglum with the opportunity to bolster the progressivism of the Republican Party and to assist the western farmers in the agrarian revolt's latest incarnation.

Arthur C. Townley, former Socialist and flax farmer, offered a solution to North Dakota's perennial agrarian concerns: a nonpartisan coalition of farmers advocating for the public ownership and control of those private interests hobbling the American farmer's prosperity.⁵⁸ In 1915, the Nonpartisan League (NPL) abandoned the agrarian movements' tradition of developing third parties through which to assert their programs; instead, the NPL's innovative organization worked through the established political parties, selecting "the best man for the job regardless of party" by taking advantage of the progressive introduction of direct primaries in the state. In 1916, the NPL successfully placed Lynn J. Frazier in the governor's seat and implemented a broad program of reform, including a new grain grading system and a state-owned grain elevator.⁵⁹ Borglum's first introduction to North Dakota farmers came in 1916 at the

⁵⁷ Briley, "The Artist as Patron," 132-133; Rumble, "Gutzon Borglum," 122-123. According to Rumble, Borglum believed that "the farmer was the pillar upon which America was founded." Furthermore, Rumble states, "the yeoman farmer was the ideal citizen: he worked at a calling which was uniquely important to society, was productive and blessed, and therefore demanded national attention."

⁵⁸ Morlan, *Political Prairie Fire*, preface, 22; Rumble, "Gutzon Borglum," 123-124; Briley, "The Artist as Patron," 125; Elwyn B. Robinson, *History of North Dakota* (1966; repr., Fargo: North Dakota State University Institute for Regional Studies, 1995), 328-331. According to Elwyn Robinson, the early NPL organized around the platform of "state ownership of elevators, flour mills, packing houses, and cold-storage plants; state inspection of grain and grain dockage; exemption of farm improvements from taxation; state hail insurance on an acreage-tax basis; and rural-credit banks for low-interest loans."

⁵⁹ Morlan, *Political Prairie Fire*, 33, 52, 76. Morlan notes that "It has often been stated that the Republican party of North Dakota was captured in 1916 by the Nonpartisan League. It would actually be fully as correct to say that the Republican Party was captured by the Republican voters of the state, who

Republican National Convention where he had joined other progressive Republicans hoping to see Roosevelt consent to the nomination.⁶⁰ The farmers, there to promote the candidacy of Robert LaFollette, impressed the artist enough that he agreed to work as an eastern-based fundraiser and supporter of the new organization.⁶¹ In 1918, Borglum traveled to the state to support the Nonpartisan League.

With the NPL, Borglum saw the opportunity to revive the progressive wing of the Republican Party, but it would be necessary to curb the radical and third-party tendencies within the League. Borglum, who had suffered from an embarrassing lack of influence in the Warren Harding administration, saw the League as the antidote to the conservative factions within his party; for Borglum, its ability to shape national politics represented the League's greatest potential.⁶² But a conservative Republican faction, the Independent Voters Association (IVA) challenged the League's dominance in the state, forced a recall election, and ousted Governor Frazier and other NPL officials.⁶³ In 1922,

were using a political party as it is theoretically supposed to be used—as a vehicle for carrying out the will of the majority of its members.”

⁶⁰ Briley, “The Artist as Patron,” 124.

⁶¹ Briley, “The Artist as Patron,” 120-121, 124. According to Briley, Borglum served as a “patron” of the Nonpartisan League. See also, Rumble, “Gutzon Borglum,” 125; Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 177.

⁶² Rumble, “Gutzon Borglum,” 125. According to Rumble, “The importance of the ‘agrarian crusade’ lay in its possible effect on national policy. The problems of the farmer had to be dealt with by national legislation and Borglum saw that this could be done only by keeping the League within the Republican party and using its force as a lever of power for extracting gains from the administration.” See also, Briley, “The Artist as Patron,” 121, 127-128. As Briley states, “Borglum, who adhered to the progressive Theodore Roosevelt wing of the Republican party, sought to contain that prairie fire within the party and work out some type of accommodation between the league and the administration of President Warren G. Harding that would result in a more reform-minded GOP.”

⁶³ Briley, “The Artist as Patron,” 126; Morlan, *Political Prairie Fire*, 208, 286; Robinson, *History of North Dakota*, 346-350.

Borglum backed Lynn Frazier in the contest for the U.S. Senate seat held by conservative Republican Porter J. McCumber. Frazier won the election, but Borglum could not contain the League's support for Robert LaFollette's 1924 Progressive campaign for the presidency.⁶⁴

Borglum's involvement with the NPL, his attempt to foster their reform-minded program within the Republican Party, along with his aversion to the group's more radical elements, placed the artist firmly within the spectrum of conservative progressivism that was the hallmark of Roosevelt's presidency. Therefore, TR's image operated as an appropriate expression of Borglum's own views of democracy and the democratic traditions of a people's government. Through the images on Mount Rushmore, Borglum pulled these democratic ideals into the 1920s and 1930s and beyond. For Borglum, Roosevelt's presidential imagery represented not only expansionism, but also the support of the agrarian traditions in the Progressive Movement and—through his association with the American West—the western agriculturalists that Borglum saw as foundational in American society. Borglum used Roosevelt—rather than a pioneer or a western farmer—to portray the fundamentals of American democracy. Unlike Borglum, Norbeck opposed the Nonpartisan League's encroachment into South Dakota politics, and he frequently referred to himself as a “Theodore Roosevelt Republican,” a progressive force within the party.⁶⁵ Norbeck

⁶⁴ Robinson, *History of North Dakota*, 389-390; Rumble, “Gutzon Borglum,” 122. For a full account of Borglum's efforts in Frazier's 1922 senatorial bid, see Briley, “The Artist as Patron.” In his article, Briley notes that Borglum paid more attention to attacking McCumber than supporting Frazier, which suggests that the artist did not fully support the NPL's more socialistic measures.

⁶⁵ For more on Norbeck's political views and his efforts to stifle the NPL in South Dakota, see Fite, *Peter Norbeck*, 39-49, 59-69. See also, Boime, *The Unveiling of the National Icons*, 144-145; Taliaferro, *Great*

stayed in the Republican Party and instituted plans and programs in South Dakota which helped ease the discontent in that state and thereby limit the League's appeal. Although they approached the issue from two different angles, both men supported the democratic progressivism of Theodore Roosevelt and wanted to see the Republican Party move back in that direction.

After Roosevelt's death in 1919, Borglum assisted with the commemorative efforts of the newly-created Roosevelt Memorial Association (RMA).⁶⁶ Expressing his admiration for Roosevelt, Borglum professed to the *Stamford Advocate* that, "He did things. He had vision and, hot-footed, he pursued that vision to accomplishment as only the traditional crusader could." In a separate letter to the *New York Herald*, Borglum proposed commemorating Roosevelt by carving a colossal equestrian statue of the

White Fathers, 186-187; Larner, *Mount Rushmore*, 232. Some scholars suggest that Borglum's populism led to his association with the Ku Klux Klan during the years he worked on the Stone Mountain project. Albert Boime, for example, states that "belonging more to an agrarian world, the Klan seemed to Borglum to embody the populism of his native West and could forge a weapon against the Wall Street bankers and financiers that he held responsible for America's decline." Furthermore, Boime argues, "Borglum envisioned the Klan as the instrument of a pro-farmer, antitariff, Anglo-Saxon progressivism expressing 'the minds of the villagers and agrarians,' not subject to the influence of foreign ideologies and opposed to the alien interests of New York and the urban east generally." As Boime continues, "Borglum, sensed a source of political power that he had hoped to tap to bring about the changes that he felt were urgently needed." In this way, Boime suggests that Borglum had hoped to tame the radical fringe of the Klan—much like what he tried to do with the NPL; he wanted to harness the power of the organization for progressive purposes. John Taliaferro concurs that Borglum "came to view the Klan as the next Nonpartisan League, a promising grassroots movement with the potential to reshape the political map of the nation." Jesse Larner disagrees: "Whatever his modern apologists may say of this embarrassing episode in his life, there is more to it than his crackpot hope to redirect the Klan's political energies." Larner views Borglum's racism and xenophobia of these years as "perfectly consistent with his long-standing conviction of western cultural superiority."

⁶⁶ See Box 86, Folder: Roosevelt Memorial Association, Borglum Papers; Shaff and Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time*, 181. According to Shaff and Shaff, "Mary Borglum wrote that Gutzon did meet with Roosevelt's son, Captain Roosevelt, who wanted Gutzon to make a portrait of his father while his likeness was still fresh in his mind." Although Borglum never produced a full portrait statue of TR, he did create a portrait bust that the authors describe as "a vigorous character study that captured the force and humor of his friend." A replica of Borglum's bust of TR is on display at Sagamore Hill in Oyster Bay, New York.

former president on the Palisades of the Hudson River.⁶⁷ Like many of Borglum's grandiose schemes, however, the colossal equestrian idea never developed into a concrete plan; the suggestion was probably meant to convey Borglum's personal affections for TR rather than a presentation of a viable commemorative option. By 1925, Borglum found a realistic site on which to carve a colossal memorial to Roosevelt, and, not surprisingly, the selection represented Borglum's progressive convictions. Roosevelt, Borglum wrote, "was preeminently an all-American President."⁶⁸ In a national radio address in 1931, Borglum submitted Roosevelt's exploits as a path-breaking trust buster as additional proof for his inclusion on Mount Rushmore: "Roosevelt did more; alone he stayed the encroachment of organized privilege against the principles of a government by, of, and for the people, declaring—'so far and no farther, can you go with safety to the principles of a people's government.'"⁶⁹ Borglum emphasized Roosevelt's commitment to democratic politics and his appeal as a symbol of American nationalism in order to promote his own conception of American democratic values.

The expansionism inherent in the Panama Canal decision also expressed the global nature of modern American society and politics. Borglum declared that,

"Everything in modern civilization has so expanded that the very scale, the breadth of

⁶⁷ Gutzon Borglum, Manuscript copy for *Stamford Advocate*, Borglum Papers; Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 175.

⁶⁸ Gutzon Borglum, Report to the Harney Peak Memorial Association, n.d., included in Box 102, Folder: Rushmore 1928-29, Borglum Papers. The Harney Peak Memorial Association was the predecessor to the Mount Rushmore National Memorial Commission.

⁶⁹ Gutzon Borglum, "Why the Mountain Memorial?," Address delivered in Collier's Radio Hour at New York, January 18, 1931, located in Box 102, Folder: Rushmore 1930-31, Borglum Papers.

one's thought, is no longer limited by town, city, county or state, but daily reaches the boundaries of the world."⁷⁰ Therefore, in order for art to complement the burgeoning scope of modern American society, Borglum insisted, it needed to be massive.

"Volume, great mass, has a greater emotional effect upon the observer than quality of form," Borglum asserted. "Quality of form affects the mind; volume shocks the nerve or soul centers and is emotional in its effect." Colossal art, Borglum explained, like "the heavy pipes in an organ, will, rightly played ... make everything else on earth seem unimportant."⁷¹ Art must reverberate throughout its audience; in order to accomplish this, the scale must be such that its magnitude inspires and awes the viewer. When discussing the virtues of Mount Rushmore, Borglum frequently called upon examples of ancient colossal art as symbols expressing the greatness of those civilizations. America, Borglum argued, was the rightful heir of colossal symbolism: "The amazing and expanding character of [American] civilization clearly demands an enlarged dimension—a new scale." Furthermore, Borglum proclaimed, "Our age will some day be called 'the Colossal Age,'" as America's growth in the post-World War I decade seemed to indicate.⁷² Borglum later wrote that Mount Rushmore "is our mark":

Cut into the backbone of this western world, high in the heavens, fearless we have carved it, defying the elements ... confident that [it] shall endure eons after civilizations upon civilizations have come, read, pondered, wondered and passed away. I am assured that these carvings will endure as long as the Rocky Mountains endure; their message will outlast

⁷⁰ Borglum quoted in Albert Boime, "Patriarchy Fixed in Stone: Gutzon Borglum's 'Mount Rushmore,'" *American Art* 5, no. 1/2 (Winter-Spring 1991): 142-167, 144.

⁷¹ Borglum quoted in Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 21-22.

⁷² Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 22; Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 153.

Egypt's entombed mortality [and] Greece's gifts of grace and loveliness.⁷³

Like the ancient wonders the Colossus of Rhodes, the Great Pyramids, and the statues of Zeus and Athena, Borglum conceived the colossal commemoration in the Black Hills of South Dakota as a powerful, prominent, and enduring site of memory for future generations and future civilizations.

Although the promotional materials stressed Roosevelt's participation in the Panama Canal saga as the defining accomplishment of his presidency, this was by no means the only reason supporters selected him for the national memorial. Both Borglum and Norbeck considered themselves Roosevelt Republicans and embraced the democratic virtues they believed he represented. Furthermore, Borglum asserted that these defining values of the American civilization could only be adequately commemorated through the colossal, as no other form expressed the magnitude of the American character. As Borglum set out to create his colossal masterpiece, however, he and project supporters needed to overcome a series of challenges, including vocal opposition, drought and depression in the region, and Borglum's ongoing need to control the memorial's message.

With the selection of the four presidents determined and the theme solidified, Borglum, the consummate showman, took advantage of President Calvin Coolidge's 1927 summer sojourn to the Black Hills to formally commence the carving of Mount

⁷³ Borglum quoted in Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 1, 285.

Rushmore.⁷⁴ At the official ceremonies on the mountain, President Coolidge declared that, “by building the Panama Canal, [Theodore Roosevelt] brought into closer relationship the east and west and realized the vision that inspired Columbus in his search for a new passage to the orient.” Coolidge contended that in order to preserve the principles for which Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln stood, “destiny raised up Theodore Roosevelt.”⁷⁵ Roosevelt, Coolidge asserted, embodied and maintained the ideals of the foundation, expansion, and preservation articulated by these three great presidents; consequently, TR became the modern symbol of American foundational ideals.

Coolidge’s speech had a greater impact on the memorial than its promoters expected. Not only was Calvin Coolidge the first to refer to Mount Rushmore as a national shrine, but his speech—lengthy by “Silent Cal” Coolidge standards—eloquently outlined the purpose and significance of the colossal sculpture as a beacon of American democracy.⁷⁶ “The union of these four Presidents carved on the face of the everlasting hills of South Dakota,” Coolidge attested, “will constitute a distinctly national monument. It will be decidedly American in its conception, in its magnitude, in its

⁷⁴ Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 126-127; Mayer, “Historical Memory of Mount Rushmore,” 37. President Coolidge selected the Black Hills as his summer vacation location at the suggestion of his friend, Herbert Myrick of Springfield, Massachusetts. Myrick, the publisher of numerous farm magazines, including the *Dakota Farmer*, was a strong supporter of the Mount Rushmore effort. He, along with Norbeck, Williamson, Robinson, and Borglum, believed that Coolidge’s presence in South Dakota would boost the project, which at the moment was suffering from a lack of funds.

⁷⁵ Coolidge quoted in Mount Rushmore National Memorial Commission Bill, Borglum Papers.

⁷⁶ Mayer, “Historical Memory of Mount Rushmore,” 32, 37. Mayer argues that Coolidge’s speech declare Mount Rushmore to be a national memorial.

meaning, and altogether worthy of our country.” Coolidge’s speech framed the monument’s message and cemented its shift from a regional to a national memorial.⁷⁷

Although Robinson initially proposed several Native Americans for the colossal carving—including Red Cloud and Sakakawea (Sacagawea)—the new national presidential memorial broadcast the superiority of the “great white men” in an area that still actively disputed as part of the Great Sioux Reservation.⁷⁸ Robinson, founder of the South Dakota State Historical Society, authored several books on the state’s history, including the two-volume *History of South Dakota* (1904) and *A History of the Dakota or Sioux Indians* (1904). He realized, no doubt, how important the Black Hills—the *Paha Sapa*—were to the Sioux and yet continued to support a national memorial with an imperialistic theme.⁷⁹ The memorial’s emphasis on expansionism—and each president’s role in creating or maintaining the national narrative of Manifest Destiny—contributes to the symbolic dominance of the United States over the land and the Sioux. The colossal scale of the memorial ensures that Mount Rushmore serves as a visual, permanent

⁷⁷ Mount Rushmore National Memorial Commission Bill, Borglum Papers. See also, Mayer, “Historical Memory of Mount Rushmore,” 32. According to Mayer, “The rhetoric used by both Borglum and Robinson to describe the Black Hills project became significantly more patriotic as their proposed sculpture transformed from a distinctly western monument to a patriotic national monument.”

⁷⁸ For more on the legal battles between the Sioux and the United States government, see Ostler, *The Lakotas and the Black Hills*; Larner, *Mount Rushmore*; and Mayer, “Historical Memory of Mount Rushmore,” 25-26.

⁷⁹ Doane Robinson, *History of South Dakota* (Logansport, IN: B. F. Bowen, 1904); Doane Robinson, *A History of the Dakota or Sioux Indians* (1904; repr., Minneapolis: Ross and Haines, 1974); Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 44. See also, Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 17-29; Ostler, *The Lakotas and the Black Hills*, 3, 22, 26. Ostler describes the importance of the Black Hills to the Sioux: “Nowhere were the seven directions (East, South, West, North, Above, Below, Center) so obviously manifest. Within the Lakotas’ geographical and spiritual landscape, then, the Black Hills were *wakan* [sacred, powerful, mysterious, incomprehensible] in a singular way.” Ostler also notes that some scholars debate the sacredness of the Hills to the Sioux.

marker of American cultural, social, and political dominance over the region.⁸⁰

Furthermore, the memorial's designation as a "shrine of democracy" carved into a mountain symbolically suggests a consensus of interpretation and a shared national identity despite the protests of the Sioux.⁸¹

Borglum's personal relationship with the Sioux Nation was more complicated. On one hand, Borglum called the Sioux "the Romans among the red men ... that great war-like race."⁸² But he also demonstrated his paternalistic attitude toward Native Americans when he learned that the Lakota on the Pine Ridge reservation were near starvation during the Great Depression. Borglum frantically wrote to numerous government officials on their behalf, but frustrated by the government's slow response, Borglum sent his own cattle to the reservation for distribution.⁸³ Borglum's belief in Anglo-Saxon superiority is also evident in his condescending report of the episode sent

⁸⁰ Boime, *The Unveiling of the National Icons*, 147-148, 162. Boime states that, "the elevated vantage point and the sense of mastery and control that that vantage point inspires is the metaphorical embodiment of the aspirations of Manifest Destiny," which he terms "magisterial aesthetics" or the "magisterial gaze." For Boime, "Mount Rushmore literally crystallizes the performance of this experience into rock hardness through monstrous omniscient heads looming over the Western landscape." See also, Ostler, *The Lakotas and the Black Hills*, xiii. According to Ostler, "the colossal scale of the four presidents (each sixty feet high) and their placement atop a huge wall of rock make Rushmore a powerful symbol of America's ownership—not only of the Black Hills but of a continental empire. The overwhelming permanence of Mount Rushmore conveys the impression that this empire might last forever."

⁸¹ Boime, *The Unveiling of the National Icons*, 137. Boime states that, "As if to stake out the territory like a typical colonial, the sculptor then proceeded to desecrate the holy place by defacing it permanently with the effigies of four Great White Fathers hewn directly into the granite. Thus, the harmony that the Native Americans established with their environment was disrupted in a double sense by Borglum's monument, first as a religious and cultural site, and second as an integral feature of the indigenous landscape."

⁸² Borglum quoted in Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 319.

⁸³ Boime, *The Unveiling of the National Icons*, 164-165. Borglum's personal papers reveal his level of involvement with the Sioux, particularly those on the Pine Ridge reservation. See Boxes 70 and 71, Borglum Papers, for example, which contain Borglum's correspondence with various government officials and prominent Sioux leaders, such as Chief Henry Standing Bear and James Red Cloud.

to a friend: “I have a new toy,” Borglum wrote, “I’ve been feeding eight thousand Indians this winter . . . I have provided them with clothing and blankets and now I’m developing a scheme to reorganize their life [sic] so they will be happy and I’ll make the government do it.”⁸⁴ The Sioux, grateful for his assistance, made him an honorary member of the tribe with the name “Inyan Wanblee,” Chief Stone Eagle, although some continued to criticize the defacement of the Black Hills.⁸⁵

The Sioux were not the only opponents to the proposed monument; budding environmentalists criticized the desecration of the Black Hills’ natural beauty. A region that made its money from mining, Robinson retorted, had no ground on which to criticize the artistic sculpting of mountains. Attacking the hypocrisy of Black Hills residents, Robinson declared that, “If the granite [of the Harney Peak region] should assay five cents a ton in gold, they would unanimously subscribe to a machine to grind up the Needles and wipe them off the face of the earth.”⁸⁶ Reminding South Dakotans of the potential windfall of the venture, Robinson pronounced that the project would not “grind up its material and pass away, but for a thousand years would continue to bring its annual harvest of gold. With such sculpture in the Hills no eastern man would think of

⁸⁴ Borglum quoted in Boime, *The Unveiling of the National Icons*, 163. See also, Rumble, “Gutzon Borglum,” 122. According to Rumble, Borglum “was a fervent believer in Anglo-Saxon superiority.” Borglum’s beliefs manifested themselves in a strong nativist sentiment, and, in this case, in the paternalism toward the Sioux.

⁸⁵ Boime, *The Unveiling of the National Icons*, 163, 169; Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 321; Shaff and Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time*, 281.

⁸⁶ Robinson quoted in Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 60. For additional discussion of the opposition to the carving of Mount Rushmore, see Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 206.

going west for pleasure without passing through the Hills enroute.⁸⁷ Deflecting both criticism and suggested augmentation of the project, Mount Rushmore's supporters worked diligently to see their mission accomplished.

On July 4, 1930, Borglum presided over a ceremony for the unveiling of Washington's bust. Prior to the observances, workers draped a gigantic American flag, measuring forty by seventy-two feet, over Washington's face. Like the earlier celebration on Stone Mountain and the two previous dedication exercises at Mount Rushmore, Borglum conducted the Washington unveiling with his usual dramatic flair. With more than 2,500 people in attendance, the ceremony began with a twenty-one gun salute by soldiers from nearby Fort Mead. Reporters from several major newspapers, including the *New York Times*, covered the story for eastern audiences. Besides Borglum, however, no nationally-recognized dignitaries participated in the ceremony, a situation the sculptor rectified in later dedications.⁸⁸ But as the Great Depression wore on and the drought worsened on the Great Plains, national attention shifted from the celebrations at Mount Rushmore to the plight of the region's residents.

Harry Hopkins, director of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), employed veteran journalist Lorena Hickok to survey the conditions in the various western states and to assess the agency's impact on the region. Her letters back to Hopkins, along with those she sent to First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, reveal the severity of the Great Depression in the West. Hickok, who grew up in the vicinity of

⁸⁷ Robinson quoted in Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 60.

⁸⁸ Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 212-214; Shaff and Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time*, 271, 318-319; Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 248.

Mobridge, South Dakota, was familiar with the region; her years in journalism enabled her to astutely assess the conditions of the land and its people.⁸⁹ Hickok stopped first in North Dakota in October 1933; the state contained some of the worst conditions she encountered on her travels, although in some regards, South Dakota was a close second. Hickok observed the presence of some radical elements in South Dakota, including members of the Farm Holiday movement who attracted attention to the farmers' desperate situation by refusing to bring their crops to market. Additionally, a few communists organized rallies in the state, but most of those gathered were unemployed and restless and the farmers did not place much stock in them.⁹⁰ Hickok called the Dakotas the "Siberia of the United States" with "miles and miles of flat brown country," devoid of haystacks and crops for as far as the eye could see. She also reported on the devastation caused by swarms of grasshoppers that invaded the region. The grasshoppers, Hickok lamented, destroyed the fields "right down to the earth, even eating the roots." In addition to the crops and grasslands, the grasshoppers ate the bark off trees and even laundry hanging on clotheslines.⁹¹ During the Depression, farm families relied on crop reduction payments from the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) to cover the crops destroyed by drought and grasshoppers.

The summer of 1936 was one of the hottest on record and there was little evidence that rain would relieve the parched region. President Franklin Roosevelt,

⁸⁹ Lowitt, *The New Deal and the West*, 8, 12.

⁹⁰ Lowitt, *The New Deal and the West*, 9-12.

⁹¹ Lowitt, *The New Deal and the West*, 13.

understanding the limited ability of relief efforts to combat cyclical deficiencies, searched for reform measures to alleviate the suffering.⁹² Seeking to bolster support among the region's farmers for the upcoming 1936 election, Franklin Roosevelt embarked upon what newspapers called his "Drought Tour." That summer, the President visited several states hit hard by the Depression and drought, securing firsthand knowledge of the situation. In anticipation of the President's visit to South Dakota, Borglum orchestrated an elaborate ceremony to unveil the second bust, that of Thomas Jefferson.⁹³ Borglum's well-laid plans, however, failed to account for the inflexibility of the chief executive's schedule; postponing the presentation until the afternoon of August 30, 1936, Borglum still managed to pull off a dramatic revelation of Jefferson's bust. Twenty-year-old Mary Ellis Borglum pressed a button to signal her brother, Lincoln, to detonate five charges and swing aside the enormous American flag attached to the pointing boom, exposing the carving. Although Borglum had been informed that Franklin Roosevelt would not make any remarks at the ceremony, he spurred the president to speak extemporaneously: "I want you, Mr. President, to dedicate this memorial as a shrine to democracy; to call upon the people of this earth for one hundred thousand years to come, to read the thought and to see what manner of men struggled here to establish self-determining government in the western world."

⁹² Schell, *History of South Dakota*, 290; Lowitt, *The New Deal and the West*, 40.

⁹³ Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 311; Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 278-279; Shaff and Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time*, 277. The lengthy gap between the Washington and Jefferson unveilings occurred because Borglum initially located Jefferson to the left of Washington. As the carving progressed, however, it became apparent that the granite on that side was inadequate. Workers blasted the initial Jefferson from the mountain and restarted the bust to Washington's right.

Roosevelt, unflustered by the sculptor's boorishness, responded philosophically to the gigantic sculpture:

I had seen the photographs, and I had seen the drawings, and I have talked with those who are responsible for this great work, and yet I had no conception, until about ten minutes ago, not only of its magnitude, but also of its permanent beauty and importance.... I think that we can perhaps meditate on [what] those Americans ten thousand years from now ... will think about us. Let us hope that they at least give us the benefit of the doubt—that they will believe we have honestly striven every day and generation to preserve for our descendants a decent land to live in and a decent form of government to operate under.⁹⁴

Franklin Roosevelt's message, combined with the imagery of Borglum's art, represented the hope that future generations of Americans would look kindly upon their forebearers as they struggled through a crippling depression while maintaining their democracy. Even though Mount Rushmore continually received federal funds throughout the depression years, it was not a New Deal project. Borglum refused to use the numerous Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) workers who built campgrounds and trails throughout the Black Hills; he preferred to maintain control over his own workers.⁹⁵

The following year, Borglum unveiled the bust of Lincoln. He selected September 17, 1937—the sesquicentennial of the ratification of the Constitution—for the occasion.⁹⁶ Borglum's reverence for his subject is evident in his passionate speech delivered to the five thousand people in attendance:

⁹⁴ Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 280-281; Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 312-314.

⁹⁵ Shaff and Shaff, *Six Wars at a Time*, 319; Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 273-277; Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 232. As Smith notes, "Borglum was a New Deal enthusiast."

⁹⁶ Mayer, "Historical Memory of Mount Rushmore," 55.

It is my ... bounden duty as the creator of this memorial, to emphasize the cultural necessity to make of this colossal undertaking something more than the “biggest” in the world, that is, to make it a great work of art—a work of art as great for us and our time as the subject merits, and our ability permits, determined ... that it shall rank with the great records of awakened Egypt, Greece, and Rome.⁹⁷

With three of the four busts nearly completed, Borglum philosophically pondered the memorial’s significance—not only as a great work of art, but as a permanent, prominent record of his belief in the greatness of the American civilization.

Because the Entablature became an increasingly contentious feature, Borglum replaced the concept with a new addition to the presidential busts that would ensure that the memorial message would not be lost or misinterpreted. Behind the four figures, Borglum wanted to cut a room into the mountain to showcase additional statuary, descriptions of the monument’s purpose, along with the original copies of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. A grand staircase would lead to a doorway twenty feet high and fourteen feet wide topped with a bas-relief eagle with a thirty-nine foot wingspan.⁹⁸ The Hall of Records would also allow for the commemoration of the many Americans suggested for inclusion on the mountain; “I will give Susan B. Anthony a place with the gods in the great hall,” Borglum proclaimed, “Her friends should be happy.”⁹⁹ Work on the project began in July 1938, but the

⁹⁷ Borglum quoted in Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 285. Borglum was devoted to Lincoln and his ideals. In addition to the *Seated Lincoln* dedicated in Newark, New Jersey in 1911, he produced an oversized bust for the Capitol. Borglum also named his only son Lincoln.

⁹⁸ Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 354. See also, Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 276.

⁹⁹ Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 354. For more on the discussion of including Anthony on Mount Rushmore, see Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 326.

following year, congressional funding stipulations forced Borglum to abandon the extension and focus solely on the completion of the presidential busts.¹⁰⁰ Borglum's attempt to control the intended interpretation of the memorial lost out to Congressional frugality.

On the evening of July 2, 1939, Borglum hosted a ceremony—the most elaborate and well-attended of the four dedications—to unveil the memorial's final component, the bust of Theodore Roosevelt. Selected to coincide with South Dakota's fiftieth anniversary of statehood, the celebration drew nearly twelve thousand people to the mountain. One of the visiting dignitaries, William S. Hart, a silent film actor best known for his westerns, had spent part of his youth in the state. Hart's speech, which he delivered partly in English, Lakota, and Indian sign language, appealed dramatically for the rights of American Indians; but going over his allotted time, the CBS radio announcer broadcasting the event cut him off to move on to the next item on the dedication program, a move that prompted a vigorous, but unaired protest by the actor. Tenor Richard Dennis sang Irving Berlin's, "God Bless America," to which Borglum reportedly responded, "I have done a lot of things I am proud of, but ... I would gladly abandon my sense of accomplishment in all I have done if, by doing it, I could claim authorship of one song, 'God Bless America.' Only one in thousands can see my art, but every man, woman, and child with an ounce of American blood may stand with reverently bowed head and sing that song."¹⁰¹ Patriotism, it seems, was never far from

¹⁰⁰ Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 363.

¹⁰¹ Borglum quoted in Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 371.

Borglum's thoughts. Another of the ceremony's speakers, Judge A. R. Denu of Rapid City, took on a patriotic tone as well. "I hope," Denu stated, "America's Shrine of Democracy will proclaim with mute eloquence for unnumbered centuries the basic truth that, by the law of nature and nature's God, the individual and not the state is the basic unit of society."¹⁰² Following Denu, Borglum expressed his view that the colossal memorial captured and contained the democratic values and virtues that drove him in his crusade: "We are at the spearhead of a mighty world movement—an awakened force in rebellion against the worn and useless thought of yesterday," Borglum pontificated; "We are reaching deep into the soul of mankind, and through democracy building better than has ever been built before."¹⁰³

At Mount Rushmore, Borglum believed he had succeeded in creating a memorial to America's greatness in dimensions appropriate to inspire and awe, carved in materials that would survive into distant millennia.¹⁰⁴ As the sculptor proclaimed at Washington's unveiling in 1930, "the dimensions of national heartbeats are greater than village impulses, greater than city demands, greater than state dreams or ambitions. Therefore, we believe a nation's monument should, like Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Roosevelt, have a serenity, a nobility, a power that reflects the gods who inspired them and suggests the gods they have become."¹⁰⁵ For Borglum, America needed monuments

¹⁰² Denu quoted in Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 371; Larner, *Mount Rushmore*, 265.

¹⁰³ Borglum quoted in Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 371.

¹⁰⁴ Rumble, "Gutzon Borglum," 126.

¹⁰⁵ Larner, *Mount Rushmore*, 265; Matthew Glass, "Producing Patriotic Inspiration at Mount Rushmore," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 62, no. 2 (Summer, 1994): 265-283, 269.

on the scale of its achievements; that through colossal art, the nation displayed itself as the rightful heir of the great civilizations of bygone eras. This collection of American leaders gathered together—apotheosized by their deeds and through the homage of the American people—would serve as an indestructible guide for future generations of Americans and subsequent civilizations.

With the celebrations and fanfare concluded for the moment, Borglum set out to complete his memorial. But in February 1941, after Borglum underwent surgery to address a prostate issue, blood clots developed and he succumbed to a pulmonary embolism; he died March 6, 1941. At a memorial service in Keystone, South Dakota, the Mount Rushmore workers gathered to remember the man they called “the Chief.” The crew described Borglum as a quick-tempered fighter, a “moody cuss” who demanded hard work and dedication to his dream for a national memorial carved in mountain granite. Lincoln Borglum, with the support of the workers, completed his father’s vision.¹⁰⁶ As the government refused to issue additional funds, Lincoln Borglum chose to refine the presidents’ features as fully as the last of the appropriations and time allowed. On the final day of October 1941, the drills fell silent on the

¹⁰⁶ Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 387-388, 390. Some questioned whether work on Mount Rushmore should be shut down now that the chief engineer/sculptor was dead. Mary Borglum stated that it would have been her husband’s wish to see their son Lincoln complete the project; the workers agreed: “We, the men who have worked under Gutzon Borglum on Mount Rushmore in past years do hereby and hereon unanimously petition the Mount Rushmore Memorial Commission to permit Lincoln Borglum, his son, to take full charge and complete the work as to his father’s wishes.”

mountain. In December, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor turned the nation's attention from commemorating its democracy to defending it.¹⁰⁷

Robinson, Norbeck, and Borglum, along with countless other Mount Rushmore supporters, embraced the nationalist symbolism inherent in the memorial. From its origins as a tourist destination to its promotion as a national shrine constructed to endure in perpetuity, Mount Rushmore became a recognizable symbol of American values and character—a symbol that gained currency as the country found itself enveloped by war. But Mount Rushmore also illustrates the deliberate use of selective iconography to employ the nation's collective memory of the twenty-sixth president. Unfolding nearly concurrently with the RMA's saga in the national capital, the development of Mount Rushmore led promoters in South Dakota to propagandize Roosevelt as an appropriate, even necessary, component of the Mount Rushmore National Memorial.¹⁰⁸ Borglum, the indefatigable publicist, reiterated the memorial's theme—the foundation, preservation, expansion, and unification of the nation—and each president's contributions to it. For TR, this meant that Borglum and the other commemorators continually singled out Roosevelt's presidential actions, particularly the construction of the Panama Canal—the apogee of the strong, active executive that Roosevelt embodied—as the accomplishment that made TR worthy of such exaltation.

¹⁰⁷ Mayer, "Historical Memory of Mount Rushmore," 61.

¹⁰⁸ Rumble, "Gutzon Borglum," 126. Rumble asserts that "the reasoning behind the inclusion of Roosevelt in the project provided the conceptual framework for the Memorial itself. To Borglum, the great events in American history were those connected to the expansion of the national domain." Rumble argues that this theme is also clearly visible in the Entablature and Hall of Records that Borglum proposed but was not allowed to complete. See also, Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore*, 324.

Furthermore, the concentration on the presidential Roosevelt places his other, potentially more contentious, incarnations in the background. Several other factors ensured that the Mount Rushmore promoters were able to commemorate TR on a national stage, an endeavor that eluded the well-funded and well-organized Roosevelt Memorial Association.

Early in the process, Mount Rushmore promoters reduced the celebration of the American ethos to four very specific and simple components constituting the memorial's theme. Because promoters accentuated the memorial's thematic harmony, there was less pressure to advocate for TR as an individual within this group. The placement of Theodore Roosevelt within an assemblage consisting of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Abraham Lincoln elevates the perception of his stature through his association with the others and represents, in this context at least, the moment of his apotheosis.¹⁰⁹ Whereas the RMA had situated TR symbolically on the same level as Washington and Lincoln on the National Mall, Mount Rushmore literally and visually communicates equity of status. Moreover, promoters rapidly secured Congressional approval with TR as an original component, which meant that evicting him would be a challenge, one requiring opponents to rationalize his removal from an accepted, coherent plan.

¹⁰⁹ Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 326; Boime, *The Unveiling of the National Icons*, 140. Boime notes that Borglum "borrowed a popular literature trope for his tourist showcase—taking the participants from various historical epochs and uniting them in a kind of Renaissance *Sacra Conversazione* (where various saints in profile and front views flank the Madonna to converse with her) in the same space."

Finally, the location in the scenic Black Hills of South Dakota allowed for the monumental commemoration of Theodore Roosevelt in a way that the Tidal Basin site could not. The National Mall provides the pseudo-sacred space for the celebration of American ideals and principles; the location in the heart of the nation's capital ensures that any changes or additions to this space would be hotly contested as disparate groups of Americans sought to influence the definitions of American values and character.¹¹⁰ Because Theodore Roosevelt's life and presidency were still fresh in the minds of many Americans in the 1920s, and because his energetic and nebulous personality and career were so difficult to distill, Americans were unable to commemorate him in that location at that historical moment.

Mount Rushmore, on the other hand, is far removed from the monumental core of the nation. South Dakota represents a viable alternative to the nation's capital as the location for a national TR memorial given the commonly accepted association of Roosevelt with the West. Borglum's affinity for the region reinforces this notion, as do his political escapades with the Progressive Party and the Nonpartisan League, even though commemorators did not portray Roosevelt as a westerner.¹¹¹ Additionally,

¹¹⁰ For more information on the development of a monumental space within the nation's capital, see Kirk Savage, *Monument Wars: Washington, D.C., the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009). See also, Glass, "Producing Patriot Inspiration at Mount Rushmore," 274. Glass suggests that "this geographic centering increases the symbolic power of Mount Rushmore. Its location in the continent's heartland suggests its purifying distance from the actual centers of political power. It is far removed from the world of corruption and scandal."

¹¹¹ Stephenson, "Celebrating American Heroes," 299. In more recent years, the National Park Service interpretation of Roosevelt's inclusion on Mount Rushmore has placed more emphasis on his conservationism; one might argue, however, that Roosevelt the conservationist would prefer to see mountains in their natural state.

because Mount Rushmore, in the geographic heart of the nation, is distant from the symbolic heart in the nation's capital, the location is less symbolically contentious, although the appropriation of land revered by another social entity—the Sioux—complicates Mount Rushmore's status as a site of American collective memory. Mount Rushmore maintains a sense of permanence that even the memorials on the Mall do not project because Mount Rushmore is not a memorial sculpted from stone, it is a mountain carved into a memorial.¹¹²

Theodore Roosevelt's placement on Mount Rushmore, and the permanence of the granite in which it is carved, implies a consensus of interpretation. Over the years, Mount Rushmore transformed from a tourist novelty to a national icon through which Americans celebrated their traditions and values.¹¹³ As part of this presidential pantheon, Theodore Roosevelt, his bold executive actions, and his devotion to democratic ideals helped Mount Rushmore promoters sell his image to a national audience as a commemorative symbol of American democracy.

¹¹² Glass, "Producing Patriotic Inspiration at Mount Rushmore," 274, 280. Glass states that, "unlike those memorials in Washington, D.C., [Mount Rushmore] appears to be rooted in place, a sculpture that has not been transformed completely from nature to culture. Additionally, because the United States, unlike European nations, does not have ancient ruins, castles, or similar sites of memory, the unique western landscapes frequently serve as cultural and historical reminders of the past. According to environmental historian Alfred Runte, national parks and monuments "evolved to fulfill cultural rather than environmental needs." Runte quoted in Bergman, "Can Patriotism be Carved in Stone?" 93.

¹¹³ Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers*, 238. According to Taliaferro, "during the Depression and the Second World War, Mount Rushmore would emerge as the nation's vivid new icon of strength and stability." For more on Mount Rushmore's role as a national icon in the twentieth century, see Boime, *The Unveiling of the National Icons*.

CHAPTER V

COMMEMORATING IMPERIALISM: TR AND THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

In its resolution of January 8, 1919, the New York state legislature mourned the passing of the twenty-sixth president and native New Yorker Theodore Roosevelt: “In his death America has lost a great statesman, a soldier who could either command or obey, an unassuming philanthropist, an undaunted explorer; a beloved leader and a wise counselor and withal an unadulterated American—a man among men.”¹ Throughout the rest of 1919 and into 1920, the legislature prepared to honor their beloved son and determine how best to commemorate his memory for future generations. Although supporters initially considered a site on the state capitol grounds at Albany, the lobbying of Dr. Henry Fairfield Osborn, President of the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH), along with the vigorous support of the *New York Times* and the *New York World*, persuaded the legislature that the memorial should be placed adjacent to the museum and educational in nature.² By the end of 1920, the New York legislature created a commission to investigate proposals which would “for all time stand as a visible recognition of the services of one who had been most active in the welfare and

¹ George N. Pindar, under the direction of the New York State Board of Trustees of the Roosevelt Memorial, *The New York State Theodore Roosevelt Memorial, Dedicated January Nineteen, Nineteen Thirty-Six* (Albany: J. B. Lyon Co., 1936), 3.

² George N. Pindar, “The Theodore Roosevelt Memorial: The Structure being Erected by the State of New York Adjacent to the American Museum of Natural History in Memory of a Great Naturalist and Statesman” (New York: The American Museum Press, n.d.), 5, Permanent Halls Roosevelt Memorial, American Museum of Natural History Archives (hereafter cited as AMNH); Steven McLeod Bedford, *John Russell Pope: Architect of Empire* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1998), 212; Pindar, *The New York State Theodore Roosevelt Memorial*, 9.

development” of New York and the United States.³ The result was a celebration not only of Roosevelt the naturalist and conservationist, but Roosevelt the imperialist as well.

By portraying Roosevelt as hunter-explorer, the patrons, sculptor, and architect highlighted his role as patriarch and asserted the perceived social and cultural superiority of America’s Anglo-Saxon heritage. The memorial’s iconography also conveys the continued anxiety of modern industrial Americans: reactions to mass immigration after 1890, as depicted in the nostalgic symbolism for the “lost” American West and regeneration on a new frontier; the celebration of strenuous, hardy masculinity in the midst of a perceived turn-of-the-century masculinity crisis; and the negotiation of the complex relationship with nature and “primitive” civilizations. Moreover, this memorial illustrates America’s new role as a world leader through symbolic representations of the shift from westward expansion to overseas imperialism, the patriarchal attitude of American business, educational, and political leaders, along with the subjugation of nature. Finally, the protracted period between the memorial’s conception in the 1920s and the equestrian statue’s dedication in 1940 demonstrates the transposability of naturalist and imperialist iconography as a result of dramatic social, political, economic, and diplomatic changes.⁴

³ Pindar, *The New York State Theodore Roosevelt Memorial*, 7.

⁴ Although all aspects of the memorial addition, including the interior murals, quotations, and dioramas, testify to these assertions, this chapter focuses on the exterior architecture and the equestrian sculptural group at its entrance. These elements represent the public façade of the memorial and are visible to all, including those who do not enter the Museum.

Theodore Roosevelt promoted the strenuous life: a life of hunting, exploring, and the rugged life on the frontier. But Roosevelt also advocated for imperialism—for the United States to acquire colonies overseas as a way to ensure the maintenance of the vitality of the American nation as well as the virility of American manhood. Both of these concepts are displayed in the New York State Theodore Roosevelt Memorial addition to the American Museum of Natural History, especially in James Earle Fraser’s bronze equestrian statue of Roosevelt flanked by two guides, an American Indian and an African.

Incorporated in 1868 by a group of business leaders, politicians, and scientists, including Theodore Roosevelt, Sr., the twenty-sixth president’s father, the American Museum of Natural History was part of the great period of museum building in the late nineteenth century.⁵ Its major collecting expeditions began in 1888 and continued into the 1930s; by the early twentieth century, the museum encompassed nine scientific departments—including its strongest fields of paleontology, ornithology, and mammalogy. The budding field of anthropology grew substantially during these years as well.⁶ Supported financially by leaders in American business and industry, the 1920s witnessed over one hundred expeditions in the field all over the globe. The AMNH

⁵ Ronald Rainger, *An Agenda for Antiquity: Henry Fairfield Osborn & Vertebrate Paleontology at the American Museum of Natural History, 1890-1935* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1991), 55. The idea for the Museum originated with Albert Bickmore.

⁶ John Michael Kennedy, “Philanthropy and Science in New York City: The American Museum of Natural History, 1868-1968” (PhD diss., Yale University, 1968), 2, 194; Donna Haraway, “Teddy Bear Patriarchy: Taxidermy in the Garden of Eden, New York City, 1908-1936,” in *The Haraway Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 188, 189. Other trustees included J. P. Morgan, William K. Vanderbilt, Henry W. Sage, H. F. Osborn, Daniel Pomeroy, E. Roland Harriman, Childs Frick, John D. Rockefeller III, and Madison Grant. Roosevelt’s son, Kermit, was a trustee during the building of the African Hall.

benefited from the turn-of-the-century thirst for knowledge, and Americans flocked to the museum thereby expressing their interest in the natural world. Theodore Roosevelt, an early champion of the strenuous life in the outdoors, contributed to the museum's collection of natural specimens, particularly from his African hunting trips, and it was this incarnation that Osborn and the museum's trustees wished to celebrate.⁷

Henry Fairfield Osborn was born into a wealthy New York family in 1857. His father, William Henry Osborn had been made president of the Illinois Central Railroad in 1853, and his mother, Virginia Reed Sturges was the daughter of prosperous merchant Jonathan Sturges. Virginia, a devout Christian of a Presbyterian upbringing, encouraged her children to strive continuously to improve themselves, rather than relying on the privilege of their birth and wealth. It was active struggle, Virginia believed, that brought about self-improvement and meaning in one's life—a concept that Henry later incorporated into his theories of human evolution and adaptation.⁸ For his part, William Osborn instructed his children on the social responsibilities that came with affluence, virtues that Henry expressed in his work with the museum's educational activities.⁹ Young Henry showed an early affinity for nature and enjoyed fishing and nature walks on the family's estate, Castle Rock at Garrison-on-the-Hudson. Henry's younger brother

⁷ Haraway, "Teddy Bear Patriarchy," 188. See also, Annie E. Coombes, *Reinventing Africa: Museums, Material Culture and Popular Imagination in Late Victorian and Edwardian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 2-3, 5, 44. As Coombes's work demonstrates, museums are fundamentally imperialist enterprises. A full examination of these qualities, however, is outside the scope of this study.

⁸ Brian Regal, *Henry Fairfield Osborn: Race, and the Search for the Origins of Man* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Co., 2002), xv, 26-27, 31; Rainger, *An Agenda for Antiquity*, 24-25. Both Regal and Rainger note that this philosophical belief shaped Osborn's later arguments about how and why species evolve.

⁹ Rainger, *An Agenda for Antiquity*, 26.

Frederick joined him frequently, and, on occasion, brought along his friend—another of New York’s young knickerbockers—Theodore Roosevelt.¹⁰

Osborn attended the College of New Jersey (Princeton) where he came under the influence of the university’s president and professor, James McCosh, who emphasized Scottish Enlightenment’s examination of questions about government, education, and science into his courses, a framework that influenced Osborn’s study of the natural world.¹¹ Later, in 1885, as a professor at Princeton, Osborn chose to focus his research on vertebrate paleontology and enrolled in graduate courses in England and Germany to further his education in this field; it was in this specialty that he asserted his prominence as a scientist.¹² Osborn’s family connections led many within the philanthropic network of New York society to encourage him to take a leading position at the American Museum of Natural History because he, as a member of their class who shared their values, understood how to promote and preserve the status quo.¹³ In 1891, Osborn joined the museum’s staff and set out to build the department of vertebrate paleontology, in addition to teaching courses at Columbia College (now Columbia University).¹⁴

¹⁰ Rainger, *An Agenda for Antiquity*, 45, 47. At Castle Rock, the Osborn family mingled with their neighbors, the wealthy elite of New York society, including Frederic Edwin Church and J. Pierpont Morgan. Morgan married Virginia’s sister Amelia in 1861; after her death in 1862, he remained close to the Osborn family and financially assisted Henry with his later endeavors.

¹¹ Rainger, *An Agenda for Antiquity*, 26, 33, 38.

¹² Regal, *Henry Fairfield Osborn*, 49; Kennedy, “Philanthropy and Science in New York City,” 4, 114; Rainger, *An Agenda for Antiquity*, 1.

¹³ Regal, *Henry Fairfield Osborn*, 71; Rainger, *An Agenda for Antiquity*, 3-4.

¹⁴ Rainger, *An Agenda for Antiquity*, 45, 47.

Like many New Yorkers of his class, Osborn worried about the massive influx of immigrants as well as the rapid and jolting change taking place in the city caused by increasing urbanization and industrialization of the Second Industrial Revolution. New York City, which had been a patchwork quilt of ethnic groups, religions, and languages, boomed between 1869 and 1910, as many rural residents moved to the cities, southern African Americans moved north, and large numbers of immigrants flooded into the country.¹⁵ Ellis Island, which had opened in 1892, had, by 1900, become a key entry point for new arrivals, many of whom remained in the city. Some, especially those old stock Americans in New York, viewed this influx, along with the economic and technological changes, as threats to the established order. For his part, Osborn believed that “traditional” American values were being threatened by immigrants and their “anarchic ideas.”¹⁶

In 1908, Osborn became president of the American Museum of Natural History and it was during his tenure that the museum reached the peak of its influence and reputation.¹⁷ As a social leader, a prominent scientist, and the head of a major metropolitan museum, Osborn had the platform from which to educate the American public. Publishing widely in both scholastic and popular journals, including the *Atlantic Monthly*, Osborn promoted and shaped science education in America. With the support

¹⁵ Regal, *Henry Fairfield Osborn*, 103. See also, Rainger, *An Agenda for Antiquity*, 148-149; John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925*, 2nd ed. (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1988), 43, 95, 102.

¹⁶ Osborn quoted in Kennedy, “Philanthropy and Science in New York City,” 5, 168-169. See also Regal, *Henry Fairfield Osborn*, 103; Rainger, *An Agenda for Antiquity*, 111, 150-151; Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 139.

¹⁷ Kennedy, “Philanthropy and Science in New York City,” 154, 156, 159.

of the city's social and industrial elite, he used the AMNH as a venue for educational and recreational outlets for the city's working class.¹⁸ Reigning over the museum during the first decades of the twentieth century, Osborn organized the institution to serve as a positive influence on children and make them "more reverent, more truthful and more interested in the simple and natural laws of their being and better citizens of the future through each visit."¹⁹ Osborn, like many of his peers, believed that science education and the study of nature could serve as antidotes to the alleged breakdown of American society. Observing the natural order through habitat groups, Osborn argued, taught respect for law and order in the midst of the rapid and seemingly chaotic industrialization and immigration of the modern age. The study of nature, Osborn asserted, was "the best means of raising the mental and moral level of our foreign-born population."²⁰ The museum's sponsors agreed and saw it as the perfect instrument for turning the teeming immigrants into productive American citizens. Connecting physical cleanliness with moral cleanliness, Osborn organized an exhibition on public health at the museum and promoted the study of nature as a force for good in the city. As he told the museum's Board of Trustees, "Nature teaches law and order and respect for property.

¹⁸ Regal, *Henry Fairfield Osborn*, 75. For a listing of Osborn's published works, see Regal's bibliography.

¹⁹ Osborn quoted in Haraway, "Teddy Bear Patriarchy," 189-190.

²⁰ Osborn quoted in Regal, *Henry Fairfield Osborn*, 129. See also, Rainger, *An Agenda for Antiquity*, 119-121.

If these people cannot go to the country, then the Museum must bring nature to the city.”²¹

Osborn’s programs with the museum and his promotion of educational development represent his beliefs concerning human evolution, informed by the need for active struggle that his mother taught. First encountering Charles Darwin’s *The Origin of Species* (1859) and other works on evolution during his last two years at Princeton, Osborn embraced Darwin’s idea of the importance of an organism’s struggle for existence as part of species development, but he could not bring himself to support the randomness and variation surrounding the process of natural selection.²² Osborn framed the exhibits in the Hall of the Age of Man to be didactic demonstrations of “the slow upward ascent and the struggle of man from the lower to the higher stages, physically, morally, intellectually, and spiritually. Reverently and carefully examined, they put man upwards towards a higher and better future and away from the purely animal state of life.”²³ Additionally, the rediscovery of the work of early geneticist Gregor Mendel demonstrated the transmission of traits from generation to generation without regard to environmental factors.²⁴ The intersection of these scientific ideas produced a change in the understanding of human development and led to profound changes in many Americans’ views of the unrelenting waves of immigration.

²¹ Osborn quoted in Kennedy, “Philanthropy and Science in New York City,” 169.

²² Rainger, *An Agenda for Antiquity*, 40-41. Rainger describes in great detail where Osborn fits within the evolutionary debate’s spectrum of beliefs. See also, Regal, *Henry Fairfield Osborn*, 61-62. As Regal notes, Osborn fit better within the neo-Lamarckian camp than with the Darwinists.

²³ Quoted in Haraway, “Teddy Bear Patriarchy,” 189-190.

²⁴ Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 150.

In addition to his paternalistic philosophy concerning immigrants and the working class, Osborn also associated himself closely with the developing eugenics movement that explored the perceived biological differences that separated the old stock Anglo-Saxons from the new immigrants currently flooding into the country.²⁵ As the dark side of the Progressive Era, the nativist and eugenics movements utilized science to justify controlling the demographic shifts in American society. Confusing social with biological traits, the eugenics movement sought to stabilize the changes in favor of the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant elite class.²⁶ Osborn's friend and museum trustee Madison Grant greatly influenced his eugenicist philosophy. Grant, a New York lawyer and amateur naturalist, was a stout force within the movement. In his book, *The Passing of the Great Race* (1916), Grant argued that there were three hierarchically-arranged strains of the white race: Nordic, Alpine, and Mediterranean. Grant's book provided the inspiration for the resurgence of nativism in the early 1920s as Americans sought to prevent the contamination of Nordics by limiting immigration of Mediterraneans who made up the majority of the "new" immigrants. New additions appeared in 1921 and 1923, which greatly increased publicity and sales.²⁷ Osborn, in his introduction to the book, praised Grant's efforts in the construction of a biologically-based history of

²⁵ Regal, *Henry Fairfield Osborn*, 105.

²⁶ Regal, *Henry Fairfield Osborn*, 105-106, 107-108; Rainger, *An Agenda for Antiquity*, 150. Eugenics—the concept of controlled human breeding—came from Charles Darwin's cousin, Francis Galton who studied British genealogies and concluded that great men produced great men and lesser men produced lesser men. Additionally, as Regal notes, some eugenicists feared miscegenation and women's suffrage would breakdown the boundaries between masculinity and femininity. See also, Haraway, "Teddy Bear Patriarchy," 188. According to Haraway, "three public activities of the Museum were dedicated to preserving a threatened manhood: exhibition, eugenics, and conservation."

²⁷ Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 157, 271-273.

Europe.²⁸ Grant believed Anglo-Saxons (Nordics) were the ultimate expression of human evolution. His hatred of non-Nordics, especially immigrants, was frightening in its intensity. Grant proclaimed that the United States was under biological attack by racial inferiors and that the tide of immigrants must be turned back. As part of the effort, Grant became the vice president of the Immigration Restriction League, which Osborn later joined. Supporting the basic plan of eugenics, Grant wanted to keep out as many immigrants as possible, segregate the inferior, and sterilize the undesirables in order to limit the propagations of those traits.²⁹ Earlier, in 1912, leading American eugenicists, Charles Davenport, Alex Hrdlicka, and Vernon Kellogg, among others, attended the First Eugenics Congress in London. Wanting to bridge the European and American segments of the movement, they organized the Second International Congress on Eugenics held in 1921 at the American Museum of Natural History where the group discussed ways to implement their ideas. Osborn, as part of his welcoming address, warned the group about the dangers of racial mixing.³⁰

²⁸ Haraway, "Teddy Bear Patriarchy," 190; Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 150-151; Kennedy, "Philanthropy and Science in New York City," 207-209. Kennedy notes that Osborn wrote "a cautiously approving preface" to the book's third edition published in 1923. According to Kennedy, "Osborn did not state that Grant had proven his thesis about the racial superiority of the Nordic peoples; he merely suggested that Grant's point of view had much to recommend it and that the question should be examined more carefully." See also, Regal, *Henry Fairfield Osborn*, 108, 116; Rainger, *An Agenda for Antiquity*, 118. Both Regal and Rainger state that Osborn enthusiastically praised Grant in the Introduction.

²⁹ Regal, *Henry Fairfield Osborn*, 108, 113, 117. Regal also states that although Osborn believed Nordics were the possessors of the best character traits in people, he was reluctant to dismiss the rest of humanity as quickly as Grant. See also, Rainger, *An Agenda for Antiquity*, 149, 150-151.

³⁰ Regal, *Henry Fairfield Osborn*, 122; Kennedy, "Philanthropy and Science in New York City," 206; Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 274.

In addition to racial and ethnic concerns, many in the movement feared industrialization's emasculation of American men by confining their work to offices and boardrooms and the feminized luxury of dinner parties and opulent residences.³¹ Holding up the naturalists and explorers as the epitome of the masculine ideal, Osborn promoted the exploratory and investigative qualities of the museum's research, adventurous elements that were intensely popular with the American public. Dramatizing the museum's "naturalist-explorers" and their escapades into "the wild places of the world," Osborn touted the boldness, hard work, energy, and ingenuity of men like Roy Chapman Andrews, Carl Akeley, and Theodore Roosevelt.³² In his book, *Impressions of Great Naturalists* (1928), Osborn argued that the physical, intellectual, and moral traits these men displayed constituted the high-water mark of human evolution.³³

For Osborn, Theodore Roosevelt embodied the idea of utilizing one's inherited characteristics and pushing them beyond their limits to achieve more; TR was the model of American character and it was this aspect that Osborn wished to celebrate.³⁴ The

³¹ Regal, *Henry Fairfield Osborn*, 106-108. On the emasculation of American men during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era, see Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998) and Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

³² Kennedy, "Philanthropy and Science in New York City," 157.

³³ Henry Fairfield Osborn, *Impressions of Great Naturalists: Darwin, Wallace, Huxley, Leidy, Cope, Balfour, Roosevelt, and Others*, 2nd ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), 10. See also, Regal, *Henry Fairfield Osborn*, 121. As Regal notes, Osborn believed that men such as Charles Darwin, T. H. Huxley, John Muir, John Burroughs, and Theodore Roosevelt had an intense inner drive that allowed them to tap into their creative genius, which gave them an intellectual and spiritual edge.

³⁴ Regal, *Henry Fairfield Osborn*, 166; Haraway, "Teddy Bear Patriarchy," 154. Haraway states that Roosevelt embodied the "Museum's task of regeneration of a miscellaneous incoherent urban public

museum's exhibitions, expeditions, and memorial addition dedicated to Theodore Roosevelt, therefore, all reveal Osborn's philosophy and influence.

In planning the memorial, the legislature emphasized three key factors: the character of Roosevelt as naturalist and citizen; the memorial as an essentially educational institution; and the maintenance of Roosevelt's lofty standard of idealism through "the golden age of architecture." The commission requested a design that would "symbolize the spirit of Roosevelt, and by its impressiveness infuse those ideals for which Roosevelt strove and many of which he attained."³⁵ The commission, consisting of two state senators, two assemblymen, and two members at large—Peter D. Kiernan and Henry Fairfield Osborn—evaluated and reported on the proposed Roosevelt Memorials.³⁶ In 1921, the Board of Trustees of the Roosevelt Memorial invited eight leading New York architects to submit plans for the competition. The official program stated that "the nature lover should be stressed by monumental architecture, sculpture and mural paintings," and that the design should "symbolize the scientific, education, outdoor and exploration aspects of Theodore Roosevelt's life rather than the political or the literary." Finally, the selected design needed to blend harmoniously with the existing museum. A leading architectural journal called the memorial, "the most important building the State has ever erected, because of the fact that it not only will attract the

threatened with genetic and social decadence, threatened with the prolific bodies of new immigrants, threatened with failure of manhood."

³⁵ Pindar, *The New York State Theodore Roosevelt Memorial*, 8.

³⁶ Pindar, "The Theodore Roosevelt Memorial," 5.

citizens of the State and the nation, but will become of world-wide interest.”³⁷ The memorial, ostensibly a state tribute to a favorite son, immediately took on national and international connotations based on its location in New York City and its siting next to the American Museum of Natural History. The jurors, who awarded the commission to John Russell Pope, expressed their pleasure with his design: “a monumental structure, graceful in every line and inspired by the stately designs of the old Roman architecture, it conveys to the beholder an impression of spaciousness and enduring strength.”³⁸ Pope, a powerhouse among residential and memorial architects, was well-known for his neo-classical designs.

By the 1930s, however, the aging architect encountered increasingly harsh and vocal criticism of his signature style. Some argued that Pope’s neo-classicism, with its elements of Roman imperialism, represented a centralized and powerful American government that contradicted American democratic traditions. *Harper’s Monthly* criticized what it considered to be the excessive extravagance of Pope’s neo-classical style and the inappropriateness of imperial symbols for democratic America. Critics demeaned Pope’s anti-modernism as the International Style gained ground with its simple lines and functional symmetry; the modernist style emphasized volume rather than ornamental mass. Although constructed during a period when many New York

³⁷ “John Russell Pope Appointed Architect of the New York State Roosevelt Memorial,” *Architecture* 52, no. 1 (July 1925): 257-258.

³⁸ Pindar, *The New York State Theodore Roosevelt Memorial*, 9; Bedford, *John Russell Pope*, 212. See also, “Competition for the New York State Roosevelt Memorial,” *American Architect* 128, no. 2475 (July 1, 1925): 14; “New York State Roosevelt Memorial. Appointment of John Russell Pope as Architect,” *Architectural Record* 58, no. 2 (August 1925): 190-193; “J. R. Pope to Design Roosevelt Tribute,” *New York Times*, June 4, 1925.

architects turned to the International Style, the Roosevelt Memorial's commissioners gave Pope the freedom to execute his plan as he saw fit.³⁹

Pope's design for the Roosevelt Memorial included a concourse 160 feet wide running along Central Park West Drive in front of the Museum.⁴⁰ The eastern façade of the memorial addition comes forward from the established line of the building and includes a large granite terrace with four projecting columns decorating the expansive entrance arch (see figure 7). Prominent naturalists and explorers, Daniel Boone, John James Audubon, Meriwether Lewis, and William Clark top the columns adjacent to the arch.⁴¹ TRUTH, KNOWLEDGE, and VISION are inscribed over the columns on the frieze of the entablature. The central portion of the parapet displays the formal

³⁹ Bedford, "Museums Designed by John Russell Pope," 751, 752; Bedford, *John Russell Pope*, 118, 152. Pope's critics commented specifically on the Jefferson Memorial, but their arguments can be applied to Pope's work more generally. Bedford notes that the critics, "rejected Pope's work as inappropriate to its own time, and elaborated by claiming that it did not, by any token, grow out of contemporary life; that it did not fulfill the requirements of contemporary life; that it did not make good use of contemporary methods of construction; and that classical architecture had turned Washington from the executive seat of democracy into the Rome of an empire."

⁴⁰ Bedford, *John Russell Pope*, 212, 214. Pope's careful attention to the eastern approach along with his incorporation of an inter-museum promenade through Central Park—an attribute strongly desired by Osborn—ultimately secured him the contract. The promenade would connect the AMNH with the Metropolitan Museum. The proposal stirred up considerable debate between those who wished to preserve Frederick Law Olmsted's vision for Central Park and those who wished to increase attendance at the AMNH by ensuring a safe pedestrian route from the east. Osborn in particular was interested in having the working class residents of the east side visit the Museum. See also, Stern, Gilmartin, and Mellins, *New York 1930*, 136.

⁴¹ There is some question whether William Clark (of Lewis and Clark fame) or his older brother George Rogers Clark is depicted in the memorial. Some of the photographs in James Earle Fraser's collection list the figure as "Wm. Clark." In an article draft, dated August 6, 1937, the figures are listed as Daniel Boone, George Rogers Clark, Meriwether Lewis and John James Audubon. The first three men are described as "three of the heroes of American life celebrated in [Roosevelt's multi-volume] the Winning of the West." Box 41, Folder: July-September 1938, James Earle and Laura Gardin Fraser Papers, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Library (hereafter cited as Fraser Papers). In *The New York State Theodore Roosevelt Memorial*, George Pindar lists the figures simply as "Boone, Audubon, Clark, and Lewis, outstanding characters in the early history of the country," 10.

dedication to Roosevelt: “State of New York memorial to Theodore Roosevelt; a great leader of the youth of America, in energy and fortitude, in the faith of our fathers, in defense of the rights of the people, in the love and conservation of nature and of the best in life and in man.”⁴² Surrounding the terrace on the parapet wall, carved inscriptions celebrate Roosevelt’s multifaceted endeavors: “Ranchman, Scholar, Explorer, Scientist, Conservationist, Naturalist, Statesman, Author, Historian, Humanitarian, Soldier and Patriot.” The design called for sculptural representations of two American big game animals—a bison and a bear—for the niches at either side of the entrance. According to the New York State Roosevelt Memorial dedication book: “it is intended that the bear shall typify courage, tenacity, and power; the bison, romance, fortitude, and endurance, dominant characteristics of Roosevelt.”⁴³ Although these sculptural additions were never completed, their intended symbolism highlights the characteristics that the commemorators believed TR possessed.

Pope recognized the importance of glorifying Roosevelt with a distinct and prominent memorial space.⁴⁴ As the symbolic elements and monumental iconography demonstrate, Pope’s homage celebrates more than Roosevelt the naturalist. Through the imperial Roman architectural elements, particularly the powerfully monumental entrance

⁴² Bedford, *John Russell Pope*, 214; Pindar, *The New York State Theodore Roosevelt Memorial*, 10. James Earle Fraser sculpted the four explorers.

⁴³ Pindar, *The New York State Theodore Roosevelt Memorial*, 6, 11. James L. Clark was selected to sculpt the bison and the bear for the entrance niches, but these elements were never completed; the niches remain without decoration.

⁴⁴ Bedford, *John Russell Pope*, 214. Bedford argues that Pope’s competitors failed to recognize the importance of glorifying Roosevelt; in other words, that the committee was searching for a way in which to step beyond the program’s criteria to celebrate Roosevelt’s imperialistic image through neo-classical architecture.

arch, Pope skillfully commemorated the grandeur of a leader of men rather than the solitude of a humble seeker of knowledge.⁴⁵ Although the design program required that the memorial addition harmonize with the existing museum, Pope's design clearly delineates the two. Originally calling for Picton Island red granite, which would have blended seamlessly with the building's wings, Pope asked for the stone to be changed to Milford red granite. This alteration may seem slight, but over time, Milford granite fades to white and, therefore, visually distinguishes Pope's memorial from the rest of the building. While ostensibly an addition to the museum, Pope's neo-classicism, along with the clever use of stone on the façade, separates the Roosevelt Memorial into a distinct architectural entity. James Earle Fraser's massive bronze equestrian statue of Roosevelt accompanied by two guides on foot serves as the centerpiece of the grand terrace in front of the great entrance arch and corroborates the imperialistic architectural homage.⁴⁶ Pope selected Fraser to complete the memorial's sculptural elements based on the sculptor's reputation as a portrait artist and his *Beaux-Arts* training, which called for harmoniously blending architectural and decorative elements; but Fraser's personal and professional connections to Theodore Roosevelt must have factored into the decision as well.

⁴⁵ Bedford, *John Russell Pope*, 212; Bedford, "Museums Designed by John Russell Pope," 753-754. Bedford argues that Pope seized "on the image of Roosevelt as a benevolent conqueror and the creator of an imperial image of America." More subtle design elements support the image of an imperial Roosevelt as well—the flooring pattern of the Memorial Hall was borrowed from the Pantheon, and the eagle and wreath motifs are based on those of Trajan's forum. Eagles are traditional symbols of imperial power.

⁴⁶ Bedford, *John Russell Pope*, 212. Bedford remarks on the change in stone as assisting in the separation between the museum and the addition. It appears that designers selected the composition of the monumental statuary fairly early on, although, as noted below, Fraser worked through several variations of the design. See, for example, Virginia Pope, "Roosevelt and Akeley Honored in the Museum," *New York Times*, June 30, 1929.

James Earle Fraser was born in Winona, Minnesota in 1876; his father worked for the railroads then making their way westward connecting budding communities on the northern Great Plains with those in the East. In 1880, the family moved just outside Mitchell, in present-day South Dakota, and spent their first winter in a boxcar waiting for their home to be built.⁴⁷ In his unpublished autobiography, Fraser revealed how the nearly ten years the family spent in Mitchell profoundly affected him as a young, impressionable boy. Fraser recalled listening to the tales of the hardy pioneers that stopped in Mitchell on their way further west; he watched intently as cowboys practiced tricks with their pistols and challenged each other to shooting matches.⁴⁸ Describing the joys and mischief a boy could find living on the prairie, Fraser acknowledged the uniqueness of his experiences:

although my boyhood in Dakota was unusual ... I wouldn't have had it different, for I grew fond of the wind and colorful beauty of the prairie and learned little by little, of the courage and ingenuity of man fighting against the primitives to know animal and bird life, and to have close contact with Indians in their natural state.⁴⁹

Fraser's romanticized recollections of the plains later appeared in his art.

In the first chapter of his autobiography, "Indian Prairie," Fraser described the family's frequent encounters with Indians. His grandfather bartered a silver watch to local Indians in exchange for a pony for young Fraser; his parents traded domestic fowl

⁴⁷ James Earle Fraser, "Indian Prairie," 1, unpublished manuscript, Box 63, Autobiography, "Indian Prairie," Draft K, Fraser Papers; Dean Krakel, *End of the Trail: The Odyssey of a Statue* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1973), 14; Wayne Craven, *Sculpture in America* (New York: Thomas Y. Cromwell Company, 1968), 492.

⁴⁸ Fraser, "Indian Prairie," 1, Fraser Papers.

⁴⁹ Fraser, "Indian Prairie," 12, Fraser Papers; Craven, *Sculpture in America*, 492.

and pork for prairie chickens and antelope.⁵⁰ For the most part, life on the prairie was peaceful; occasionally, however, there were Indian scares and the family barricaded themselves in the house. “Once because of rumors,” Fraser recollected, “the women and children took a wild moonlight ride into Mitchell. Someone said that the Indians had covered themselves with war paint and were ‘rounding the hills,’ but it turned out to be a false alarm.”⁵¹ During his time on the prairie, Fraser developed an appreciation for the Indians he met, a fondness he demonstrated later in life.

Railroad work brought the family back to Minnesota in 1889, but only for one year; then they were off to Chicago.⁵² Having obtained a position with Richard Bock while he was still in school, Fraser became familiar with the professional sculptor’s studio.⁵³ In 1893, Fraser took in the sights and spectacle of the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago, and the experience profoundly affected the budding sculptor: “I doubt that any Fair in this country has given such a desire to students of art to pitch their work as did this Fair, seeing fine sculpture of all characters from the enormous figure of Columbia by [Daniel Chester] French, to the [Frank] Macmonnies fountains, to equestrian sculptures of cowboys and buffalo.”⁵⁴ The beauty and splendor of the White City, with its *Beaux-Arts* inspired architecture and sculptural features, confirmed

⁵⁰ Fraser, “Indian Prairie,” 13, Fraser Papers.

⁵¹ Fraser, “Indian Prairie,” 38-40, Fraser Papers.

⁵² A. L. Freundlich, *The Sculpture of James Earle Fraser* (New York: Universal Publishers, 2001), 4.

⁵³ James Earle Fraser, “Minneapolis,” 8-9, unpublished manuscript, Box 63, Autobiography, Chapter Two, “Minneapolis,” Fraser Papers.

⁵⁴ Fraser, “Minneapolis,” 9-10, Fraser Papers.

Fraser's decision to pursue a career in art. Although Fraser's father wished that his son would choose another profession, he supported James's decision to continue his artistic training. Fraser's early sculptures won him the chance to study at the prestigious *École des Beaux Arts* in Paris and brought him to the attention of famed sculptor, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, for whom he worked as an assistant. Fraser's association with Saint-Gaudens secured him the commission that would establish the young man as one of the great American portrait sculptors. When the Senate commissioned the bust of Theodore Roosevelt, then President of the United States, Roosevelt called on Saint-Gaudens for the job. The aging sculptor replied that he was too ill to take the commission, but he recommended Fraser, who was by then a young man in his twenties, to take his place.⁵⁵

In order to complete a study of Roosevelt for the bust, Fraser agreed to meet the President at the White House one evening as an introduction. Coming down the stairs, Roosevelt looked at the young artist and stated bluntly, "So you are Fraser. I thought you would be a much older man ... but Saint-Gaudens said you could do this bust, and you are going to do it! I believe in taking the advice of people whose judgment I trust."⁵⁶ Beginning work a few days later, Fraser confronted the President's tireless energy. "Mr. Roosevelt's idea of the pose he wanted was a gesture with the head up and back," Fraser recalled, "but I couldn't keep him in the pose long enough to do any work—the moment he spoke his head was thrust forward, and there was always

⁵⁵ James Earle Fraser, "Notes set down while modeling Senate bust of Theodore Roosevelt," n.d., Box 20, Theodore Roosevelt Equestrian Statue 1929-1941, 1947, Fraser Papers; Krakel, *End of the Trail*, 18.

⁵⁶ Roosevelt quoted in Fraser, "Notes set down while modeling Senate bust of Theodore Roosevelt." See also, Krakel, *End of the Trail*, 18. Due to the President's schedule, Roosevelt "sat" for Fraser during meetings.

someone talking to him, so he answered and posed at the same time.”⁵⁷ Rather than fight to maintain the original pose, the sculptor adjusted his model to capture the President’s enthusiastic spirit. Settling on this characteristic gesture, the sittings—if they could be called such, Roosevelt stood while Fraser worked—continued for about two weeks. During their many hours together the President and the sculptor reminisced about their common interests in the outdoors and athletics as well as their similar experiences in the West.⁵⁸ The friendship that developed during these weeks lasted for the remainder of Roosevelt’s life and opened opportunities for Fraser to work on government commissions.⁵⁹ Fraser’s wife, Laura Gardin Fraser, an accomplished sculptor in her own right, later asserted that “from Theodore Roosevelt came his intense feeling of patriotism and love of America,” sentiments that Fraser exercised through his numerous government commissions, including the New York State Theodore Roosevelt Memorial.⁶⁰

The memorial’s official dedication program states that Fraser’s equestrian is not meant to portray Theodore Roosevelt as the president of the United States; rather, it

⁵⁷ Fraser, “Notes set down while modeling Senate bust of Theodore Roosevelt”; Krakel, *End of the Trail*, 18.

⁵⁸ Craven, *Sculpture in America*, 493; Freundlich, *The Sculpture of James Earle Fraser*, 40; Krakel, *End of the Trail*, 18.

⁵⁹ Freundlich, *The Sculpture of James Earle Fraser*, 40; Krakel, *End of the Trail*, 18.

⁶⁰ Laura Gardin Fraser quoted in Krakel, *End of the Trail*, 52; see also, 42, 106. Fraser worked mainly on portrait sculptures and large government commissions throughout the bulk of his career, many times in conjunction with the country’s best known architects. In 1925, when John Russell Pope secured the commission for the New York State Theodore Roosevelt Memorial, he turned to Fraser for the sculptural elements of his plan. Fraser worked closely with architect Henry Bacon—the architect of the Lincoln Memorial—to produce a Rough Rider monument to Theodore Roosevelt in Cuba. Fraser worked with Pope on the Second Division Memorial in Washington, D.C. as well (started in 1930).

celebrates Roosevelt the naturalist “who made a notable collection of animal specimens from Africa and America.” The statue channels the commemorators’ sentiments concerning the natural world and emphasizes the connection between Roosevelt and the AMNH. According to Fraser, “Roosevelt rides forth with his highly dynamic and highly enthusiastic personality.” With his legs straight and knees nearly locked, TR sits upright in the saddle with his left hand holding tightly to the reins; his left forearm is raised nearly parallel to the ground. Roosevelt’s right hand rests near the holster on his hip containing one of his two pistols. His horse, modeled on the thoroughbred champion Man O’ War, is a representation of “the fully grown stallion,” rather than the racer.⁶¹ A spirited animal, the horse holds his head and tail high as the group strides forward with purpose. Two pedestrian figures, each nearly ten feet in height, described as either guides or gun bearers, flank the mounted Roosevelt. One representing a Native American and the other an African intended to symbolize, “if you choose,” Fraser wrote, “Roosevelt’s friendliness to all races.” From the horse’s hooves to the top of Roosevelt’s head, the statue measures approximately sixteen feet high and is believed to be one of the largest equestrians in the world at the time of its dedication (see figure 8). The immense proportions are necessary, Fraser noted, “both to fill the opening of the arch, and to be adequate to the scale of the architecture,” as sculptors and architects in the *Beaux-Arts* tradition insisted upon the integration of sculpture with architecture in

⁶¹ Letter from Peter Kiernan to James Earle Fraser, September 27, 1940, Box 20, Folder: Theodore Roosevelt Equestrian Statue, 1929-41, 1947, Fraser Papers.

monumental art.⁶² The accompanying figures of the Indian and the African add mass and volume to Fraser's equestrian statue; much like Augustus Saint-Gaudens' statue of General Sherman, the additional figures fill in the monumental arch of Pope's design without the need for the subject figure to be grossly gigantic.⁶³

Fraser's equestrian goes beyond traditional representations of Roosevelt as barrel-chested and hardy; as Fraser stated, he wanted to portray Roosevelt as he appeared after the hunt, muscled and energized.⁶⁴ But the artist appears to have struggled with what that might look like in bronze. The collection of Fraser's surviving papers at Syracuse University contains numerous pencil sketches and photographs of clay models illustrating the various ways in which Fraser conceptualized Roosevelt. Although many of the models and sketches are slight variations, several distinct patterns appear. In pencil sketches and rough clay models, it is evident that Fraser wanted to show Roosevelt on the move. These concept sketches and models depict TR standing in the stirrups leaning forward over the neck of his horse. The active movement of the group continues through the horse's spirited prancing, with either one or two hooves off

⁶² "New York State Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Dedication Program," Box 749, Folder 1270x 1940, AMNH; Freundlich, *The Sculpture of James Earle Fraser*, 123-124. Osborn suggested that Fraser use the general proportions of Man O' War. See also, Craven, *Sculpture in America*, 419.

⁶³ Donald M. Reynolds, *Monuments and Masterpieces: Histories and Views of Public Sculpture in New York City* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1988), 74. Saint-Gaudens's statue of General William T. Sherman is noteworthy in that it adds the figure of winged victory leading Sherman's horse. The addition of the second figure allowed Saint-Gaudens to reduce the size of the horse and still maintain the powerful presence of the group. As one of Saint-Gaudens's assistants, Fraser worked on this project as well. See also, Freundlich, *The Sculpture of James Earle Fraser*, 126. Freundlich states that "In the Roosevelt Fraser chose not to use the flying drapery of the Sherman, but rather to achieve the desired dominance by compactness and size. The horseman and his two accompanying guides form a compact group reflecting the shape and size of the arched and vaulted portico behind them."

⁶⁴ Fraser to Frank McCoy, October 9, 1940, Box 20, Folder: Theodore Roosevelt Equestrian Statue 1929-41, 1947, Fraser Papers.

the ground. Some of the models accentuate the energy through the horse's dramatically arched neck and Roosevelt pulling tightly on the reins. Fraser expresses Roosevelt's masculinity in his action and drive as well as the physical power of his barely restrained horse. These examples might be the earliest concepts for the statue as few include the accompanying figures.

Another series of sketches and clay models illustrate an alternate tone to the sculptural group as Fraser worked to find a suitable representation of Roosevelt. Variations of this concept show Roosevelt sitting down in the saddle; the horse stands calmly with all four feet on the ground. Roosevelt rests the butt of his rifle on his right thigh as he looks off to the right into the distance. It appears that the group has come to a stop at a lookout point to survey the landscape for game or danger. The slight twist of his powerful neck conveys the horse's restlessness, as if he is encouraging the group to continue on. He is strong but not high-strung; he is obedient if slightly impatient with the group's pause.⁶⁵ The power in this composition is controlled, latent energy. Fraser's other conceptions of the group reflect his attempts to combine elements to illustrate energy, power, and masculine control through the positioning of the horse and rider. These options include Roosevelt leaning forward, standing in the stirrups, or settling into the saddle; the depiction of the horse varies from placid to highly animated, with one or two hooves off the ground. In each case, however, the masculine energy of the horse and rider—either latent or kinetic—is clearly evident.

⁶⁵ Various sketches and photographs, Box 36, Roosevelt, Theodore—equestrian figure sketches, Fraser Papers. Most of the photographs in the Fraser collection are not dated.

The final version of the statue synthesizes these concept sketches (see figure 9). Roosevelt's knees are nearly locked but he appears to have his full seat in the saddle. The positioning puts him upright, but he does not lean forward over his horse's neck. Holding the reins in his left hand, his left arm is raised and his body is slightly torqued as his left shoulder is thrust forward. Roosevelt's shirt is form-fitting and reveals the sinews of his heavily-muscled body. The shirt is open at the neck, although his broad chest is more apparent through the clingy fabric than through the open collar. It is the body of an athlete—a boxer perhaps—physically fit and exuding strength and power.⁶⁶ Fraser used his earlier portraits of the former president to construct Roosevelt's facial features, thus capturing the look of a slightly younger man than would have been seen during Roosevelt's post-presidential safaris.⁶⁷ With his direct gaze and firm jaw, Roosevelt's face is strong and masculine—there is no sign of weakness or femininity in his features. His eyes squint slightly and crow's feet are apparent at the corners; there is a slight furrow to his brow as he intently concentrates his gaze on his target. Roosevelt's neck is thick, his chest broad, and his back ripples with muscles. He is a gleaming example of physical masculinity.⁶⁸ With a firm rein on his spirited horse, Roosevelt dominates the sculptural group.

⁶⁶ James Earle Fraser, "New York," 5, Box 36, Autobiography, Chapter Eight, "New York," Fraser Papers. Fraser states that he enjoyed attending boxing matches to see the human anatomy and beauty of form; Roosevelt's experiences in the boxing ring are well documented.

⁶⁷ Reynolds, *Monuments and Masterpieces*, 117.

⁶⁸ Edward N. Saveth, "Theodore Roosevelt: Image and Ideology," *New York History* 72, no. 1 (1991): 45-68, 57. As Saveth notes, TR is strongly associated with masculinity, but not sexuality. This representation of TR, however, challenges that assumption as Roosevelt appears as a portrait of masculine virility.

The horse is a stallion in his prime; his thick muscles reveal the strength of his breeding. Not slender and lithe like he was during his racing years, this is a representation of Man O' War when he was allowed to settle at a natural weight during his years at stud. His neck and chest are thick and he is full bodied. That Fraser meant this horse to be a fully intact stallion is evident in his mannerisms as well: the horse's ears are pinned back, his nostrils flaring, his mouth open; he appears wild-eyed as his rider restrains him. Known for their spirit and strength, stallions are notoriously difficult to manage, with or without a rider. The need to control and protect the herd is a natural instinct for the dominant male in a hierarchical social group and is manifested in his surly demeanor and spiritedness. The stud conveys his displeasure through his arching neck and lifted tail, along with the positioning of his ears. The flaring nostrils and open mouth also support the image of a stallion's disposition. The tight reining may account for some of his irritability, but the presence of the accompanying figures may be this horse's main concern. The Native American and the African walk so close to the horse that they brush up against his sides. Their positions behind Roosevelt's legs put them dangerously close to his sensitive belly and genital area. It is unlikely that the sculptural group's composition would be replicated in life as these men would not walk so close to a spirited stallion.⁶⁹ Artistically and aesthetically, however, it is necessary to place the Indian and the African close enough to the horse and rider in order to create a sculptural mass that fills the voluminous arch. Fraser's equestrian Roosevelt, therefore, conforms

⁶⁹ Even in dense brush, the group would probably walk single file instead of walking so close to the horse. I would like to thank Jared Donnelly for sharing his knowledge of equine behavior, particularly stud mannerisms.

to the *Beaux-Arts* style and harmonizes with Pope's architecture. Fraser's Roosevelt is also a direct descendent of the great equestrian statues of Europe.

On a high plinth, Fraser elevates Roosevelt to a place of honor reminiscent of the great leaders of antiquity who placed their statues on high platforms as symbols of their authority. In addition to the inherently imperialistic nature of equestrian statuary, Fraser incorporated an ancient symbol of victory—the horse's raised foreleg—along with elements of the foundational equestrian statues of Europe, including the *Marcus Aurelius* and Donatello's *Gattamelata*.⁷⁰ Erected in Rome in 1495 CE, the statue's full-bodied horse and the dominating bulk contribute to the expression of power and grandeur, although his lack of weapons emphasizes the emperor as a philosopher rather than a military leader; his hand raised in clemency supports the elevation of wisdom over brute physical strength. Fraser's Roosevelt, on the other hand, is heavily armed, but the full-bodied horse conveys the same power and presence as the *Marcus Aurelius*.⁷¹ By balancing the proportions of the horse and rider and allowing Roosevelt to appear alert,

⁷⁰ Reynolds, *Monuments and Masterpieces*, 113, 114. According to Reynolds, "The equestrian statue dates to antiquity. At different times in the history of art, it has served as a portrait symbol of authority and power, a funerary memorial, and a tribute to Christian virtues. As a monument portraying a great leader, the equestrian goes back to the Greeks and the Romans." Although many would like to believe that equestrian statues maintain ancient symbolism indicating how the rider died, Fraser's Roosevelt proves that secret equestrian symbolism does not exist. Roosevelt died peacefully in his sleep and not as a result of wounds received in battle as the raised foreleg supposedly indicates in the pervasive myth. Following the tradition of the *Marcus Aurelius*, Donatello's equestrian statue of *Gattamelata* stands in the Piazza del Santo in Padua, Italy.

⁷¹ Reynolds, *Monuments and Masterpieces*, 114. Reynolds states that "The horse's raised front leg symbolizes power, and Marcus Aurelius' extended right arm symbolizes clemency, a human gesture even if it is another aspect of imperial power."

but settled in the saddle, Fraser proclaims Roosevelt as a leader of men who dominates the accompanying figures.⁷²

The most significant connection to European equestrian traditions, however, is the relationship between Fraser's Roosevelt and Andrea del Verrocchio's *Colleoni* in Venice.⁷³ In Verrocchio's statue, Bartholomeo Colleoni stands erect in the stirrups with his left shoulder thrust forward; his body is torqued slightly as he gazes over his left shoulder. Although Roosevelt is not wearing armor, he is heavily muscled and heavily armed; his stiff-legged pose, therefore, captures the aggression of Colleoni as *condottiere*.⁷⁴ Like the *Colleoni*, Fraser's Roosevelt draws himself unabashedly to his full height and strikes an ostentatious pose (see figure 10). The extension of the horse's head and foreleg beyond the edge of the plinth supports the image of the group's active forward advance. As with the *Colleoni*, this posture contributes to the domineering

⁷² Maureen Barraclough, *Sovereigns and Soldiers on Horseback: Bronze Equestrian Monuments from Ancient Rome to Our Times* (Ipswich, MA: The Ipswich Press, 1999), 3; Reynolds, *Monuments and Masterpieces*, 116-117; G. Passavant, *Verrocchio: Sculptures, Paintings, and Drawings*, trans. Katherine Watson (New York: Phaidon Publishers Inc., 1969), 64. Passavant argues that in the *Gattamelata*, Donatello failed to integrate the horse and rider as a "sculptural whole," one that combines "the different expressive values of man and animal." Verrocchio's *Colleoni* and Fraser's Roosevelt do not demonstrate this defect.

⁷³ Reynolds, *Monuments and Masterpieces*, 117. Fraser's artist friends commented on the similarity between the AMNH Roosevelt and Verrocchio's *Colleoni*. John Flanagan to Fraser, October 28, 1940; Lee Lawrie to Fraser, November 6, 1940, Box 20, Theodore Roosevelt Equestrian Statue 1929-41, 1947, Fraser Papers. Verrocchio reduced the size of the horse in relation to the rider compared to Donatello's *Gattamelata*, which Fraser did not replicate, but the overall similarity between the two equestrians is striking.

⁷⁴ Passavant, *Verrocchio*, 64-65. According to Passavant, "The stiff-legged seat of Colleoni is a consequence of the constriction on movement dictated by the armour." Additionally, Passavant states that "The long lances with which the cavalry was usually armed at that time dictated too the asymmetrical form of the armour. Since the lance was carried near the right hip in fighting, the left shoulder was twisted forwards and had to be protected with thicker and broader plating." This explains Colleoni's distinctive posture in Verrocchio's statue.

presence of the Euro-American male.⁷⁵ Fraser's Roosevelt mimics *Colleoni's* gestures unmistakably, but Roosevelt's horse retains the bulk of Donatello's *Gattamelata*, thereby blending the styles.⁷⁶ Although the inclusion of the other two figures—especially the Native American—marks Fraser's statue as part of the American equestrian traditions, Fraser's Roosevelt conforms closely to its European antecedents.⁷⁷

The European heritage of Fraser's Roosevelt calls to mind the imperial nature of the equestrian statuary. Like the *Marcus Aurelius* and its successors, Fraser's Roosevelt is clearly meant to depict a leader, a man of power.⁷⁸ The horse's raised foreleg is a traditional symbol of victory, although Fraser's Roosevelt is not depicted as a military leader. Additionally, the statue does not show Roosevelt as a statesman or president, which could correlate to TR's diplomatic leadership. In this case, the horse's raised foreleg and the inclusion of the accompanying figures demonstrates American imperialistic control over other "primitive" societies; the figure of Roosevelt illustrates

⁷⁵ Passavant, *Verrocchio*, 65-66. As Passavant states about the *Colleoni*, "The projection of the horse's head and foreleg beyond the edge of the plinth and the way this position accentuates the transitory moment in the forward impetus of horse and rider contributes tremendously to the characterization of the man: the victorious *condottiere* who will trample any opposition underfoot."

⁷⁶ Reynolds, *Monuments and Masterpieces*, 117. According to Reynolds, "James Earle Fraser's monument to Theodore Roosevelt near Seventy-seventh Street and Central Park West in front of the American Museum of Natural History is a noteworthy blend of Donatello and Verrocchio." Fraser to Frank McCoy, October 9, 1940, Box 20, Theodore Roosevelt Equestrian Statue 1929-41, 1947, Fraser Papers. Fraser argued that Roosevelt was never pictured on small horses. See also, Passavant, *Verrocchio*, 64. Passavant states that "It is not only that the relative size of the rider has been increased, compared with Donatello's statue; the movement of the horse contributes to the characterization of Colleoni and only receives its meaning when related to his domineering strength."

⁷⁷ Fraser's Roosevelt displays some of the same elements as Henry Kirke Brown's statue of George Washington, particularly the horse's dramatically arched neck and raised foreleg.

⁷⁸ Edward Linenthal, *Changing Images of the Warrior Hero in America: A History of Popular Symbolism* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1982), 4; Reynolds, *Monuments and Masterpieces*, 126.

symbolically the imperial strength of the nation which Roosevelt advocated as part of the strenuous life.⁷⁹ Roosevelt's physical appearance—the muscled physique of the man—asserts American masculinity's ability to regenerate on the frontier as a corrective counterforce to the anxiety of modern industrial society.⁸⁰ The juxtaposition of the masculine patriarchal Roosevelt with the codification of the guides as primitive savages supports the image of Roosevelt as the benevolent conqueror and imperialist. The iconography of the accompanying figures confirms the masculine and imperialistic nature of scientific expeditions, including those sponsored by the American Museum of Natural History.

On Roosevelt's right-hand side is a Native American with the traditional war bonnet of feathers commonly associated with the Great Plains tribes (see figure 11). He wears a claw or tooth necklace, moccasins, and has a blanket secured with a length of rope around his torso. A shield slung low on his back protrudes beyond the trailing feathers of his headdress; his long braids drape on either side of his bare muscular chest. The Indian's face, weathered and lined from the relentless prairie sun, perhaps, alludes to the wisdom that comes from experience. His prominent nose is slightly curved, but exaggeration and caricature do not mar his face (see figure 12). With well-defined cheekbones and firm jaw, Fraser's Indian displays stoic dignity and nobility. The faint

⁷⁹ George L. Mosse, *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 7. See also, Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood*, 138-139; Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 186.

⁸⁰ Mosse, *The Image of Man*, 5 and 49; Gerald Franklin Roberts, "The Strenuous Life: The Cult of Manliness in the Era of Theodore Roosevelt" (PhD diss., Michigan State University, 1970), especially Chapter 3, 52-77.

squint of his eyes reveals a hint of crow's feet at the corners giving the impression of intense focus and determination; the slight pursing of his lips reinforces the effect. The Indian's face impresses upon the viewer that this is not a young man partaking in his first hunt, but a seasoned warrior or leader with an abundance of patience and insight. His athletic muscular body does not imply, however, that he is an elder whose age prevents his participation in the physical trials of the hunt. The casual carriage of the rifle on his left side reveals his familiarity with weapons of war. With the stock end up, he holds the rifle upright with his right hand and secures it with his left arm.

Unlike the numerous drafts produced on his way to completing the figures of Roosevelt and his horse, Fraser seems to have decided on the design for the Native American relatively early in the process. A detailed pencil sketch shows the Indian with a patterned blanket or robe wrapped around his shoulders, a full feathered war bonnet, buckskin leggings, and moccasins. A rough clay model, however, shows the Indian without a war bonnet; he is nearly nude with a blanket draped over his left shoulder. The Indian's head is mostly shaved with a patch of hair in the back plaited into a long braid. He carries a sheathed knife and appears more aggressive and threatening than the stoic Indian of the final version. The greatest shift appears to be from a completely covered individual to one nearly devoid of clothing. The final version represents a compromise between the two—the bronze Indian's blanket covers most of his lower body while his chest and arms are left bare to reveal a well-muscled physique. The

feathered war bonnet, however, is the key element in the representation as it reflects the prevailing images of Native Americans in the early twentieth century.⁸¹

The depiction of the Indian as a member of a Plains tribe became the dominant image of American Indians shortly after the Civil War. With eastern tribes decimated by early colonization and long pacified on reservations, newspapers across the country sensationalized the exploits of the Sioux (Lakota), Cheyenne, and Blackfeet as they battled the U.S. Army on the northern plains in an effort to maintain their traditional lifestyles. After George Armstrong Custer's defeat at Little Big Horn, many of the "unreformed savages" joined Buffalo Bill Cody's traveling troupe. The stereotype of the Indian in a war bonnet with fringed buckskin leggings and painted face gained popularity as a result of the Wild West shows along with the numerous world's fairs and expositions of the late nineteenth century. By the time early films appeared on the scene, to portray an Indian meant to display the real and imagined accoutrements of the indigenous horsemen of the Great Plains.⁸² Because few Americans outside the West and Southwest had contact with Native Americans, Indians were visible to most Americans merely as performers, solidifying the image of the Indian as a resident of the

⁸¹ Various sketches and photographs of clay models, Box 36, Roosevelt, Theodore—equestrian figure sketches, Fraser Papers; Karl Gröning, *Body Decoration: A World Survey of Body Art* (New York: The Vendome Press, 1998), 43. There are similarities between Fraser's early clay model and a portrait of an Osage warrior by French painter Charles de Saint Memin (1804). Fraser may have known of the Osage during his time in southern Minnesota. The final version, however, does not display these similarities. See also, Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., *The White Man's Indian* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978), 16, 28, 167. As Berkhofer notes, Europeans viewed Indians as naturally masculine: "Along with the handsomeness of physique and physiognomy went great stamina and endurance." Fraser's representation of this belief is evident in the well-muscled physique of his Native American. I would like to thank Angela Pulley Hudson for directing me to this literature.

⁸² Rayna Green, "The Tribe Called Wannabee: Playing Indian in America and Europe," *Folklore* 99, no. 1 (1988): 30-55, 38, 39.

Plains.⁸³ Fraser's own boyhood experiences near the various bands of Sioux on the northern Great Plains probably influenced his decision to depict the Indian in this manner. Another factor may have shaped Fraser's perceptions of Native Americans—his experiences at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago.

Fraser created his most famous sculpture, *The End of the Trail*, not long after his visit to the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. His first major sculptural work—which later became one of the most recognizable and pirated images produced by an American sculptor—testifies to an alternative representation of Native Americans.⁸⁴ Viewing the equestrian sculptures of cowboys and Indians and the great plaster casts of bison and other western animals inspired the young artist to complete a group originally suggested by hearing the western trappers say that “the Indians would someday be pushed into the Pacific Ocean.”⁸⁵ Fraser also acknowledged the inspiration of poet Marion Manville Pope: “The trail is lost, the path is hid and winds that blow out the ages sweep me on

⁸³ Alan Trachtenberg, *Shades of Hiawatha: Staging Indians, Making Americans, 1880-1930* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2004), 170. In the 1920s and 1930s, however, the Southwestern tribes, particularly the Navajo, Hopi, and Pueblo—with their distinctly marked blankets and crafts—became the dominant motif in portrayals of indigenous people. See also, Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian*, 3, 25-26. As Berkhofer notes, “By classifying all these many peoples as *Indians*, Whites categorized the variety of cultures and societies as a single entity for the purposes of description and analysis, thereby neglecting or playing down the social and cultural diversity of Native Americans then—and now—for the convenience of simplified understanding.” Berkhofer asserts that the generalization of Indians started shortly after the arrival of Europeans on the North American continent.

⁸⁴ Robert L. McGrath, “The Endless Trail of the *End of the Trail*,” *Journal of the West* 40, no. 4 (Fall 2001): 8-15, 8; Krakel, *The End of the Trail*, 4, 6, 11. Fraser may also have accessed the Museum's anthropological collections, particularly those of Clark Wissler who led a long-term study of the Plains Indians. See also, Kennedy, “Philanthropy and Science in New York City,” 144; Coombes, *Reinventing Africa*, 3. Coombes notes the connection between museums' ethnographic displays and exhibitions at world fairs as places to display the exoticism and primitiveness of pre-industrial societies.

⁸⁵ Fraser, “Minneapolis,” 9-10, Fraser Papers.

that chill borderland where Time's spent sands engulf lost peoples and lost trails."⁸⁶ *The End of the Trail* earned Fraser a thousand dollar prize from the American Art Association in 1898 and was one of the pieces that brought him to the attention of Augustus Saint-Gaudens.

In 1915, Fraser displayed a heroic-sized plaster replica of *The End of the Trail* in San Francisco at the Panama-Pacific Exposition whose guidebook described the sculpture as "An Indian brave, utterly exhausted, his strong endurance worn through by the long, hard ride, storm spent, bowed in the abandon of helpless exhaustion, upon a horse as weary as he, he has come to the end of the trail, beyond which there is no clear path."⁸⁷ *The End of the Trail* depicts the mounted Indian exhausted and near death as he and his people are pushed to the very edge of the North American continent. The Indian's head hangs down in defeat and his spear points to the ground; his faithful pony—head and tail drooping—struggles to take one more step.⁸⁸ Whether the statue depicts the defeated "Other," "martyrdom," "victimhood," or the "American Centaur," it has become an iconic representation of the "lost" American West.⁸⁹ Fraser's wife later stated that, "Jimmy saw the spiritual mood, the tragedy and emotional undercurrents of the frontier and so created his *End of the Trail*."⁹⁰ Fraser wanted to convey the utter

⁸⁶ Craven, *Sculpture in America*, 493; Freundlich, *The Sculpture of James Earle Fraser*, 48.

⁸⁷ Panama-Pacific Exposition guidebook quoted in Freundlich, *The Sculpture of James Earle Fraser*, 48.

⁸⁸ Trachtenberg, *Shades of Hiawatha*, 245-246.

⁸⁹ McGrath, "The Endless Trail of the *End of the Trail*," 8, 11.

⁹⁰ Laura Gardin Fraser quoted in Krakel, *The End of the Trail*, 56.

despair of “a weaker race . . . steadily pushed to the wall by a stronger” one.⁹¹ The connection between the weary, defeated Indian and the loss of the frontier was so effective that Fraser’s visual lamentation of the passing of an era has yet to find an equal in the minds of many critics.⁹²

The End of the Trail is the visual representation of the trope of the vanishing Indian. Dead Indians and the memory of Indians became useful tools for Americans disturbed by the rapidity of change at the turn of the century. Americans’ nostalgic image of the West in the 1920s was the result of the perceived loss of the frontier—a sense of loss that extended to the indigenous inhabitants of the region. With the end of the Indian wars on the Plains, white Americans were free to symbolically exaggerate Indian virtues without the complications that a new round of violence would create.⁹³ But in order for Americans to coopt indigene values, the Indian must vanish; Native Americans could not be menacing and inspiring at the same time.⁹⁴ Nostalgia for the noble savage became increasingly important to Americans as the wonders and challenges of modern industrial urban society enveloped the nation in the early twentieth

⁹¹ Fraser quoted in Craven, *Sculpture in America*, 493.

⁹² Freundlich, *The Sculpture of James Earle Fraser*, 7.

⁹³ Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1973), 356, 357; Kennedy, “Philanthropy and Science in New York City,” 139 and 175. Many of the Museum’s anthropological expeditions were the result of the fear that the cultures of the “primitive peoples” of the world needed to be documented before they vanished in the face of modernity.”

⁹⁴ Trachtenberg, *Shades of Hiawatha*, 176; Green, “The Tribe Called Wannabee,” 49; Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 64.

century.⁹⁵ Americans seized the opportunity to celebrate and emulate the “first Americans” with camping expeditions and explorations into the wilderness; “playing Indian” in a variety of venues brought Americans into contact with the natural world. The popularity extended to both private collecting and ethnographic displays of Native American arts and crafts, including those in museums.⁹⁶

Fraser also utilized the trope of the vanishing Indian in his statuette, *Buffalo Prayer*. In his autobiography, Fraser recalled a scene from his boyhood that would haunt him for the rest of his life—the vanishing Indian praying for the return of the vanished buffalo. As Fraser wrote,

Early in the morning before sunrise I saw this medicine man or counselor of the tribe make his prayers. It was for the return of the buffalo. It intrigued me as a small boy to see the old man on a knoll outside Mitchell. He made his prayer after a night in a sweat lodge, having had no food he would go to the creek, bathe himself, put on a few strips of buffalo hide and place in front of him a buffalo skull, then build a small fire of buffalo chips beyond that toward the West.... The bronze color of the man, his black hair with bits of red wound into his braids making a picture indelibly impressed on my mind since boyhood. The Indian boys and I watched from a respectful distance.⁹⁷

Like *The End of the Trail*, Fraser’s *Buffalo Prayer* calls forth potent, nostalgic emotions: the passing of a noble race from the West; the diminishing association with the natural world; a weariness brought on by hundreds of years of resistance, and stoic resolution to the inevitable forthcoming disappearance. The AMNH Indian, however, bears little

⁹⁵ Alison Griffiths, “Science and Spectacle: Native American Representation in Early Cinema,” in *Dressing Feathers: The Construction of the Indian in American Popular Culture*, S. Elizabeth Bird, ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990), 82; Green, “The Tribe Called Wannabee,” 49.

⁹⁶ Green, “The Tribe Called Wannabee,” 49, Trachtenberg, *Shades of Hiawatha*, xxiii, 170-171.

⁹⁷ Fraser, “Indian Prairie,” 40-41, Fraser Papers.

resemblance to the *Buffalo Prayer* or *The End of the Trail* Indians. He is proud and noble; he stands tall. His athletic physique and poise exude a virile and manly aura. He is the Indian before the vanishing—timeless.⁹⁸

The 1920s and 1930s brought about significant change for American Indians. At the end of the nineteenth century, the policies of assimilation forbade native languages, tribal structures and authority, as well as religious and cultural practices. Indian children were taken from their homes and placed in boarding schools where school officials expected them to dress, speak, and work like white boys and girls.⁹⁹ With the buffalo gone, tribal unity in tatters, and their marginal reservation land diminishing as a result of the Dawes General Allotment Act of 1887, many tribes were on the verge of extinction. Drought and economic depression exacerbated the problems American Indians faced in the early twentieth century.¹⁰⁰ The watershed for American-Indian relations occurred when Harold Ickes, Franklin Roosevelt's Secretary of the Interior, selected John Collier as Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1933. Collier believed in cultural pluralism and felt that the best way to help American Indians was to keep them within their tribal

⁹⁸ Griffiths, "Science and Spectacle," 80. According to Griffiths, "Both popular and anthropological views of Native Americans at the time were animated by a central tension between the idea of Native Americans as historically co-present (coeval) with White society and the conception of a timeless (allochronic) existence in the familiar White image of the Noble Savage." In this statement, Griffiths describes the juxtaposition of real, living Native Americans with the Indians of the popular imagination. Griffiths argues that Americans had difficulty conceptualizing Indians as part of both the present and the past.

⁹⁹ Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian*, 170-171. According to Berkhofer, the off-reservation manual-labor boarding schools were the government's attempt to de-tribalize Indians' communal lifestyle in favor of the individualism of American society.

¹⁰⁰ Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian*, 174; Richard Lowitt, *The New Deal and the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984), 123. Lowitt argues that "Indians suffered more during the Great Depression than possibly any other group in the nation."

networks and to support the return of tribal lands, native languages, and traditional cultural and religious practices.¹⁰¹ Collier's plan included abolishing the boarding school system which had suppressed traditional social, cultural, and generational connections, effectively destroying tribal unity. Collier's other crusades involved ending the sale of reservation lands, weeding out corrupt government employees, and providing relief and employment opportunities by extending FDR's New Deal programs to American Indians.¹⁰²

Collier further encouraged Congress to pass the Johnson-O'Malley Act of 1934 which structured cooperation between state, federal, and tribal agencies in an effort to provide basic services to reservations, including healthcare, education, welfare, and agricultural extension programs. Additionally, Congress passed the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 ending the allotments of the Dawes Act and providing federal assistance for individuals and tribal entities. The general trend of Collier's tenure was the re-establishment of tribal structures and support, cultural freedom and autonomy, along with economic efficiency. Although the programs were not as

¹⁰¹ Lowitt, *The New Deal and the West*, 122. According to Lowitt, "Collier deemed it both better and wiser to make Native Americans good Indians rather than poor whites." See also, Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian*, 178-179. Berkhofer explains that Collier developed an appreciation for cultural pluralism after spending time with the Pueblos in the American Southwest. Collier's experiences and philosophy led him to support the timelessness of the American Indian. As Berkhofer observes, Collier "saw Indians as repudiating the materialism, the secularism, the fragmentation of modern White life under industrialism for a simpler, more beautiful way of life that emphasized the relationship of humans with one another, with the supernatural, and with land and nature." This also shows, however, the stereotyping of American Indian tribes, as Collier's experiences with the Pueblo are used to generalize all Indians.

¹⁰² Lowitt, *The New Deal and the West*, 123, 124, 126.

successful as Collier hoped, the efforts represented a shift in government policy toward Native Americans—from extermination through assimilation to co-existence.¹⁰³

Coinciding with the renewed focus on tribal authority and cultural freedom was the reversal of the devastating population decline that had hindered Native American autonomy for decades. By the early twentieth century, the buffalo, too, were inching their way back from near extinction. These elements—increasing Indian populations and cultural renewal—also affected the trope of the vanishing Indian in American popular consciousness.¹⁰⁴ But it would be changes outside reservation boundaries that ultimately altered the ways in which Americans viewed Indians in the early twentieth century.

From the early years of European colonization in North America to the establishment of the United States at the end of the eighteenth century, white Euro-Americans wrestled with the balance of identities—as colonials, Britons, and Americans. After the founding of the United States, citizens of the new nation struggled to create a national identity to ensure unity in the fledgling country and to separate that identity from the older societies in Britain and continental Europe. Incorporating Native American virtues and iconography was one of the ways Americans found to separate themselves from the Old World.¹⁰⁵ For Americans searching for ideological

¹⁰³ Lowitt, *The New Deal and the West*, 126, 131, 137. Lowitt notes that “while many Indian problems remained unresolved at the end of the New Deal, most had been attacked and brought into the realm of public discussion by Collier and his associates during the Indian New Deal.”

¹⁰⁴ Lowitt, *The New Deal and the West*, 122.

¹⁰⁵ Deloria, *Playing Indian*, 2. According to Deloria, “for the next two hundred years, white Americans molded similar narratives of national identity around the rejection of an older European consciousness and

distinctness, the Indian represented freedom, harmony with nature, and opportunity on the expansive lands in the West. Symbolic Indians came to represent America itself.¹⁰⁶ As Americans moved into a new modern industrial age, the Indian again proved a useful and powerful symbol for the nation. The shift from savage to “first American” came during a period of anxiety resulting from dramatic social, cultural, and economic changes brought on by modern industrialization. The Indian provided the psychological antidote to the masses of unfamiliar immigrants flooding America’s shores as well as a framework for understanding the place of teems of “brown peoples” brought under American jurisdiction by overseas conquests.¹⁰⁷ Fraser’s heroic bronze Indian represents the western frontier on which Roosevelt and others regenerated their masculinity; he also

an almost mystical imperative to become new.” Green, “The Tribe Called Wannabee,” 30. Green argues that the cooption of Native American virtues and iconography was “one of the ways in which we can demarcate the boundaries of an American identity from that which affiliates with Europe.” See also, McGrath, “The Endless Trail of the *End of the Trail*,” 11; Berkhofer, *The White Man’s Indian*, 86.

¹⁰⁶ Green and Deloria note that political cartoons often depicted the British North American colonies (and colonists) as Indians; Berkhofer corroborates this point. See, for example, Berkhofer, *The White Man’s Indian*, 24. As Berkhofer states, “America and Africa appeared naked and the former usually wore a feathered headdress and carried a bow and arrow.” Fraser also designed what would become one of the most popular American coins of the twentieth century—the buffalo nickel. In an interview with the *Oceana Herald* of Shelby, Michigan in 1938, Fraser stated, “In designing it, my objective was to achieve a coin which would be truly American, that could not be confused with the currency of any other country. I made sure, therefore, to use none of the attributes which other nations had used in the past. And in my search for symbols, I found no motif within the boundaries of the United States so distinctive as the American buffalo, or bison.... With the Indian head on the obverse, we have perfect unity in theme. It has pertinent historical significance, and is in line with the best traditions of coin design, where the purpose was to memorialize a nation or a people”; Fraser quoted in Krakel, *The End of the Trail*, 25-26. Ted Steinberg, *Down to Earth: Nature’s Role in American History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 156. Steinberg notes that “Bison and Indians were the two icons that, more than anything else, symbolized the destruction of both nature and culture in the American West.”

¹⁰⁷ Trachtenberg, *Shades of Hiawatha*, xxii, xxiv, 24, 212. According to Trachtenberg, “the fundamental shift in representations of Indians, from ‘savage’ foe to ‘first American’ and ancestor to the nation, was conditioned by the perceived crisis in national identity triggered by the ‘new’ immigrants.” Trachtenberg also notes a coincidental juxtaposition: “Just months after the restriction National Origins Act [1924] shut the ‘open door’ on immigration, Congress passed the Indian Citizenship Act.”

serves as a reminder of national values and unity during a period of social and cultural anxiety. Moreover, Fraser's Indian symbolizes the connection between the people and the land. Although the Indian signifies a primal, natural masculine force, the composition of the sculptural group reminds the viewer that the masculinities of its figures are not equal.

The Indian's carriage of the rifle, stock-end up, tucked against his body, reveals his subordination; this position does not allow for swift firing of the weapon if danger presents itself. With one quick gesture, however, the mounted Roosevelt could snatch the rifle and fire without a hitch, reinforcing the status of the Indian as "gun bearer." Beyond this lone weapon, the Indian appears unarmed and defenseless against marauding animals or hostile humans. The Indian's lack of a horse, however, is the most significant indication of his subordination. Fraser clearly intended to depict a Plains Indian, as the war bonnet and other accoutrements attest; this individual was meant to appear as if he had been plucked from the prairie and dropped in the middle of New York City. But Plains Indians, particularly the men of these tribes, were known for their advanced equestrian skills. Buffalo Bill's Wild West and other expositions heralded the horsemanship of the Sioux, Cheyenne, and Blackfeet riding in their arenas. Of all the Indian's accessories Fraser included in this statue, he is missing the most important one—the horse. By dismounting the Indian and placing him on the ground slightly behind Roosevelt's right leg, Fraser effectively emasculated this individual. The Plains Indian on his horse was synonymous with the freedom of the West; the mounted Indian had the ability to strike and retreat quickly in battle and to hunt buffalo for the

family and the tribe. By stripping him of his horse, Fraser stripped him of his manhood—at least as it relates to the white Euro-American male.

The Indian represents the values and freedoms of Americans—a symbol of hope and unity during a period of anxiety and economic depression. In order for the Indian to fulfill his symbolic duties, however, he could not be vanishing—as vanishing Indians represented forward progress and the successes of capitalism and industrialism. A timeless Indian, however, could represent the revitalization of American society and American manhood on the frontier. The dichotomy displayed in the American Indian inadvertently conveys the problematic status of the Native American in the Anglo-American consciousness, although it may not have been Fraser’s intent to do so. Unfortunately, the Indians’ natural habitat, the American West, was gone, or so it seemed. The Great Depression hit the West hard as drought and plummeting agricultural prices threatened to deplete the Plains of its tenacious pioneer settlers and indigenous inhabitants despite Franklin Roosevelt’s commitment to restoring the economic and natural vitality of the region.¹⁰⁸ The effort to reinvigorate American values and masculinity, therefore, would need to look beyond the West for a new source of rejuvenation; the template for accomplishing these tasks was already in place.

Americans’ experiences fighting Indians on the western frontier established a framework for dealing with overseas “primitive” societies. As William Howard Taft noted when discussing the Philippine Insurrection, “It is possible for us to govern them

¹⁰⁸ Robert B. Athearn, *The Mythic West in Twentieth-Century America* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1986), 105; Richard Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America* (1992; repr., Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), 256.

as we govern the Indian tribes.” By referring to colonized people as a collection of tribes, American policymakers transferred their understanding of and experiences with Native Americans onto these new groups.¹⁰⁹ In framing colonized peoples as “tribal,” Americans extended the precedent set by U.S.-Indian relations. The methodology included those that white Americans encountered on their hunts on the latest frontier—Africa.

To Roosevelt’s left is an African gun bearer who, like the Native American, demonstrates the authenticity and primitiveness necessary to reinvigorate white masculinity (see figure 13). The iconography of the African figure reflects the prevailing attitudes toward the African continent, its inhabitants, and colonized people more generally. Africa in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was portrayed as the place the West used to be—untamed and unspoiled by modernity. Theodore Roosevelt embraced this image of the African continent:

In these greatest of the world’s great hunting grounds, there are mountain peaks whose snows are dazzling under the equatorial sun, swamps where the slime oozes and bubbles and festers in the steaming heat, lakes like seas, skies that burn above deserts where the iron desolation is shrouded from view by the wavering mockery of the mirage, vast grassy plains where palms and thorn trees fringe the dwindling streams, mighty rivers rushing out of the heart of the continent through the sadness of endless

¹⁰⁹ Richard Drinnon, *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian-Hating and Empire-Building* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1980), 316. Theodore Roosevelt’s philosophy supports the projection of the cultural and societal framework onto others: “the presence of troops in the Philippines during the Tagal insurrection has no more to do with militarism and imperialism than had their presence in the Dakotas, Minnesota, and Wyoming during the many years which lapsed before the final outbreaks of the Sioux were definitely put down; Roosevelt quoted in Drinnon, 312. Berkhofer, *The White Man’s Indian*, 23, 24, 27. Just as Europeans used Indians as counter-images to themselves during the colonization period of the early seventeenth century, Europeans (and by extension, Americans) used Africans as a counter-image.

marshes, forests of gorgeous beauty, where death broods in dark and silent depths.¹¹⁰

Frequently described as authentic and associated with nature, Africa was the “dark continent”—unknown and unknowable—a frontier on which a white hunter could regenerate his masculinity. But Euro-American representations of Africa leaned toward the generic. Rather than highlighting the multitude of landscapes, climates, cultures, and societies on the continent, white colonizers reduced the multiplicity to a generalized, neatly defined “Africa.” The continent became the frontier setting in the story of the white hunter seeking adventure and testing his manly skills against a wild and dangerous land inhabited by fierce animals and primitive savages.¹¹¹ Against this novel setting, Africans became stock players assisting or resisting the protagonist in his effort to conquer the land, its people, and its wildlife.¹¹²

Africa, like the American West, needed to be a place where savage primitives lived and where wild and dangerous animals roamed free. As a frontier—a boundary where the savage and Euro-American met—Africa contained the authentic elements that

¹¹⁰ Roosevelt quoted in Virginia Pope, “Roosevelt and Akeley Honored in Museum,” *New York Times*, June 30, 1929.

¹¹¹ Ruth Mayer, *Artificial Africas: Colonial Images in the Times of Globalization* (Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England, 2002), 1. Mayer argues that the generalization of Africa was the result of colonization: “Thus, the very notion of Africa, or rather ‘Africanity,’ as I will call the artificial concoctions of Africa, attests to the fact that at least in one respect the gigantic project of colonialism did work: forcing most diverse regions, traditions, and cultures in Africa into one symbolic system, colonial rule brought about an imperialist framework of representation that is still effective today.” As author Toni Morrison explained, Africa became “a blank, empty space into which [the writer] asserts himself, an uncreated void, ready, waiting, and offering itself up”—a “fantasy space” in which to write the next great adventure story”; Morrison quoted in Mayer, 77. See also, Coombes, *Reinventing Africa*, 2, 3, 63.

¹¹² Coombes, *Reinventing Africa*, 63, 88; Haraway, “Teddy Bear Patriarchy,” 184, 192. According to Haraway, it is necessary to present Africa and Africans as “unspoiled” because “spoiled nature could not relieve decadence, the malaise of the imperialist and city dweller.”

allowed for regeneration through violence. Africa's depiction as a wilderness enabled it to serve as a font of renewal that was no longer available on the North American continent. Invented by colonial necessity, Africa became an artificial entity and the inhabitants of the vast landscape—the Kenyans, Senegalese, Zulu, and Igbo, to name just a few—were reduced by colonial shorthand to simply “African.”¹¹³ James Earl Fraser's portrayal of the unspoiled, authentic African, therefore, conforms to the contemporary vision of Africa as a wilderness and an antidote to the decadence and deterioration of the virtues and vitality of industrial urban society in the United States.

Fraser provides few clues to the bronze African's social or cultural identification; the anonymity of his persona is a continuation of the colonial vision of “Africa” as a conglomeration of elements distilled to depict a generalized “African.” In this statue, the African carries an animal skin or woven shield on his back, but its patterns do not easily identify the societal or even geographic affiliation of its owner. Beyond the shield, however, the African does not carry any accoutrements that would indicate his status as a military, religious, or political leader—in fact, with the exception of his shield, sandals, and shroud, he is completely nude. The draping folds of the shroud hide very little of the man's body and reveal the physical savagery of the African, an individual who does not don the clothes of the white Christian male. His nudity upholds the belief that the African is savage and primitive; his naked body confirms a close tie to nature and the natural world. The tenets of public art corroborate the African's status as primitive, as

¹¹³ Mayer, *Artificial Africas*, 1; Coombes, *Reinventing Africa*, 2, 3, 63. According to Coombes, “The image of Africa, as it was presented to the British public in the last decade of Victoria's reign and the first decade of the twentieth century, has often been historically reconstructed as the product of a monolithic imperial propaganda.”

only savages and classical nudes escaped being labeled obscene pornographic displays rather than acceptable artistic subjects.¹¹⁴

Like the Native American to Roosevelt's right, the African strides forward with purpose, holding his head high as he looks toward some point in the distance. His posture is proud, determined, but not threatening. Holding the butt of the rifle in his right hand, his left hand keeps the weapon secure against his right shoulder. The statue's face is well modeled to illustrate the African heritage of its subject with its broad nose, full lips, and prominent cheekbones and brow bone. But here Fraser also demonstrates his skill as a portrait sculptor and his sensitivity for his subject—although the figure is clearly of African descent, the shaping of the nose and lips are not exaggerated and there is no indication of caricature in the statue's features. The result is an example of an authentic, though generic, African man. The African's toned athletic body gives the impression of energy, vigor, and health. His firm, youthful face does not reveal years of undue hardship or depravation, nor does his erect posture give signs of extended periods of backbreaking toil. He is a young man in his prime; his proud and noble bearing allows the viewer to image him as a person of stature within his native society—a warrior perhaps, or maybe the son of a chief who will someday look after the welfare of his people. All of this is mere speculation, however, given the lack of material evidence to indicate the young man's society and his place in it.

¹¹⁴ Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 8. Savage describes how race is depicted in sculpture, particularly as it relates to slavery and emancipation.

In pencil sketches and photographs of early clay models, Fraser's concept for this figure included several potentially identifying elements. Some of the first detailed sketches show the African carrying a spear and shield and wearing a headdress made of feathers or natural materials. Early clay models also show him wearing stacked (perhaps gold) collar necklaces and an earring. One model depicted grass or raffia garters worn around the calf. These elements disappeared, but a rattle or gourd carried at the hip survived through later clay models. Fraser deleted this potentially identifying piece of material culture from the final version as well.¹¹⁵

The final version of the statue does include markings on the African's temples that frame each eye. The grid pattern of dots runs from just above the brow bone to the cheekbone on his left temple and two lines of dots sit above his right eyebrow (see figure 14). It is likely that Fraser depicted scarification—a practice in which designs are carved or burned into the skin to produce a pattern of raised scars on the face and body. This practice was common among the Igbo and Yoruba as well as several other societies on the African continent and elsewhere. Although the marks Fraser included do not represent those of a particular African cultural or social group, they symbolize a primitive civilization unspoiled by modernity. The scars serve as visual communications of the African's status as “Other,” a distinct contrast from white Christian Europeans.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ Various sketches and photographs of clay models, Box 36, Fraser Papers.

¹¹⁶ Enid Schildkrout, “Inscribing the Body,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33 (2004): 319-344, 324; Gröning, *Body Decoration*, 128. The scar patterns of the Bumi of the Omo Valley in southwestern Ethiopia most closely resemble the scarification of Fraser's African. The Bumi's scars are marks of prestige linked to rituals related to hunting and killing. If Fraser intended to portray the Bumi's facial scarification, the African would be recognized as a person of status or achievement in his society. The scarification also resembles the *kolo* markings of the Yoruba of southwestern Nigeria. The Yoruba display

Since the seventeenth century, Europeans used the illustration of scarification and other permanent and temporary examples of body art as a way to visually distinguish the exotic from the civilized. Additionally, scarification separates this figure as a foreigner, an individual not to be confused with African Americans. While the scarification along with the iconography serves to disconnect the African pictured here from African Americans struggling for equality in the United States in the 1930s, the marks also represent proof of racial inferiority—commentary that may include an assessment of African Americans as well as Africans.¹¹⁷

Physicality and athleticism are striking components of Fraser's African. As with Native Americans, the physical prowess of Africans was associated with nature and unspoiled (undiluted) masculinity.¹¹⁸ Euro-Americans related African masculinity to

a wide variety of scar motifs on their faces, including dots similar to those on Fraser's African. Although some of the *kolo* represent status or character traits such as bravery, the majority of the *kolo* are for aesthetic purposes only.

¹¹⁷ Schildkrout, "Inscribing the Body," 324, 327. According to Schildkrout, "Tattooing and scarification, conflated with race, had been themes in descriptions of exotic peoples since the 'age of exploration.'" Mayer, *Artificial Africas*, 51. Mayer argues that the connections between Euro-American writings on Africa also served as commentary on African Americans: "Every so often, the fictions of American imperialism, mapping out scenarios abroad, can also be read as fictions of national race relations. And certainly, to write about Africa in the United States was always also to write about African-Americans." Coombes, *Reinventing Africa*, 44. Coombes suggests that natural history museums, with their anthropological and ethnographic depictions of Africans as part of a comparative study of culture, provide "proof" of racial inferiority as a justification of colonial intervention but also present Africans as exotic spectacles. None of Fraser's writings indicate his personal views of Africans or African Americans and extant records do not report possible sources of information for Fraser's African. He did spend time at the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago as a young man where numerous African societies were on display. Fraser may have obtained information from the AMNH's own extensive anthropological and ethnographic studies. Kennedy, "Philanthropy and Science in New York City," 4. Kennedy briefly describes the work of Frederick Ward Putnam, Franz Boas, and Clark Wissler, three of the distinguished anthropologists working at the Museum.

¹¹⁸ Coombes, *Reinventing Africa*, 207. According to Coombes, "Physical prowess had already become a naturalized precondition of blackness by this date, and the concept of 'natural' racial characteristics, biologically determined, is consistent with that emphatic preoccupation with the body and with details of black and white physiognomy."

nature, animality, and primitiveness—features that could help regenerate white masculinity, but are distinctly separate from it. The fear of African-American hypersexuality is mollified through markers that separate this individual from black Americans. The focus on the black body was a common aspect of anthropological studies of African societies which emphasized differences in skull sizes and shapes, body art, and skin color.¹¹⁹

The “unspoiled” representation of the African is necessary as it represents uncorrupted Africa—an authentic arena in which to combat the degeneracy of white masculinity. Much like the reinvigoration in the American West, Euro-Americans performed regeneration of masculinity in Africa through big game hunting, but the sport was meant to be the exclusive domain of white men. The African, like the Native American before him, was not permitted to participate in the hunt beyond a supporting role—to do so would endanger white manhood.¹²⁰ This explains why Fraser’s African does not carry his own traditional weapon; he is holding a rifle that he does not intend to use. With the gun facing outward braced with one hand against his shoulder, the

¹¹⁹ Coombes, *Reinventing Africa*, 101, 160. Coombes states that “Whether the taxonomy was geographical, ‘racial’ or typological, many ethnographic collections shared certain characteristics in their representation of Africa. The focus on the body, whether on its decoration, scarification, skin color, or measurements and proportions, is a consistent feature of the African exhibits in this context (160).” Coombes also notes the connection between the physicality of the African body with animals: “A corollary of this emphatic reference to the bodily, physical attributes of either black males or females is the frequent inference in the guidebooks that this physicality is a quality more closely connected with animals than humans (101).”

¹²⁰ Haraway, “Teddy Bear Patriarchy,” 185. According to Haraway, “The African could not be permitted to hunt independently with a gun in the presence of a white man. The entire logic of restoring threatened white manhood depended on that rule.” See also, Mayer, *Artificial Africas*, 79. Mayer concurs that “Big game hunting presented itself as the cure for the diseases of civilization and, by extension, as the reinvigorating potion for white men.”

positioning indicates that the African is ready to thrust the weapon up to his mounted companion at a moment's notice; he is not in a position to fire it easily should danger or appealing game animals suddenly appear. Moreover, the African's subordinate position as "gun bearer" is clear by his positioning behind Roosevelt's leg, whereby the bulk of the horse's front quarters blocks his view from the front.¹²¹

As the centerpiece of the memorial entrance, James Earle Fraser's equestrian channels the commemorators' sentiments concerning the natural world, while the artistic details complement the imperialistic symbolism of the Roosevelt Memorial. The mass of the sculptural group emphasizes the connection between Roosevelt and the AMNH, but it also ensures that visitors are unable to avoid the muscular masculine imagery of its subjects. Roosevelt's posture, along with the physical impressiveness of the horse, conveys a sense of dominance and power. The overt masculinity of Roosevelt, his horse, and his guides is unmistakable—the rippling muscles of horse and rider, and the toned, athletic physiques of the guides do not suggest weakness, femininity, or submission. But the guides also contribute to the patriarchal symbolism of the statue. Both the Native American and the African are on foot, walking slightly behind Roosevelt's legs—allowing him to lead the way. Moreover, the guides' semi-nudity contrasts with the fully-clothed Roosevelt and suggests the primitive, uncivilized nature of African and American Indian tribesmen distinct from the Euro-American hunter-explorer.

¹²¹ The desire for the regeneration of masculinity is also found Fraser's other contributions to the memorial, specifically the four explorers perched atop the columns of the Museum's façade.

John Russell Pope submitted his design for the Theodore Roosevelt memorial addition in the early 1920s and deviated little from his initial plan. James Earle Fraser formulated his concept for the equestrian sculptural group and the four explorers by the late 1920s, with some details of each continuing evolve into the early 1930s. But the time between the design and dedication reveals changes in how Roosevelt's commemorators framed aspects of his personality, career, and memory. They could not physically alter the art and architecture to reflect these changes, but they could, and did, reevaluate the significance of those attributes to conform to their changing worldview and Roosevelt's place in it. The dedication of the New York State Theodore Roosevelt Memorial took place in two phases. The first occurred in 1936 with the completion of Pope's memorial addition; the second dedication in 1940 marked the unveiling of Fraser's equestrian group.¹²² The memorial's façade and sculpture pay homage to the imperial Roosevelt; the dedication speeches corroborate the celebration of Roosevelt's symbolic association with American imperialism and the forceful assertion of America's place within the community of nations.

At the building's dedication ceremonies on January 19, 1936, Vice-Chairman of the Roosevelt Memorial Commission Peter D. Kiernan acknowledged the influences and contributions of recently deceased Henry Fairfield Osborn: "to the day of his death he labored with a tireless zeal and with a tenacity of purpose which brooked no obstacle. It is due solely to the invincible will of Professor Osborn that this great Memorial was

¹²² An earlier ceremony was held October 27, 1931, which marked the laying of the addition's cornerstone. Franklin D. Roosevelt, then Governor of New York, participated in the celebration. See "Roosevelt Tribute at Museum Today," *New York Times*, October 27, 1931; "Roosevelt Honored in Nation's Eulogies," *New York Times*, October 28, 1931.

conceived and executed.”¹²³ Kiernan and other speakers of the day paid tribute to Osborn’s diligence and perseverance in ensuring that the Memorial became a reality. The man who urged the State of New York to honor a favorite son, also enhanced the educational and research elements of the American Museum of Natural History by forever linking the memory of Roosevelt to the museum and its agenda.

Dedication speakers, as expected, spoke to the virtues of Roosevelt the naturalist and conservationist, but they also extolled Roosevelt’s resolve as a reformer and a seeker of social justice, aspects that took the commemoration beyond the realm of natural history and conservation. Following Kiernan, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who as governor of New York helped to dedicate the cornerstone in 1931, emphasized Theodore Roosevelt’s multifaceted personality and the breadth of his interests as captured in the art and architecture of the New York Memorial. Quoting Theodore Roosevelt’s philosophy of conservation, FDR hinted to his own efforts to husband the nation’s natural resources; as Franklin Roosevelt recalled, TR argued that “Conservation means development as much as it does protection.” This phrase, FDR asserted, “ought to be emblazoned in every treatise on the care and perpetuation of our national resources.”¹²⁴ But it was social justice rather than conservation that appeared again and again in FDR’s speech: “With clearness of vision, energy, unfaltering faith, he labored through his

¹²³ Pindar, *The New York State Theodore Roosevelt Memorial*, 18.

¹²⁴ Pindar, *The New York State Theodore Roosevelt Memorial*, 20; “President Extols ‘T.R.’ as Defender of Social Justice,” *New York Times*, January 20, 1936. See also, John Robert Greene, “The Men in the Arena: Presidential Co-option of the Image of Theodore Roosevelt, 1916-1989,” in *Theodore Roosevelt: Many-Sided American*, ed. Natalie Naylor, Douglas Brinkley, and John Allen Gable (Interlaken, NY: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1992), 599. Greene argues that the dedication ceremonies at the Roosevelt Memorial marked the first stop on FDR’s campaign for a second term. According to Greene, FDR used this opportunity to connect himself to TR’s image.

entire career to transform politics from a corrupt traffic to a public service. With a passion for justice and equality before law he sought with voice and pen, with every resource at his command, to obtain for men everywhere their constitutional guarantee of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness.”¹²⁵ Although Franklin Roosevelt recognized the memorial addition to the American Museum of Natural History as the State of New York’s tribute to TR, the memory of the man could not be confined within borders: “Everything about him was big and vital, and above all national. He was able to see great problems in their true perspective, because he looked at the Nation as a whole. There was nothing narrow or local or sectional about that man.”¹²⁶ The memorial offered up by the people of the State of New York, therefore, commemorated the national and international aspects of Theodore Roosevelt’s life and career.

In his address, New York Mayor Fiorello La Guardia also spent little time recalling Roosevelt’s exploits as a naturalist and focused instead on Roosevelt’s actions within the political and diplomatic arenas. According to La Guardia, Theodore Roosevelt’s example of progressive government had contemporary relevance: “There were economic and industrial problems to be solved in his time, as we have today. Conditions created by changed industrial, transportation and agricultural systems required a new approach and imposed new functions of government.”¹²⁷ At first glance, La Guardia praised TR’s progressive idea of government, but upon closer examination,

¹²⁵ Pindar, *The New York State Theodore Roosevelt Memorial*, 23.

¹²⁶ Pindar, *The New York State Theodore Roosevelt Memorial*, 24.

¹²⁷ Pindar, *The New York State Theodore Roosevelt Memorial*, 36.

he announced his support of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal programs designed to help the nation through the most severe depression of its history. Many criticized FDR's unprecedented approach to solving the nation's economic crisis, but *La Guardia* suggests that this type of active executive was not radical, but a continuation of TR's progressive reforms from earlier in the century.

On October 27, 1940—what would have been Theodore Roosevelt's eighty-second birthday—New Yorkers dedicated the monumental statue in front of the American Museum of Natural History. Roosevelt's widow was on hand to unveil Fraser's statue while dignitaries and guests paid tribute to Roosevelt, his memory, conservation, and imperialism. After opening remarks by General Frank McCoy and an invocation by Bishop William Thomas Manning, Edith Roosevelt Derby read a selection of quotations from her famous grandfather. What is remarkable about this collection of quotes is how much they emphasized the American imperialist attitude promoted by TR and how they urged the country to be prepared to fight if necessary. The selected quotations, however, said little about Roosevelt's role as a naturalist.¹²⁸ In its coverage of the ceremonies, the *New York Times* illustrated how significantly contemporary events colored the collective memory of Theodore Roosevelt and how his admirers—

¹²⁸ In a 1911 speech, Roosevelt stated that "the United States has not the option as to whether it will or will not play a great part in the world. It must play a great part." For TR, this meant that the United States needed to assume its "rightful" place within the hierarchy of nations and promote liberty and democracy abroad. A quote from 1899, however, must have had particular significance for the audience: "We cannot sit huddled within our own borders and avow ourselves merely an assemblage of well-to-do hucksters who care nothing for what happens beyond." A 1908 speech stresses this point: "Fit to hold our own against the strong nations of the earth, our voice for peace will carry to the ends of the earth. Unprepared, and therefore unfit, we must sit dumb and helpless to defend ourselves, protect others, or preserve peace." "Quotations of Theodore Roosevelt Read by Edith Derby, October 27, 1940," 3, Box 749, Folder 1270x 1940, AMNH.

along with anti-isolationists—employed his image to promote their agendas. Under the headline announcing the unveiling, the subheading stated, “Grenville Clark says U.S. may face decision on resorting to arms to save Britain.” In the article that follows, this *Times* reporter used the majority of the space to discuss the remarks of one of the ceremonies’ participants and to question whether or not the U.S. would need to enter the war in Europe.¹²⁹ The celebration, having moved away from natural history and conservation, focused on the example of an active, forthright politician known for his skill in the diplomatic arena.

Through the design of the Roosevelt Memorial addition to the American Museum of Natural History, the State of New York celebrated the memory of a favorite son and provided the opportunity for schoolchildren, residents, and tourists to benefit from the former president’s love of nature, the outdoors, and safari. The majestic equestrian greeting visitors to the museum demonstrates Roosevelt’s determination to protect the world’s natural resources and his willingness to live harmoniously with all of the inhabitants of the earth. Underneath this patina, however, lies a celebration of Roosevelt the imperialist—the man who argued for the seizure of the Panama Canal Zone, supported the subjugation of the Philippines to American control, and advocated military preparedness and intervention in the Great War. During this era, Americans struggled with the shift from westward expansion to overseas imperialism; the perceived degeneration of American masculinity; a crippling economic depression and drought;

¹²⁹ “Unveils Statue of ‘Rough Rider,’” *New York Times*, October 28, 1940. The Theodore Roosevelt Association held ceremonies in conjunction with the statue’s unveiling. The Theodore Roosevelt Medal of Honor is given annual by the Association for distinguished public service in fields related to TR, including law enforcement and conservation, among others. Fraser designed the Medal of Honor for the Association. See Krakel, *The End of the Trail*, 24; Freundlich, *The Sculpture of James Earle Fraser*, 58.

and a renewal of the isolation/intervention debate. Throughout the changing historical contexts, however, Theodore Roosevelt remained a relevant symbol for Americans.

The memorial's iconography demonstrates the artist's and the public's inclination to associate Roosevelt with the American West; the explorers and naturalists atop the façade's columns represent the opening of the region to new settlers and contact with Native Americans and big game. The stoic Native American on Roosevelt's right contributes to his fraternity with that legendary region as well as his efforts to reinvigorate his own masculinity and to live the strenuous life on the Plains. The Indian also represents a primal masculinity and harmony with nature that appealed to urban Americans in the twentieth century. The African symbolizes the newest frontier on which Americans could test their manhood through hunting and exploration; Roosevelt's garb supports this connection. But the equestrian Roosevelt and the imperialistic architecture calls forth the symbolic leaders of men—those who chased glory in war and immortality through commemoration. Roosevelt's affiliation with the American West, nature, strenuous masculinity, and imperialistic conquest allowed him to remain a potent symbol in changing historical contexts.

CHAPTER VI

COMMEMORATING CONSERVATION: THEODORE ROOSEVELT ISLAND AND THE SANCTUARY OF THE FREE SPIRIT

On October 27, 1967—the 109th anniversary of Theodore Roosevelt’s birth—President Lyndon Johnson and Alice Roosevelt Longworth, TR’s daughter, unveiled the long-awaited national memorial to Theodore Roosevelt on the Potomac island bearing his name. The memorial statue and plaza—the least accessible of the District’s presidential memorials—covers three acres of the eighty-eight-acre wooded island which many deemed an especially appropriate homage to the conservationist president. “If Theodore Roosevelt had wanted any memorial at all,” Johnson offered, “he would have wanted it here—in this wild little island.” In his short speech dedicating the memorial, Johnson praised his predecessor’s verve, tenacity, and uncompromising sense of righteousness. “May our people always remember the generous passionate spirit that is memorialized here,” Johnson implored, “May it inform and strengthen all of us in our hours and our time of our greatest trials.” Roosevelt’s duties, therefore, had not passed away with his earthly body; his memory remained a relevant symbol to the American people and the American president during their current tribulations.¹

¹ “Rough Rider ‘Rides’ Again: ‘Excellent’ Likeness Perfect Setting,” *Washington Post*, October 28, 1967; “Memorial to Theodore Roosevelt Unveiled,” *New York Times*, October 28, 1967; National Park Service, *Master Plan, Theodore Roosevelt Island, Washington, D. C.*, (Washington, D. C.: Department of the Interior, 1968), 33, copy included in Folder: Special, Theodore Roosevelt Island, Box 30, General Correspondence of the Asst. Director for Design & Construction, 1965-1968, Record Group 79, Records of the National Park Service, National Archives and Records Administration II, College Park, MD (hereafter cited as NPS Records).

Lyndon Johnson joined other Americans who postulated that the image of the twenty-sixth president—with his belief in rugged individualism, his unadulterated passion for life, and his sense of justice—could be a powerful inspiration to the nation during a period of dramatic social, cultural, and political turmoil. A physical memorial for such inspiration, however, was never guaranteed. After its failure to secure a monument on the Tidal Basin site in the 1920s, the Roosevelt Memorial Association (RMA) re-evaluated its strategy and shifted the commemorative focus geographically from the National Mall to Theodore Roosevelt Island and ideologically from Roosevelt the nationalist to Roosevelt the conservationist.² The dedication of the memorial on Theodore Roosevelt Island in 1967 resulted from years of struggle, both external and internal, as the Association overcame obstacles in order to commemorate its hero within the symbolic heart of the nation.

When the Roosevelt Memorial Association purchased Analostan Island, the organization intended it to be maintained in its natural state as a living memorial to the first modern conservationist president. The RMA also wanted a physical monument that would draw visitors to the island refuge and would place Theodore Roosevelt on the level with the other great presidents memorialized in the nation's capital. The path to these goals was winding and filled with obstructions as economic depression, war, and lack of

² The Roosevelt Memorial Association (RMA) changed its name to the Theodore Roosevelt Association (TRA) in 1953 to avoid confusion with Franklin Roosevelt; it merged with the Woman's Roosevelt Memorial Association (WRMA) in 1956. See also, Alan Havig, "Presidential Images, History, and Homage: Memorializing Theodore Roosevelt, 1919-1967," *American Quarterly* 30, no. 4 (Autumn, 1978): 514-532, 530; Charles Todd Stevenson, "Celebrating American Heroes: The Commemoration of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, and Thomas Jefferson, 1832-1943" (PhD diss., Brown University, 1993), 215.

funding inhibited the planning and construction for nearly three decades. In 1958, the centenary of TR's birth breathed new life into the project, although there were new obstacles to overcome: Roosevelt's family challenged the memorial's design concept; the needs of modern Washington, D.C. required the construction of a bridge across the island, threatening its unspoiled wilderness; and the glacial pace of government appropriations delayed the memorial's completion and dedication until 1967. Ultimately, the Association's proposed "sanctuary of the free spirit," symbolic of mankind's continuing struggle for freedom, gave way to a quiet, sylvan retreat for Washington locals and a pilgrimage destination for American and foreign tourists. The naturalist/conservationist iconography prevailed over other incarnations of Roosevelt's multifaceted personality and career as part of the nation's commemoration. Design features and symbolism, however, ensured that Theodore Roosevelt's political vitality and masculine vigor spoke to the continuing commitment to political freedom for future generations of Americans; and the wilderness into which Roosevelt frequently retreated offered shelter and renewal for those fighting for freedom and the rights of their fellow man. Like the dance between sunlight and shade on the wooded island, the expressed emphasis on Roosevelt the conservationist retreats on occasion to reveal ulterior motives behind the commemoration, the struggle between the traditional and the modern, along with the indefatigable efforts of the Association to apotheosize Theodore Roosevelt in American hearts and minds.

With the purchase of Analostan Island in 1931 and its rededication as Theodore Roosevelt Island, the Roosevelt Memorial Association accomplished its goal of

establishing a national memorial to Theodore Roosevelt. The Association retained the services of John Russell Pope as memorial architect and set about planning for a physical memorial to complement the natural wildness of the island: a simple terraced overlook on the island's southern shore providing views of the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument, thereby connecting it to the nation's commemorative core.³ In May 1932, the Association called upon the nation's leading landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., to assess the natural environs of the island and to prepare plans for restoring its native flora. In his report to the Association's trustees, Olmsted described a long-range vision for the island involving the development, "steadily and progressively through the years and centuries to come," of "the natural primeval forests which once covered this and others of the Potomac Islands." The "climax forests," as ecologists referred to them, emphasized the flora's "stability and unity of character, reached through the long process of evolutionary change" that would then remain unaltered into subsequent centuries.⁴ According to Olmsted, these forests had "an enduring permanence of beautiful qualities that made them one of nature's most inspiring and enduring masterpieces, comparable only with the very greatest of the works of art

³ "Roosevelt Island Bill Signed; Memorial Architects Chosen," *New York Times*, May 24, 1932; "Analostan Island Deed to be Given President Today," *Washington Post*, December 12, 1932.

⁴ Theodore Roosevelt Association, "Theodore Roosevelt Island," n.d., n.p., included in Box 8 (Correspondence Files R-T), Folder: T.R. Inscription Data. 1962-1964, Eric Gugler Papers, 1889-1979, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution (hereafter cited as Gugler Papers); Arleyn A. Levee, "An Enduring Design Legacy: Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. in the Nation's Capital," in *Civic Art: A Centennial History of the U. S. Commission of Fine Arts*, ed. Thomas E. Luebke (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Commission of Fine Arts, 2013), 52. Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., had been part of the Senate Park Commission (more commonly referred to as the McMillan Commission) that sought to unify and beautify the nation's capital and its parks and monument grounds by honoring the original conceptions outlined by the capital city's planner, Pierre Charles L'Enfant.

produced by man.” Olmsted asserted that the forest on Theodore Roosevelt Island could be coaxed carefully and gently back onto its ecological path and reconstructed as a primeval forest that long ago had been altered by human interference.⁵

Although historians, park service officials, and newspaper reporters continually heralded the island as “natural” or “primeval,” the island needed to be transformed before it could be touted as a pristine forest such as which greeted the region’s first Euro-American settlers. Because of the severity of the overgrowth, it was difficult for the landscape architects to adequately assess the island’s topography and vegetative features.⁶ In 1934, after Charles F. Cochran, a historian employed by the National Park Service (NPS), reported on the extent of the problem, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), in conjunction with the NPS, systematically cleared debris, dead trees, and weedy growth. Through late 1934 and 1935, the crews progressed to removing stumps and brush, developing trails and paths, and planting native varieties of trees and shrubs.⁷

⁵ Theodore Roosevelt Association, “Theodore Roosevelt Island,” Gugler Papers. See also, Levee, “An Enduring Design Legacy,” 52-53. Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. designed Central Park in New York City and was the primary landscape designer for the White City of the World’s Columbian Exposition in 1893 in Chicago. Echoing his father’s work at the World’s Columbian Exposition, the younger Olmsted avidly supported keeping the island in a natural state reminiscent of “the Wooded Isle as a place of verdant respite in contrast to the structured formality of the great White City” in Chicago. The Wooded Isle on the World’s Fair grounds was home to a cabin constructed by the Boone and Crockett Club of which Theodore Roosevelt was a founding member.

⁶ Levee, “An Enduring Design Legacy,” 53.

⁷ Charles F. Cochran, “Report on Analostan Island,” April 1934, n.p., copy included in Box 8 (Correspondence Files R-T), Folder: May 1964-December 1964, Gugler Papers. In addition to this report, J. Walter Coleman completed a one-page summary for the National Park Service on April 20, 1935, also included in Box 8 (Correspondence Files R-T), Folder: TR, May 1964-December 1964, Gugler Papers; National Park Service, *Master Plan, Theodore Roosevelt Island, Washington, D. C.*, 22-23. The NPS identified English ivy, Japanese honeysuckle, gill-over-the-ground, and periwinkle as major concerns. According to the National Park Service’s Master Plan for Theodore Roosevelt Island, “In visualizing the island’s original upland conditions, one should imagine a deciduous mixture of oaks, beech, red maple, yellow poplar, black cherry, elm, sycamore, and other species, not much different from the existing

Olmsted hoped that a simple, dignified monument complementing the natural woodland would serve as the primary memorial to Theodore Roosevelt and embody “so many qualities which he keenly appreciated ... and which he led so many others to appreciate and make a part of their enjoyment of a full, well-rounded life.”⁸ Lack of funding in the 1930s, however, limited NPS and RMA activities to trail work and brush clearing; a physical memorial must wait for better economic times. Although the Great Depression delayed the consideration of a constructed physical memorial, many seemed content simply to return the island to its natural state and celebrate the memory of Theodore Roosevelt through its rehabilitated sylvan beauty. “Analostan Island,” a *Washington Post* reporter remarked, “more than almost any other site around Washington, still retains the flavor of the early days when Indians came in their canoes up the Potomac River. In this setting will be placed the memorial to a man who loved nature—and, you may be sure, the memorial will be in keeping with the man.”⁹

By the spring of 1937, Theodore Roosevelt Island had opened as a limited use recreation area, accessible only by boat. Within a year, however, it appears as though the wilderness island had fulfilled its destiny too well; beyond the occasional naturalist, adventurer, or birdwatcher, the island remained too secluded to draw visitors to its shores.

cover.” But as the NPS noted, “Forest management on the island began in 1935, when what were assumed to be climax species were planted. Though many of the planted trees failed to survive, much of the present cover dates from that year. The 1935 planting concept contained a few mistakes, and the previous owners had already introduced several exotic species. Thus, there is today a mongrel forest type on the island.” Local newspapers occasionally commented on the progress: “Theodore Roosevelt Park,” *Washington Post*, July 15, 1934. See also, Levee, “An Enduring Design Legacy,” 53.

⁸ Levee, “An Enduring Design Legacy,” 53.

⁹ “Theodore Roosevelt Park,” *Washington Post*, July 15, 1934.

The *Washington Post* lamented that “It is remarkable that so beautiful and historic a spot as Roosevelt Island ... should be so unfamiliar to the thousands who see it every day, but have never set foot on its shores.”¹⁰ As the Second World War captured the nation’s attention during the 1940s, the island itself remained the only national memorial dedicated to Theodore Roosevelt.¹¹

Between 1945 and 1947, the Olmsted firm finalized the landscaping plans for the island in anticipation of a memorial’s construction once funding was secured. During the immediate postwar years, the National Capital Parks and the NPS also encouraged visitation by offering guided nature walks on the island assisted by limited ferry service. It was not long before local newspapers once again called the island “a neglected D.C. playground.” The purpose of a June 1950 story in the *Washington Post* was to inform readers about the island and “maybe, to interest Congress and TR’s friends into doing something about a neglected memorial to the Rough Rider” nearly fifty years after he became president. The appeal fell on deaf ears and little was done with the island in the early 1950s except for the occasional “jungle jaunt” organized by the National Capital Parks. The only other visitors were those who rowed to the island to explore on their

¹⁰ “Roosevelt Island to Open in Spring,” *Washington Post*, December 17, 1936; “New Drive to ‘Discover’ Historic Roosevelt Isle,” *Washington Post*, August 14, 1938. Even in 1938, the island was still being cleared of the overgrowth and developed as “a recreational memorial to that great lover of the outdoors—Theodore Roosevelt.” See also, National Park Service, *Master Plan, Theodore Roosevelt Island, Washington, D.C.*, 34.

¹¹ “The New Isla,” *Washington Post*, November 1, 1931; Theodore Roosevelt Association, “Theodore Roosevelt Island,” Gugler Papers. According to this brochure, “The Trustees of the Association made no effort, in a period of economic depression and the four years of World War II that followed, to press Congress for the funds needed. Under the general direction of the National Park Service and the supervision of the Olmsted Brothers, however, work-squads from the Civilian Conservation Corps cleared out much of the Japanese honeysuckle that infested the Island, constructed paths and planted some 20,000 trees and shrubs.”

own; they reveled in the seclusion and uncultivated beauty that separated it from “the crowd of amusement parks or picnic spots” found elsewhere in the District.¹² Behind the scenes, however, the Theodore Roosevelt Association continued its drive to construct a national memorial as a way to draw visitors to the island, but first the Association had to defend the wooded sanctuary from the encroachment of urban sprawl that threatened to mar its serene setting.¹³

In January 1952, the District Highway Department proposed the construction of a bridge running from the foot of E Street NW, across the Potomac River to connect with Lee Highway and Lee Boulevard on the Virginia shore. The planners stated that the new bridge would provide a much needed second route between downtown Washington and the growing suburbs of Northern Virginia. The bridge—lying between the Francis Scott Key Bridge to the north and the Arlington Memorial Bridge to the south—would bisect Theodore Roosevelt Island. In filing “a vigorous protest” against the use of the island, Major General Frank R. McCoy, president of the Theodore Roosevelt Association, argued that the placement of an artificial structure on or over the island violated the law which required the TRA to sign off on any constructed additions to the island. Despite

¹² “Exploring Flora and Fauna of Roosevelt Island,” *Washington Post*, September 29, 1947; “Teddy Roosevelt’s Island Is a Neglected D.C. Playground,” *Washington Post*, June 18, 1950; Elma Williams, Letter to the Editor of the *Washington Post*, May 29, 1953; “Roosevelt Island Saga, ‘Only Unspoiled Spot’ of Kind,” *Washington Post*, August 7, 1953. As the *Washington Post* noted, prior to the establishment of the ferry service in 1953, “Only canoeists, hardy swimmers, or confirmed bird watchers and nature students had discovered the natural island park.” Ms. Williams wrote to express her concern that regular weekend ferry service scheduled to begin in the summer of 1953 might make the island “too public” and transform the island into “a picnic area such as Rock Creek Park with picnic tables and benches and the wild underbrush neatly trimmed away.” Ms. Williams and her friends canoed frequently to the island.

¹³ Letter from Harry Thompson to Leslie Stratton, July 23, 1958, Box 7 (Correspondence Files R), Folder: T. Roosevelt Memorial, 1958, Gugler Papers. See also, Levee, “An Enduring Design Legacy,” 53.

these objections, the District Highway Department approved the plan and the engineer commissioner prepared to study the survey program. In October, the National Capital Planning Commission brought together the principal players in an effort to negotiate an agreement, but they failed to reach a compromise.¹⁴

A year after the highway department first proposed the E Street bridge, the debate raged on. TRA secretary and director Hermann Hagedorn traveled to Washington to battle against the perceived violation of the Association's gift to the nation. According to the *Washington Post*, Hagedorn outlined his two-pronged campaign against the bridge: the first involved lobbying Congress, specifically the House and Senate District Committees and the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, which control District concerns and fiscal matters respectively. The second aspect of Hagedorn's crusade was to expand the public's interest in and use of Theodore Roosevelt Island as a natural sanctuary and recreation spot. Hagedorn urged Government Services, Inc. to establish weekend ferry service from the District shore in order to increase visitation to the island. Hagedorn also pushed the National Capital Parks to construct comfort stations and picnic tables and to provide guides for visitors. The *Post* speculated on Hagedorn's motives: "Clearly, he hopes to impress the community and Congress that these 90 acres of 'unspoiled wilderness' are essential as a refuge from the turmoil and burly-burly [*sic*] of the workaday city, and incidentally as a memorial to Theodore Roosevelt."¹⁵

¹⁴ "Theodore Roosevelt Isle Bridge Site Plan Draws Protest," *Washington Post*, February 17, 1952; "Committee Named to Mediate Plans for New Potomac Span," *Washington Post*, October 24, 1952.

¹⁵ "Leader of Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Arrives to Wage Battle against E St. Span," *Washington Post*, January 23, 1953.

By May 1953, the debate heated up as conservationists entered the fray. Major General U. S. Grant, III, chairman of the Committee of One Hundred on the Federal City, along with General McCoy of the TRA, asserted that the construction of the proposed E Street bridge violated the 1932 agreement Congress made with the TRA to preserve the island in its natural state. McCoy, expressing his anger over the situation, strenuously objected to “the raping of the park system.” Meanwhile, the Arlington (Virginia) County Board approved the proposed bridge project which would have eight lanes and a traveling capacity of 120,000 vehicles per day. The County Board, in deference to the twenty-sixth president, suggested naming the span the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Bridge.¹⁶ Despite this concession, conservationists and naturalists continued their opposition. In his serial column, “The Naturalist,” Irston R. Barnes, President of the Audubon Society of the District of Columbia, articulated the “double meaning” of Theodore Roosevelt Island: “It is a fitting memorial to the President who awakened the conservation conscience of the American people, and it is a personal invitation to his people to live fully and to learn the joys of the outdoors which he advocated as ‘the rugged life.’” Reminding readers of Roosevelt’s conservation milestones, Barnes argued that “Theodore Roosevelt richly deserves the lasting gratitude of his countrymen” through the preservation of Theodore Roosevelt Island. “What memorial could be more appropriate for a great President,” Barnes asked rhetorically, “who found relaxation of the body, recreation of mind, and renewal of spirit both in distant wildernesses and in unspoiled

¹⁶ “Fight Promised on Any Plan to Run Bridge Over Island,” *Washington Post*, May 29, 1953; “E St. Bridge Approved by Citizen Unit in Arlington,” *Washington Post*, June 14, 1953.

natural areas like Rock Creek Park near his home.” Proclaiming that the proposed bridge would “destroy all of these values” promoted by Roosevelt and captured in the island’s wild sanctuary, Barnes called it a place of solace “in honor of the memory of a great American who would have his fellow countrymen regain in a wilderness sanctuary the values and perspectives lost in the confusions of the city.”¹⁷ The fight to preserve the natural solitude and sanctuary of Theodore Roosevelt Island, therefore, became a struggle to promote the conservationist memory of TR and the lessons it offered to modern-day Americans.

As the bridge debate rolled over into a new calendar year, Representative Joel T. Broyhill (R-VA) proposed that the government make a thorough investigation of the possibility of digging a tunnel under the Potomac River in order to protect the island’s natural attributes. The District Highway Department explored the option previously, but concluded that the cost—estimated to be three times that of a bridge—was prohibitive. Broyhill theorized that advances in tunnel construction technology, particularly the “cofferdam” technique, might make it more feasible.¹⁸ The following month, after a two-hour closed-door conference, engineering experts rejected the tunnel option as too expensive—estimating the cost to be \$60 million more than the proposed \$31 million E Street bridge. According to Broyhill, “overcoming the objections of the Roosevelt Memorial Association just isn’t worth that much.” In his statement Broyhill explained

¹⁷ Irston R. Barnes, “T. R.’s Island Has Two Purposes,” *Washington Post*, August 2, 1953; Irston R. Barnes, “Roosevelt Island’s Unique Role,” *Washington Post*, August 9, 1953. It appears that Barnes has combined the concept of rugged individualism with Roosevelt’s crusade for the strenuous life.

¹⁸ “E St. Tunnel Under Island is Proposed by Broyhill,” *Washington Post*, January 16, 1954.

that his tunnel suggestion was essentially a strawman used to demonstrate its exorbitant costs in case the TRA or others offered a tunnel as a viable alternative to a bridge.¹⁹ Still, Broyhill and other bridge proponents sought to placate critics by praising Theodore Roosevelt publically; Mrs. Leone Buchholz, chairman of the Arlington County Board, for example, remarked that a “bridge of proper design would be a lasting memorial to Theodore Roosevelt.” Additionally, Clifton B. Stoneburner questioned the extent of the bridge’s actual impact on the island as the noise of thousands of passing cars would not interfere with wildlife any more than the low-flying planes landing at nearby National Airport. Moreover, Stoneburner asserted confidently, if Theodore Roosevelt were alive, he would not oppose the bridge project. Despite the exuberance of their assertions, the proposed E Street bridge faced obstacles, including Virginia’s ability to pay for its share of the bridge’s approaches. But the loudest protestations came from an aesthetic viewpoint.²⁰

Assistant Secretary of the Interior Orme Lewis contended that the proposed bridge would obscure Theodore Roosevelt Island, and, perhaps a greater offense, would eclipse the Lincoln Memorial, in addition to increasing traffic congestion in downtown Washington. Broyhill, remarking on the neglected state of the island, questioned whether a bridge might be a better memorial to Roosevelt than “that wild island that looks like the very devil right now.” The TRA, however, hoped to complete the island’s proposed

¹⁹ “High Cost Buries Plan for Tunnel,” *Washington Post*, February 4, 1954.

²⁰ “Va. Official Says State Can’t Afford Span Roads,” *Washington Post*, March 3, 1954.

\$600,000 development project by 1958—the 100th anniversary of TR’s birth.²¹ The Association’s plan called for a “great formal terrace with stone seats and a slab with a carved inscription.” The island would remain inaccessible to automobiles, but parking on the Virginia shore would be built to accommodate visitors’ vehicles.²² In order to be able to construct the memorial as planned, the TRA had to protect the island’s natural integrity, a battle that appeared to be won in April 1954 when the *Washington Post* reported that aesthetic concerns killed the E Street bridge plan.²³

Seeking a permanent solution to the dilemma, South Dakota Senator Francis Case (R-SD) proposed a central area bridge that would bypass Theodore Roosevelt Island to the south and meet up with the principal roadways at Constitution Avenue. The plan passed through Congress and reached President Dwight Eisenhower’s desk that fall; the President signed the bill, but not without expressing reservations, an issue that soon exploded in the press as the bridge controversy once again made headlines. In his statement of August 30, 1954, President Eisenhower asserted that the bridge would negatively affect “the memorial concept of Arlington Memorial Bridge, which symbolizes the reunion of the North and South and provides a monumental approach to Arlington National Cemetery. It can infringe upon the Water Gate design as a monumental entrance to the Mall from the Potomac River. Most serious of all could be

²¹ “Congress Breach of Faith Charged in E St. Bridge Plan,” *Washington Post*, March 10, 1954.

²² “Teddy Roosevelt’s Island Is a Neglected D.C. Playground,” *Washington Post*, June 18, 1950. According to the National Capital Parks officials consulted for this article, the project would cost approximately \$300,000. It is unclear how much the plan changed between 1950 and 1954.

²³ “Let’s Have A Bridge,” *Washington Post*, March 12, 1954; “NCP Official Doubts Value of ‘Compromise’ Bridge,” *Washington Post*, March 13, 1954; “Better Use of Bridges,” *Washington Post*, April 5, 1954. It appears that the TRA’s objections helped to bring down the proposed E Street bridge.

the effect of the bridge on the beautiful setting of the Lincoln Memorial.” The conflict, as Eisenhower expressed, centered on the Commission of Fine Arts’ objection that the proposed Constitution Avenue bridge, in an effort to avoid touching Theodore Roosevelt Island, placed the span “too close to Memorial Bridge for aesthetic perfection and obstructs the view from Roosevelt Island.”²⁴ To protect the monumental landscape of the District of Columbia, the Commission of Fine Arts urged Congress to construct a tunnel under the Potomac River. “The Mall,” the Commission explained, “terminating in the Memorial Bridge and the wide expanse of the river, with the wooded island given to the Nation as a memorial to Theodore Roosevelt, provides a setting of incomparable beauty for the Lincoln Memorial and form perhaps the finest civic landscape in America. It is of the utmost importance that this landscape should not be marred by the intrusion of another bridge at this point.”²⁵

In June 1955, the trustees of the Theodore Roosevelt Association, taking into consideration the Commission of Fine Arts’ objections to the Constitution Avenue bridge, voted to allow an alternative bridge across the northern end of Theodore Roosevelt Island, not far off the path originally outlined by the District Highway

²⁴ “House Sends D.C. Bridges Measure to White House,” *Washington Post*, August 18, 1954; “Group Urges Restudy of Bridge Plan,” *Washington Post*, November 3, 1954; “Fine Arts Group Maps Bridge Fight,” *Washington Post*, November 9, 1954; Letter from Joseph C. Grew to Dwight Eisenhower, March 10, 1955, Folder: Fine Arts Commission, Box 8, Office Files of Director Conrad L. Wirth, 1946-1964, NPS Records.

²⁵ “Congress Petitioned to Promote Tube Or Another Site For New Bridge,” *Washington Post*, November 11, 1954; Commission of Fine Arts Press Release, March 15, 1955, Folder: Fine Arts Commission, Box 8, Office Files of Director Conrad L. Wirth, 1946-1964, NPS Records. The Commission stated that “After careful study of the effect of the proposed bridge on the landscape setting of the Lincoln Memorial, Theodore Roosevelt Island and Arlington National Cemetery, the Commission by unanimous vote arrived at the conclusion that a bridge should never be built at this location.”

Department in 1952. The Association had endorsed the Constitution Avenue bridge mainly because it bypassed the island to the south, but the Commission of Fine Arts convinced the group that the bridge would damage the District’s memorial setting, particularly the stretch following Memorial Bridge from the Lincoln Memorial to Arlington Cemetery. As an official explanation, the Association stated that “the trustees recall the part that Mr. Roosevelt as President played in conserving and developing the grand plan of the National Capital,” by establishing the McMillan Commission during his presidency; they declared that their main objective was maintaining the monumental dignity of the nation’s capital.²⁶ Unofficially, however, the TRA realized that a bridge at the northern end would not block the view of the Mall from the island, thereby preserving the connection between the two commemorative spaces. The *Washington Post* praised the TRA’s vote to accept a bridge straddling the island and reported that “murmurs of approval can be detected” across Washington, D.C.: “For the first time the agreement of all District groups concerned with the bridge—seemingly as difficult to obtain as a Big Four accord—now seems a real prospect.”²⁷

In approving the bridge’s construction across the island, the TRA set down three conditions: that the National Park Service, the National Capital Planning Commission, and the District Commissioners join in endorsing the planned location; that the design of the bridge as well as its “relation to the island” be approved by the TRA, the Commission

²⁶ Thomas E. Luebke, ed., *Civic Art: A Centennial History of the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, 2013), 206. Additionally, the Trustees were calling upon a different memory of TR to help them deal with a change in circumstances.

²⁷ “Look, Mom, a Bridge!” *Washington Post*, June 18, 1955.

of Fine Arts, and the NPS; and that the bridge be named the Theodore Roosevelt Bridge. Hermann Hagedorn specified that the Association would like to see a low-level memorial-type bridge comparable to the Arlington Memorial Bridge; such a bridge, the *Post* noted, “could be a handsome monument” to Theodore Roosevelt. Additionally, a bridge over the island had the potential to “insure the permanent protection of Roosevelt Island, which has so long been in controversy.” By incorporating pedestrian access, the plan could “pave the way for selective development of this delightful wilderness preserve.” Not everyone supported the Association’s arbitration, however; Maryland representative Donald E. Gingery harrumphed that it was “nonsense” that a private group could “dictate to public agencies.”²⁸ Nevertheless, it appeared that a solution amenable to all was in sight. The pleasant glow of cooperation faded rapidly, however, as the power of economics brought the plan to a screeching halt. The more northerly bridge, Virginia and Arlington County highway engineers testified, would not connect the necessary routes on the Virginia side, nor would the state be able to put up the over \$10 million for the bridge’s extensive approaches.²⁹

Seeing that the northerly bridge proposal was not fiscally feasible, Congress, ignoring the earlier objections of the Commission of Fine Arts, appropriated \$1.5 million to initiate construction on the controversial Constitution Avenue bridge. As a concession, they agreed to an amendment introduced by Senator Case that would permit the bridge to

²⁸ “Roosevelt Island Site at Issue,” *Washington Post*, June 16, 1955; “Bridge Site On Island Given Boost,” *Washington Post*, June 17, 1955; “Look, Mom, a Bridge!” *Washington Post*, June 18, 1955.

²⁹ “Sen. Case Predicts Delay in New Plan for Bridge,” *Washington Post*, June 19, 1955; “Roosevelt Island Span Plan Killed,” *Washington Post*, June 22, 1955; “All Is Confusion,” *Washington Post*, June 23, 1955.

be constructed across the southern tip of Theodore Roosevelt Island if the TRA agreed to the proposal by August 1, 1955. The Constitution Avenue bridge had become a particular concern for the Association because, as the Commission of Fine Arts outlined in their objections, the construction of the bridge would destroy the view from the island to the monumental core of the nation's capital—particularly the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument—thereby permanently inhibiting the connection between the island and the National Mall.³⁰ Furthermore, there would no longer be a reason to construct a memorial overlook on the island, as thousands of speeding automobiles would disrupt the intended view. Senator Case, in a letter to Interior Secretary Douglas McKay, expressed that it would be “unfortunate” for the NPS to abandon plans for the island’s memorial development on account of the bridge. Case proclaimed that a bridge crossing the southern tip of the island would increase accessibility to the neglected space. “Such a plan,” Case insisted, “would preserve the dignity and naturalness of Theodore Roosevelt Island and make it available for appreciation by visitors for years to come.”³¹ After consulting with the Theodore Roosevelt Association’s Board of Trustees in New York City, TRA president Oscar Straus II and director Hermann Hagedorn acquiesced to the

³⁰ Luebke, *Civic Art*, 205. According to Luebke, “The association intended to place a single structure on the island, a paved terrace at the south end where visitors could look out to the Lincoln Memorial, establishing the kind of reciprocal view between monuments that formed a vital element of both the L’Enfant and McMillan Plans. The bridge would interrupt the conversation between the two spaces.

³¹ “Case Urges Final Parley on Island Link to Span,” *Washington Post*, June 26, 1955.

modification of the Constitution Avenue bridge proposal and permitted it to touch the southern tip of the island.³²

With the bridge matter seemingly settled by November 1955, the TRA and the nation prepared to commemorate the upcoming centenary of TR's birth. Earlier, in July 1955, Congress created the Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Commission to coordinate a nationwide program for the 1958 celebrations and to recognize "the outstanding contributions to the Nation of a great American leader and conservationist." Two sites dedicated to Roosevelt's memory—Theodore Roosevelt National Memorial Park in North Dakota and Theodore Roosevelt Island—were set to receive special consideration in the planning and preparations. According to National Park Service Director Conrad L. Wirth, \$265,000 had been appropriated for the island's development, including the memorial overlook, additional trails, and a ferry terminal.³³ In light of the new placement of the Constitution Avenue bridge, however, the Theodore Roosevelt Association, in

³² "New Island Span Move Hits Snag," *Washington Post*, June 29, 1955; "Concession to Beauty," *Washington Post*, July 9, 1955; "Group Votes to Permit Span to Pass Over Southern Tip," *Washington Post*, July 9, 1955; "Officials Air Potomac Span Route Today," *Washington Post*, July 14, 1955; "Island Site for Bridge Furthered," *Washington Post*, July 21, 1955; "Potomac Bridge Site is Approved," *Washington Post*, November 2, 1955; "Our Harmonious Bridge," *Washington Post*, November 6, 1955; "Commission Favors 'Ribbon of Steel' Span," *Washington Post*, December 10, 1955. According to the *Washington Post*, the Theodore Roosevelt Association now favored a vehicular connection from the new bridge to the island, but wanted to ensure that parking did not take up too much space.

³³ Public Law 183, 84th Congress, Chapter 418, 1st session, Folder: Theodore Roosevelt WASO, Box 21, General Records, Administrative Files, 1949-1971, NPS Records; Press Release, September 11, 1955, Folder: Theodore Roosevelt WASO, Box 21, General Records, Administrative Files, 1949-1971, NPS Records; "Roosevelt Centennial Set for '58," *Washington Post*, September 12, 1955; NPS, *Master Plan, Theodore Roosevelt Island, Washington, D.C.*, 38. For a list of the commission's members, see *Report of the Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Commission relating to a celebration in 1958 of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Theodore Roosevelt* [March 5, 1956?] (hereafter cited as TRCC Initial Report), Theodore Roosevelt National Park. <http://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record.aspx?libID=o273670>, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University, Dickinson, ND.

conjunction with the Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Commission, decided upon “an entirely new approach” to the island’s monumental memorial to Theodore Roosevelt.³⁴

Having rescued the island from industrial development in the early 1930s, the Association resurrected its natural flora only to have the island fade into obscurity, a forgotten wilderness in the middle of a bustling metropolis. But the capital’s need for expanded transportation routes linking the urban center with the sprawling suburbs threatened the island refuge. After years of standing firm against the proposed bridge, the Association realized that unless it assisted in the selection of the bridge’s location, it might lose the symbolic connection between the island and the National Mall. With the approach of the centenary of Roosevelt’s birth, the Association would use the occasion and the renewed national enthusiasm for Roosevelt to re-establish control over the memory and image of TR.

The impetus for the centennial celebration stemmed from the TRA’s desire “To kindle in the American heart today the kind of fire that burned in Theodore Roosevelt’s,” so that “his passion for his country, his faith in her future, his longing that the quality of American citizenship might become an inspiration and a beacon to mankind.”³⁵ It is not difficult to see the Association’s hand in the Theodore Roosevelt Centennial

Commission’s work. Hermann Hagedorn, the Association’s secretary and director since

³⁴ “Roosevelt Centennial Set for ’58,” *Washington Post*, September 12, 1955; “Roosevelt Island Barred as Site for Auditorium,” *Washington Post*, January 16, 1956. The bulk of this article discusses the possibility of constructing a new civic auditorium on the island, an idea that was swiftly rejected. The proposed auditorium would eventually become the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

³⁵ *Theodore Roosevelt Centennial (1858-1958), Report of the Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Commission to the Congress of the United States by Hermann Hagedorn, Director of the Commission* (hereafter cited as TRCC Final Report), 13, Folder: Theodore Roosevelt WASO, Box 21, General Records, Administrative Files, 1949-1971, NPS Records.

its incorporation in 1920, resigned from his post in 1957 to devote his time and energy to his duties as director of the Centennial Commission; Oscar Straus, president of the Association, also served on the Commission. As the Commission's director, Hagedorn wrote most of the official reports submitted to Congress, and his flowery prose, unrelenting in its praise of Theodore Roosevelt's virtue, filled page after page in declaration of his and the Association's ongoing devotion to Roosevelt and his memory. Historian John Allen Gable, in a brief article on Hagedorn for the *Theodore Roosevelt Association Journal*, commented that "Although by then a man in his seventies, Hagedorn worked indefatigably as Director of the T.R. Centennial Commission, traveling around the nation, writing articles and delivering lectures and speeches, and organizing a multitude of varied centennial activities." The successful centennial celebrations, Gable observed, proved to be "the fitting climax to Hagedorn's long career as leader of the Roosevelt memorial movement."³⁶

In many ways, the Commission allowed the Association to fulfill—through an official government entity—its mission to apotheosize Theodore Roosevelt; the commemoration of Roosevelt's centenary through the auspices of the Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Commission was ostensibly the action of the United States government and the American people, not merely another crusade undertaken by TR's zealous admirers and disciples. The commission thereby legitimized the TRA's

³⁶ TRCC Final Report, 15. Additionally, the Association allowed the commission to establish headquarters at Theodore Roosevelt House in New York City without charge. John Allen Gable, "He Loved the Soaring Spirit of Man': The Life and Work of Hermann Hagedorn," *Theodore Roosevelt Association Journal* 3, no. 3 (1977): 9-13, 13. Gable also served as the director of the Theodore Roosevelt Association.

objectives and offered the impression of a national consensus on Roosevelt's memory. Hagedorn, however, maintained that the Association did not dictate the efforts to memorialize TR, rather the larger body of the American public acted through the Centennial Commission expressing its reverence and homage.³⁷ Nevertheless, the Association's involvement was extensive. For example, although the commission only received \$150,000 from the federal treasury for centennial activities, it received a matching donation from the TRA. As Hagedorn recounted in the commission's final report sent to Congress in 1959, the Association's trustees, "sympathetic to the national pressure to reduce the cost of government, deplored any application by the Commission for a further appropriation." The trustees professed that, "We feel sure that this is the way Mr. Roosevelt would want this program financed, rather than by further public funds."³⁸ Finally, the Commission's centenary theme revived the Association's long-held desire to perpetuate the memory of "the greatest teacher of the essentials of popular self-government the world has ever known," and to advance those ideals in a new generation of Americans.³⁹ According to the Commission's statement of purpose, the centennial celebrations focused less on "recollections of an earlier age" and more on summoning

³⁷ Letter from Hermann Hagedorn to Eric Gugler, December 15, 1955, Box 7 (Correspondence Files R), Folder: 1948-1957, Gugler Papers.

³⁸ *Interim Report of the Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Commission*, 1957 (hereafter cited as TRCC Interim Report), 24, Theodore Roosevelt Island National Memorial, <http://theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record.aspx?lib=IDo274204>, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University, Dickinson, North Dakota. See also, TRCC Final Report, 25-26, NPS Records. In the Final Report, Hagedorn stated that Centennial Commission member Senator Joseph C. O'Mahoney of Wyoming was preparing to introduce a bill to ask for an additional \$150,000, but "the Theodore Roosevelt Association stayed his hand."

³⁹ TRCC Final Report, 16. As noted in Chapter II, Elihu Root used this phrase to describe Roosevelt during one of the first commemorative celebrations in 1919.

“the resources of the past to help men face the challenges of the present.” The challenge, Hagedorn asserted, was “to live the answer to the question dividing the world: whether man has the capacity, under God, to govern himself and to use the liberty that is his to build a civilization that shall endure.”⁴⁰ The aim, therefore, “was not to add new laurel to the wreath that decked the brow of Theodore Roosevelt, or to arrange birthday parties or memorial demonstrations, however impressive ... It is to grasp the breathtaking opportunity which the centennial offers to make the spirit of Theodore Roosevelt again a vital factor in the life of the American people.”⁴¹ A factor desperately needed, the Commission claimed, in the increasingly troubled times of the mid-twentieth century, a time in which enemies worked to corrupt the liberty and integrity of the American people and the American government.

The (unnamed) enemies of the United States do not seek, currently at least, to destroy the nation’s cities or armed forces, Hagedorn wrote; “They are interested in confusing our moral values, disrupting our national unity, setting race against race, class against class, labor against management, and management against labor.” From Hagedorn’s description, it appeared as though the very consensus of the United States was under attack. For Hagedorn (and through him the Commission), the nation’s enemies, whether internal or external, were “interested in ridiculing our high purposes, in paralyzing our hope, our faith, and our courage—in a word, in draining out of us our

⁴⁰ TRCC Initial Report, 1. See also, Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Commission, January 18, 1956, Box 7 (Correspondence Files R), Folder: 1948-1957, Gugler Papers.

⁴¹ TRCC Final Report, 33-34. See also, TRCC Interim Report and TRCC Initial Report.

moral and spiritual energies. Let us be clear about this. They want to quench the American spirit so that we may become ‘pushovers’ for a philosophy which, at their best, all Americans detest.”⁴² Hagedorn proclaimed that there was a solution to this dangerous threat to American society, culture, and government: the memory of Theodore Roosevelt.

If ever there was a program to provide the militant and effective moral and intellectual resources to repulse so subtle, corrupting and treacherous an assault, the Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Commission’s program is just that. It puts into our hands a weapon which might have been made expressly for this moment in history—the personality, the spirit, the record, and the message of Theodore Roosevelt, his ringing summons to responsible and courageous living, impassioned love of country, and dynamic public service.⁴³

Theodore Roosevelt, Hagedorn asserted, exhibited the qualities necessary to defeat America’s enemies: honesty, forthrightness, courage, decency of personal and family life, along with his work for social justice and equal opportunity. Most importantly, Hagedorn pronounced, was the “passion for America which burns in Theodore Roosevelt’s spoken and written words and, most compellingly, in the records of his action in public office or as private citizen.”⁴⁴ The survival of the United States depended upon following Roosevelt’s example, for as an example, Theodore Roosevelt makes a particularly compelling case, in Hagedorn’s estimation. “Theodore Roosevelt,” Hagedorn declared, “represents so heroic and attractive a personality, so picturesque, colorful and dramatic a life, that it will not be difficult to project the qualities his life

⁴² TRCC Initial Report, 8.

⁴³ TRCC Initial Report, 8.

⁴⁴ TRCC Initial Report, 8.

revealed, and to make them come alive in our contemporary world in the form of new aspirations and new resolves in the hearts of American men and women, American boys and girls.”⁴⁵ Therefore, Hagedorn insisted, Theodore Roosevelt would be “fruitfully commemorated” not as a part of the past, but rather as an indispensable aspect of the present.⁴⁶ “Closer to us, in menacing times, than the President who cut an interoceanic canal or the mediator of a war between rival empires,” the Commission contended, “is the citizen who showed in action his responsibility toward his city, his state and his nation, and inspired in others a devotion akin to his own.”⁴⁷ The centennial celebration theme, building on the Commission’s statement of purpose, centered “upon the responsibilities of dedicated and effective citizenship that dominated Theodore Roosevelt’s public life, and that is so essential for the maintenance and advancement of our national welfare.”⁴⁸ Under this framework, the Commission chose to highlight five areas through which to emphasize the theme of “responsible citizenship”: family life and the home as the crucible of individual character; the moral and spiritual foundations of free government; the citizen’s participation in government; the conservation of the nation’s resources; and the national defense.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ TRCC Interim Report, 28-29. See also, TRCC Final Report, 34.

⁴⁶ TRCC Initial Report, 1. See also, Appendix A, Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Commission, January 18, 1956, Gugler Papers; TRCC Final Report, 19.

⁴⁷ TRCC Initial Report, 1. See also, Appendix A, Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Commission, January 18, 1956, Gugler Papers.

⁴⁸ TRCC Initial Report, 2.

⁴⁹ TRCC Final Report, 18; TRCC Interim Report, 2; Appendix B, Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Commission, January 18, 1956, Gugler Papers.

In an effort to guide the American people through lessons in responsible citizenship, the Commission proposed utilizing a book of Rooseveltian quotations interspersed with Roosevelt's contemporaries commenting on his words and deeds. *The Free Citizen: A Summons to Service of the Democratic Ideal* (1958)—coincidentally edited by Hermann Hagedorn—would, the Commission affirmed, “give the free world, in the form of Theodore Roosevelt’s simple and easily comprehensible code of free government, the unifying element that it so desperately needs: a common Bible of Democracy.”⁵⁰ Considered essential to the Commission’s work, *The Free Citizen* ensured that the message, approved and advocated by the Theodore Roosevelt Association, made its way into the hands of Americans and others around the world, the generous gift from the TRA.

The Commission, as its reports and public proclamations attest, did not concentrate on Theodore Roosevelt as a leader in conservation; it did not honor him solely as the champion of the natural world. These documents reveal more pressing and immediate concerns of the commemorators: the ideological Cold War struggle then consuming American politics, society, and culture. Theodore Roosevelt, in this context, became a symbol of the spirit, the integrity, and the righteousness of the American democratic cause. Roosevelt’s image and message comprised the fount from which the

⁵⁰ TRCC Initial Report, 2-3. The royalties would go to the TRA to develop Sagamore Hill and assist with the upkeep of Roosevelt House. See also, TRCC Interim Report, 22. In the Interim Report, Hagedorn called the book a “centennial textbook.” TRCC Final Report, 28. “The determination of the Commission that the centennial theme of Responsible Citizenship should find expression, so far as possible, in every aspect of the observance was carried out. Every piece of literature that went out of the national headquarters across the country stressed the theme, and the chief Centennial publications dealt with it exhaustively.” Theodore Roosevelt, *The Free Citizen: A Summons to Service of the Democratic Ideal*, ed. Hermann Hagedorn (New York: Macmillan, 1956).

American public could drink to strengthen its resolve to fight against the enemies of American democracy—real and imagined, foreign and domestic. The virtues and lessons that Theodore Roosevelt could teach had the power to encourage all Americans to live up to the ideal of responsible citizenship touted by the Theodore Roosevelt Association and the Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Commission. The commemorators’ concerns and beliefs influenced their memorialization of Roosevelt on the isolated wooded island in the Potomac River. This is not to say that conservation was unimportant to the centennial celebration or to the memorial on the island; as Hagedorn explained in the Centennial Commission’s final report, “If the centennial theme of Responsible Citizenship had not obviously covered the conservation of the nation’s natural resources, the theme of Conservation would have stolen the show.”⁵¹ Hagedorn, however, viewed conservation not as a separate entity, but as one of the avenues through which Roosevelt expressed his social and political philosophy.

Although the Theodore Roosevelt Association originally planned to memorialize TR with a simple overlook and landscaping by the Olmsted Brothers firm, the new Potomac bridge proposal disrupted the monumental view it meant to capture. Taking advice from the National Park Service, the Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Commission—and through it the Theodore Roosevelt Association—called upon New York architect Eric Gugler and sculptor Paul Manship “to signalize the life of Theodore Roosevelt and the civic values with which his name is associated.”⁵² In a letter to Gugler,

⁵¹ TRCC Final Report, 97.

⁵² TRCC Initial Report, 5. The architect and sculptor had been friends for many years and most recently had collaborated on the monument at the American cemetery in Anzio, Italy. It is uncertain whether the

Hagedorn expounded that, “This is what comes to be about the Island and its ‘focus of reverence’: Not a Memorial to a great man so much as a living voice summoning the world to the services of the democratic ideal.”⁵³ The architect, not unfamiliar with the ways of Washington, set out to capture the commemorators’ civic objectives in a monumental memorial design.

After finishing a degree in architecture at Columbia University, Eric Gugler studied at the American Academy in Rome. Gugler maintained close relationships with many *Beaux-Arts*-trained architects and sculptors, including Charles McKim, along with many influential leaders, including those within government. Gugler first worked with Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt on reconstructing the buildings at Warm Springs, Georgia, which would later become the president’s retreat. The Southern Greek Revival architecture of Georgia Hall (completed in 1933) demonstrates the conservative nature of the architect’s work. Eleanor Roosevelt later consulted with Gugler on a housing project for low-income farmers and miners in the experimental town of Arthurdale, West

TRA hired Gugler and Manship prior to the formation of the Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Commission. The evidence suggests that the TRA hired the pair to design a new memorial which was then adopted by the Commission. “The Dream ... And the Reality,” *Washington Post*, August 9, 1957; Luebke, *Civic Art*, 205; Levee, “An Enduring Design Legacy,” 55. As Levee notes, “They allowed a bridge to pass over the southern end of the island, destroying all possibility of the intended visual connections. Also destroyed was the innovative concept to complement the classic architectural memorialization in the Mall with a living wilderness set aside as a monument to a president so closely associated with American conservation.”

⁵³ Letter from Hermann Hagedorn to Eric Gugler, December 10, 1955, Box 7 (Correspondence Files R), Folder: 1948-1957, Gugler Papers.

Virginia. The young architect also assisted in the expansion and redesign of White House office space, including moving the Oval Office to its current location.⁵⁴

In conceptualizing the design for the Theodore Roosevelt memorial, Gugler attempted to balance the natural with the formal. In an intra-office memorandum summarizing a recent visit to Washington, D.C., Gugler commented that, “Generally speaking, it was agreed by everyone that the Memorial should be arranged so that from the outside, it would look a part of the naturalistic character of the Island but that upon entering the enclosure of trees it could be severely formal, the whole thought being somewhat on the order of the Adams Memorial, rather than the type of memorial which would be seen on the end of a vista.”⁵⁵ In other words, in contrast to the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument, the Theodore Roosevelt memorial was not intended to be seen from a distance—a factor that affects how visitors react to and interact with the memorial and its components. Visitors would discover the Theodore Roosevelt memorial along the secluded and gently sweeping paths on the island with the physical structure revealed only as they round the last bend of the path. The sculptural

⁵⁴ William B. Bushong, “Presidential Influence: F.D.R., Truman, and the Design of Washington’s Icons of Executive Power, 1933-1953,” in *Civic Art: A Centennial History of the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts*, Thomas E. Luebke, ed. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, 2013): 220-229, 223; William B. Rhoads, “Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Architecture of Warm Springs,” *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 67, no. 1 (Spring 1983): 70-87; William B. Rhoads, “Franklin D. Roosevelt and Washington Architecture,” *Records of the Columbia Historical Society, Washington, D.C.* 52 (1989): 104-162, 112. See also, “Regional Office Reports, Boston,” *Archives of American Art Journal* 16, no. 3 (1976): 19-20.

⁵⁵ Eric Gugler, Memorandum, Re: Washington Visit, December 20, 1955, Box 7 (Correspondence Files R), Folder: 1948-1957, Gugler Papers. It is interesting that Gugler mentions the Adams Memorial as a comparison here. Augustus Saint-Gaudens created the Adams Memorial in Rock Creek Cemetery for Marian “Clover” Hooper Adams, wife of Henry Adams, who committed suicide. The hauntingly powerful Adams Memorial is just one of many within the picturesque Rock Creek Cemetery. The hexagonal plot was designed by Stanford White and is meant to display contemplation and serenity. Some of the drawings and sketches, however, seem to suggest that commemorators did want the memorial to be seen from the shores of the District, thereby enhancing the connection between the island and the Mall.

centerpiece of the memorial plaza conformed to the signature style of its sculptor, Paulanship.

Born in Minnesota in 1885, Paulanship first studied art at the Saint Paul School of Art (later known as the Saint Paul Institute of Art and Sciences) while he was still enrolled in public school.⁵⁶ In 1905,anship moved to New York and began his apprenticeship under the direction of several *Beaux-Arts*-trained sculptors, including Herman MacNeil, Charles Grafly, and Solon Borglum. Not surprisingly,anship's early work displayed the expressive realistic modeling of his French-trained mentors. Because of this association,anship developed a deep respect for the leading sculptor of the day, Auguste Rodin and aspired to study with the French master. Asanship stated, "Rodin was the great teacher, the inspiring direction which young sculptors decided to follow."⁵⁷

anship, however, had another significant influence in his early years, Isidore Konti. The Italian sculptor—lacking connections with the French school—discouragedanship's attraction to Rodin, and, it is probable, actively encouragedanship to compete for the sculptural fellowship to the American Academy in Rome.⁵⁸ The receipt of the fellowship in 1909 andanship's experiences there altered his allegiance away from the heavily-modeled French style. In the third and final year of his fellowship,anship traveled to Greece and the nature of his sculpture changed dramatically; he

⁵⁶ Johnanship, *Paulanship* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1989), 14; Wayne Craven, *Sculpture in America* (New York: Thomas Y. Cromwell Company, 1968), 565.

⁵⁷anship, *Paulanship*, 16; Susan Rather, *Archaism, Modernism, and the Art of Paulanship* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993), 10-11, 94.

⁵⁸ Rather, *Archaism, Modernism, and the Art of Paulanship*, 12.

developed his signature form of archaism, with its smooth lines and minimal modeling.⁵⁹ Upon the completion of his Academy fellowship, Manship's return to New York in 1913 coincided with the upheaval of the American art scene brought about by the Armory Show that introduced American audiences to modernism in art. Manship did not contribute to the Armory Show, however; he made his professional debut in February 1913 at the Twenty-Eighth Annual Exhibition of the Architectural League of New York—one of the conservative bastions of American art.⁶⁰ By the end of the decade, Manship had achieved considerable fame through his archaistic sculptures which embodied both classicism in their subject matter and modernism in his smooth modeling and stylization, with the most recognizable being the *Prometheus* fountain at Rockefeller Center in New York City (figure 15).⁶¹

Hermann Hagedorn, in the Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Commission's initial report submitted to Congress in March 1956, outlined the proposed memorial's physical

⁵⁹ Craven, *Sculpture in America*, 565. According to Craven, Manship “found a source of inspiration in the graceful maidens in the frescoes of Pompeii, in the decorative figures in the vase paintings, and in the elegant classical beauty of Roman bronze statuettes.” Continuing, Craven notes that “Especially stimulating to him were the simple, rather abstract figures of archaic Greek art, with their decorative stylizations of the hair and drapery.” Finally, Craven observes, “In Egypt he discovered another stylized art of antiquity; indeed, the oriental Indo-Greek, the Minoan, and the Assyrian styles also came to influence his style in time.” See also, Rather, *Archaism, Modernism, and the Art of Paul Manship*, 2,-3, 5, 7, 12, 38, 43, 49. According to Rather, archaism involves the simplified stylization and influence of early medieval European, ancient Indian, and pre-classical Greek elements. Rather states that traditional interpretations of archaism note “the hallmarks of archaic style [as being] sound structure, emphasis on essentials, and simplicity and attributed the vitality of archaic art to the artist's quest for form (5).” Furthermore, Rather explains, “scholars recognized that archaic art had quite distinctive characteristics, including planarity, frontality, linearity, ornamentality, and stylization (43).”

⁶⁰ Rather, *Archaism, Modernism, and the Art of Paul Manship*, 77, 105-106.

⁶¹ Rather, *Archaism, Modernism, and the Art of Paul Manship*, 84, 96, 105-106. Craven, *Sculpture in America*, 565. According to Craven, “His subjects and even his style sprang from antiquity and were therefore acceptable to the men of the academies, yet his work incorporated something of the simplification and abstraction of the new art.” See also, Rather, *Archaism, Modernism, and the Art of Paul Manship*, 1.

features. To the left, right, and rear of a rectangular court 150 feet wide and 200 feet deep sit twelve granite panels ten feet high and twenty feet long bearing inscriptions from Theodore Roosevelt on the principles and practices of free government. Trees ring the open plaza which includes a wide reflecting pool showcasing the memorial's centerpiece, an armillary or celestial sphere forty to fifty feet in diameter. Hagedorn explained this central feature as

a skeletal globe consisting of 3 circular bronze bands, with the same radius and the same imaginary center. The bands, having neither beginning nor end, symbolize infinity, both in space and time. On the broadest of these are to be indicated the signs of the zodiac, the ancient symbols of the constellations, leading the mind to the immutable laws governing alike the celestial bodies and the soul of man. The sphere, as a whole—open to the sun and moon, the stars and all the winds of heaven, with bounds suggested but not defined—betokens the free spirit, universal in its nature, timeless in its being, and abiding within the orbit of eternal law.⁶²

The sphere's granite base includes "a flame of burnished bronze" roughly ten to twelve feet high representing Theodore Roosevelt's impassioned belief in the "essentials of popular self-government." The base contains the only visual likeness of Roosevelt, shown delivering a speech. Hagedorn proclaimed that the representation of TR speaking "to his countrymen in his own time" made him relevant to his countrymen "in the centuries to come," as well as "to free men everywhere."⁶³ For Hagedorn, the memorial's components extended its significance beyond the nation; the memorial was

⁶² TRCC Initial Report, 5; see also, Hermann Hagedorn, Appendix D: Proposed Plan for the Theodore Roosevelt Island Memorial, Minutes of the Executive Committee, January 18, 1956, Gugler Papers.

⁶³ TRCC Initial Report, 5; Hermann Hagedorn, Appendix D: Proposed Plan for the Theodore Roosevelt Island Memorial, Minutes of the Executive Committee, January 18, 1956, Gugler Papers; "The Dream ... And the Reality," *Washington Post*, August 9, 1957. The cost of the entire project—plaza, sculpture, and landscaping—was set at \$2.5 million.

not merely a shrine for the great teacher of the essentials of self-government but a Sanctuary of the Free Spirit to which, it is not extravagant to believe, men of every race and color and creed from the four corners of the earth will want to come to refresh, or to deepen, their appreciation of the moral and spiritual foundations of freedom.⁶⁴

In the vision of TR's commemorators, the island was more than a refuge in the wilderness, a sylvan temple in which to contemplate the wonders of nature. In fact, there is no overt mention of Roosevelt the naturalist in this design description. The commemorators previously stressed the natural landscape of the wooded island as a living tribute to Roosevelt's conservationist ideals, but the sculpture, plaza, and inscriptions focus on Roosevelt as a dynamic civic leader, a defender of free government, and an exemplar of active citizenship. Roosevelt's commemorators intended this memorial to serve as a sanctuary of renewal for those yearning for freedom from political bondage and for pilgrims on a quest for free governments.⁶⁵ The Sanctuary of the Free Spirit was "not just America's tribute of remembrance to her great son," but a sanctuary for all of the world's denizens, especially those "keeping alight the torch that Theodore Roosevelt carried in his time."⁶⁶ The initial report to Congress concluded with an

⁶⁴ TRCC Initial Report, 5-6.

⁶⁵ TRCC Initial Report, 6. According to the Commission's report, "At a time when, in every land men are fighting the menace of enslavement, how, the Commission asks the Congress, can we better serve the memory of Theodore Roosevelt than by creating, in his name, a place of pilgrimage and of rededication, where those of all the nations who have fought and achieved in the battle for freedom, as well as the discouraged and the battle-weary among those yet struggling to be freed, may rekindle the inner fire?" Hagedorn suggested to make the memorialization of Theodore Roosevelt a truly international affair: "At intervals along the paths of approach to the inner court, the governments of these nations might set great granite stones from their own lands, bearing engraved quotations from their own great fighters for freedom and responsible citizenship."

⁶⁶ TRCC Initial Report, 6; see also, Hermann Hagedorn, Appendix D: Proposed Plan for the Theodore Roosevelt Island Memorial, Minutes of the Executive Committee, January 18, 1956, Gugler Papers.

assertion that harkened back to the early days of the Roosevelt Memorial Association:

“We, of the Commission, have set out to kindle in the American heart of today a little of the fire that blazed in the heart of Theodore Roosevelt. If we are effective in doing this we shall do better than commemorate history; we shall be making it.”⁶⁷

It was believed that the project could be completed in time for the centenary in October 1958, although Congress had yet to appropriate the funds needed for the memorial.⁶⁸ Additionally, Congress needed to approve the Theodore Roosevelt Association’s agreement to allow the bridge to cross the island’s southern tip. Instead of formalizing the agreement, however, Congress found itself embroiled in a new controversy that revived the bridge versus tunnel debate. In February 1957, the House District Subcommittee scheduled hearings on the unfinished business of the Potomac bridge, but the Commission of Fine Arts and the National Capital Parks resuscitated the call for a tunnel. Weighing in, the Bureau of the Budget announced that it “inclines” toward the bridge plan authorized by Congress in 1954, but it would not oppose a tunnel.⁶⁹ Not helping the situation, the Senate reversed its earlier stance on the matter and voted for the construction of a four-lane tunnel under the Potomac River, a measure strongly supported by Senator Joseph O’Mahoney (D-WY), who served as the vice-

⁶⁷ TRCC Initial Report, 7.

⁶⁸ Memorandum, T.R. Memorial, March 7, 1956, Box 7 (Correspondence Files R), Folder: 1948-1957, Gugler Papers.

⁶⁹ “House Group Sets Hearing on ‘T.R.’ Span,” *Washington Post*, February 14, 1957; “Budget Bureau Won’t Fight Tunnel,” *Washington Post*, February 20, 1957; “Lane to Push Bridge Voted in 1954 Unless Congress Decrees Otherwise,” *Washington Post*, April 29, 1957; “Lane Bridge Stand Gets Approval,” *Washington Post*, May 5, 1957. These articles refer to District Engineer Commissioner Thomas A. Lane.

chairman of the Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Commission.⁷⁰ By August 1957, it seemed as though the bridge drama had returned to its starting point as District Commissioners agreed to build the six-lane bridge originally approved in 1954. The Commission of Fine Arts, however, now joined by the American Institute of Architects, continued its objections, which the District Commissioners continued to ignore.⁷¹

During the resurrection of the bridge controversy, the Theodore Roosevelt Association awarded its Distinguished Service Medal for 1957 to David E. Finley, chairman of the Commission of Fine Arts. In his remarks accepting the award, Finley recounted Roosevelt's accomplishments in the field of conservation, including the Conference of Governors held in 1908 to discuss the nationwide conservation of natural resources and expanding the country's protected parks. "Today," Finley posited, "if Colonel Roosevelt were alive, I think he would stress the importance of saving not only the great scenic areas but also our cities, which, with the recent trend toward urban growth here become the new frontier." For Finley, the natural and historic elements of the American landscape represented vital components of American society and culture: "The American people need to preserve their National Parks, their Redwood trees, their Federal City, their museums and historic houses. We need these things all the more because of the vast material civilization we have built up in this country—a civilization so overwhelming as to dwarf, in the eyes of the world, our great achievements on the

⁷⁰ "Senate Votes Tunnel Plan for Potomac," *Washington Post*, July 4, 1957.

⁷¹ "City Heads Order Start on Bridge," *Washington Post*, August 17, 1957; "Bridge by Default," *Washington Post*, August 20, 1957.

intellectual and spiritual level.”⁷² The nation, therefore, must consider the value of the natural areas threatened by urban sprawl.

As the bridge imbroglio raged on for yet another calendar year, the President of the United States waded into the fray and recommended shifting the course of the bridge over the southern tip of Theodore Roosevelt Island to avoid the “possible impairment” of Memorial Bridge and the Lincoln Memorial area.⁷³ Later that month, without debate, the House of Representatives quietly approved the bridge’s path over the island; the Senate consented to the change two days later. President Eisenhower signed the bill on June 4, 1958, thereby ending the controversy begun in 1952 with the first proposal of an additional Potomac River crossing.⁷⁴

Despite the uncertain future of the physical memorial, the Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Commission held ceremonies on the island on July 4, 1958, as part of the centennial celebrations.⁷⁵ In preparation for the event, the Commission issued “A Call to

⁷² Remarks by David E. Finley on the occasion of receiving the Theodore Roosevelt Distinguished Service Medal, October 27, 1957, Folder: Theodore Roosevelt WASO, Box 21, Administrative Files, 1949-1971, NPS Records.

⁷³ “Ike Urges Change in Bridge Site,” *Washington Post*, April 20, 1958; “Interior Chief Moves to End Bridge Dispute,” *Washington Post*, May 2, 1958.

⁷⁴ “House Approves Upstream Bridge Without a Ripple of Opposition,” *Washington Post*, May 20, 1958; “Senate United Endorses Upstream Bridge Plan,” *Washington Post*, May 22, 1958; “President Signs Bill for Bridge Across Island,” *Washington Post*, June 5, 1958.

⁷⁵ A minor controversy erupted when the National Capital Parks announced that the annual fireworks, display would be shifted from the Washington Monument grounds to Theodore Roosevelt Island. See for example, “Fireworks shifted to Roosevelt Island,” *Washington Post*, May 22, 1958; Jesse B. Manbeck, Letter to the Editor of the *Washington Post*, June 12, 1958; Ethel Qullian Bixby, Letter to the Editor of the *Washington Post*, June 23, 1958; “Leader Approves Roosevelt Island Fireworks,” *Washington Post*, June 25, 1958; George D. Watrous, Letter to the Editor of the *Washington Post*, June 27, 1958; Hermann Hagedorn, Letter to the Editor of the *Washington Post*, June 28, 1958; Irston B. Barnes, “Would Fireworks Honor Theodore Roosevelt?” *Washington Post*, June 29, 1958. Both sides in the debate claimed that Theodore Roosevelt would have supported their position. Memorandum, Re: Theodore Roosevelt

the American People,” in order embolden each citizen to “review the foundations of freedom, renew his faith in freedom, respond to the challenge of freedom, accept the responsibilities of freedom, [and] give his heart to America, his symbol of freedom.”⁷⁶ In the perilous time of the mid-twentieth century, the Commission called upon the American people to assume “the position of world leadership” and to restore the Fourth of July “*as a day of remembrance and challenge.*”⁷⁷ In the keynote address, Theodore Roosevelt McKeldin, Governor of Maryland, explained that, “The enduring work of Theodore Roosevelt ... was his success in re-awakening in the hearts and minds of millions a new respect for the old principles of the Republic, a new appreciation of the incalculable value of freedom of the spirit.” The memory of Theodore Roosevelt, therefore, was needed to fortify the spirit and resolve of the American people as the nation assumed its destined role as a world leader. The qualities Roosevelt possessed—courage, honesty, decency, and resolution—would augment the nation’s strength by building up the nation’s character in the image of Roosevelt.⁷⁸

Memorial, June 17, 1958, Box 7 (Correspondence Files R), Folder: T. Roosevelt Memorial, 1958, Gugler Papers. Oscar Straus and Hermann Hagedorn wanted to call off the celebrations because neither the President nor the Vice President could attend; the National Park Service, however, decided to carry on with the events.

⁷⁶ *July 4th, 1958: A Day of Gratitude and Rededication*, 1958 Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Symposium, Dickinson State University, <http://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record.aspx?libID=o274497>, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University, Dickinson, North Dakota (accessed June 14, 2014). See also, TRCC Final Report, 50.

⁷⁷ Emphasis in the original. *July 4th, 1958: A Day of Gratitude and Rededication*, 1958 Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Symposium, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University.

⁷⁸ Address of Theodore Roosevelt McKeldin, July 4, 1958, Dedication of Theodore Roosevelt Island, Folder: Theodore Roosevelt Commission, Part 2, Box 22, Administrative Files, 1949-1971, NPS Records. McKeldin continued: “Let us remember, too, that Theodore Roosevelt’s real gift to the people was his creation of greatness from their own minds, his fanning into flame that love of liberty that smoulders [*sic*]

Although the Fourth of July ceremony and the centennial year celebrations revitalized interest in the island and in Theodore Roosevelt, friends and supporters saw the need for a physical memorial as a “terminal objective” to continually draw visitors to the island.⁷⁹ Gilmore Clarke, former chairman of the Commission of Fine Arts, in a letter to Hermann Hagedorn, urged the director to tap into the nation’s revived interest in Theodore Roosevelt: “If this spirit is to continue to live there must be, in the Nation’s Capital, a visual reminder of T.R. His birthplace in New York and his home at Sagamore Hill are not enough.”⁸⁰

In the Commission’s final report sent to Congress in 1959, Hagedorn appealed to that body to fulfill its “moral obligation to complete the Memorial on this Island,” so that the Sanctuary of the Free Spirit would be “the enduring expression in granite and bronze of the centennial theme of Responsible Citizenship.” Continuing his petition, Hagedorn pleaded that the memory of Theodore Roosevelt could be made to serve contemporary

in the breast of every man who has once known what it means to be free.” See also, “July 4 Celebration Viewed by 215,000,” *Washington Post*, July 5, 1958.

⁷⁹ Letter from Harry Thompson to Leslie Stratton, July 23, 1958, Box 7 (Correspondence Files R), Folder: T. Roosevelt, 1958, Gugler Papers. As Thompson wrote, “I would hope so very much that ways and means can be found to proceed promptly with the memorial which has been planned to go in the center of the island. I think there must be a terminal objective on the island to which all people are drawn when they go there.”

⁸⁰ Letter from Gilmore Clarke to Hermann Hagedorn, January 19, 1959, Box 7 (Correspondence Files R), Folder: Theodore Roosevelt Association, 1958-June 1959, Gugler Papers. Clarke continued that, “His service to the Nation during his years as President demands that those who knew him and those who came along after him but who nevertheless understand and who try in some small measure to exemplify his philosophy of life, must press on toward the goal that was established at least thirty years ago, namely, to construct a distinguished memorial in his memory in Washington on the Island in the Potomac that bears his name.” Clarke served as chairman of the Commission of Fine Arts from 1937 until 1950.

American needs as a beacon of American democracy.⁸¹ Hagedorn also called upon President Eisenhower to use his influence for the project's benefit.⁸² By the close of the centennial year, it was clear that a now-or-never attitude prevailed among those most interested in the project. Furthermore, the possibility of a Democratic Party victory in the upcoming 1960 presidential election did not bode well for a Republican enterprise.⁸³ In the final report to Congress, Hagedorn professed that, "notable as the plan is as a memorial to a great American, it transcends in its spirit and scope the personality and the achievements of Theodore Roosevelt. It becomes indeed, a symbol not of human greatness but of the responsibilities of free citizenship that he preached and, in his life, exemplified, and of that free spirit which—if a people may be said to have a soul—is the soul of the American people."⁸⁴ The Commission's efforts finally bore fruit as the federal government stepped up to fund the memorial.

The Theodore Roosevelt Association successfully navigated the bridge debate and resumed control of Roosevelt's memory through the auspices of the centennial commission. It now faced additional challenges brought about by the publicity

⁸¹ TRCC Final Report, 105-106. As Hagedorn asked, "Is it too much to believe that, as such, it can be made to serve the vital needs of the free world, today and in the future, and to serve them with ever deepening, ever widening effectiveness?"

⁸² Letter from Hermann Hagedorn to Dwight Eisenhower, January 13, 1960, Folder: Theodore Roosevelt Commission WASO, Box 22, Administrative Files, 1949-1971, NPS Records. Hagedorn wrote to Eisenhower that, "Your support was instrumental in making the Centennial observance a success, and we hope that you may continue that support in the achievement of this final objective—the erection of a permanent tribute in the national Capital to a great American, and one of the greatest of our Presidents."

⁸³ Letter from Hermann Hagedorn to Gilmore Clarke, January 23, 1959, Box 7 (Correspondence Files R), Folder: Theodore Roosevelt Association, 1958-June 1959, Gugler Papers; Memorandum from Richard Kimball to Eric Gugler, Re: Theodore Roosevelt Memorial, December 12, 1958, Box 7 (Correspondence Files R), Folder: Theodore Roosevelt Association, 1958-June 1959, Gugler Papers.

⁸⁴ TRCC Final Report, 102.

surrounding the proposed monumental memorial. Although the architect and sculptor, along with the TRA, enthusiastically defended the design, it could not overcome the Roosevelt family's stout objections. The resulting monumental memorial incorporated Roosevelt's love of nature but maintained the TRA's emphasis on responsible citizenship.

On August 6, a press release announced "Bi-Partisan Sponsors of Legislation to Create Memorial to Theodore Roosevelt."⁸⁵ Vice President Richard Nixon, in his capacity as chairman of the Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Commission, wrote letters to every member of Congress "asking for action on legislation authorizing such appropriations as are necessary to enable the Interior Department to build the 60-foot-high 'celestial' sphere to honor the 26th president."⁸⁶ In a public statement, President Dwight Eisenhower expressed his "emphatic endorsement" of the project.⁸⁷ It was now up to Congress to approve the needed funds.

As a result of the proposed legislation, newspapers across the country published the Gugler/Manship memorial design and immediately stirred up a debate between supporters and opponents. Unlike the conflict of the 1920s, this debate did not center on

⁸⁵ Press Release: Bi-Partisan Sponsors of Legislation to Create Memorial to Theodore Roosevelt, August 6, 1959, copy included in Box 7 (Correspondence Files R), Folder: TR, July 1959-December 1960, Gugler Papers.

⁸⁶ Quote from "Bill Seeks to Form Monument Board," *Washington Evening Star*, January 7, 1960.

⁸⁷ News Release from Senator Kenneth B. Keating (NY-R), Re: President Eisenhower Backs Theodore Roosevelt Memorial in Washington, February 23, 1960, copy included in Box 7 (Correspondence Files R), Folder: TR, July 1959-December 1960, Gugler Papers; "Ike Endorses Memorial on River Isle," *Washington Post*, February 24, 1960; "TR Memorial Bill Sent to Floor by House Group," *Washington Post*, June 25, 1960. The memorial's cost was estimated at \$886,000, much lower than the earlier figure of \$2.5 million.

whether or not TR should be commemorated in the District of Columbia—nearly all consented to a memorial to the long-dead and now favorably-remembered president. Nor was the controversy tied to location; Americans universally supported the sylvan setting of the Potomac island as the appropriate site for a memorial to the great conservationist.

Some questioned, however, the necessity of a physical monument on the island; a superfluous feature, they argued, on a landscape that already honored Roosevelt through its wild natural beauty. In a letter to the editor of the *Washington Post*, Sydney Brodie commented on a recent trip to the secluded island: “We then felt, and still strongly feel, that there could be no better, more significant memorial to a great conservationist, a sincere nature-lover.” There was no need, Brodie asserted, to mar the island with a sprawling memorial. “Perhaps an elaborate monument of granite, marble, and bright metals would be appropriate elsewhere, even on mainland Washington, D.C., but not on Roosevelt Island. The language of nature needs no man-made temple to bring home her message or the message of those who hold her in the highest esteem.”⁸⁸ Many opposed the memorial plan because it had evolved to include a parking lot and electricity on the island. Most cited the simple beauty of the island and the abundant wildlife as tribute enough.⁸⁹ A *Washington Post* editorial went a step further, declaring that the memorial was an insult to Roosevelt’s memory: “Teddy Roosevelt was a man of outdoor vigor in whom the thought of such a pantywaist contraption would have aroused infuriated outbursts.” Stressing the natural beauty of the island, the *Post* continued that “Surely the

⁸⁸ Sydney Brodie, Letter to the Editor of the *Washington Post*, June 25, 1959.

⁸⁹ “Memorial May ‘Update’ Wild Beauty of Roosevelt Island with Lights, Cars,” *Washington Post*, July 8, 1960.

most appropriate monument is Theodore Roosevelt Island as it is ... a glorious little retreat of trees, birds, wilderness and history in the Nation's Capital." Additionally, the plans for vehicular access to the island and a parking lot, the newspaper admonished, "would complete the defilement of the sylvan charm and grace in a serenade of honks and a cloud of exhaust fumes."⁹⁰ Vic Stephan, in his letter to the editor, concurred that "It is only a matter of time before our precious woodlands vanish into suburbias, or are 'modernized' all to hell by those softboiled souls who can't conceive of life without the gaudy trappings of civilization."⁹¹ Irston Barnes, further criticizing the proposed vehicular access, asserted that "the great exponent of the 'strenuous life' would have little sympathy for those who would not walk to his memorial."⁹² Other nature-loving groups, including Roosevelt's own Boone and Crockett Club, along with the Wildlife Management Institute and the Citizens Committee on Natural Resources, joined the opposition on conservationist grounds.⁹³

The larger dispute over the memorial's design, however, re-opened a feud with which the memorial's designers—particularly sculptor Paulanship—were intimately familiar, that between the modern and the traditional in American art. The question of whether or not he was "modern" had followed Manship since his debut in New York in 1913. Although many labeled Manship as modern, his conservative academic philosophy

⁹⁰ "TR in a Cage," *Washington Post*, July 8, 1960; "People, Cars Seen Sully Nature Haven," *Washington Post*, July 10, 1960. The *Post* also suggested that the "improvements" to the island "would drive away birds and animals and change the island wilderness to an ordinary city park."

⁹¹ Vic Stephan, Letter to the Editor of the *Washington Post*, July 21, 1960.

⁹² Irston R. Barnes, "Bill Threatens Memory of T.R.," *Washington Post*, July 24, 1960.

⁹³ "TR Memorial Criticized by More Groups," *Washington Post*, August 14, 1960.

on art quickly surpassed any modern tendencies in his modeling. In fact, Manship's popularity decreased dramatically in the 1940s as the cutting edge of the avant-garde criticized his classical subjects and objectivity. Manship's involvement in conservative artistic societies further confirmed for them that he maintained, rather than challenged, the status quo.⁹⁴

Even though many in America's artistic community had long ago determined the conservative nature of his artistic sensibilities, the broader American public now deliberated if the archaism of Paul Manship was an appropriate symbol through which to commemorate an American president. Deemed "ultra modern" by one House committeeman, the memorial's armillary sphere became the butt of jokes as congressmen stretched to outdo one another in mocking the design. Despite its new nicknames—including a "glorified gyroscope" and "donuts in limbo"—the House approved the appropriation. Chairman of the House Rules Committee, Howard W. Smith (D-VA), one of those ridiculing the memorial's design, reportedly chose not to vote against the bill in order to avoid being labeled "conservative."⁹⁵ Shortly after the House of Representatives

⁹⁴ Craven, *Sculpture in America*, 568; Rather, *Archaism, Modernism, and the Art of Paul Manship*, 2, 7, 106, 163-164. As Rather states, "It is one of the ironies of Manship's career that he gained a certain popularity as a modern-looking sculptor while holding to a profoundly conservative understanding of his own practice. Manship served in a variety of professional capacities, including elected positions in the National Sculpture Society, National Academy of Design, and the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Additionally, Manship served on the Commission of Fine Arts from 1937 to 1941. Rather suggests that archaism transformed from a modernist to an academic mode; as Manship's career progressed, it made its way through this transformation (7). In explaining Manship's style, Rather states that "His modernism lay in the greater importance of form than subject to the effect of his own works and the provocative combination of stylization and naturalism; his conceptualized treatment of form, in particular, signified originality (106)."

⁹⁵ "TR Memorial Bill Sent to Floor by House Group," *Washington Post*, June 25, 1960; "Is This Memorial Really Necessary?" *Washington Post*, August 11, 1960; "Unartistic Congress Approves Memorial: Teddy Roosevelt Monument Called Too Modern By Lawmakers," *Bergen (New Jersey) Evening Record*, July 2, 1960. The *Bergen Evening Record* reported that "Over the years modern art has tended to baffle the good

sent the bill to the Senate, the nation's newspapers and would-be art critics on Capitol Hill and Main Street weighed in on the design.

Responding to the House committee's arguments that the proposed Theodore Roosevelt memorial was "ultra modern," *Washington Post* resident art critic Leslie Judd Ahlander chastised the committee: "Chairman Smith should not assume that everything strange to him is 'ultra modern.'" As Ahlander described, "The memorial is an armillary sphere such as was used by astronomers for several centuries before Christ," and represents "the great circles of the heavens including the equator, meridian, ecliptic and tropics. Chairman Smith (and the Senators about to vote on the bill) are urged to consult their Encyclopaedia Britannicas or any standard dictionary." Although Ahlander asserted that, "since the conception is astronomical and not artistic, this proposed monument could by no stretch of the imagination be called an original work of art." In fact, as Ahlander observed, Paul Manship had had an armillary sphere on display in the District at Meridian Hill Park since 1936. The most significant problem, Ahlander stated, was one of scale: the proposed 40-to-50 foot sphere, "surrounded by a Stonehenge of 10-foot granite slabs," would dominate the small island. The scale was increased according to the Theodore Roosevelt Association, only after the proposed location of the new Potomac bridge effectively blocked the view between the island and the District, particularly the

lawmakers, in whatever form it rears its head. A proposed modernistic building at the Air Force Academy in Colorado drew anguished outcries and eventually was redesigned in a more conventional form. An international art exhibit prepared for a Moscow showing included some far-out stuff that made some Congressmen see red." During the Cold War, Congress was very sensitive about items reflecting and representing America. Although the zealous witch hunts of the McCarthy Era were over, the conformity of the 1950s lingered into the 1960s. In many ways, this conformity included hostility toward modern art. The public controversy over Manship's design is particularly interesting because most members of the *avant-garde* art scene of the 1960s considered Manship a member of the conservative art establishment and cited his leadership in the nation's established art societies as evidence, as noted above.

Lincoln Memorial. The enlarged scale was necessary to ensure the memorial's visibility, which was a shame, Ahlander lamented, because "it is hard to believe that Theodore Roosevelt Island will long remain the beautiful bird refuge it is now, when it has a tourist attraction of this size and proportion installed upon it." The worst crime, according to Ahlander, however, was the design's lack of originality.⁹⁶

Continuing the conversation over the memorial's abstract form, Representative Don L. Short (R-ND)—whose constituents had long ago adopted Theodore Roosevelt as one of their own—asked desperately, "What am I going to tell my people back in North Dakota when they ask me what it is?" In an effort to provide an acceptable alternative to the "modernistic" sphere, Short suggested they "put up a statue of Teddy Roosevelt on horseback carrying a big stick over his shoulder." The *Bergen (New Jersey) Evening Record* concluded its coverage of the controversy with Representative Craig Hosmer's (R-CA) colorful observation that, "You'll never find a design that everyone likes. This is the kind of thing that starts fistfights at a Quaker picnic."⁹⁷ Although the House of Representatives passed a bill appropriating \$886,000 for the memorial's construction, the Senate and the President still had to approve the matter. In mid-July 1960, some believed the aesthetic concerns delayed the bill's placement on the Senate calendar.

⁹⁶ Leslie Judd Ahlander, "Project is Called an Outsized Duplicate: Not 'Ultra Modern' Memorial Enlarged," *Washington Post*, July 12, 1960.

⁹⁷ "Unartistic Congress Approves Memorial: Teddy Roosevelt Monument Called Too Modern By Lawmakers," *Bergen (New Jersey) Evening Record*, July 2, 1960. Short's comments calls forth the masculine archetype conveyed through the man on horseback—heroic, rugged, and assertive—and presents the manly example of the western cowboy and the Rough Riders of the Spanish-American War. The relationship between the Cold War struggles and the masculine symbolism of TR and his big stick diplomacy speaks volumes about Americans' concerns of the mid-twentieth century.

In their effort to gain support amid the criticism, the monument's supporters carefully defended the design. In a meeting memorandum, Gugler's office organized talking points to present to Senator Richard Russell (D-GA) on August 4, 1960. First, Gugler's team claimed, "The Armillary sphere is one of the very oldest and most classical ideas representing the universe. Origins go back to Greece and Rome and it is as modern as the Air Force."⁹⁸ In other words, the armillary sphere is ancient, archaic, and classical; because of these historical connections, it is not outside the boundaries of convention or tradition. It is also abstract—which means that it is timeless and therefore modern; it is not out of touch with modern American society. Second, the team defended the size of the memorial, particularly the armillary sphere itself by noting that pyramids are symbolically powerful because of their colossal size, arguments repeated for the classical form of the Statue of Liberty as well as the gigantic obelisk of the Washington Monument.⁹⁹

It was not just the Senate that Gugler and his team needed to convince, however; the public controversy dragged the Roosevelt family into the debate. There is some evidence to suggest that the TRA had at least the tacit approval of the Roosevelt family early in the process; Alice Roosevelt Longworth, for example, "vaguely" recalled being consulted. But the public discussion elicited the vocal expression of the family's

⁹⁸ Memorandum, Re: Theodore Roosevelt Memorial, telephone conversation with Leslie Stratton, August 4, 1960, Box 7 (Correspondence Files R), Folder: TR, July 1959-December 1960, Gugler Papers; Meeting Memorandum—Javits-Paul and E.G. with Russell, August 4, 1960, Box 7 (Correspondence Files R), Folder: TR, July 1959-December 1960, Gugler Papers.

⁹⁹ Memorandum, September 12, 1960, Box 7 (Correspondence Files R), Folder: TR, July 1959-December 1960, Gugler Papers. One of the key elements here is the colossal scale; Gugler defends this by mentioning the Washington Monument and the Statue of Liberty.

displeasure—an element that many of the monument’s opponents in the media and Congress held up as the trump card.¹⁰⁰ Alice Longworth, never one to mince words, expressed her disapproval of the design and proclaimed that the “globular jungle gym” would “desecrate the memory of anyone,” including, she added saucily, that of her father’s former nemesis, Woodrow Wilson. The money would be better spent, Longworth advised, on preserving the island in its natural state or as an endowment providing scholarships to naturalists. “That lovely, wild island should be left just as it is,” Longworth insisted; “It’s a splendid memorial for my father.”¹⁰¹ The day after the *Washington Post* reported Alice Longworth’s evaluation of the proposed memorial, the Senate refused to act on the bill authorizing its construction. Senator Richard B. Russell stated that the memorial “was in no way typical of the rugged individualism of Theodore Roosevelt.” Senator Francis Case informed the Senate that he found repugnant any memorial that displeased Roosevelt’s descendants; he later said he would draft an amendment to the bill requiring the approval of the Roosevelt family on any memorial for the island.¹⁰²

When confronted with the hostility of the public’s response to the memorial’s design, the Theodore Roosevelt Association reminded the *Washington Post* that the

¹⁰⁰ Letter from Harry Thompson to Gugler, September 19, 1960, Box 7 (Correspondence Files R), Folder: TR, July 1959-December 1960, Gugler Papers. In this letter, Thompson expressed his frustration: “It would appear as though the Theodore Roosevelt Association has not done its homework too well with the Roosevelt family, but I still think there is time to get them back into line and to accept the concept of the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial which you have developed.”

¹⁰¹ “TR Memorial Plans Would Desecrate Anyone’s Memory, Daughter Says,” *Washington Post*, August 19, 1960.

¹⁰² “Senate Rejects ‘Celestial Sphere’ as Design for ‘T.R.’ Memorial,” *Washington Post*, August 20, 1960.

design had been public for four years—since the Centennial Commission’s initial report to Congress in March 1956. In discussing alternative possibilities, director Leslie C. Stratton stated that the TRA would “continue to be cooperative,” although he agreed with former director Hermann Hagedorn that there must be some kind of memorial to Theodore Roosevelt on the island. As Hagedorn declared, there “must be some focus on the island or it will not be a memorial at all.”¹⁰³ When the Senate finally voted on the memorial’s appropriation bill, it included an amendment allowing the Roosevelt children to have veto power over the design.¹⁰⁴

Despite the Roosevelt family’s negative opinion, Eric Gugler and his team made every effort to convince them of the monument’s appropriateness. Director of the National Park Service, Conrad Wirth, and TRA president Oscar Straus arranged for the Roosevelt children to visit the island and view the proposed location of the monument. They would also view models on display at Wirth’s office. On the appointed day, Wirth and Straus discovered to their surprise that the Roosevelt family—Alice, Ethel, and Archibald—had taken it upon themselves to invite several others on their field trip,

¹⁰³ “Roosevelt Memorial Leaders Say New Design May Replace Sphere,” *Washington Post*, August 21, 1960.

¹⁰⁴ “Senate Oks Memorial to Roosevelt,” *Washington Evening Star*, August 31, 1960. The bill stated that the living Roosevelt children—Alice Roosevelt Longworth, Archibald Roosevelt, and Ethel Roosevelt Derby—along with the National Capital Park and Planning Commission, the Commission of Fine Arts, and the National Park Service must approve the memorial’s design. The House of Representatives approved the Senate version of the bill the following day. There seems to have been some confusion on the part of the Roosevelt children, however; the bill did not give them the authority to create or develop a design or to dictate the placement or setting of the memorial on the island.

including a handful of reporters. Another of the unexpected guests, Mr. C. R. Gutermuth, the vice president of the Wildlife Management Institute, brought along his wife.¹⁰⁵

According to the *Washington Post*, Alice Roosevelt Longworth expressed strong opinions about where the memorial should be placed and how visitors should reach the island. “We don’t want any parking on his island, no parking of any sort. We want to keep its natural character. Let people walk in,” she told reporters. Although she was unwilling to describe the type of memorial she would like to see there, Longworth expressed her opposition to the proposed design: “We know very definitely we don’t care for that big thing—you know, that jungle gym—that was proposed.” In keeping with the island’s natural simplicity, the Roosevelt children agreed that the memorial should be modest; as Longworth protested, “None of this ‘sanctuary of the free spirit’ jargon, that kind of stuff. We don’t think in those modern terms.”¹⁰⁶ The Roosevelt

¹⁰⁵ Letter from Harry Thompson to Eric Gugler, November 22, 1960, Box 7 (Correspondence Files R), Folder: TR, July 1959-December 1960, Gugler Papers. Thompson expressed his displeasure with the Roosevelt’s solicitation of media attention: “I was so upset by the appearance of newspaper reporters and the exhibitionist tactics of Archie and Alice that I lay awake half the night fretting about the inequities that have surrounded the problem of getting a memorial to Theodore Roosevelt on the island. I can say to you that Mr. Gutermuth appears to serve as a kind of ‘Rasputin’ to advise Archie, Alice, and Ethel in their thinking on this problem. Just why the Roosevelt children would toss aside the Roosevelt Association with the millions of dollars and the years which the Association has devoted to keeping the memory of Theodore Roosevelt alive and willing to accept the views of a wildlife conservationist is beyond me.” Letter from Harry Thompson to Oscar Straus, November 22, 1960, Box 7 (Correspondence Files R), Folder: TR, July 1959-December 1960, Gugler Papers. In a letter to Straus on the same day, Thompson posits that it was Gutermuth who “had alerted the press to the pending tour of the island, which I personally thought was most unfortunate. Following the inspection of the island, the party met in the Director’s conference room, where models prepared by Mr. Eric Gugler were on display. I cannot truthfully report that anything that I consider constructive resulted from the inspection of the island or the meeting in Director Wirth’s office.” “TR Design to Suit Kin in Amendment,” *Washington Post*, August 26, 1960. Apparently Gutermuth presented himself as a spokesperson and/or advisor for the Roosevelt children. See also, “Newest Design for ‘T.R.’ Memorial ‘Couldn’t be Finer,’ Says Daughter,” *Washington Post*, June 23, 1961.

¹⁰⁶ “Roosevelt Clan Inspects TR’s Island to Determine a Suitable Memorial,” *Washington Post*, November 22, 1960; “Let People Walk In,” *Washington Post*, November 23, 1960. Memorandum, Re: Telephone conversation with Harry Thompson, December 1, 1960, Box 7 (Correspondence Files R), Folder: TR, July

children's disapproval effectively sent Gugler and Manship back to the drawing board in an effort to put forth an acceptable design.

The memorial's final version retained much of the spirit and tone of the original, although specific elements changed to satisfy the critics. The new design consisted of a large central portrait statue of Roosevelt standing in front of a massive granite slab facing south toward Washington. The statue depicts Roosevelt, dressed in a suit with a top coat, in a "characteristic pose" in which he, in the midst of giving a speech, raises his right hand high with his typical drama and flair; his brow furled as he makes his case. It appears as if, at the precise moment needed for emphasis, Roosevelt's right hand will ball into a fist and collide with the palm of the left as he testifies to the crowd (see figure 16). At seventeen feet tall, the statue dominates the viewer immediately in front of it, but remains in proportion with the plaza's large open space (figure 17). Manship's smooth modeling starkly contrasts with the *Beaux-Arts*-inspired statues that dot the urban landscape of Washington, D.C. On either side, to the rear of the design, four granite shafts, about twenty feet high, display some of TR's most profound quotations on the

1959-December 1960, Gugler Papers. As the architect, sculptor, and memorial planners reeled from the rapidly changing circumstances of their commemorative efforts, one of the key discussions revolved around who had the authority to develop a memorial proposal and who merely had the power to approve or disapprove of a proposed design. Following a telephone conversation with Harry Thompson, Eric Gugler outlined the struggle in an intra-office memorandum: "His [Thompson's] main thought however which he wanted to make clear to me and about which he is writing to Straus with a copy to Horace [Albright] has to do with this; that the T.R. Association is authorized by Congress to build this memorial and that the Roosevelt children legally are no more in authority as to what to be done than the others. Harry thinks that they should be permitted no more power in any decision than the others, and that the representatives of these various groups each should meet with them and that the Roosevelts should agree that if voted down, they would go along." Gugler is referring to the legislative requirement that the National Park Service, the National Capital Park and Planning Commission, and the Commission of Fine Arts all approve the design.

subjects of Youth, Nature, Manhood, and The State (figures 18-21).¹⁰⁷ To either side of the statue, toward the center of the plaza, two large fountains on balled feet bearing the Great Seal of the United States, make up the main part of the memorial's water feature; a moat surrounds and defines the entire monumental space. Finally, plantings in and around the memorial's components complete the composition. One of the elements Gugler retained from the original design was the transition between the natural forest of the island and the architectural features of the memorial. Visitors come upon the memorial space by a winding wooded path that reveals the statue and other elements only after they round the final bend (figure 22). The memorial plaza occupies a small clearing on the island in which the trees planted and retained along the plaza's perimeter create the illusion of a natural oculus that opens the plaza to the sky and highlights the memorial's features.¹⁰⁸ In a letter to Conrad Wirth, David Finley described the

¹⁰⁷ The quotations on the Manhood slab include: "A man's usefulness depends upon his living up to his ideals in so far as he can"; "It is hard to fail but it is worse never to have tried to succeed"; "All daring & courage all iron endurance of misfortune make for a finer & nobler type of manhood"; "Only those are fit to live who do not fear to die and none are fit to die who have shrunk from the joy of life and the duty of life." On the Nature slab: "There is delight 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"; "The nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources as assets which it much turn over to the next generation increased and not impaired in value"; "Conservation means development as much as it does protection." For Youth, the quotations include: "I want to see you game boys. I want to see you brave and manly and I also want to see you gentle and tender"; "Be practical as well as generous in your ideals keep your eyes on the stars but remember to keep your feet on the ground"; "Courage hard work self-mastery and intelligent effort are all essential to successful life"; "Alike for the nation and the individual the one indispensable requisite is character." For The State: "ours is a government of liberty by through and under the law"; "A great democracy has got to be progressive or it will soon cease to be great or a democracy"; "Order without liberty and liberty without order are equally destructive"; "In popular government results worth having can be achieved only by men who combine worthy ideals with practical good sense"; "If I must choose between righteousness and peace I choose righteousness."

¹⁰⁸ There was some discussion about including a bust rather than a full portrait statue, but the idea was abandoned somewhat early in the design process. For discussions concerning the redesign see Gugler's intra-office memorandums for January 18, 1961; February 8, 1961; March 9, 1961; and May 16, 1961, Box 7 (Correspondence Files R), Folder: TR, July 1959-December 1960, Gugler Papers. In describing the growth of trees around the memorial, Gugler wrote that "When the trees surrounding the memorial have

Commission of Fine Arts' approval of the memorial: "In the opinion of all, the plans gave promise that the memorial to President Theodore Roosevelt would enhance its wooded setting on Theodore Roosevelt Island. They considered that the memorial would possess dignity and quiet repose that would make it a worthy addition to the great memorials of the city of Washington."¹⁰⁹ Alice Roosevelt Longworth and her siblings concurred that the new memorial design "couldn't be finer."¹¹⁰

After a series of delays slowed construction, the memorial was finally ready for its dedication exercises on Friday, October 27, 1967. Years of struggle were finally over as the nation now had its memorial to Theodore Roosevelt. Before a crowd of approximately 1,500 people, President Lyndon Johnson recalled the exploits of his predecessor and praised his courage in making tough choices. "He fought the trusts, the selfish interests, and those who plundered this land. The nation changed," Johnson asserted, "because of what he said and because he put his words into action." The weight

grown to their full height and the fullness of their branches (perhaps twenty to fifty years from now), it is assumed, of course, that they will reach out to meet each other, forming a natural dome with an opening to the heavens. The effect, it is reasonable to hope, should resemble the lighting, from its oculus, in the Pantheon in Rome."

¹⁰⁹ David Finley to Conrad Wirth, October 26, 1961, Box 7 (Correspondence Files R), Folder: TR, July 1959-December 1960, Gugler Papers.

¹¹⁰ "Newest Design for 'T.R.' Memorial 'Couldn't be Finer,' Says Daughter," *Washington Post*, June 23, 1961; "Family Agrees on 'T.R.' Memorial Design," *Washington Post*, October 19, 1961; "New Plan for TR Memorial is Unveiled Here," *Washington Post*, March 7, 1962; "Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Takes Shape," *Washington Post*, September 17, 1964; "Progress on Roosevelt Memorial Construction," *Washington Post*, May 23, 1965; "Memorial to T.R. Rises on Island," *Washington Post*, October 10, 1965; "Roosevelt Island Memorial Delayed," *Washington Post*, August 18, 1966; "Red Tape Bogs Dedication of Roosevelt Memorial: Stalled Since 1965 Finishing Touches Left," *Washington Post*, June 4, 1967; "No One 'Speaks Softly' for TR Statue," *Washington Post*, September 14, 1967. Landscaping and fountain plumbing problems caused most of the delays. Interestingly, the crated statue of TR arrived from Italy in May 1966 and was installed on the island where it remained crated until its October 1967 dedication. The crated statue became the frequent topic of newspaper commentary as noted above.

of the present, however, specifically the ongoing war in Vietnam and the mounting opposition to it, colored Johnson's assessment of his commemorative subject and provided a glimpse into the chief executive's burdens. "I do not know what his response would be to the specific problems of our decade," Johnson declared, "But we do know that it would not be the easy answer—if he believed the hard answer was the right one." Quoting Roosevelt, Johnson called forth his spirit to chastise his critics, those Johnson believed had shied away from the responsibilities of citizenship: "Woe to the country where a generation arises which shrinks from doing the rough work of the world."¹¹¹

Two years after the formal dedication of the memorial on Theodore Roosevelt Island, journalist James Kilpatrick described his first visit to the secluded oasis in the Potomac River. In his poetic description of the island's natural beauty, Kilpatrick pointed to TR's character and values as solutions to perceived deficits in modern American society and politics. "Roosevelt was soldier, politician, statesman, conservationist, founder of the Forest Service," Kilpatrick wrote, "He was President of the United States at 42. He was a fighter, reformer, hunter, innovator, winner of the Nobel peace prize. No public figure in our history ever surpassed his vitality, his zest for living, the pure and unaffected joy he found in life.... Teddy Roosevelt has been dead for fifty years. God knows we need his like today."¹¹²

¹¹¹ "Rough Rider 'Rides' Again: 'Excellent' Likeness Perfect Setting," *Washington Post*, October 28, 1967; "LBJ and Kin of Teddy Unveil Roosevelt Statue," *Washington Evening Star*, October 27, 1967; "Memorial to Theodore Roosevelt Unveiled," *New York Times*, October 28, 1967. Unfortunately, sculptor Paul Manship did not live to see the statue placed on the island; he died two days before it left the foundry in Italy.

¹¹² James Kilpatrick, "T.R. Memorial a Message for Today's Youth," *Washington Evening Star*, September 4, 1969.

The Theodore Roosevelt Association's lengthy struggle to commemorate Theodore Roosevelt in the nation's capital illustrates the challenges faced by those wishing to conjure and employ the memory of national historic figures. Because of the failure to secure the Tidal Basin site in the 1920s, the Association had to look outside the monumental core of the nation. As stated in Chapter II, the new location necessitated a change in interpretation of Theodore Roosevelt. John Russell Pope's Tidal Basin design focused on the nationalist image of TR—the great American president on par with Washington and Lincoln. Analostan Island, in view of, yet outside the monumental core, dictated that Roosevelt could still be celebrated as a great president, but the wild little island also drew attention to TR's love of nature and his efforts as the first modern conservationist president.

When the needs of the capital city required another route to connect the suburbanites of Northern Virginia with their federal jobs in the city, the island was once again thrust into the limelight. The TRA, now firmly committed to protecting the island's natural landscape and integrity as a wildlife refuge, refused to budge on its position. Realizing, however, that an ill-placed bridge (even if it did not touch the island) might destroy the view—and through it the symbolic connection between the island the capital—the TRA acquiesced to the bridge. The bridge's final placement on the southern tip required the TRA to reconsider (again) its monumental scheme to include something bolder that would provide the focal point needed to bring visitors to the shores of the long-neglected island.

Utilizing the authority and the perceived consensus brought about by the formation of the Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Commission, the TRA seized the opportunity to assert its agenda. Declaring the centennial theme to be “responsible citizenship,” the TRA resurrected the Roosevelt Day celebrations of an earlier era. Even on the island where conservation occasionally dominated, it remained couched in the terms of the responsibilities of citizens and governments to protect the nation’s natural resources. The memorial design, however, came under attack as Americans openly and actively debated how to commemorate TR. Whereas the “sanctuary of the free spirit” armillary sphere grew directly out of the centennial theme of responsible citizenship, most Americans seemed to favor celebrating the conservationist representation of TR so strongly associated with the wooded island bearing his name. The sphere’s abstract nature ensured misunderstanding and misinterpretation on the part of Congress and the American public. Princess Alice’s vehement disapproval brought the whole idea crashing to the ground as the Senate refused to push through a design so strongly criticized by its members and the Roosevelt family. The final memorial—with its portrait statue, fountains, and carved inscriptions—retained much from the defeated design: the symbolic elements maintained the presence of the nationalist representation of Roosevelt on the island. The inscriptions, related to youth, manhood, nature, and the state, support this, as does TR’s “characteristic” pose in which one can image him making an impassioned plea for the rights of his countrymen. The statue itself faces south toward the monumental heart of the city and the oculus calls to mind the Pantheon, thereby creating a natural temple in which Roosevelt’s memory is celebrated. Two elements—

the naturalist and the nationalist—not necessarily out of harmony, demonstrate the difficulty in commemorating historical figures even a half-century since their passing and how geo-spatial elements influence monumental representations, along with the memory of historical figures.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

As naturalist John Burroughs described, Theodore Roosevelt was a multifaceted character who appealed to diverse populations of Americans. Roosevelt's commemorators chose how to remember him based upon their needs (proposed message), intended audience, and geographic location. Throughout these memorializations, commemorators—either overtly or subtly—maintained the connection between TR, Americanism, and masculine vitality.

In the years immediately following his death, the Roosevelt Memorial Association, having organized quickly and nationally and incorporated high-profile members, established itself as the gatekeeper of TR's memory. As a central force within the RMA, Hermann Hagedorn's drive to memorialize TR came from his desire to promote Americanism to the American public. The geographic location in the center of America's pseudo-sacred space in the nation's capital, along with the situational location in conversation with the national memorials to George Washington and Abraham Lincoln required a national representation of Roosevelt. Through its monumental memorial, the RMA sought to promote and cement its message of Roosevelt as the embodiment of Americanism as a national consensus. Failing to commemorate TR on the Tidal Basin site, the RMA searched for an option that would allow for a continuation of the memorial scheme. Although presented with attractive alternatives to the Tidal Basin, the RMA rejected them as being too distant from the symbolic heart of the nation. Settling on Analoatan Island, the Association maintained the conversation between TR

and the National Mall. The geographic context of the island's wild natural space, however, initially necessitated a shift from TR the nationalist to TR the naturalist. After a protracted period of inactivity, the island once again became a focal point of a celebration of TR the nationalist.

In Portland and Minot, Henry Waldo Coe and A. Phimister Proctor memorialized the American West through the western image of TR. The celebration of this incarnation of Roosevelt illustrates concerns over the changes in post-World War I American society, culture, and politics through a nostalgic vision of the West. The complications in processing the memories and commemorations of the recent Great War led Coe to cling to an image of a simpler conflict, the 1898 war with Spain, an event that solidified TR's image as a leader of men, the epitome of masculinity, and a product of the American West. These commemorations also demonstrate the utility of the cowboy image as an example of rugged masculinity along with the inherent "Americanness" of this representation. These memorials connect the image of the Rough Rider—especially through the unit's western component—to the West as a region, which presents the national connotations of these memorials. Symbolizing TR's regeneration in the West through his ranching and hunting exploits, this image serves as a lesson for regenerating American masculinity and American society; the image also depicts imperialistic expansion (through the image of TR as a soldier), which made up a significant segment of his strenuous life.

Gutzon Borglum applauded Roosevelt's stance on living a strenuous life, on his promotion of the hardy masculinity that comes from a life lived in the open air and

sprawling expanses of the American West. Borglum admired Theodore Roosevelt—his energy, his forthrightness, his moral crusade to reform American society and politics. On Mount Rushmore, Borglum utilized the presidential figures, including Roosevelt, to celebrate the United States as the leading democratic nation. Borglum did not want this to be a local or regional monument, however, and the colossal size and national figures ensured a national focus. The memorial’s message that these great Americans steered the country along its democratic path modeled the values to which Americans should aspire. In this regard, Mount Rushmore served as a “shrine of democracy” honoring the nation’s great presidents as symbolic representations of American democratic values. Mount Rushmore represents a view of Americanism that focuses on the people’s democracy, but also on elements of the imperialistic conquest of the West and the subjugation of the region’s indigenous inhabitants. The colossal nature of the carving—which Borglum promoted as especially appropriate to memorializing American democracy—broadcasts the prominent status of the United States despite the challenges of economic depression and increasing international instability. Mount Rushmore’s geographic location makes it less contentious than the RMA’s proposed memorial on the Tidal Basin site, although it was not without opposition. By combining Roosevelt with Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln on Mount Rushmore, the commemorators present Roosevelt’s apotheosis as a *fait accompli*; the sculpting of the mountain into a memorial announces a national consensus of interpretation on the subject.

Intended as a local monument, New York State’s Roosevelt memorial addition to the American Museum of Natural History assumes national connotations through the

representation of TR as hunter-explorer and the accompaniment of the two guides. The neo-classical architecture calls forth the imperialistic symbolism associated with Rome; the massive entrance arch and James Earle Fraser's bronze equestrian group support the imagery. Located on the building's Central Park façade, the memorial's prominent presence in a tourist city makes the audience national (and even international). The memorial addition connects the museum's mission to Roosevelt's image, including the belief in Anglo-American superiority over "primitive societies." The Native American to Roosevelt's right symbolizes the American West and TR's connection with that region through his ranching and hunting exploits. The proud and noble bearing of the Plains Indian plays upon Americans' stereotyped representation of Native Americans visible in Wild West shows and world's fairs. By depicting the Native American man on foot rather than on horseback, however, Fraser emasculates him and asserts the patriarchal, imperialistic authority of white men through westward expansion. The African to Roosevelt's left continues this theme into the new frontier on which Euro-American males sought to regenerate their masculinity after the "closing" of the American West. The well-muscled Roosevelt, perched high on his horse above his subordinates exerts the impression of the superiority of white masculinity over the lands and people encountered through westward expansion and overseas imperialism.

Chosen as an alternative to the Tidal Basin site, Theodore Roosevelt Island represents much more than an epilogue to the RMA's quest to construct a national Theodore Roosevelt memorial. In choosing a location within sight of the National Mall, the RMA intended to maintain TR's connection with the symbolic heart of the nation,

along with a relationship to the nationalistic symbolism inherent in that space. Eric Gugler and Paul Manship designed a monument to suitably display Roosevelt's enthusiasm for conservation and his advocacy for free governments and free citizens throughout the world. Despite the overt references to Roosevelt's conservationism, the resulting representation of TR included elements of the commemorators' original intention—celebrating TR's Americanism. The Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Commission, strongly influenced by Hermann Hagedorn and the Theodore Roosevelt Association, profoundly affected the memorial's message and design. The national audience, however, once again led to disputes over TR's image and memory, although the final design retained the commemorators' nationalist intentions.

By pulling TR into subsequent decades, these commemorators demonstrated his ongoing relevance for contemporaries and future generations of Americans. These patrons and artists illustrated TR's continued utility as a didactic example of vigorous, rugged masculinity and engaged, vigilant citizenry. Examining monumental statuary dedicated to Theodore Roosevelt reveals how commemorators employed his image to speak to a national audience, although the configuration of his memorial image depended upon the memorial's geographic and situational locations as well as the commemorators' message. Roosevelt's many-sided nature, therefore, lent itself a variety of causes across the nation and throughout much of the twentieth century.

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APPENDIX



Figure 1. A. Phimister Proctor, *Rough Rider* (replica, 1924). Roosevelt Park, Minot, North Dakota. Photograph by author.



Figure 2. Henry Kirke Brown, *George Washington* (1856). Union Square, New York City, New York. Photograph by author.



Figure 3. Clark Mills, *Andrew Jackson* (replica, 1856). Jackson Square, New Orleans, Louisiana. The original statue was dedicated in Washington, D.C. in 1853. Photograph by author.



Figure 4. Henry Merwin Shrady, *General Grant* (1922). Ulysses S. Grant Memorial, Washington, D.C. Photograph by author.



Figure 5. Portland *Rough Rider* (1922) and plinth. South Park Blocks, Portland, Oregon. Photograph by author.



Figure 6. Minot *Rough Rider* and base. Roosevelt Park, Minot, North Dakota. Photograph by author.



Figure 7. John Russell Pope, New York State Theodore Roosevelt Memorial (1936). Memorial Addition to American Museum of Natural History, New York City, New York. Photograph by author.



Figure 8. James Earle Fraser, Roosevelt Equestrian Group (1940). New York State Theodore Roosevelt Memorial addition to the American Museum of Natural History, New York City, New York. Photograph by author.



Figure 9. Fraser's *Roosevelt*. Roosevelt Memorial, AMNH. Photograph by author.



Figure 10. Fraser's *Roosevelt* imitates Verrocchio's *Colleoni*. Roosevelt Memorial, AMNH. Photograph by author.



Figure 11. Proper right side, Native American, Fraser's Equestrian Group. Roosevelt Memorial, AMNH. Photograph by author.



Figure 12. Native American, Roosevelt Equestrian Group. Roosevelt Memorial, AMNH. Photograph by author.



Figure 13. Proper left side, African, Fraser's Equestrian Group. Roosevelt Memorial, AMNH. Photograph by author.



Figure 14. African's Face, Roosevelt Equestrian Group. Roosevelt Memorial, AMNH. Photograph by author.



Figure 15. Paul Manship, *Prometheus Fountain* (1933). Rockefeller Center, New York City, New York. Photograph by author.



Figure 16. Paul Manship, *Theodore Roosevelt* (1967). Theodore Roosevelt Memorial, Theodore Roosevelt Island, Washington, D.C. Photograph by author.



Figure 17. Eric Gugler and Paul Manship, Theodore Roosevelt Memorial (1967). Theodore Roosevelt Island, Washington, D.C. Photograph by author.

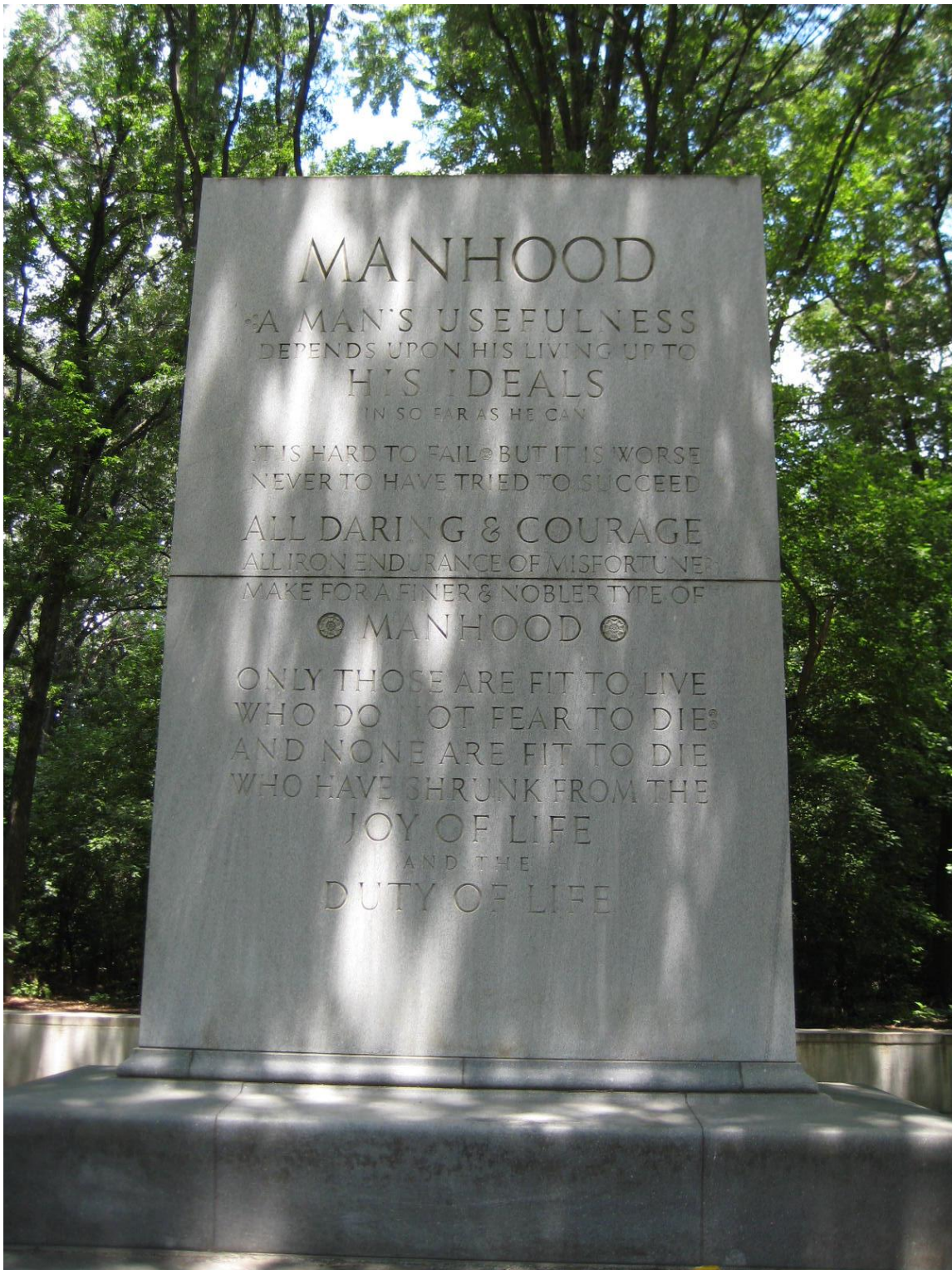


Figure 18. Manhood, Theodore Roosevelt Memorial. Theodore Roosevelt Island. Photograph by author.



Figure 19. Youth, Theodore Roosevelt Memorial. Theodore Roosevelt Island. Photograph by author.



Figure 20. Nature, Theodore Roosevelt Memorial. Theodore Roosevelt Island. Photograph by author.



Figure 21. The State, Theodore Roosevelt Memorial. Theodore Roosevelt Island. Photograph by author.



Figure 22. Path leading to Theodore Roosevelt Memorial. Theodore Roosevelt Island. Photograph by author.