Review the timeline of American activity in the Philippines

During the first half of 1902 the US Senate conducted hearings into the conduct of American soldiers in the Philippines. Many Americans were outraged at reports that American soldiers were committing atrocities against Filipino soldiers and civilians.

Combat may often bring out the worst form of brutal behaviour in soldiers. Most young men who enlist in any armed forces are not sociopathic criminals to begin with. Somehow the stress of combat elicits a degree of aggressive, brutal conduct resulting in the mistreatment of ‘the enemy’. Today we call this misconduct ‘war crimes’.

**WHY WOULD SOME AMERICAN SOLDIERS HAVE BRUTALIZED FILIPINO INSURGENTS?**

Review the following sources related to American soldiers in the Philippines. Complete the organizer after reading the sources.

Debrief:

- What evidence did you find for each of the hypotheses?
- Is some of the evidence more or less believable? Why?
- Based on the evidence, which hypothesis do you find most convincing for why some American soldiers brutalized Filipino insurgents?
### American Soldiers in the Philippines
**1898 - 1904**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>US Soldiers who brutalized Filipino insurgents...</th>
<th>Hypothesis 1</th>
<th>Hypothesis 2</th>
<th>Hypothesis 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>... were simply following orders</td>
<td>... thought Filipinos were less than human</td>
<td>... getting revenge for how Filipinos treated American soldiers</td>
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**Evidence 1**

**QUOTE:**

**SOURCE:**

**QUOTE:**

**SOURCE:**

**Evidence 2**

**QUOTE:**

**SOURCE:**

**QUOTE:**

**SOURCE:**

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Based on this evidence, do you find this hypothesis convincing? Explain.
WHY WOULD SOME AMERICAN SOLDIERS HAVE BRUTALIZED FILIPINO INSURGENTS?

Use evidence from the documents to support your answer.
Document A
1902 Senate Hearing Testimony

TESTIMONY OF RICHARD T. O’BRIEN.
(Sworn by the chairman.)

By the CHAIRMAN:
Q. You were living in New York at this time? — A. Yes, sir.
Q. And are engaged in business there? — A. Yes, sir.
Q. Oh; but your home is in North Adams, Mass. ? — A. Yes, sir.
Q. Were you in the Army? — A. Yes, sir.

[. . .]

By Senator CARMACK:
Q. There is a statement by you published in a New York paper of an occurrence on the 27th of December. What year was that ?— A. 1899. That was in the barrio of La Nog.
Q. Where was that? —A. The barrio of La Nog.
Q. You entered the town that day?— A. Yes, sir.
Q. What was the object of your expedition on that day; where were you going? — A. I don't know, sir.
Q. Was that town your destination? — A. I don't know, sir,
Q. Tell what occurred there at that time. — A. We entered the town. It was just daybreak. The first thing we saw was a boy coming down on a carabao, and the first sergeant, William Stahlburg, shot at the boy. I don't know whether he intended to kill him or not. I know he didn't hit him. The boy jumped off the carabao and fled.
Q. Where was this boy?--A. Coming down a mountain path on a carabao.

The CHAIRMAN. What did you say the sergeant's name was? --A. Stahlburg; he is now a policeman in the city of Manila.

By Senator BEVERIDGE:
Q. You say the boy was on a carabao? — A. Yes, sir.
Q. And then he jumped off? — A. Yes, sir. That was a sort of silent signal for a volley. Everybody fired at him.
Q. At the boy? — A. Yes, sir.

By the CHAIRMAN:
Q. I don't suppose you fired?--A. Yes, sir; I did. I am supposed to obey.
Q. Were you ordered to fire? — A. No, sir.

By Senator BEVERIDGE:
Q. What did you tire for, then? — A. I can not tell. A man fires when he is in those places.
Q. Did the sergeant tell you why he fired? — A. No, sir.
Q. He offered no explanation? -- A. No, sir.

Senator ALLISON. How many shots hit him?
The WITNESS. He was not hit at all.

By Senator BEVERIDGE:
Q. How far away was he?— A. I should judge 1,500 yards.
Q. Are you a pretty good shot? — A. No, sir.
Q. Are any of our soldiers good shots? — A. Yes, sir.
Q. Were any in that squad good shots? — A. Yes, sir. They were all snap shots, most all of them.
Q. They did not shoot but once? — A. No, sir.
Q. You had more than one cartridge? — A. Yes, sir.
Q. You just fired a volley at the boy and quit? — A. Yes, sir. That brought the people in the houses out, brought them to the doors and out into the street, and how the order started and who gave it I don't know, but the town was fired on. I saw an old fellow come to the door, and he looked out; he got a shot in the abdomen and fell to his knees and turned around and died.
Q. Were you shooting then, too? — A. Yes, sir.
Q. And had you had any orders to shoot? — A. Yes, sir.
Q. Who ordered you to shoot? — A. I don't know, sir.
Q. You were shooting a good deal like you shot at the boy? — A. No, sir.

Senator CARMACK. The orders were given to fire. Go ahead and tell the whole story.
The WITNESS. After that two old men came out, hand in hand. I should think they were over 50 years old, probably between 50 and 70 years old. They had a white flag. They were shot down. At the other end of the town we heard screams, and there was a woman there; she was burned up, and in her arms was a baby, and on the floor was another child. The baby was at her breast, the one in her arms, and this child on the floor was, I should judge, about 3 years of age. They were burned. Whether she was demoralized or driven insane I don't know. She stayed in the house.

The CHAIRMAN. What troops were those?
The WITNESS. M Company, the Twenty-sixth.

By Senator PATTERSON:
Q. How many men were there in M Company at that time? — A. I don't know, sir.
Q. About how many? — A. There were very nearly a hundred.

Senator DUBOIS. Excuse me a moment. I did not catch the name of the town.
The WITNESS. La Nog.
By Senator BEVERIDGE:
Q. Where is that? — A. About 16 miles--
Q. On what island? — A. Panay. It is northeast of Igbarras about 16 miles.

By the CHAIRMAN:
Q. What officers were present? — A. Captain McDonald was the only officer.
Q. He was the only officer present? — A. Yes, sir.

Senator BEVERIDGE. The commanding general at that time was General Hughes? The WITNESS. Yes; he was in command.

Senator CARMACK. Were any orders given when you entered the town about prisoners or anything of that sort? — A. No, sir. In regard to that order being issued, as he would go along in Indian file, the word would pass along “take no prisoners.” Nobody would know where it emanated from.

By Senator BEVERIDGE:
Q. Where would you get that order?— A. It would start at the head of the line and come down.
Q. Did you think that unusual? — A. No; we did not then.
Q. Did you inquire where the order came from? — A. No, sir.
Q. Did your sergeant give you the order? — A. I don't know, sir.
Q. It came down the line? — A. It came down the line; yes.
Q. And you obeyed it? — A. Yes.

TESTIMONY OF D. J. EVANS.
(Sworn by the chairman.)

By the CHAIRMAN:
Q. Give your full name. — A. Daniel J. Evans.
Q. And you have been in the Army? — A. Six years.
Q. In the regulars? — A. Yes, sir.
Q. In what regiment? — A. My first enlistment was in the First Cavalry, for three years; my second enlistment, two years and seven months in the Twelfth Infantry, and transferred to the artillery stationed at Honolulu.
Q. Are you a resident of Kansas? — A. Yes, sir.
Q. Concordia, Kans., I believe? — A. Yes, sir.
Q. And Concordia is your home? — A. Yes, sir.
Q. And did you serve in the Philippines? — A. Yes, sir; for two years.
Q. From when; when did you go there? — A. I got there in April, 1899, and left about the 1st of February, 1901.
Q. Where did you serve during that time; what part of the islands? — A. The Island of Luzon.
Q. What was your rank? — A. Private, at the time of enlistment.
Q. And your rank at the time of your discharge? — A. Corporal.
Q. You received an honorable discharge, did you? — A. Yes, sir.
Q. The committee would like to hear from you in regard to the conduct of the war, and whether you were the witness of any cruelties inflicted upon the
natives in the Philippine Islands; and if so, under what circumstances. — A. The case I had reference to was where they gave the water cure to a native in the Ilicano Province at Ilocos Norte.

Q. That is in the extreme northern part of Luzon? — A. Yes, sir. There were two native scouts that were with the American forces. They went out and brought in a couple of insurgents. They were known to be insurgents by their own confession, and, besides that, they bad the mark that most insurgents in that part of the country carry; it is a little brand on the left breast, generally inflicted with a nail or head of a cartridge, heated. They tried to find out from this native—

Q. What kind of a brand did you say it was? — A. A small brand put on with a nail head or cartridge.

Senator BEVERIDGE. A scar on the flesh?
The WITNESS. Yes, sir. They tried to get him to tell where the rest of the insurgents were at that time. We knew about where they were, but we did not know how to get at them. They were in the hills, and it happened that there was only one path that could get to them, and we did not get to them that time. They refused to tell this one path and they commenced this so-called “water cure.” The first thing one of the Americans — I mean one of the scouts for the Americans— grabbed one of the men by the head and jerked his head back, and then they took a tomato can and poured water down his throat until he could hold no more, and during this time one of the natives had a rattan whip, about as large my finger, and he struck him on the face and on the bare back, and every time they would strike him it would raise a large welt, and some blood would come. And when this native could hold no more water, then they forced a gag into his mouth; they stood him up and tied his hands behind him; they stood him up against a post and fastened him so he could not move. Then one man, an American soldier, who was over six feet tall, and who was very strong, too, struck this native in the pit of the stomach as hard as he could strike him, just as rapidly as he could. It seemed as if he didn’t get tired of striking him.

By Senator ALLISON:

Q. With his hand? — A. With his clenched fist. He struck him right in the pit of the stomach and it made the native very sick. They kept that operation up for quite a time, and finally I thought the fellow was about to die, but I don’t believe he was as bad as that, because finally he told them he would tell, and from that on he was taken away, and I saw no more of him.

Q. Did he tell? — A. I believe he did, because I didn’t hear of any more water cure inflicted on him.

By Senator RAWLINS:

Q. How many were present then?—A. This was an expedition. There were thirty, I think, of our company. We were not at our station at that time; we were on a little expedition down south, and I should think out of the thirty—I should judge that there were about fifteen of our men present, maybe twenty; and out of G Company, of our own regiment, that is the town they were stationed at—there were a greater number of them present.
Q. How many American soldiers altogether were there present?—A. I can safely say there were 50.
Q. Who was in command of them?—A. Capt. Robert K. Evans.
Q. Was he present at the time the water cure was inflicted?—A. He did not see it; no sir.
Q. What, if any, officer was present?—A. This is a subject that I have debated on and I can not arrive at a conclusion. It was either Lieutenant Drum or Lieutenant Aloe; and I prefer to think it was Lieutenant Aloe, for the simple reason that our lieutenants were transferred about that time. Lieutenant Drum was promoted from second lieutenant to first lieutenant, and transferred to the Twenty-fourth Infantry, and about that time we got Lieutenant Aloe; and which of those two was on that expedition I can not say for certain.
Q. Where was the commander? How far distant from where this business was performed?—A. The captain in charge?
Q. Yes.—A. He was not over 200 yards away.

Senator BURROWS. Captain Evans, you mean?
The WITNESS. Yes, sir.

By Senator RAWLINS:
Q. Not over 200 yards away?—A. Yes, sir.
Q. Was there any effort to conceal it?—A. Not in the least.
Q. Was it a matter of common knowledge?—A. Yes, sir; it has been the talk of the whole army. They do not try to conceal it.
Q. How long has that been the case?—A. Well, it has been practiced, to my knowledge, from along in July, 1900, until the time I left the islands; and, of course, after that time I know nothing about it. I left the islands about February, 1901.
Q. When did this particular case occur?—A. It was about the month of August, 1900. I have not the dates accurate, but it was about that time.

Document B
American Soldier’s Letter Home

The town of Titatia was surrendered to us a few days ago and two companies occupy the same. Last night one of our boys was found shot and his stomach cut open. Immediately orders were received from General Wheaton to burn the town and kill every native in sight; which was done to a finish. About 1,000 men, women, and children were reported killed. I am probably growing hard-hearted, for I am in my glory when I can sight my gun on some dark skin and pull the trigger.

Let me advise you a little, and should a call for volunteers be made for this place, do not be so patriotic as to come here. Tell all my inquiring friends that I am doing everything I can for Old Glory and for America I love so well.

Source: A. A. Barnes’s letter to his brother, dated March 20, 1899, published by The Standard, Greensburg, Indiana, on May 8, 1899.

Document C:
Historian’s Account

So revolting was the punishment meted out to some Filipinos that sensitive Americans denounced the proceedings in no uncertain terms. Thus, Private Andrew K. Weir, Jr., of Troop C, Fourth U.S. Cavalry, stationed at Balayan, Batangas, wrote his uncle, saying:

"I have something to inform you about. It is the terrible cruelty practiced upon Filipino prisoners by American soldiers in these islands. * * * These people are note nearly so uncivilized as is supposed. You probably have read about some of our men being put to death by terrible torture, but what can you expect when we do equally as bad to our prisoners."

The brutality was not, however, monopolized by the Americans. The guerrillas, in violation of Aguinaldo’s orders and circulars, treated captured Americans with barbaric cruelty. Noses and ears were lopped off and the bleeding wounds seasoned with salt. In some cases, American prisoners were buried alive. Kicking, slapping and spitting at the faces of American prisoners were common, the hatred of Americans being such that the guerrillas forgot or conveniently forgot Aguinaldo’s injunctions regarding the good treatment to be accorded the prisoners.

The exceptional barbarity with which some over-enthusiastic Americans indulged in led Aguinaldo to issue a denunciation.

Interesting Letter From Funston.

Colonel Frederick Funston, writing under date of March 17, to Mr. C. S. Gleed, of Topeka, among other things says: "Events have crowded events at such a rate through the past six weeks and there has been so much of very serious work on hand that I have sadly neglected writing letters to my home friends. You in the States have heard through the newspapers of the fighting and burning of this eventful month and a half, but, as cablegrams are very expensive, I doubt if the accounts have gone much into detail. We are now anxiously awaiting the arrival of papers from home published since the outbreak in order that we may see what news our folks have been furnished with.

"The regiment fought splendidly and effectively, and in each one of the three attacks it has made carried everything before it. It has undoubtedly acquired the best reputation of any regiment here for fine fighting. The boys go for the enemy as if they were chasing jack rabbits. It is a nasty sort of war--one of ambushes and surprises. So far two officers, Captain Elliot and Lieutenant Alford, have been killed, and with them ten enlisted men, while two officers and thirty-four enlisted men have been wounded; but the worst of it is that the end is not yet, and many and many a Kansas home will be darkened before we see the end of this sorry business. That is the sad, distressing part of it.

"This is different business from seeing Cubans killed. But how gloriously these countrymen of ours fight! When I tell them to charge, which I have three times, the trouble has been not to get them to come on, but to keep from getting run over by them. We are at present occupying the trenches at Caloocan, three miles north of Manila, the extreme left of the cordon of trenches fifteen miles long that protects the land side of Manila from the enemy.

"The insurgents are close in on our front quite well intrenched and there is some bloody business ahead when we advance. But that will happen long before this reaches you; in fact, we are expecting it in a few days.

"It would take a great prophet to even guess how long this thing will last. It may be that the leaders, discouraged by their recent severe defeats, will give up, or it may be that they will for years maintain a guerrilla warfare.

"I am afraid that some people at home will lie awake nights worrying about the ethics of this war, thinking that our enemy is fighting for the right of self-government, etc. The word 'independence' which these people roll over their tongues so glibly is to them a word and not much more.

"It means simply with them license to raise hell and if they got control they would raise a fine crop of it. It is true that they have a certain number of educated leaders--educated, however, about the same way a parrot is.

"They are, as a rule, an illiterate, semi-savage people, who are waging war not against tyranny, but against Anglo-Saxon order and decency. Their whole conduct during the several months preceding the outbreak was one of insufferable arrogance and egotism. They were swollen up by the fact that our people made too much of them at first. I, for one, hope that Uncle Sam will apply the chastening rod good, hard and plenty, and lay it on until they come in to the reservation and promise to be good 'Injuns.'"

Source: Letter written by Frederick Funston published in the Kansas City Journal on April 22, 1899.