

Visualizing US Imperialism & the Philippines, 1898-1913 (VPx), an MITx MOOC, Fall 2017

Module I—Introduction

- This module introduces the MIT Visualizing Cultures project and approach to history through the visual record [visualizingcultures.mit.edu], the source for the content and methodology.
- Overview of course content, methods of visual analysis, and background on Philippine and US history.
- Instructional team John Dower (Historian and Visualizing Cultures co-founder), Christopher Capozzola (MIT Prof. of History), and Ellen Sebring (Media scholar and VC Creative Director) introduce their approaches to visual history, and present critical questions of race, power, and intercultural exchange that will frame discussion throughout the course.
- Visualizing Cultures co-founder, Shigeru Miyagawa, discusses the evolution of digital education.

Module II—Civilization & Barbarism: Cartooning and Global Imperialism

- Based on the Visualizing Cultures unit, “Civilization and Barbarism: Cartoon Commentary & the ‘White Man’s Burden’ (1898-1902)” by Ellen Sebring [[link](#)].
- This unit explores pro- and anti-imperialist imagery in the United States and international cartooning on the subject of “civilization” and colonialism at the turn of the century.
- How did Americans learn about U.S. colonialism in the Philippines?
- How did Filipinos and US-based critics of empire challenge and question American policies?
- How can visual evidence from the past serve as the basis for new digital forms of history?

Module III—Photography and Power I: the Philippine-American War

- Based on the Visualizing Cultures unit: “Photography & Power in the Colonial Philippines I: Conquest by the Camera (1898–1902)” by Christopher Capozzola [[link](#)].
- Teaching team joined by Genevieve Clutario (Assistant Professor of History, Harvard University).
- This module explores the role of photography in the Philippine American War (1898-1902).
- How did soldiers represent war experiences for themselves and for audiences in the United States?
- How did Filipinos respond to US colonization, and what role did visual images play in their responses?

Module IV—Photography & Power II: How Photography Colonized the Philippines

- Based on the Visualizing Cultures unit: “Photography & Power in the Colonial Philippines II: Dean Worcester’s Photographic Record of the Philippines (1898–1913)” by Chris Capozzola [[link](#)].
- Teaching team joined by Carla Sinopoli (Prof. Dept. of Archeology and Curator, Dean Worcester Collection, University of Michigan)
- This module uses the photographic archive of US colonial official Dean Worcester to consider relationship of photography to anthropology and colonial governance.
- How did photography serve as a basis for cultural engagement—both in positive and negative ways?
- What are the “ethics of looking”? What responsibilities do we have today when confronting potentially difficult images?

Module V—Conclusion: Images of Power/the Power of Images

- John Dower, Christopher Capozzola, Ellen Sebring, and Genevieve Clutario: a roundtable discussion on the relationship between visual images and US expansion, as well as the contemporary implications of teaching and disseminating images in a digital environment.