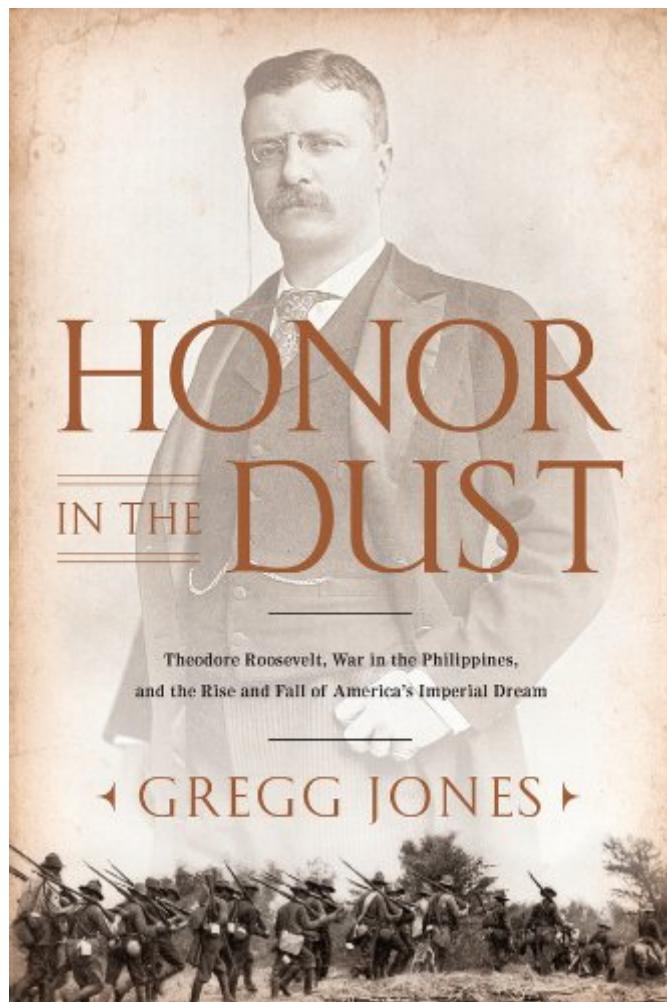


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# Honor In The Dust: Theodore Roosevelt, War In The Philippines, And The Rise And Fall Of America's Imperial Dream



## **Synopsis**

On the eve of a new century, an up-and-coming Theodore Roosevelt set out to transform the U.S. into a major world power. The Spanish-American War would forever change America's standing in global affairs, and drive the young nation into its own imperial showdown in the Philippines. From Admiral George Dewey's legendary naval victory in Manila Bay to the Rough Riders' heroic charge up San Juan Hill, from Roosevelt's rise to the presidency to charges of U.S. military misconduct in the Philippines, *Honor in the Dust* brilliantly captures an era brimming with American optimism and confidence as the nation expanded its influence abroad.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This is a book review of "Honor in the Dust" written by Greg Jones. I like to browse the new books in the book aisle at Costco, while my wife does her grocery shopping. When I saw that this was a book about Theodore Roosevelt, I was immediately interested in buying it. I find him to be a fascinating and inspirational character and have read other biographies about him. Although some of the book is directly related to my favorite president, the majority of the book is a detailed wartime account of the US conquest of the Philippine islands. Much of the justification for the United States to invade

the Philippine Islands and wrest it from Spain was the inhumane and barbaric treatment of the islanders by the Spanish rulers. The bulk of this book tells the story of how we mishandled the relationship with the Filipinos and how they came to view us as enemy conquerors rather than liberators. Naturally, they fought for their independence with the limited resources that they had. The US soldiers had rifles and machine guns, whereas the Filipinos only had knives and their ingenuity to resist the invasion. As the Americans tried harder and harder to stifle resistance, the Filipinos fought back using guerrilla tactics and trickery. Before long, the Americans were employing tactics as brutal as the Spanish had done before them. The war had started under Pres. McKinley, but when he was assassinated Theodore Roosevelt assumed the presidency and the responsibility for the war effort. Although the military tried its best to hide its scandalous behavior against the Philippine natives, the truth leaked out to the American people. President Roosevelt and the Republicans were embarrassed and defensive. One item interesting to me, was that one of their most vocal critics was Mark Twain.

I've read a lot of books on American history, especially military history. Many concentrate of course on wars, and one of the things I enjoy is reading about the more obscure wars of American history, the ones that don't get talked about much. This book is more or less a recounting of America's adventure in the Philippines, between our Declaration of War on the Spanish and the end of the insurgency around 4 years later. Author Gregg Jones does a pretty good job of recreating the era and the personalities involved, and provides a good introduction to the various events of the period. The book is therefore in general worthwhile. Jones starts his narrative by explaining how the war came about. As far as I'm concerned he puts a bit too much emphasis on Theodore Roosevelt's role in starting the war, but that's a matter of perspective; there's no argument that TR, despite his junior status in the Administration at the time (he was Assistant Secretary of the Navy) had a lot more to do with the beginning of the war than you'd expect. The author provides a brief recounting of the events in Cuba that culminated in the end of the war (and curiously less about the American attack on Manila, which ended the war in the Philippines) before moving on to how the insurgency in the Islands started. He provides a reasonably clear narrative of the guerilla war that Aguinaldo (the Philippine resistance leader) led, and how he was captured. The book then spends a great deal of time discussing the war crimes allegations against the various soldiers in the American army who, in their frustration at continued Philippine resistance, used torture to extract information from reluctant civilians or insurgents they'd captured.

Every part of the past has a history worth revisiting as a result of interesting moments that may not have been completely emphasized upon. Journalist and historian Gregg Jones takes a historic event that may have already been written numerous times. However, he delves much closer to the major individuals and pivotal events such as the aftermath of the Spanish American War and the beginning and end of the Philippine American War. Honor in the Dust: Theodore Roosevelt, War in the Philippines and the Rise of America's Imperial Dream examines a portion of the grander scales of both wars and how one continued after the other and the role of President Theodore Roosevelt and key officials and military generals that were responsible to the rebuilding of the Philippines after Spanish rule, but within the cracks the memory of the war may have been forgotten within the historic past as global expansionism steered forward by 1900. And the Philippine islands became a crux to that movement of advancement and transition but not without a cost that during the time caused controversy within foreign affairs and the United States military. Honor in the Dust is twofold and elaborates upon the period from 1898 to 1902, which begins with President William McKinley's presidency after the Spanish American War and the preliminary events leading to the Philippine American War a year later and the complexities that ensued that proceeded during Roosevelt's first term. But as one narrows the lens of the past to a particular segment that had not been retold with greater emphasis, Jones focuses on Roosevelt and the debacle that occurred between US soldiers and Filipino guerilla soldiers that eventually led to misconceptions and misconduct.

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