Imperialism...Good or Bad?

The extending of a country’s rule over foreign countries in order to benefit the country extending its rule. This is imperialism and it is a topic of hot debate. Are the benefits of expansion worth the costs? What are the costs? Was the transition to imperialism by the U.S. between 1890 and 1914 a good thing? The answer is simply no. This transition was extremely detrimental to America sacrificing out country’s basic ideals as well as the lives of many of our people. Although there are arguments to be made for both sides the negatives of imperialism far outweigh the positives.

First, I must start by stating the opposing opinion. Imperialism actually had many benefits. Because of our imperialistic efforts we gained land in both the Caribbean and the Philippines. Expansion into these territories allowed us to gain more natural resources and strengthened our influence in world trade and affairs. (Streich) Unfortunately as we strengthened our foreign affairs, the economy in our own country weakened as Americans lost their jobs and taxes increased to pay for the war. (Clayton et al 278) As stated in one document imperialism “established the United States as a world power.” With imperialism the U.S. created a stronger navy as well as a shorter route between the Pacific and the Atlantic via Panama. (Overview) One could argue thought that this new naval power lead to excessive war hunger like the tedious and bloody war in Panama and unnecessary overseas expansion. Although imperialism accomplished some great things they are tarnished by the national catastrophes of imperialism.

Imperialism cost America lives and “the occupation of the Philippines erupted into a bloody war in 1899.” Not only did Americans lose their lives but they lost their jobs to cheap foreign laborers. (Streich) Most importantly though, imperialism challenged the basic principles that the United States were founded on. As the textbook puts it, imperialism was a “rejection of the nation’s foundation of liberty and justice for all.” (Clayton et al 278) America took the freedom of other weaker countries to strengthen itself. As soon as one becomes a hypocrite of its own principles then it is truly lost. The racist act by America was not only economically expensive but morally corrupt. It gave the world a reason to hate Americans. It showed the ability for something that is good to be corrupted.
Between 1890 and 1914 the U.S. became a world power. The U.S. became what “manifest destiny” told Americans is should be. What lies in the un-read pages history is the corruptions of that time. What is forgotten is the suppressed countries and the lives lost the title of “World Power.” A nation willing to sacrifice the principles it was created upon is no good thing. Therefore, the conquest for imperialism is impractical for Americans. A nation “under God” for “Liberty and justice for all” should never look back on a time where it suppressed the weaker man and say it was a good thing. In the case of imperialism in the U.S., the end didn’t justify the means.
Works Cited


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Analysis of Three Supporting Reasons-
Score of 4
The student provides a sophisticated analysis of three supporting reasons; provides rich and accurate supporting evidence.
The first supporting reason that the student provides is grounded in evidence. It is provided in the opening sentence in Paragraph #3, “Imperialism cost America lives and ‘the occupation of the Philippines erupted into a bloody war in 1899’.”
A second point is made using another quote from an additional source: “…imperialism challenged the basic principles that the United States were founded on. As the textbook puts it, imperialism was a “rejection of the nations foundation of liberty and justice for all.”
A concluding sentence provides the third reason, “The racist act by America was not only economically expensive but morally corrupt.”

Connection - Score of 4
The student provides a sophisticated conclusion about the wider significance of the issue.
In the concluding paragraph, the student pulls the reader back out to a broader view of imperialism and summarizes the wider consequences of it, stating “What is forgotten is the suppressed countries and the lives lost in the title of “World Power.” The student then shares what this means for America, “…the conquest for imperialism is impractical for Americans. A nation “under God” for “Liberty and justice for all” should never look back on a time where it suppressed the weaker man and say it was a good thing.”
Native American Policy

As most people know, the Native Americans lived in America long before the colonists settled here. As the colonist’s power grew and immigration increased these new white settlers began to expand their territory. Huge numbers of Native Americans were forced out of their homelands, where they had lived for hundreds of years before the colonists came to America. Many people would say this treatment of Native Americans was necessary for the growth of America, a now prosperous country. However, another large group of people would disagree with this statement and describe the former treatment of the Native Americans as cruel and unjust.

People belonging to this second group of thought have a lot of valid points. The relocation of the Native Americans began with the colonists’ belief that the Native Americans were not capable of civilized living, and that proper borders between the two groups would maintain peace. This belief, coupled with the settler’s strong beliefs in the expansion of America led to the government supported relocation of Native Americans; even though they had been living on that land for hundreds of years. In 1830 all Native Americans living East of the Mississippi River were removed and relocated to lands West of the Mississippi under the Indian Removal Act. This resulted in the “Trail of Tears” from their homeland in southeastern America to Indian Territory from 1838 to 1839. The American army made inadequate preparations for this march and thousands of Cherokees died of exhaustion, lack of food and illness. Later on, in 1887 the Dawes Act was set into motion. It was based on the settler’s belief in individual land ownership of tribal lands and distributed land to Native American families accordingly. This had a large negative impact on the unity, self government and culture of the Native American tribes. The Native Americans were forced to live in a way that contradicted their beliefs, culture and the way they had been living for hundreds of years; however, some people would say that America benefited from this.

In spite of numerous records of the cruel and unfair treatment of Native Americans, many individuals believe the removal of the Native Americans from their homelands was necessary for the well being of America. One of the most prevalent beliefs among the colonists
was called Manifest Destiny. This was the belief the United States was destined to spread across the continent of North America and it was a huge factor in the relocations of the Native Americans. During the nineteenth century many people supported and believed in Manifest Destiny. This belief led to the eventual expansion of America, which meant larger supplies of natural resources. Without this expansion and the numerous natural resources America would not be as prosperous as it is today and has been in the past. The relocation of the Native Americans opened up a lot of land for white settlers and led to new industry and economic growth.

Even though both sides present compelling arguments, it is my belief that the Native American policies from our country’s past were unfair as well as unjustified. Even though the removal of the Native Americans led to economic growth and expansion in the United States, the cost the Native Americans paid for it is far too great to ignore. A desire for an improved economy is no excuse for robbing a group of people of their homelands, lands they had lived on for hundreds, even thousands of years before a colonist ever set foot on American soil. Furthermore, Native American culture was virtually destroyed during this time and their aboriginal way of living was outlawed. Not only did the Native Americans suffer these injustices, but thousands of Natives died as a direct result of the American action during events such as the Trail of Tears. Crimes like this cannot be justified by a greedy desire for land and natural resources. There is no excuse for cruelty or carelessness of this kind.
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Connection - Score of 2
Offers a weak or partial conclusion about the wider significance of the issue.

This is the one area of the essay of that is lacking in substance. In order to receive a “4”, the student would need to explain how the Native American policies of America’s past have an impact on today. There is an attempt at the end of the essay to make a broader statement with, “Crimes like this cannot be justified by a greedy desire for land and natural resources. There is no excuse for cruelty or carelessness of this kind.” This could be developed further will a connection to current day.

Conventions - Score of 4
Highly effective use of conventions
Andrew Carnegie...Captain of Industry or Robber Baron?

Although some people may perceive Andrew Carnegie as a Captain of Industry, my views on him and the work done would show that he was a Robber Baron. Carnegie believed rich people were better than poor people and his ruthless tactics in the industry reflected the workers greatly.

Workers for Carnegie’s factories worked long hours with non-livable wages. They worked 12 hours days, 7 days a week with a wage of 14 cents an hour. When workers from Homestead went on strike, Carnegie had his assistant Frick do whatever was necessary to shut down the Union. Some examples of this were beating workers on strike, shutting down the factory so workers couldn’t receive income, and he had spies in the factory so workers would be afraid of speaking to one another.

Carnegie also manipulated the workers by donating libraries to the towns. He also donated money to organizations. Some would argue that Carnegie was a good man for these generous donations, but in reality this donated money was blood money he took from the people. The donations were unable to justify his ruthless tactics. Many workers saw his donations as pure hypocrisy.

Carnegie was a greedy man. He was determined to get to the top. He stole other peoples’ ideas for the factories and when another plant was making more money, he’d tear down his and build a new one with better equipment. Carnegie’s old boss Scott needed help when the industry went down and even though Scott had helped Andrew Carnegie start his business many years ago, Carnegie refused to help his old friend now.

Carnegie was not only selfish with his money but he was cocky too. His mother and him rode into their old hometown in a parade for himself, showing his new wealth and power. Throughout the years, Carnegie and his old friend Frick had worked together, but when Frick was making his own profit off of his coke ovens, Carnegie sold them for less than their original value. Frick sued Carnegie and won 31 million from him. He was the only one to have ever stood up to Andrew Carnegie and his deceitful ways. Carnegie may have donated a lot of money throughout his life, but the way he got the money was manipulative, despicable and wrong. Andrew Carnegie was definitely a Robber Baron.
Andrew Carnegie...Captain of Industry
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Position Taken - Score of 3
The student takes a solid position on the issue.
The student’s position is clearly stated in the first sentence of the essay and the last sentence of the essay: “Although some people may perceive Andrew Carnegie as a Captain of Industry, my views on him and the work done would show that he was a Robber Baron” and “Andrew Carnegie was definitely a Robber Baron.” The language of the position is simplistic (i.e. “and the work done”) and thus does not qualify as earning a “4.” The student could earn a “4” by adding more descriptive language about what “my views on him” and “the work done” mean.

Description of the Issue - Score of 2
The student provides a weak or partial description of the facts regarding the issue
Because the student begins his/her essay with their thesis statement, the reader must piece together background information throughout the essay about what it means to be a “Captain of Industry” versus a “Robber Baron.” More general information could have been provided at the beginning of the essay to help set the stage for the reader prior to learning about the arguments for each side of the issue.

Rebuttal of Two Opposing Arguments - Score of 2
The student provides a weak or partial rebuttal of two opposing arguments
The student validates one opposing argument by recognizing that Carnegie donated “libraries to the towns” and “money to organizations.” The student then offers a rebuttal to this point: “Some would argue that Carnegie was a good man for these generous donations, but in reality this donated money was blood money he took from the people” and “Many workers saw his donations as pure hypocrisy.” The student could have increased this score to a 3 or higher by adding another opposing argument and rebuttal.
worked together, but when Frick was making his own profit off of his coke ovens, Carnegie sold them for less than their original value. Frick sued Carnegie and won 31 million from him. He was the only one to have ever stood up to Andrew Carnegie and his deceitful ways. Carnegie may have donated a lot of money throughout his life, but the way he got the money was manipulative, deceitful and wrong. Andrew Carnegie was definitely a Robber Baron.

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<th>Analysis of Three Supporting Reasons- Score of 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The student provides a solid analysis of three supporting reasons; provides substantial supporting evidence. The student offers several arguments to support his/her position that Carnegie was a Robber Baron:</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Workers for Carnegie’s factories worked long hours with non-livable wages.&quot;</td>
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<th>Connection - Score of 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>The conclusion [about the wider significance of the issue] is absent or unrelated. The student does not make a case for why labeling Andrew Carnegie as either a Captain of Industry or a Robber Baron has any wider significance.</td>
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<th>Conventions - Score of 3</th>
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<tr>
<td>Conventions may have a few errors but does not distract from the overall quality of the product. Some errors include, but are not limited to: preservative hypocrisy His mother and him deceitful</td>
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</table>