

**Red Blood and Red Tape:
Building the Collections of the National Zoological Park,
1887-1908**

Madeleine Moore

Honors Thesis Submitted to the
Department of History, Georgetown University
Advisor: Professor Kathryn Olesko
Honors Program Chair: Professor Amy Leonard

9 May 2017

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	1
Introduction	2
Historiography	3
Argument	11
I: “Animals Desired for the National Zoological Park”	14
The Smithsonian and the Zoo	16
Congress and the Zoo	20
The Zoo Changes Course	24
Animal Collection for the Zoo	27
Growing the American Animal Kingdom	31
Conclusion	33
II: “In Response to Your Circular”	35
Enlisting Aid	37
The Animal Investment	45
Conclusion	52
III: Red Blood and Red Tape	54
Historiography	56
Goding and Cunningham	58
Plumacher	61
The Shantons	67
Conclusion	70
IV: The International Zoological Congress, 1907	72
Frank Baker, Zoology, and Scientific Racism	76
Foreign Animals and Foreign Zoologists in the Press	81
Conclusion	86
Conclusion: “Shame on the Garden”	88
Bibliography	92
Appendix A: Tables	96
Appendix B: Figures	106

Acknowledgements

It is best to save writing an acknowledgements section for last. It was in the final days and hours of making this thesis that I received some of the most generous and help and advice.

I would like to thank Professor Katherine Benton-Cohen for guiding our class through the emotional and intellectual upheavals of doing research, thinking and rethinking, writing and rewriting. Much gratitude also to Professor Amy Leonard for pushing us forward in the fall semester. To both professors, thank you for the support and discipline that kept me going even when, to use Professor Benton-Cohen's words, I felt "caged in" by my thesis topic. Thank you as well to my thesis advisor Professor Kathryn Olesko for her thoughtful feedback and to Professor Michael Kazin for his teaching, especially his course on the Progressive Era. I would also like to thank Dr. Daniel Vandersommers for giving me access to his work on the history of the National Zoological Park, which was integral to my own research and writing. I also thankfully acknowledge the staff of the Smithsonian Archives, Lauinger Library, and the Georgetown Special Collections for their assistance.

My peers in the thesis seminar were wonderfully consistent in their help, feedback, and general support. Much thanks to the whole group. A special thanks to Taylor Tobin for her moral support and friendship during the process.

Finally, thank you to my parents and my siblings, especially to my brother Sam for his feedback throughout the year.

Introduction

On February 21, 2017, a panda cub named Bao Bao left the Smithsonian's National Zoo in Washington, D.C., for Chengdu, China. Like all panda cubs born at the Zoo, Bao Bao went to China as part of a cooperative breeding program with the China Wildlife Conservation Association, which exchanges panda cubs to maintain genetic diversity in the vulnerable population of this beloved species. Before her departure, the Zoo's staff gave Bao Bao several months to acclimate to a specially designed travel crate, and when it was time to go, a keeper and a veterinarian from the Zoo accompanied her on a dedicated aircraft donated by FedEx for the international journey. Millions of people watched her plane take off.¹

This thesis is not about animals leaving the country, but entering it. While Bao Bao's journey is part of a long history of Chinese panda diplomacy, it is also part of the Smithsonian's history of importing and exporting live animals to and from the National Zoo.² In the late twentieth century, zoos drew audiences with the arrival of Pandas from Asian countries; in the late nineteenth century, they hoped to create excitement with new specimens from Latin America; monkeys from the Philippines, flamingos from Cuba, jaguars from Paraguay. The National Zoological Park's methods of international animal acquisition from 1887 to 1908 will be the focus of this thesis.

My research, like most zoo studies, did not begin with an international perspective. It first developed through an interest in the domestic politics of the Progressive Era and the urban social

¹ "Bye Bye, Bao Bao," Smithsonian's National Zoo & Conservation Biology Institute, <https://nationalzoo.si.edu/events/bye-bye-bao-bao>; "Bao Bao's Departure FAQ," Smithsonian's National Zoo & Conservation Biology Institute, <https://nationalzoo.si.edu/animals/news/bao-baos-departure-faqs>.

² Kathleen Carmel Buckingham, Jonathan Neil William David and Paul Jepson, "Diplomats and Refugees: Panda Diplomacy, Soft "Cuddly" Power, and the New Trajectory in Panda Conservation" *Environmental Practice* 15, no. 3 (2013): 262-270.

initiatives that sought to address elite concerns about the problems facing American cities. In the late nineteenth century, zoo-building emerged as a phenomenon in many American cities in association with the City Beautiful Movement, the popularity of natural sciences, and a desire to reacquaint the American populace with nature. The twentieth century zoo became a “hybrid” place; the natural world ordered, curated, tamed, and displayed for the benefit of civilization; the civilized world drawn to nature to satisfy and contain its own wild impulses and anxieties.³ The establishment of a National Zoo during an accelerating industrial age embodied an interaction between some of the most important ideologies of the period – social reform, civic unity, conservation, gospels of wealth and efficiency, scientific management, nationalism, nativism, and imperialism. As an institution, it negotiated the moral and intellectual rehabilitation of the upper classes, reform of the lower ‘masses,’ and the whims of the popular culture in which they all shared.

Historiography

This political and cultural symbolism is an element of zoo history that gains major attention in the existing literature on zoos. It is not however the only element of zoo history worthy of study, as I found in my research on the National Zoological Park. There are many intriguing questions to be answered in writing a zoo history, which can add to the existing literature and point toward new analytical possibilities.

As Jeffrey Nugent Hyson points out, there is a certain “indeterminacy” of a zoo that resists historical categorization, and thus, historical study. What kind of place is a zoo, and what historiography does it belong within? After all, a zoo is a hybrid space; a human institution, an animal habitat, a public experience, a political statement, a social idea, and a scientific project. It

³ Elizabeth Hanson’s *Animal Attractions: Nature on Display in American Zoos* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 7.

is perhaps because of this indeterminacy that serious scholarship on zoo history did not begin until the 1970s and 1980s.⁴ The first came in the form of a few journal articles and one Ph.D. dissertation, which suggested zoos as worthy subjects of cultural and intellectual history. Not until 1987 did a published book on the topic appear, Harriet Ritvo's *The Animal Estate: The English and Other Creatures in the Victorian Age*. Her work was foundational because it provided the model for reading animals in zoos as "living texts of human society."⁵ Into the 1990s, a small number of academic zoo histories were published, accompanied by a large volume of popular histories written and published by zoos themselves and by zoo enthusiasts.⁶ These popular histories provided source material and some local history but made no real analytical contribution. Zoo studies only began to take off as a field of historical scholarship after the millennium, with four zoo histories published between 2000 and 2002.⁷ Since then, zoo studies has been a growing field of research, becoming especially popular after 2010. The last few years have seen a number of Ph.D. dissertations on zoo history completed, some of which are embargoed in the process of being published.⁸

⁴ Hyson argues that zoos' formal complexity has deterred historical scholarship. Jeffrey Nugent Hyson's "Urban Jungles: Zoos and American Society" (Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1999), 5-6.

⁵ Daniel Vandersommers, "Laboratories, Lyceums, Lords: The National Zoological Park and the Transformation of Humanism in Nineteenth-Century America" (Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 2014), 5.

⁶ Compilations like *New Worlds, New Animals: From Menagerie to Zoological Park in the Nineteenth Century*, eds. William A. Deiss and R.J. Hoage (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996) were far less common than brief popular histories or zoo publications such as *From Bison to Biopark: 100 Years of the National Zoo* by Alexa Mergen (Washington: Friends of the National Zoo, 1989).

⁷ The most important of these were Nigel Rothfels *Savages and Beasts: The Birth of the Modern Zoo* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), which focused on early German zoos, and Elizabeth Hanson's *Animal Attractions*. They were accompanied by two broader works on Western Zoo history, Vernon N. Kisling Jr.'s *Zoo And Aquarium History: Ancient Animal Collections to Zoological Gardens* (Boca Raton: CRC Press, 2001), and *Zoo: A History of Zoological Gardens in the West* by Eric Baratay and Elisabeth Hardouin-Fugier (London: Reaktion, 2002).

⁸ One of these unpublished dissertations served as an excellent source for this general historiographical timeline, Vandersommers' "Laboratories, Lyceums, Lords," 5-6. Other recent dissertations include Nugent Hyson's "Urban Jungles," Diane Smith's "Animals and Artifacts: Specimen Exchanges and Displays in Yellowstone National Park, The National Museum, and the National Zoo, 1846 to 1916"

Within this historiography, a few themes and approaches are dominant: the social, cultural, and political symbolism of American zoos in the Progressive Era, and a geocentric focus on American zoos in a primarily American context. The widespread establishment of zoos in American cities began in the late nineteenth century, a phenomenon that most scholars place firmly within the story of the Progressive Era. During a time of rapid industrialization, zoos were part of larger attempts at modernization, civic improvement, social control, and nationalism. American zoo histories generally treat zoos as products or reflections of these dynamics. Some focus on zoos as the cultural projects of the social elite. Others turn attention to zoo audiences; science in the public mind, nature in popular culture. Animals in cages are certainly a compelling metaphor for a post-Civil War time of economic growth, technological change, urban reform, national expansion, and racial strife, but the broad intellectual appeal of zoos to Western audiences during this period is already well-trodden ground in the scholarship.

Zoos were more than symbols. They were living institutions, the work of diverse backers, administrators, designers, and managers. They fulfilled a broad existential need, but had locally specific impacts. Institutional histories of zoos show that they can be studied as more than simply ornaments of an age. There are some Ph.D. dissertations that fill in zoo history with details on how these parks were operated on a daily basis, by whom, and according to which principles and priorities.⁹ This thesis attempts to add to this scholarship on the behind-the-scenes workings of zoos, looking at how the ideas and attitudes of Progressive America impacted not only the public-facing elements of the National Zoo, but the private decisions about its management.

Further, it attempts to bring an international angle into the institutional history of the National

(Ph.D. dissertation, Montana State University, 2012), and Noah Cincinnati's "Arks for Empires: American Zoos, Imperialism, and the Struggle for International Wildlife Protection, 1889–1936" (Ph.D. dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 2012).

⁹ The dissertations by Cincinnati, Hanson, Smith, and Vandersommers go the furthest into institutional detail.

Zoo, because while the existing institutional histories of zoos depart from the broad cultural analysis of earlier works, they still reside mostly within a domestic perspective.

Because American zoo historiography is so wedded to the domestic history of the Progressive Era, further zoo research could benefit from the kind of approach to period taken by historian Daniel Rodgers in his book *Atlantic Crossings*. Though the work doesn't mention zoos, his interpretation of other, similar Progressive Era projects can inform zoo histories. Rodgers places city planning, social insurance, labor reform, agricultural policies and economic regulations in the United States within a larger, transatlantic progressive moment. He views the decades from 1870 to 1940 as a period of intense cross-pollination of European and American social politics, emphasizing international, institutional networks as the keys to understanding a "lost" history of the time. Traditional historical explanations for the rise of the Progressive American state focus on domestic developments - industrial capitalism and its discontents. In contrast, Rodgers explains the period as a time when American politics were "peculiarly open" to foreign models and imported ideas. American permeability meant that Progressive Era policies were less the result of a sudden amount of social problems, and more the product of a sudden abundance of available solutions, circulated by transatlantic brokers of cultural, intellectual, and institutional connections. Lower class labor agitation, middle class social paternalism, and upper class scientific demands for rationalized social order emerged in many industrializing Western nations simultaneously, but Rodgers points to something more than similar economic conditions to account for similar political responses. He unearths the tangible, personal connections between American and European "cosmopolitan elites" that fostered a shared set of agendas. The North Atlantic economy, he writes, formed a "world mart" of useful and interesting social experiments, introduced along the same networks of international

commerce that brought goods, trade, and capital. Rodger's methods follow progressive political movements, policies, and reforms on a journey from foreign model to domestic outcome, noting their adoption, rejection, or 'Americanization' as indicative of unique forces and circumstances at work.¹⁰

The kind of approach can be illuminating for the history of the National Zoological Park. Zoos were indeed an imported idea, but the National Zoo in particular demonstrated 'Americanization' of a European model. Further, the presence of animals from around the world in the United States capital at the turn of the twentieth century represented more than distant imitation - they were the product of intimate dialogue, ongoing personal and institutional relationships between American and European elites. These animals were the direct result of multitudinous international interactions, the material evidence of a web of interconnected commercial, political, and cultural networks. They were delivered to Washington through the relationships between American and foreign leaders, diplomats, businessmen, scientists, adventurers, and opportunists. The zoo therefore represented a nexus of global affairs in a time of American ascendancy. My goal will be to uncover the experiences and motivations of some of these zoological "brokers" of international institutional exchange.

In pursuing this goal, I will borrow from some valuable research on these "brokers" that has already been accomplished by three Ph.D. dissertations, which deserve special attention here. Unfortunately, the most relevant of these to understanding the international institutional structures in which the National Zoo evolved has been embargoed - Noah Cincinnati's "Arks for Empires." Although not available to read in full, the dissertation's abstract is enough to demonstrate the kinds of analytical opportunities opened by focusing zoo research

¹⁰ Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1998), 2-7.

internationally. Cincinnati argues that American zoos' institutional behavior helped to build the first networks of international environmental governance, as Zoo administrators negotiated competing priorities in animal acquisition and became key actors in the new and problematic American regime of global wildlife protection. This claim goes to the heart of what makes American zoo history interesting at the turn of the twentieth century - as the country transformed into a major world power, the people and institutions that negotiated international relationships pursued diverse, sometimes contradictory priorities. Business versus statecraft, exploration versus conquest, protection versus paternalism - these were some of the many tensions within American imperialist ideology, tensions that can be analyzed through an institution like the National Zoo. Cincinnati's work, for example, suggests that through interactions with the international wildlife trade, zoo officials in New York City and Washington, D.C. walked a line between leadership and exploitation; by acquiring animals from other nations, were they collecting or trafficking? Advancing science or profit? Education or entertainment? In Cincinnati's words, zoos' role in crafting an international wildlife protection movement revealed "the complex webs of scientific authority, market capitalism, imperialism, and violence that shaped the politics of environmental reform and American international organizations during the early twentieth century."¹¹

The two other important dissertations for this topic are Elizabeth Hanson's "Nature Civilized" and Daniel Vandersommers' "Laboratories, Lyceums, Lords." While neither dissertation focuses on international institutions, they both include very useful chapters or sections that deal with the "complex webs" Cincinnati discusses. Though Hanson's work sets out to be a "cultural history of American Zoos," it ultimately becomes a history of animal acquisition in American popular culture - public awareness, enthusiasm, and even participation in the

¹¹ Cincinnati, "Arks for Empires."

process of bringing animals to the zoo. Toward this end, her dissertation offers useful research into certain international areas. To start, she details the donation of animals to zoos by members of the public, from Americans both at home and abroad. Hanson suggests that some of these donations were made to dispose of animals or make money, but that many of them were motivated by an eager, amateur naturalism, and growing public interest in science and zoology. Her analysis does not make any distinction between the average Americans who donated domestic animals, and the United States military and government officials who facilitated animal acquisitions from their stations abroad.¹² It may be true that Americans at home and abroad shared in a popular culture newly enchanted by nature and science, but it would also be revealing to examine the distinct reasons why a South Dakota postmaster, an American soldier in the Philippines, or a United States diplomat in the Middle East would endeavor to help the National Zoo. This I will discuss in Chapters two and three.

Hanson also deals with the dynamics of international animal trade during the nineteenth century and discusses international animal expeditions by the National Zoo between the first and second world wars. In both of these areas, she provides insightful research into how American zoos benefited from the social structures and lines of transportation set up by European powers in Africa and Asia. Colonial commerce dictated ease of access into the living resources of ‘exotic’ regions, and a well established animal trade was critical to a well-supported zoological expedition. Hanson emphasizes the importance of local infrastructures in facilitating zoos’ animal acquisition; the presence or absence of colonial bureaucracies and native communities who understood the value of wildlife as a commodity to Western collectors.¹³ In Hanson’s work, there is a gap between the her study of the international animal trade of the late nineteenth

¹² Hanson, *Nature Civilized*, 75-133.

¹³ Hanson, *Nature Civilized*, 180, 236-238.

century, and her research on zoological expeditions starting in the mid 1920s. Those few decades at the turn of the century were critical, and this gap in Hanson's timeline is one of the reasons I chose to focus my research on the period 1890-1910.

Daniel Vandersommers' dissertation on the National Zoo has been the most important secondary source for this thesis. His argument involves the role of the Zoo transforming humanism, changing Americans' relationship to nature, and laying the foundation in popular culture for later environmental and animal rights movements. Although his conclusions are primarily about cultural and intellectual history, and his research covers less international material than Hanson's, his work contributes a significant amount of institutional history of the National Zoo's early decades. In particular, this thesis will draw on Vandersommers' detailed writing about the various people who supported or operated the zoo, the congressional debates and newspaper commentaries around the zoo's founding in 1889, and the career of the zoo's superintendent, Frank Baker, who was also a professor at Georgetown University. Perhaps more importantly, his work demonstrated the value of studying the National Zoo, as a site where social and political ideas were mediated both publically and privately through science and entertainment.¹⁴ It was in the context of Vandersommers' dissertation that I was able to conduct my own research at the Smithsonian Archives, where the National Zoo's records are stored.

The National Zoo's records at the Smithsonian Archives are extensive, and contain a variety of material related to the zoo's international connections. These include studies done by the National Zoo of other zoos throughout Europe, especially of their layout and design, and publications by the international zoological community. They also include a host of correspondence with scientists, business people, and government officials from other countries. The most intriguing primary source I found in the archives was a pamphlet distributed in 1899 to

¹⁴ Vandersommers, "Laboratories, Lyceums, Lords."

all of the diplomatic and military officers of the United States government stationed abroad called “Animals Desired for the National Zoological Park.”¹⁵ This pamphlet inspired me to look at the National Zoo’s annual reports listing all animals acquired by the Zoo each year, from where, and through whom. Thus, the National Zoo’s international animal acquisition methods became the focus of my research.

Investigating animal acquisitions from outside the United States brought me from the international world back to Washington, D.C., and even to the Georgetown University Archives; the international angle leading back to the domestic. In trying to understand the process by which the National Zoo created an internationally representative collection of animals at the turn of the century, a new set of questions emerged about government bureaucracy, science, and Washington politics during this period. What did an association with the federal government mean for the National Zoo, and vice versa? The resulting thesis tells a story that is as much about the federal government in the Progressive Era as it is about zoos.

Argument

I will argue that the National Zoo’s relationship with the federal government during its first two decades, 1887-1910, altered both the Zoo’s goals and the ways it sought to fulfill them. When Congress established a national zoo in 1899, it participated in the zoo movement but created an institution that was different from any other American zoo; the National Zoo was part of a larger federal bureaucracy, and this proved both a blessing and a curse. Chapter One will show how the tension between the National Zoo’s local and federal connections created significant obstacles in funding and oversight, and contributed toward reshaping the Zoo’s mission. I will argue that while this local-federal divide contributed to an expanded vision of

¹⁵ “Animals Desired for the National Zoological Park,” Record Unit 74, Box 121, Folder 16, Smithsonian Institution Archives (hereafter SIA).

what the Zoo's animal collections should include, it also saddled the Zoo with a very limited budget that prevented it from engaging in the existing international animal trade. This created a need for the Zoo to creatively adapt; to work around limited resources and find novel ways of acquiring animals from outside the United States.

Although its status as a federal institution created obstacles for the National Zoo, it was the federal bureaucracy that in fact provided a way for the Zoo to overcome the challenge of animal acquisition. In Chapter Two I will show that between 1899 and 1908, the Smithsonian succeeded in mobilizing the State Department, Army, and Navy to collect animals from around the world on the National Zoo's behalf. I will argue that the Zoo benefited from an expanding American presence abroad to improve its collections and meet its nationalistic mission, but that the de-facto specimen collection network it set up made significant compromises of professionalism, efficiency, and animal welfare.

The American officials abroad who collected animals for the National Zoo included a wide variety of government workers: diplomats, scientists, consular officers, soldiers. Chapter Three will argue that their collective effort to aid the Zoo represented a Progressive Era expansion of both the American bureaucracy and the American international position. Further, I will argue that while these collectors projected a variety of American identities in their stations abroad, all of these identities engaged with nature, its domination, and its exhibition.

My final chapter will demonstrate that by 1907, with the aid of United States officials abroad, the National Zoo had become an impressive decoration for the American capital, contributing to the prestige of American science and government. That year, the National Zoo hosted an international gathering of zoologists in Washington. I will argue that this event marked the successful growth of the National Zoo and exemplified the scientifically racist ideas of the

Zoo's administrators and supporters. I will make the case that the event represented a peak moment in the American zoo movement and in American Progressive Era ideology about civilization, nature, race, and empire.

I: “Animals Desired for the National Zoological Park”
Founding the Zoo and Building its Collections,
1887-1889

“There is at the capital a National Zoological Park,” announced Samuel Pierpont Langley, Secretary of the Smithsonian, in a circular sent to all officers of the United States stationed abroad in 1899. These officers were perhaps unaware that ten years earlier, an act of Congress had established a zoo “for the advancement of science and the instruction and recreation of the people.”¹⁶ One reason Langley may have felt the need to inform them of the Zoo’s very existence was that the Zoo, in its first decade, had not reached the heights of other, more impressive American zoos. Langley meant to change this. The park, he promised in his circular, “shall be to America what the zoological gardens of London, Paris, and Berline are to their respective countries.” Not only would it be “especially rich in our native American animals,” but it would “also contain specimens from all parts of the world.” Langley presented this grand vision of the National Zoo in the future tense - as of yet, he frankly explained, the park’s collections were “far from adequate as an exhibit in a national institution.” The officers who read the circular were in a position to help improve this situation. If they participated in animal collection, not only could they have their names displayed to the public on the cages of the animals they donated and printed in the Smithsonian’s annual report; they could contribute a valuable public service to the nation.¹⁷

The circular detailed the most desirable species for the National Zoo in multiple regions of the world. Wrote Langley, “the new possessions of the United States are comparatively poor in animals, but it is especially desirable to have as full a representation as possible.” He outlined

¹⁶ “National Zoological Park,” Smithsonian Institution Archives, accessed February 7, 2017, <https://siarchives.si.edu/history/national-zoological-park>.

¹⁷ “Animals Desired for the National Zoological Park,” SIA, Record Unit 74, Box 121, Folder 16.

the most desirable species of each new region, accompanied by pictures. Cuba and Porto Rico offered flamingos, pelicans, boas, lizards, and crocodile, among other species. The Philippine Islands could provide deer, wild hog, bats, and rats. “Especially important” were the flying lemur, the tarsier, and the tamarin - a small wild buffalo found of the island Mindoro. The circular went far beyond new American territories, however. The zoo would welcome sloths, jaguars, and iguanas from Central America, armadillo from South America, cheetah and gazelles from Asia, giraffes, zebras, and gorillas from Africa, kangaroos from Australia, parrots from New Zealand (see Figures 1.1 and 1.2).¹⁸

This Chapter will lay out how the National Zoo’s mission in regard to its animal collections changed from 1887 to 1899, when Langley wrote this circular. It will show how the taxidermy department in the National Museum developed into the Department of Living animals, and then into the National Zoological Park, and finally matured into a traditional zoo. In order to be planned, approved, funded, and constructed, the National Zoo had to survive the gauntlet of House and Senate debate and endure the special curse of being an expense the federal government shared with the city of Washington. During this process, the Smithsonian was forced to abandon its original preservationist vision -- the Zoos a reserve for endangered North American species -- in order to accommodate the more popular American ideas and expectations about nature and animals demanded by a ‘national’ institution for a democratic country. I will argue that because it was a project not just for the Smithsonian, not just for the city, but for “the people,” the National Zoological Park became a much more traditional zoo than its founders had hoped it would be. As such, the zoo’s animal collection priorities changed, becoming more ambitious and more difficult to achieve with its spartan federal budget. Further, I will argue that these changes in the animal collections of the National Zoo during the 1890s reflected competing

¹⁸ “Animals Desired for the National Zoological Park.”

American ideas about nature and the role of government, and matched a broader expansion in the public imagination of what constituted the ‘American’ animal kingdom. This chapter will demonstrate why, in 1899, the National Zoological Park demanded a global collection of animals, and why its leaders needed to find creative, affordable ways of acquiring them. Chapter Two, “In Response to Your Circular,” will then explore these ‘alternative’ methods of international specimen collection.

The Smithsonian and the Zoo

Before the Smithsonian’s animal collections expanded from North American species to include international ones, they first had to make the leap from dead to living. At the National Museum in the 1880s, the purpose of keeping living specimens was to study their movement so it could be recreated when the animal was killed, stuffed, and positioned in a dramatic display. The animals that weren’t killed and preserved were shipped off to the Philadelphia Zoo.¹⁹

The museum’s chief taxidermist, William Temple Hornaday, was one of the key players in founding the National Zoological Park. His career at the Smithsonian and his involvement with the Zoo epitomized a critical shift in nineteenth century American thinking about nature and animals. Originally tasked with preserving animals through taxidermy, Hornaday came to appreciate a new meaning of ‘preservation’ in his work. In 1886, he travelled west on a mission to hunt, kill, and stuff specimens of American bison for the Smithsonian. This trip allowed him to witness first-hand the dramatic depletion of the bison population caused by the extension of railroads and unregulated hunting. He returned to Washington with an understanding that the twenty-five bison he shot were some of the last remaining on the continent, and was determined to save not only them, but also the elk, the moose, the caribou, the mountain goat, and the black-

¹⁹ “National Zoological Park,” Smithsonian Institution Archives, <https://siarchives.si.edu/history/national-zoological-park>.

tailed deer. He hoped that the Smithsonian could become a home for living, breeding North American species that were threatened by the imminent closing of the frontier. Its curations should include living animals, not just the dusty, glass-eyed remnants of a vanishing American past.²⁰

Hornaday and his colleagues at the Smithsonian first imagined the National Zoo as a zoological preservation project, distinct from other American zoos that served simply as urban pleasure grounds. Its animal collections would therefore be very different from a traditional zoo. In 1887, Hornaday set up a prototype for the project within the National Museum called the Department of Living Animals. Initially a small paddock with a handful of bison on the National Mall next the Smithsonian Castle, the Department grew to include dozens of specimens of North American fauna, attracting crowds of curious Washington residents. Meanwhile, Hornaday, with Secretary of the Smithsonian Samuel Pierpont Langley and Assistant Secretary George Brown Goode, began to lobby Congress to appropriate federal money for the establishment of a National Zoological Park. The Department had been a successful practical demonstration of public interest in a live collection. It was time to turn their “little try-out zoo” into a fully fledged institution.²¹

As debate began in Congress around establishing a National Zoo, the Smithsonian began surveying the grounds of Rock Creek Park. The plans for the Zoo were unique, and reflected a

²⁰ Helen L. Horowitz, “The National Zoological Park: “City of Refuge” or Zoo?” *Records of the Columbia Historical Society, Washington, D.C.* 49 (1974): 409, 411, 412; For detailed analysis of the process of the zoo’s founding, congressional approval, and the evolution of the zoo’s mission, see Horowitz, James M. Burnes, “The People’s Zoo: William M. Mann, The National Zoo, and the Birth of American Wildlife Conservation, 1889-1960” (PhD diss., Lamar University, 2012), 9-29, James Andrew Dolph, “Bringing Wildlife to the Millions: William Temple Hornaday the Early Years: 1854-1896” (PhD diss., University of Massachusetts, 1975), 566-648, and Daniel Vandersommers, “Laboratories, Lyceums, Lords: The National Zoological Park and the Transformation of Humanism in Nineteenth-Century America” (PhD diss., Ohio State University, 2014), 76-118.

²¹ Dolph, “Bringing Wildlife to the Millions,” 569; Horowitz, “The National Zoological Park,” 412.

new conception of wildlife. Whereas other American zoos consisted of around ten to forty acres, the National Zoo would hold over 166 acres of land, much of which would remain unaltered. Only forty acres would be open to the public, and the rest would be a preserve area where North American mammals could live and reproduce relatively undisturbed, except for research and necessary care. Even in the public area, the hope was to create a naturalistic environment in which animals were integrated into the landscape. Unlike zoos in New York, Philadelphia, and Cincinnati, and the European zoos they imitated, the Zoon Rock Creek would eschew elaborate architecture and theatrical displays. Rather than bringing animals into an artificial, urban space, it would attempt to bring humans into a natural environment. The institution would accommodate some aspects of traditional zoological gardens, but it would prioritize preservation and scientific study. According to zoo historian Helen Horowitz, what the National Zoo borrowed from the Old World was not zoo design but the aesthetic of the game preserve: a sprawling, verdant estate neither tame nor overly wild.²²

This initial plan was not fully realized when the National Zoo finally came into being, but it is important to include because it illuminates what the founders' animal collection priorities were, how they changed, and why. It is no coincidence that the aesthetic of the hunting ground went hand in hand with the goal of animal preservation. By designing such a project, the founders expressed their conception of animals as natural resources, concomitant with the nascent ideology of the progressive conservationists. This ideology was concerned with the proper use of natural resources and the scientific management of the natural world through expert planning and policy-making. It embraced both love of nature and love of the hunt. It grew out of nostalgia for the fading frontier, ambivalence toward urbanization and environmental destruction, and a changing view of capital that moved away from earlier, extractive industrial

²² Horowitz, "The National Zoological Park," 415, 407-408, 417.

growth and toward the long-term, efficient management of assets. To the men of the Smithsonian, wild animals were one of America's important scientific, economic, and cultural assets.

The National Zoo's founders did not attempt to draw lines around the existing Western habitats of bison and other animals, and instead planned to construct a new environment in which the longevity of the species could be supervised and controlled. Their plan typified the conservationist love for a disappearing American "arcadia," with its simultaneous enthusiasm for applied science, strong government, and the gospel of efficiency. Government could provide decisive, expert leadership to rationally solve environmental problems, advancing the public interest through centrally powerful federal agencies and national commissions.²³

Samuel Hays characterized the conservationist vision as "Jeffersonian ends through Hamiltonian means." The original plan for the National Zoo was an early rendition of that vision. It represented a desire to preserve "American virtues of the past," specifically, the cardinal virtue of free, open land, by using methods of scientific management "abundantly appropriate to the present."²⁴ By emphasizing North American wildlife, the plan particularized the zoo movement to the American identity. It also, according to Horowitz, presented an "alternative" to the usual ways Americans were used to experiencing wild animals. They would neither perform, nor serve as ornaments in a decorative, urban setting. Instead, they would merely exist and breed, and "only incidentally" be seen. That the zoo's emphasis was not on public display indicated that its founders valued animals not for entertainment, but for their place in the natural order, and their economic worth.²⁵

²³ Samuel P. Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency; the Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), 261-276, quotation on 269.

²⁴ Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency*, 269.

²⁵ Horowitz, "The National Zoological Park," 427-428.

Congress and the Zoo

The congressional debate over establishing and funding the National Zoological Park began in 1889 and continued through 1891. During this period, Congress significantly altered the zoo's mission, its animal collection goals, and the resources it had to accomplish these goals. Neither Langley nor Hornaday let go of their original vision willingly, but the zoo's status as a federal institution meant that its mission was subject to Congress' discretion. The zoo could not be insulated from the will of the people, whose ideas about animals and nature were not necessarily aligned with the government scientists and bureaucrats who put the zoo into motion.

Because the Smithsonian was a federal institution, it needed Congressional approval to construct and administer a National Zoo.²⁶ It took two sessions of Congress, 1888 and 1889, to authorize a Commission to purchase land for the Zoo and begin the design, but the structure of the zoo's funding was not finalized until 1891 because of disagreements between the House and Senate over the purpose of the zoo.²⁷ The Senate was more amenable to the Smithsonian's vision of the Zoo as a preservation project, which would also serve "the advancement of science and the instruction and recreation of the people."²⁸ The majority in the Senate had no difficulty seeing the Zoo the way Langley did, as an extension of the National Museum and the Smithsonian. Horowitz explains that to the Senators, the Zoo's and the Museum's goals were one and the same - to advance science. Both operated under the Smithsonian's Board of Regents, so their authority was the same. Therefore, their means of support should be the same -- the federal government. A

²⁶ Vandermommers, "Laboratories, Lyceums, Lords," 82.

²⁷ Horowitz, "The National Zoological Park," 412.

²⁸ "National Zoological Park," Smithsonian Institution Archives; William Jones Rhees, ed., *The Smithsonian Institution: Documents Relative to its Origin and History, 1835-1899, Vol. II* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901), 1149.

zoo in Washington served federal purposes: to give American scientists access to animals for research, and to remind American lawmakers of the importance of wildlife preservation.²⁹

The National Zoo was much less popular in the House. Some were opposed to its creation entirely, while others saw it more as a local, municipal project than a national institution. Southern Democrats in particular saw the federal government's foray into zoo building as an absurd extension of power that might contribute to increasing taxes. The zoo's supporters in the House saw the value of a federal zoo, but they also recognized the zoo's utility for the District, as a local pleasure ground for city residents. The Organic Act of 1878 had established that District public works would be voted on by Congress and supported half through federal funds and half through District taxes. Rather than seeing the Zoo as a natural extension of the Smithsonian's mission, they saw it as an improper way to carry out the original bequest from James Smithson that had established the institution. In their view, Washington should have to pay for its own zoo like any other city.³⁰

The debate over whether or not the District should share the cost of the Zoo with the federal government revealed the range of ideas that existed among national politicians about nature and animals. To many in the Senate, a National Zoo made sense both practically, for advancing science, and symbolically; they agreed with Hornaday's view that a zoological garden represented "the high-water mark of civilization and progress," providing an image of man's rational mastery over his environment.³¹ The zoo would contribute toward the United States' ascension in global politics by creating a scientific and cultural institution on par with the zoos of European cities.

²⁹ Horowitz, "The National Zoological Park," 418, 413, 414.

³⁰ Horowitz, "The National Zoological Park," 414.

³¹ Elizabeth Anne Hanson, *Animal Attractions: Nature on Display in American Zoos* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 39; Jeffrey R Stott, "The American Idea of a Zoological Park: An Intellectual History" (PhD diss., University of California Santa Barbara, 1981), 21.

Representatives in the House also saw the zoo's connection to the old world, but viewed it in a negative light. Animals were associated with Europe's aristocratic tendencies, the arrogance and ego of royalty, which had no place in the United States. Representative Bland, known as "Silver Dick" for his support of bimetallism, opposed the zoological park because it was "not in the interest of science in any manner, but simply in the interest of curiosity" to the powers in Washington; he called it an "aristocratic measure."³² Representative Stockdale of Mississippi agreed, stating that such a zoo in the capital "does not sound like republicanism. It echoes like royalty."³³ Representative McMillan also saw animals as an aristocratic indulgence, but he also associated them to the low culture entertainment of dog and pony shows, circuses, and carnivals. The following statement from McMillan demonstrated his view that a zoo was acceptable for local government but not national; it was both above and below American dignity:

Barnum is to have a new rival in his "animal industry," and the people of the United States who can not get to Washington are to "pay the fiddler" for others' dancing. Gibbon tells us love of the circus and fights of wild beasts characterized the degeneracy of the Romans. To gratify this morbid fondness for display of wild beasts one of Rome's distinguished statesmen urged Cicero to hurry and send to the "Eternal City" the tigers, lions, etc., necessary for his approaching show. Are we following in their footsteps and anxious to imitate their decline?³⁴

To the Senate, there was no reason that a zoo should not be funded by the federal government, even if it was located in Washington. After all, plenty of federally funded institutions took up space in the city. A zoo in the American capital would serve the national interest, in the same way that national monuments would a decade later, through the McMillan Plan. Not only should Washington be on par with European cities, it should also hold its own against American ones. Representative Foran, a zoo supporter in the House, referred the Central

³² Rhees, *The Smithsonian Institution*, 1164.

³³ *Congressional Record Containing The Proceedings and Debates of the Fiftieth Congress, First Session, Volume XIX* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1888), 7499; Dolph, "Bringing Wildlife to the Millions," 591-592.

³⁴ Rhees, *The Smithsonian Institution*, 1196.

Park zoo as “the one bright spot” in what he called the “desert of misery and selfishness” of New York. If New York could have a zoo, surely Washington could as well.³⁵ Moreover, unlike other American zoos, a National Zoo would have international stature, and be able to receive the “gifts and treasures” of other nations on behalf of the entire country, not a singular city. Senator McComas made this point, arguing:

If it is to be national in its scope... then make it national. Make it so that it can reflect something of the grandeur of a great nation. Why, the people of the world had just as soon send such things to Chicago, or Baltimore, or Philadelphia, if these institutions are to be merely local in their character.”³⁶

In the end, the House refused to compromise. In order to establish a National Zoo, the Senate agreed to accept the House’s terms: the Zoo would be funded half through federal money, half through District taxes. This was finalized in the 1891 appropriation for the zoo, which also cut its budget significantly.³⁷ The resolution of this debate not only demonstrated competing opinions about the relationship of D.C. with the federal government and the role of government in general; it also exemplified competing American ideas about animals and nature, their purpose, their utility to the nation and its public. Popular attitudes toward animals still viewed them as objects of entertainment or as ornaments of wealth. As yet, there was no consensus around the inherent value of wildlife, or around a conservationist notion of animals as an economic asset and natural resource, to be preserved and protected. The Congressional debate over the Zoo illustrated the dynamic priorities that influenced the shape of the zoo’s animal collections during this early period of its history. It was also correlated with the relative populism of the House versus the Senate. This fight can be read, crudely, as a difference of opinion between elites and the broader public.

³⁵ Rhees, *The Smithsonian Institution*, 1161.

³⁶ Rhees, *The Smithsonian Institution*, 1376.

³⁷ Horowitz, “The National Zoological Park,” 418.

The Zoo Changes Course

By settling the question of funding in 1891, Congress forced Secretary Langley to change the mission of the Zoo and the direction of its planning. Up until this point, Langley had operated under the assumption that the zoo's connection with the District was a temporary arrangement, so had continued with the original vision of the park as nature preserve. Once it became clear that the park would permanently rely on the District for half of its funding, and that the total budget Congress appropriated would be scarcely adequate to support the park's basic necessities, he accepted that changes would have to be made. He drafted a memorandum to the Smithsonian's Board of Regents that outlined a critical revision of the park's purpose.³⁸ The new mission maintained the goal to conduct research, but the once "subordinate" recreational features of the park would now become its chief priority. The non-public areas for animal preservation were completely abandoned, along with other reductions in building plans, staff, and maintenance.

Langley recognized that the best strategy for gradually increasing the park's funding was to enlarge the zoo's purpose to focus on securing a wide variety of specimens for public enjoyment, rather than only North American wildlife.³⁹ In order to enlist public approval and enthusiasm, the zoo's collections needed to include the classic animal species that "defined the zoo in the public mind." The bison would now play second-fiddle to lions, tigers, and elephants. In the memorandum, Langley acknowledged, grudgingly, that by taking funding from the District, the Zoo had a new obligation to satisfy local expectations. He wrote,

The moral right of the people of the District to ask consideration of their wishes for entertainment in return for the outlay which falls upon them can not be questioned, and so far as this could be recognized it introduced a tendency to provide an establishment more

³⁸ Horowitz, "The National Zoological Park," 415, 419-420.

³⁹ "National Zoological Park," Smithsonian Institution Archives.

like an ordinary zoological garden, or permanent menagerie, than the comparatively inexpensive scheme at first contemplated.⁴⁰

The zoo's change in mission also had consequences for the leadership of the park.

Before Congress had even finalized the appropriation for the park in 1891, Hornaday resigned. He left the Zoo in May, 1890, likely because he saw the direction the project was taking. There is no definitive evidence about his motivations for leaving the National Zoo, but the zoo's historians and Hornaday's biographers have persuasive theories. One major factor seems to have been the cool relationship between Hornaday and Langley. Langley was known as a stern, formal man, who exercised extremely tight control over the park's development. He insisted that all decisions, however minor, went through his approval.⁴¹ Hornaday had enjoyed a much more productive relationship with the previous Secretary of the Smithsonian, Spencer Fullerton Baird, who died in 1887 just as the National Zoo idea was taking shape. For the passionate, adventurous Hornaday, the bureaucracy of Langley's Smithsonian may have been stifling. Their differences in background may also have contributed to a mutual lack of respect. Langley was a well-educated astronomer from an old Massachusetts family, a credentialed, elite, academic man.⁴² Hornaday was born in an Indiana farmhouse and left Iowa State without earning a degree to pursue a career in naturalism. He was incredibly accomplished in his field of taxidermy, but he was an adventurer, not a bureaucrat. For Langley's part, it seems that he didn't think Hornaday had the administrative experience to run a federal institution.⁴³

⁴⁰ *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1891* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1893), 22-23.

⁴¹ Horowitz, "The National Zoological Park," 420-421.

⁴² "Samuel P. Langley: Aviation Pioneer," Smithsonian Libraries.
<http://www.sil.si.edu/ondisplay/langley/intro.htm>

⁴³ On a clipping of a newspaper editorial that speculated he left because he did not fit in with Smithsonian bureaucrats, Hornaday wrote "very accurate." Dolph, "Bringing Wildlife to the Millions," 1, 35, 639; Vandersommers, "Laboratories, Lyceums, Lords," 114-117.

Although there was friction between Langley and Hornaday, it may be that the more important causes of Hornaday's departure was the park's situation in Congress. He may well have stuck it out given the opportunity and resources to carry out his full vision of wildlife preservation. Instead, he worked for a time in real estate in Buffalo, New York, before taking a position in 1896 as Director of the newly founded New York Zoological Park (known as the Bronx Zoo).⁴⁴ This New York Zoo was generously funded by municipal and private coffers, and backed by the Boone and Crockett Club set, including Henry Fairfield Osborn, Madison Grant, and Theodore Roosevelt. At the helm of an institution with much deeper pockets and much less oversight, Hornaday hoped he could fulfill his vision more effectively. So it happened that the original vision for the National Zoo, and its champion, William Temple Hornaday, were both driven out of Washington by what Horowitz calls the "willfulness of government."⁴⁵

Shortly after Hornaday's resignation in 1890, Langley hired Dr. Frank Baker as temporary manager of the National Zoo.⁴⁶ Baker was a professor of anatomy at Georgetown University, Assistant Superintendent of the United States Life Saving Service (later called the United States Coast Guard), and a prominent member of the Washington scientific establishment. He was perhaps best known at the time for his involvement in treating President Garfield's bullet wound in 1881.⁴⁷ Though trained in anatomical sciences, Baker was an enthusiastic student of anthropology and naturalism, and was lifelong friends with both John

⁴⁴ Horowitz, "The National Zoological Park," 420; Dolph, "Bringing Wildlife to the Millions," 670.

⁴⁵ Helen L. Horowitz, "Animal and Man in the New York Zoological Park," *New York History* 56, no. 4 (1975): 428. 426-455.

⁴⁶ Vandersommers, "Laboratories, Lyceums, Lords," 117.

⁴⁷ Baker's many activities in the Washington Scientific community included being One of the founders of the Biological, Anthropological, and Medical History societies of Washington, president of the Association of American Anatomists (1897), the Anthropological Society of Washington (1897-98), the Medical History Club of Washington (1915-16), secretary of the Washington Academy of Sciences (1890-1911), editor of the *American Anthropologist* (1891-98), and one of the collaborators of Biling's *National Medical Dictionary* (1890). He also had a substantial portfolio of published scientific papers.

Burroughs and Walt Whitman, whom he met while all three worked at the United States treasury after the Civil War. One Baker biographer noted that in contrast to these two, Baker possessed the “departmental temperament” of a government worker.⁴⁸ This undoubtedly helped his career at the National Zoo.

Unlike Hornaday, Baker handled Langley’s strict oversight well, and turned his temporary position into a twenty-six year career as superintendent of the National Zoo. While Langley continued for the rest of his life to oppose the transformation of the National Zoological Park into a completely traditional zoo, Baker brought much-needed enthusiasm for the park’s new mission. Baker wanted to acquire as many traditional zoo animals as possible, and over time learned to operate within his narrow authority and limited budget to carefully and skillfully improve the Zoo and its collections.⁴⁹ Baker was just the bureaucrat the National Zoo needed to negotiate the practical challenges of building a collection of animals to meet a diverse range of priorities and expectations.

Animal Collection for the Zoo

From 1891 through 1899, when Langley penned “Animals Desired for the National Zoological Park,” he and Baker faced significant practical challenges in growing the zoo’s animal collections. Congress granted the Zoo only around half of its requested budget, which had itself been “on the most economical scale.”⁵⁰ Throughout the 1890s, Congress appropriated to the National Zoo an annual amount of between \$50,000 and \$70,000, averaging around \$57,000 per year.⁵¹ This was significantly less funding than most other American zoos enjoyed. The

⁴⁸ “The Posthumous Papers of Frank Baker,” *Medical Life* 28, no. 12 (1921): 615.

⁴⁹ Horowitz, “The National Zoological Park,” 427, 426.

⁵⁰ *Annual Report, 1891*, 22-23.

⁵¹ The 2017 equivalent of this budget range would be approximately \$1.5 million to \$2 million. “Consumer Price Index (Estimate),” Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis,

Central Park menagerie, for example, included an area of only about ten acres, and its budget for the “general maintenance” of its collections was around \$35,000 in 1891.⁵² That year, for the National Zoo which held 167 acres, Congress granted only \$17,500 in the category of “general maintenance.”⁵³ The Zoos in Cincinnati and Philadelphia each included around 40 acres of land, and had budgets for “general maintenance” of at least \$45,000 in 1891.⁵⁴ The Panic of 1893, the Spanish American War (1898) and the Philippine-American War (1899) made the 1890s a period of economic downturn and limited Congressional spending, with little room for serious expenditures on a project like the National Zoo.⁵⁵

Langley was correct in stating that the original scheme for the National Zoo would have been “comparatively inexpensive” relative to the new and expanded mission of the park’s collections.⁵⁶ During Hornaday’s tenure, he acquired North American animals fairly easily and at low cost to the Smithsonian. The first specimens in the Department of Living Animals included foxes, bears, deer, badgers, prairie dogs, and lynxes. Some Hornaday collected himself while travelling through Minnesota, Dakota, Montana, Washington Territory, Oregon, Utah, and Wyoming. Others he received as donations from interested citizens across the country. According to Vandersommers, the cost of transporting these animals was very reasonable in the

<https://www.minneapolisfed.org/community/teaching-aids/cpi-calculator-information/consumer-price-index-1800>. Documents relative, 1333, 1572, 1574, 1694, 1739, 1836.

⁵² The equivalent of around \$1 million in 2017. “Consumer Price Index (Estimate).”

⁵³ The equivalent of around \$500,000 in 2017. “Consumer Price Index (Estimate).”

⁵⁴ The equivalent of around \$1.3 million in 2017. “Consumer Price Index (Estimate);” *Annual Report, 1891*, 22-23.

⁵⁵ There is some lack of clarity in the current historiography of the National Zoo about these congressional appropriations; Horowitz claims that Congress expressly forbid the Zoo from spending money to acquire animals, while Burnes claims that Congress never made appropriations for the purchase of animals by the Zoo in the 1890s. However, the records of the Zoo appropriations in these years generally include provisions for the “care, subsistence, purchase, and transportation of animals.” Whether or not Congress expressly allowed or forbid purchases, the indirect effect of the slim appropriations was to prevent the Zoo from making significant animal purchases. Burnes, “The People’s Zoo,” 15-16; Horowitz, “The National Zoological Park,” 418-419; Rhees, *The Smithsonian Institution*, 1836.

⁵⁶ *Annual Report, 1891*, 22-23.

late 1880s and early 1890s, with some railroad companies agreeing to give the Smithsonian discounted rates. As word spread of the Smithsonian's efforts to establish the National Zoo, dozens of animal donations came pouring in from the public, some of which Hornaday was obliged to refuse. Even President Grover Cleveland and his wife Frances donated animals: a spotted fawn and a golden-headed eagle. These specimens were valuable to the Smithsonian as artifacts of North America's unique wildlife populations, but few of them would have fetched high prices in the exotic animal trade. Only occasionally did Hornaday feel the need to actually purchase an animal.⁵⁷

With the expansion of the Zoo's collection priorities, the task of acquiring animals became more difficult. The zoo's budget prevented it from engaging in the international animal trade that supplied other American zoos. By the late nineteenth century, this trade was well established both internationally and in the United States. It was a lucrative business, and newly established zoos constituted only part of the market for animals. Circuses, menageries, trained animal acts, private collectors, and laboratories all purchased animals, and it was their demand that shaped the supply of animals more than zoos. Traders generally invested in exotic and durable animals that could survive transportation and generate public excitement. Often these animals were sold in packages, with a group of five to ten specimens of a variety of species -- bears, elephants, lions, or other large cats -- selling for several thousand dollars.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Vandersommers, "Laboratories, Lyceums, Lords," 33, 38, 60-61, 81, 41, 65.

⁵⁸ Hanson's *Animal Attractions* provides 1913 prices from the German animal dealer Carl Hagenbeck and the American dealer I.S. Horne: \$4,000 for a group of five polar bears, two brown bears, and three black bears; \$4,250 for one Indian elephant, two white camels, one stallion, one collie dog, and one Rhesus Monkey; \$5,000 for one African lion, two African lionesses, two pumas, and two brown bears. The 2017 equivalent of these figures would be approximately \$150,000. Hanson, *Animal Attractions*, 73-74, 81; "Consumer Price Index (Estimate)."

At times, the National Zoo could not even afford to bring animals to Washington that were donated freely to the collections. Langley discussed this obstacle in the Smithsonian's annual report for 1891:

From Sumatra, from the islands of the Pacific, from the shores of Alaska, and from our own national parks, have come offers of gifts or terms of purchase, but I regret to say that it has been necessary to defer acceptance of all these offers owing to lack of funds even to pay transportation.⁵⁹

By the following year, the Zoo was even having trouble producing a “valuable and characteristic” collection of North American Fauna, let alone procuring a globally representative one. Langley fully expected the current collections, moreover, to be depleted by annual animal deaths at a rate of twenty to thirty percent.⁶⁰

The National Zoo did develop some potential ways to work around its limited budget in the early 1890s. It seems that because it wasn't generally expected that the Zoo would have sufficient funds for animal purchases, the zoo's founders planned from the beginning to use the products of successful breeding as currency -- to exchange a young bison or elk for a kangaroo or an ostrich.⁶¹ However, the zoo's annual reports do not list any substantial animal exchanges until 1900, after which they became somewhat regular (see table F). The zoo was much more successful in acquiring gifts or, more often, temporary loans from circuses. In April, 1891, the proprietor of the Forepaugh shows, James E. Cooper, gave the National Zoo an Indian elephant named Dunk, and loaned it a companion named Gold Dust.⁶² Then, during the winter season of 1893-1894, the Forepaugh shows loaned the Zoo a collection of seventy-three animals. These visiting specimens generated enormous popular interest in the National Zoo, although they represented the great departure the Zoo had made from its original preservationist vision. The

⁵⁹ *Annual Report, 1891*, 25.

⁶⁰ *Annual Report, 1891*, 45.

⁶¹ Horowitz, “The National Zoological Park,” 417.

⁶² Horowitz, “The National Zoological Park,” 420; Smithsonian Institution Archives. “Indian Elephants Dunk and Gold Dust.” https://siarchives.si.edu/collections/siris_arc_382629.

elephants in particular were emblematic of the traditional dynamics of the Zoo movement in America and Europe, rather than any specifically American way of valuing nature. As Elizabeth Anne Hanson explains,

A zoo with an elephant was a permanent institution, and the elephant was an awe-inspiring attraction, a model citizen, and a “handsome municipal ornament.” It was big enough to represent all the animals in the Zoo and to make that institution an emblem of civic pride, a symbol of the city’s human population and its potential.⁶³

Growing the American Animal Kingdom

There was clearly some tension, ambivalence, or disappointment among the zoo’s founders about its limited budget and modified mission. The original preservationist plan had been an exciting, modern idea, but fell apart into a much more modest and traditional zoological project. While the prioritization of ‘exotic’ animals may have seemed rooted in the past, with the old-fashioned notion of the menagerie, there were also some very modern reasons for the American public to favor foreign animals. In a decade that culminated in a peak moment of expansionism, animal curiosities fed a growing appetite for the material artifacts of empire.

In 1893, the United States Senate declined to take any action on a proposed treaty for the annexation of Hawaii.⁶⁴ Five years later, the United States not only annexed Hawaii, but also gained the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico in the Spanish-American War, and also Cuba as an American protectorate.⁶⁵ Over the course of the 1890s, the drive to expand internationally became more urgent as American industry burst its seams and pushed outward for new markets. Once, extra-continental holdings had been considered dangerous for the health of the Republic. By the turn of the century, a new consensus dictated that expansion would alleviate the

⁶³ Hanson, *Animal Attractions*, 69.

⁶⁴ William Michael Morgan, *Pacific Gibraltar: U.S.-Japanese Rivalry over the Annexation of Hawai’i, 1885-1898* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2011), 114-115; Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1963), 408.

⁶⁵ LaFeber, *The New Empire*, 408

economic, social, and political ills of the industrial revolution, and that the United States needed to establish strategic bases abroad to compete with European encroachment into Asia and Latin America.⁶⁶

Also in 1893, Frederick Jackson Turner presented his infamous thesis, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History.” This popularized a belief that the vitality of the country’s character and political institutions depended upon the acquisition of free and open lands.⁶⁷ At the same time, Americans were travelling farther than ever physically and imaginatively, through the expansion of canals, railroads, steamship lines, trans-pacific cables, travel literature, and grand global pageants like the World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893. In the National Zoo’s first decade, the frontier was closing and “the Atlantic was shrinking” simultaneously.⁶⁸

In this atmosphere, the popular understanding of what constituted the ‘American’ animal kingdom was surely expanding, especially after 1898, when the United States began to exercise control of the natural environments in the Philippines and the Panama Canal Zone.⁶⁹ It was the process of colonialism in Europe that first fueled the establishment of natural history museums across the Western world, and during the nineteenth century both museums and zoos constructed a “cultural geography of colonialism” in which objects were removed from their original contexts and subjected to appropriation and exhibition.⁷⁰

During the Progressive Era, the acquisition of a new set of artifacts was the predictable response to a new set of territorial possessions; collection and curation are typical elements of

⁶⁶ LaFeber, *The New Empire*, 408, 150-151, 412

⁶⁷ LaFeber, *The New Empire*, 65.

⁶⁸ Ian Tyrrell, *Reforming the World: The Creation of America’s Moral Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 2-17.

⁶⁹ Gregory Allen Barton, *Empire Forestry and the Origins of Environmentalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 130-143; Julie Green. *The Canal Builders: Making America’s Empire at the Panama Canal* (New York: Penguin Books, 2009).

⁷⁰ Tim Barringer and Tom Flynn, eds., *Colonialism and the Object: Empire, Material Culture, and the Museum* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 6, 2, 188-189, 13.

the imbalance of power and authority between colonizer and colonized.⁷¹ According to Ian Jared Miller, the insatiable urge to collect, catalog, study, and exhibit flora and fauna was a nineteenth century metropolitan response to the “stunning biodiversity of newly colonized ecosystems.”⁷² In 1899, public expectations of any American zoo, including the Zoo in Washington, would have demanded animals like monkeys, flamingos, elephants, or zebras not simply because these were the kinds of ‘exotic’ animals traditionally displayed in animal menageries and circuses, but also because they were associated with an increasing sense of American ownership over the natural environment of the entire Western hemisphere, and to some extent, the world. This was the appetite that the National Zoo was pushed to satisfy in the 1890s with its animal collections.

Conclusion

By establishing a zoo, the Smithsonian expanded the notion of curation and collection to include living specimens, and incorporated conservation into its mission. In doing so, it expressed an emerging American progressive ideology around nature and the role of government. The nation’s natural resources included the continent’s wildlife, and animal populations such as the bison could be saved through effective, scientific management. Further, it was a proper use of federal power to intervene and protect wildlife in this way. The Smithsonian’s initial vision for the National Zoological Park presented a new framework in which to understand and experience animals and nature -- not necessarily as inherently valuable things, but certainly as economic, scientific, and cultural assets, tied to a national identity that was increasingly defined by romantic nostalgia for American nature. It was because the

⁷¹ Barringer, *Colonialism and the Object*, 6.

⁷² Ian Jared Miller, *The Nature of the Beasts: Empire and Exhibition at the Tokyo Imperial Zoo* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 7.

Smithsonian was a federal institution that its administrators were empowered to attempt such a project. It was also because it was a federal institution that this original preservation idea died.

The process of Congressional approval and appropriation for the National Zoo resulted in an institution governed by much more traditional zoo priorities. Rather than a powerful, economical, scientifically managed zoological research and preservation park, the National zoo in the 1890s became an underfunded institution struggling to satisfy public expectations. It was a sanctuary neither for North American wildlife nor for the ideology of its progressive leaders. By 1899, the Zoo needed a new way to build its animal collections and its reputation. It needed to find a practical, affordable way to acquire global species, not simply to provide traditional, exotic animal entertainment, but to answer to growing public and scientific curiosity about the natural worlds of new American territorial possessions. The circular “Animals Desired for the National Zoological Park,” attempted to provide a solution by enlisting American officials abroad in a project of international zoological specimen collection.

II: “In Response to Your Circular” The National Zoo’s International Animal Accessions, 1889-1908

In September, 1899, Edwin Sheddan Cunningham, United States Consul to Aden, Arabia, wrote a letter to Secretary of the Smithsonian Samuel Langley.⁷³ “A few days ago,” Cunningham told Langley, “I was off the African coast in a British man of war and I never saw as many birds in the world as I saw along the beach when the tide was low.”⁷⁴

Cunningham had been at his post in Aden for over a year when he received a pamphlet from the Department of State titled “Animals Desired for the National Zoological Park.”⁷⁵ During that time, he had become familiar with region’s wildlife and with the animal trade that flourished there. He wrote to Langley to share this knowledge, and to offer his services in securing specimens for the zoo. Enclosed with his letter was a detailed list of the various species that could be procured in Aden, including kudu, gazelle, lions, leopards, cheetahs, hyena, jackal, and “large land tortoise[s].”⁷⁶ Cunningham knew less about the area’s birds, like the waterfowl he had seen on the beach, but he told Langley that “judging from the frequent visits of taxidermist[s] from the British Museum and other such institutions,” Aden was also a prime place to collect winged specimens.

This letter was the beginning of a fruitful relationship between Cunningham and the National Zoo. Over the next four years, the Consul became a frequent correspondent with the Zoo’s administrators, gathering information, facilitating donations and animal purchases, and boosting awareness and support of the National Zoo in his expatriate social and professional

⁷³ Aden is a port city in Southern Yemen, then under colonial rule as part of British India.

⁷⁴ E.S. Cunningham to Secretary Langley, September 22, 1899, Record Unit 74, Box 92, Folder 7, SIA.

⁷⁵ Cunningham was appointed U.S. Consul to Aden on February 16, 1898. *Register of the Department of State: Corrected to July 1, 1905* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1905), 55.

⁷⁶ E.S. Cunningham to Secretary Langley, September 22, 1899.

circles.⁷⁷ Cunningham was part of an enthusiastic response to Langley's circular that made the National Zoo's international collection efforts quite successful.

This chapter will examine how between 1899 and 1908, the National Zoo utilized the American federal bureaucracy and its growing international reach to increase and improve its animal collections. The zoo set up its own de facto collection network to acquire species from outside the United States through the State Department, Army, and Navy. In doing so, it turned a challenge into a resource; its federal connection became a tool rather than a burden. On behalf of the zoo, the United States government used its diplomatic, military, and naval presence abroad to draw natural resources -- animal specimens -- into Washington D.C., for study and exhibition. The government's practical methods of acquisition for "Animals Desired" did not maintain high levels of professionalism, efficiency, or animal welfare, but they did fulfill the hopes of the National Zoo's administrators. By 1908, the Zoo had acquired more than five hundred animal specimens from abroad. These included over one hundred different species, collected in at least twenty-six different countries and territories through the efforts of more than fifty individual Americans, nearly forty of whom were officers of the United States government (See tables 1 through 5).⁷⁸

The dynamics of this international collection process are a compelling aspect of the National Zoo's history and of the history of the American zoo movement generally, because they reveal one of the ways that these scientific and cultural institutions engaged with the international world in a time of American ascendancy. The diverse individuals involved in the

⁷⁷ "Animals acquired through the United States Department of State, Consular Service members, 1899-1910," Record Unit 74, Box 92, Folder 7, SIA.

⁷⁸ These figures come from the data I have compiled from the National Zoological Park's Annual Reports from the years 1889 through 1908, which list annual animal accessions. These Annual Reports are included within *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution* for the years 1889-1908.

Zoo's international collection network, the various arrangements they made for the acquisition and transportation of specimens, and the obstacles and opportunities they encountered in these efforts shed new light on the internal, institutional history of the National Zoo and the Smithsonian. The links this collection process forged among individuals in various branches of government work, and between American citizens and foreign individuals, constituted a productive way in which the National Zoo and the Smithsonian participated in the expansion of the United States' "informal empire" during the Progressive Era.⁷⁹ Further, American officers' interactions with the specimens they collected revealed a range of attitudes toward animals and their welfare. This investigation will lay the groundwork for my analysis in Chapter Three of the discrete ideas about nature and government at play among the zoo's international collectors.

Enlisting Aid

The "Animals Desired" circular directed its appeal for animals to "officers of the United States on foreign stations," but the international collection efforts it encouraged ultimately involved assistance from a wider range of individuals and groups.⁸⁰ The National Zoo enlisted the aid not only of the Army, Navy, and State Department, but also of other government agencies, private animal dealers, and transportation companies. The circular promised to give "public recognition" to animal donors by placing their names "upon the labels attached to the cages or pens," and making them "a part of the annual report of the Secretary of the Smithsonian," but these records alone did not convey the full range of services rendered to the Zoo during the coordination of these international acquisitions.⁸¹ Bringing animals to the Zoo

⁷⁹ Ian Tyrrell, *Reforming the World: The Creation of America's Moral Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 2.

⁸⁰ "Animals Desired for the National Zoological Park," Record Unit 74, Box 121, Folder 16, SIA.

⁸¹ "Animals Desired for the National Zoological Park."

meant bringing these diverse groups of federal workers and private individuals into communication with each other, from the lowest to the highest rungs of government.

Members of the United States Army and Navy were among the first government officials tasked with collecting animals for the National Zoo, and the majority of their contributions arrived in Washington within the first few years after Langley wrote his circular (See Table 5). In 1899, before the circular had even been printed and distributed, the Navy Department got a head start on fulfilling the zoo's request. The Navy Department instructed Commander Todd, of the U.S.S. *Wilmington*, to make animal collections during his voyage up the Amazon River, from Para, Brazil to Iquitos, Peru, and back to Para.⁸² The results, according to Baker's annual report, were "most satisfactory."⁸³ The *Wilmington* returned to the United States with sixteen specimens, including an Apella monkey, a spider monkey, a squirrel monkey, a Harpy Eagle, and several other species of South American birds.⁸⁴ During the voyage, these were attended to by the crew of the *Wilmington*, especially the ship's assistant surgeon, William Clarendon Cook, who Todd put in charge of the whole collection project. In May, 1899, Cook wrote a letter to Commander Todd with a report of his progress acquiring animals, for which he had been given \$300. So far, he had only needed to spend around \$90; \$70 for the purchase of a tapir in Manaus, Brazil, \$2 for the purchase of a "black howling monkey" in Iquitos, and the rest for materials for caging and feeding the animals. The other specimens Cook collected on the voyage were gifts from American, Brazilian, and Peruvian citizens in the various ports where the *Wilmington* docked. Two Brazilian governors presented animals, and the governor of Para even promised to send

⁸² Chapman Coleman Todd, *Report On Voyage of the U.S.S. Wilmington Up the Amazon River* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1899), 20.

⁸³ *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1899* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901), 56.

⁸⁴ *Annual Report, 1899*.

along more specimens himself, from the Para Zoo.⁸⁵

Baker's annual reports included various other donations from the American navy and military, though no other assortment as large as that from the *Wilmington*. Sometimes he cited an individual major, captain, lieutenant, commander, or general, or alternatively, the entire crew of a Navy vessel. The Army and Navy were often involved secondarily in the transport of animals collected by other government officials. In 1901, for example, Langley wrote to the Quartermaster General to secure transport for a young lion from Aden, Arabia to Washington. Army transports going from the Philippines to New York generally stopped in Aden, which was becoming an important port for animal acquisition. Langley believed that army transports would be a more reliable method of shipping the animals than through private steamship companies. "Forwarding the lion by this means would insure better care for the animal, as well as the saving of expense to the government," he wrote.⁸⁶ These transports continued to retrieve animals, but although members of the Army and Navy continued to make the occasional donation to the zoo, it was the State Department that provided the Zoo with its most significant and consistent accessions after the turn of the century.

State Department officials, especially in the consular service, but also the occasional ambassador, responded quickly and enthusiastically to Langley's circular, sending specimens, observations about local fauna, and information about animal prices and shipping. Some consuls displayed an active interest in collecting animals, but encountered logistical obstacles in either capturing or shipping them. Disappointed officers stationed in Madagascar and Peru, for example, sent their regrets that they could not fulfill the zoo's request despite enthusiastic

⁸⁵ Todd, *Report On Voyage of the U.S.S. Wilmington*, 20.

⁸⁶ S.P Langley to Brigadier General Marshall I. Ludington, December 4, 1901, Record Unit 74, Box 92, Folder 7, SIA.

attempts to do so.⁸⁷ The zoo did not follow through on every offer it received, especially if a consul merely offered to facilitate the purchase of animals. To the U.S. Consul-General to Singapore, for example, Langley wrote that the Smithsonian appreciated the animal price list he had sent, but was “not at the present time prepared to give an order for animals.”⁸⁸ Most offers of assistance from consuls resulted in accessions, and between 1899 and 1908, members of the consular service and higher-ranking diplomats acquired a total of at least 285 specimens for the National Zoo; Russian wolf hounds from Hull, England; lizards from Havana, Cuba; pigeons from Tenerife, in the Canary Islands; Canadian moose and Panamanian anteaters.⁸⁹

These accessions often involved negotiations between consular officers and local governments where they were stationed. In 1899, Martin J. Carter, U.S. Consul at St. John's, Newfoundland, secured permission from Newfoundland's Minister of Marine and Fisheries to have two pairs of Caribou captured, likely by natives on the northern part of the island.⁹⁰ Similarly, Cunningham offered his services in negotiating with officials of British Somaliland for a permit to export live animals, an activity otherwise prohibited there.⁹¹ Foreign governments were not always obstacles, however. Like the Brazilian governors who presented animals to the *Wilmington*, many foreign officials or politicians presented specimens as diplomatic gestures. In 1900, a Cuban general donated 2 Cuban Hutias to the zoo; In 1903, an officer of the Sudan government offered the President of the United States a lion, which ended up in the National Zoo.⁹² Another lion was gifted to the President the following year by King Menelik, of

⁸⁷ American Consul at Iquitos, Peru to Dr. Baker, December 28, 1907, Record Unit 74, Box 93, Folder 3, SIA.

⁸⁸ S.P. Langley to The Honorable R.A. Mosely, Jr., May 22, 1900, Record Unit 74, Box 92, Folder 6, SIA.

⁸⁹ *Annual Report*, for the years 1889-1908.

⁹⁰ Martin J. Carter to S.P. Langley, September 22, 1899, Record Unit 74, Box 92, Folder 6, SIA.

⁹¹ E.S. Cunningham to Secretary Langley, September 22, 1899.

⁹² *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1903* (Washington: Government

Abyssinia, the first of many animals he presented, which later included a zebra, baboons, and ostriches.⁹³ An Abyssinian governor followed suit in 1906, presenting a lion, a zebra, and an antelope to the Zoo.⁹⁴ During these years, the National Zoo also conducted animal exchanges with foreign governments and zoos, including the London Zoological Society, the Tokyo Zoo, the Buenos Aires Zoo, the Canadian Parks Department, and the New Zealand Government (see Table 5). These were transactions that generally involved the State Department and its consular service.⁹⁵

Beyond securing the cooperation of the US Army, Navy, and State Department, the Smithsonian continuously reached out to other agencies of the U.S. Government, both federal and local, to facilitate the acquisition and transport of animals to the National Zoo. The Treasury Department, for example, had to be involved in the financial arrangements made for animal acquisition - correspondence between the Smithsonian, consuls, and the Treasury Department show that the Treasury Department required receipts from each transaction made on behalf of the Zoo. The Treasury also issued orders at the Smithsonian's request to the Collectors of Customs at various American ports "for the admission, free of duties and charges," of various animals.⁹⁶ The Department of Agriculture granted permits for the importation of wild animals and birds, and was consulted frequently by Smithsonian administrators about rules and regulations around animal importation and concerns over quarantine. In one instance, Frank Baker went as far as to

Printing Office, 1905), 69.

⁹³ *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1904* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1905), 71.

⁹⁴ *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1906* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1907), 69.

⁹⁵ J.N. Ruffin, US Consul to Asuncion, Paraguay, was especially helpful in facilitating arrangements with a foreign zoo, the Buenos Aires Zoological Garden. The process also involved John Titcomb of the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, and the Argentine Minister of Agriculture. Superintendent, National Zoological Park to Mr. J.N. Ruffin, Record Unit 74, Box 93, Folder 2, SIA.

⁹⁶ Acting Secretary, Treasury Department to Secretary, Smithsonian Institution, September 8, 1900, Record Unit 74, Box 92, Folder 6, SIA.

contact the New York State Health Officers Department, who informed him that they imposed no restrictions on the transit of animals to New York City from foreign ports.⁹⁷ Although in most cases no restrictions were imposed, in 1902 and 1905 the Bureau of Animal Industry within the Department of Agriculture did advise Baker to quarantine deer from Cuba, because of the risk of infestation by *Boophilus Annulatus*, the Southern Cattle Tick.⁹⁸ Sometimes, these kinds of precautions and requests for information from the Department of Agriculture and other agencies were prompted by concerns from Steamship Companies that transported the animals.

The Smithsonian also received occasional assistance from businessmen within the international wild animal trade. Though the Zoo rarely purchased animals from these operations, it did benefit from their connections and expertise. One particular animal dealer was of special assistance to the zoo's animal collection efforts: William Bartels, "Importer and Dealer in Rare Animals, Foreign and Domestic Birds... English Fancy Canaries a Specialty," acted as a "despatch agent" and "correspondent" for the zoo. Bartels was the man to receive incoming animals at the port of New York and arrange for their transport to Washington.⁹⁹ While the Zoo could not directly purchase animals from Bartels, whose collections could have furnished the Zoo with much of the fauna it desired, it did benefit from his knowledge, expertise, and facilities for managing animal care, storage, and shipment.

When army transports and other government vessels were not available to ship specimens to Washington, negotiations with transportation companies became critical. In general, these relationships were productive and helpful to the National Zoo, but sometimes they posed

⁹⁷ A.D. Melvin, Acting Chief of Bureau of Animal Industry to Dr. Frank Baker, June 9, 1900, Record Unit 74, Box 92, Folder 7, SIA.

⁹⁸ Frank Baker to William Bartels, August 9, 1902, Record Unit 74, Box 93, Folder 5, SIA; Chief of Bureau of Animal Industry to Frank Baker, May 23, 1905, Record Unit 74, Box 93, Folder 3.

⁹⁹ W.M. Bartels to Dr. Baker, July 27, 1900, Record Unit 74, Box 92, Folder 7, SIA.

obstacles to animal acquisition. Boulton, Bliss, & Dallett appear to be the only company that agreed to transport animals for the Zoo completely free of charge; a testament to Plumacher's high level of involvement and enthusiasm for the project.¹⁰⁰ It seems that in general steamship transport was more practical than rail, because, according to Martin J. Carter, U.S. Consul at Newfoundland, railway companies would require an attendant to accompany animals during their journey, whereas steamship companies were more flexible in allowing crewmembers to be hired to care for animals during transport.¹⁰¹ The Zoo generally looked to American cargo steamers rather than foreign passenger steamers to transport animals, most likely because it was cheaper.¹⁰² It also appears that these companies were sometimes flexible in their payment structures, and willing, upon correspondence with the Zoo, to put aside their demand for prepayment at the time of boarding.¹⁰³ This was not always the case - Baker noted in his 1905 report that some shipments of animals were delayed in Buenos Ayres because of this issue of prepayment. "It has been found extremely difficult to make satisfactory arrangements for transportation from distant South American ports," he wrote. "The steamship companies refuse to receive animals without prepayment of transportation charges, which in the case of the United States Government is impracticable."¹⁰⁴ It was impractical, he explained to the U.S. Consul at Paraguay, because "it is impossible to advance the charges from a government appropriation."¹⁰⁵

The owners and upper management of these steamer companies were not always the

¹⁰⁰ Boulton, Bliss & Dallett to E.H. Plumacher, November 3, 1899, Record Unit 74, Box 93, Folder 4, SIA; *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1902* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1903), 75.

¹⁰¹ Martin J. Carter to S.P. Langley, May 10, 1900, Record Unit 74, Box 92, Folder 6, SIA.

¹⁰² "Animals acquired through the United States Department of State, Consular Service members, 1899-1910."

¹⁰³ A particularly inflexible company, Austin, Baldwin & Co., corresponded with Frank Baker on the matter. Austin Baldwin & Co. to Dr. Frank Baker, Record Unit 74, Box 93, Folder 1, SIA.

¹⁰⁴ *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1905* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1906), 69.

¹⁰⁵ Superintendent to Mr. Ruffin, March 24, 1905, Record Unit 74, Box 93, Folder 2, SIA.

problem. Sometimes, transport was blocked by forces outside of their control, especially in the Middle East and Africa. In 1900, Baker delayed the acquisition of specimens from Turkey that were “much desired for the park” because of a “want of satisfactory means of transportation” and the “risk and expense” involved in shipping from those ports. The Zoo thereby lost out on adding Turkish bear, mountain sheep, and ibex to its collections.¹⁰⁶ Similarly, in 1901, Langley wrote to Cunningham expressing regret that “conditions in Somaliland have become so unfavorable for the collecting and shipping of animals,” and that same year, Baker included in his report that animal collections had “doubtless” been prevented by “native uprisings in that neighborhood.”¹⁰⁷¹⁰⁸ In 1900, the issue of disease also presented obstacles in Aden. According to E.S. Cunningham, the appearance of the bubonic plague in that port transformed a place that “in ordinary times affords exceptionally good opportunities for shipment” into an isolated area where almost all steamers had ceased to call.¹⁰⁹ Bubonic plague also appeared in Madagascar in 1900, deferring animal shipments from those ports as well.

Plague in Aden created one of a few cases in which individual ship captains, rather than company owners or governments, prevented the shipment of animals. In May 1900, the Captain of the S.S. *Buceros* refused to board two lions and two leopards that Cunningham had secured for the park. The Captain refused to take them because he feared that his vessel would be detained in New York on quarantine. After inquiring into this possibility and discovering that no quarantine restrictions would be placed on the animals by the United States, Langley contacted the *Buceros*' owners, Norton & Son, to remedy the situation. He invoked the Zoo's national and

¹⁰⁶ S.P. Langley to The Honorable M.A. Jewett, May 22, 1900, Record Unit 74, Box 92, Folder 6, SIA.

¹⁰⁷ S.P. Langley to E.S. Cunningham, April 5, 1901, Record Unit 74, Box 92, Folder 7, SIA; *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1901* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1902), 109.

¹⁰⁸ Footnote saying that I will return to this issue of native uprisings in the next chapter.

¹⁰⁹ E.S. Cunningham to National Zoo. Park, May 9, 1900, Record Unit 74, Box, 92, Folder 7, SIA.

public purpose to pressure the company into finding another vessel to transport the cats. “As these animals are a gift to the National Zoological Park, an institution maintained by the government for the benefit of the people, I have no doubt that you will be ready to do anything which you can to assist the Park in securing them,” he wrote.¹¹⁰ In response, Norton & Son promised: “We will take up the matter with the Aden agents of the Line, and see if some way cannot be arranged to secure the transportation of the animals to this country... we assure you we will do our utmost to further your wishes.”¹¹¹ In another case, the commanding officer of a United States Navy vessel disobeyed orders and refused to transport animals for the zoo. Mr. M. W. Gibbs, U.S. Consul at Madagascar, had collected some rare animals of the region for the Zoo, but they had to be released because the Commander of the U.S.S. *Chicago* refused to take them on board, “for some reason not clearly understood.” This, even though he had been specifically instructed by the Navy Department to transport them for the zoo.¹¹²

The Animal Investment

One of the most significant obstacles to the Zoo’s process of international animal acquisition was the health and survival of the specimens; the condition of animals on these long marine voyages did not simply pose logistical and financial challenges. The documentation around their well being in transit also illuminated a major drawback of the Zoo’s new collection network - its experimental, unprofessional, amateur, and often unethical nature. An analysis of the animal experience within this collection network demonstrates the functional limits of the Zoo’s otherwise practical system of using government officers to collect and transport animals; it

¹¹⁰ S.P. Langley to Messrs. Norton & Son, undated, Record Unit 74, Box 92, Folder 7, SIA.

¹¹¹ Norton & Son to S.P. Langley, June 21, 1900, Record Unit 74, Box 92, Folder 7, SIA.

¹¹² *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1900* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901), 89; Third Assistant Secretary of State to Secretary of Smithsonian, March 3, 1900, Record Unit 74, Box 94, Folder 1, SIA.

reveals the limits of the zoo's, the officials', and the average American's understanding of animal rights; even for the National Zoological Park, animals were in effect objects; raw material; economic assets. Despite the care and attention of a few compassionate individuals, the animal welfare in this international collection network was poor.

Langley was not negligent in providing the guidelines, at least, for how animals could be properly provide for in transit. The "Animals Desired" circular included detailed instructions on boxing, feeding, and care for a variety of species. The larger animals, flesh-eating animals, monkeys, and deer should be shipped in separate containers; parrots and macaws required metal cages; reptiles should be boxed with sand. To sustain the animals on their journey, they should be given water twice a day. Flesh-eating animals required meat and bone, in varying amounts - lions and tigers, ten pounds per day; cheetahs require a supply of live chickens. Bears "may be fed dry bread, biscuits, boiled rice with sugar, vegetables, and fruit," while anteaters and armadillos "should have boiled milk beaten up with raw egg." Eagles should be given live rodents. Herbivores should be given hay, fresh green foods, fruits, and vegetables.¹¹³

Langley and the Smithsonian administrators also
The Zoo's annual report and the correspondence among its administrators, collectors, and agents around the turn of the century included many references to animal deaths during transportation, or very soon after arrival in the United States. As early as that first voyage by the U.S.S. *Wilmington*, groups of animals suffered injury, maltreatment, and starvation aboard U.S. vessels and private steamships. Wrote Cook to commander Todd in 1899:

The following casualties occurred among the collection: The sloth died from the effects of a very severe wound he had received in capture, the rope having cut deeply into his throat, exposing his windpipe, thus making every motion a painful one, causing great difficulty in feeding. Three monkeys died, one seemingly of old age, and two being extremely young. The tiger cat, when the door was opened for purpose of feeding by a

¹¹³ "Animals Desired for the National Zoological Park," SIA, Record Unit 74, Box 121, Folder 16.

man detailed to look out for this, escaped and jumped overboard. One macaco prego (monkey) jumped through an air-port into the river. The macaw - a very poor specimen - died. The remaining animals were shipped from Para in excellent condition.¹¹⁴

In some cases, animal deaths appeared to be the result of a lack of resources - the Zoo and its collectors cutting corners to save money. In 1902, for example, Dr. Goding secured free transportation for several lots of animals from New South Wales to San Francisco, and most of them died during the voyage. The transportation was free because the animals were sent on sailing vessels, rather than steam liners, making the seven thousand mile journey from Australia much longer and more arduous for living cargo.¹¹⁵ While it was preferable for the animals to be shipped by steamer rather than sailing vessel, some sources suggest that it would have been even more preferable to place animals on passenger steamships rather than cargo steamships. In 1902, Cunningham wrote to the Zoo to recommend the North German Lloyd Line of passenger steamers for shipping animals from Aden. On the Lloyd line, he wrote, the animals “would be well cared for, as I know it is no unusual thing for this line of steamers to bring from the Orient live animals.” This would be much more expensive than cargo shipment, however, and was only recommended by Cunningham because of a shortage of other options.¹¹⁶ His letter suggests that there were certain companies and lines that would have been most optimal for the health and survival of animals during transport, and that for financial reasons the Zoo would not usually have chosen such options.

Other animals suffered or died due to carelessness and inattention. In 1904, the captain of a ship on the Lamport & Holt line wrote to the zoo, in order to clear himself of blame, certifying that a bird was placed on his ship at Buenos Aires with one wing already “freshly broken off,

¹¹⁴ Todd, *Report On Voyage*, 20.

¹¹⁵ *Annual Report, 1902*, 75.

¹¹⁶ E.S Cunningham to Dr. Frank Baker, November 21, 1902, Record Unit 74, Box 93, Folder 1, SIA.

presumably owing to careless handling whilst in transit, the cage being also much broken.”¹¹⁷

The same year, the U.S. Consul at Asuncion, Paraguay, placed a jaguar and a bird on a ship headed for New York, and wrote to the Zoo that the animals “were well provided for when placed on board.” He had “paid the cook and the steward to look after the feeding,” delivered “some bales of hay, sacks of corn, bran, and meal” to the ship, and made sure the animals were stored “in a good place so as to be free from drafts and cold.”¹¹⁸ Nevertheless, by the time the jaguar made it to New York, the zoo’s agent, William Bartels, wrote that it “looked poor” and was “in pretty bad shape.”¹¹⁹ Bartels kept it for a few days to allow it to recover before sending it on to Washington. When Baker received the jaguar, he wrote to Bartels: “This jaguar is the most misshapen beast which has ever come to the Zoological park, and I am afraid that it is hopeless.” Without Bartels aid, it would probably not have made it past New York alive.¹²⁰ The consul who sent the jaguar, J.N. Ruffin, had gone to some length to assure the its safety, but he also wrote to the State Department: “I am informed it would be better to bring two in case of the death of one during the voyage.”¹²¹

The death of four sloths from Ecuador in 1900 demonstrates the strong element of chance that the Zoo’s collection network entailed for animal survival, with animal welfare relying upon the diligence of whoever happened to be involved in transport.¹²² The poor condition of the sloths was first brought to the zoo’s attention by a very concerned customs collector in Puget Sound, Washington State. F.D. Huestis wrote to inform the Zoo that two of the four sloths had

¹¹⁷ Captain Herring to the National Zoo, November 6, 1904, Record Unit 74, Box 93, Folder 2, SIA.

¹¹⁸ J.N. Ruffin to Frank Baker, November 19, 1904, Record Unit 74, Box 93, Folder 2, SIA.

¹¹⁹ William Bartels to Frank Baker, December 7, 1904, Record Unit 74, Box 93, Folder 2, SIA.

¹²⁰ Superintendent to William Bartels, December 19, 1904, Record Unit 74, Box 93, Folder 2, SIA.

¹²¹ J.N. Ruffin to Hon. John Hay, June 14, 1904, Record Unit 74, Box 93, Folder 2, SIA.

¹²² Plenty of species of animals died other than sloths; I use this example because in this case of animal death, the Smithsonian Archives contained a clear chain of correspondence in which the zoo’s administrators followed up with most parties involved in the animals’ collection and transport.

died on their way to the United States. Huestis had been disturbed by these deaths enough to investigate their cause. He reported his findings to the zoo:

The Captain tells me that he knew nothing about what they ate or how to take care of them, and had no information on the subject, and as near I can find out, all they had was what was forced into their mouths, principally bread, no fruit or anything else. No wonder they died... I am very sorry that they go forward in the condition they do, as I have serious doubts about them making the trip; but I have done everything in my power.¹²³

The surviving two sloths, a mother and baby, Huestis did his utmost to save; the following day he sent an update to the zoo:

We held the sloth over, trying to get the old one so as to be able to make the journey successfully across the continent. It was nursed very carefully, and fed milk and fruits, but it did not rally, and died last night... I would like to have you let me know whether the little one gets through safely or not.¹²⁴

In reply to Huestis' letters, Richard Rathbun, Acting Secretary of the Smithsonian, wrote back that the baby sloth had also died. In his response to the situation, and in his own inquiry into the cause of their death, he displayed genuine regret but was not eager to assign blame. To Huestis, he expressed sorrow over the animals and gratitude for his valiant attempts to nurse them back to health, writing:

I am very sorry that the animals were brought to Port Townsend under such unfortunate conditions... While I regret the loss of these interesting animals, the suffering which they must have endured during the long voyage is still more deplored... the present consignment is, in fact, the first that has lacked suitable attention... Your kindness in this matter is cordially appreciated by the Smithsonian Institution and it is regretted that the animals could not have come into your hands before it was too late for intelligent care to save them.¹²⁵

The sloths had been collected and sent by Perry M. De Leon, U.S. Consul-General at Guayaquil, Ecuador.¹²⁶ Unlike most other consul-collectors, De Leon was the highest ranking

¹²³ F.D. Huestis to R. Rathbun, October 4, 1900, Record Unit 74, Box 93, Folder 3, SIA.

¹²⁴ F.D. Huestis to R. Rathbun, October 5, 1900, Record Unit 74, Box 93, Folder 3, SIA.

¹²⁵ R. Rathbun to F.D. Huestis, October 16, 1900, Record Unit 74, Box 93, Folder 3, SIA.

¹²⁶ *Annual Report, 1901*, 109.

diplomat at his station. Rathbun wrote to De Leon about the sloth deaths, but took a very careful tone. Rathbun told De Leon that the captain had been given no knowledge of feeding or care of the animals, and had not been provided with a suitable supply of food. Thus, “the animals literally starved to death.” He continued, the institution “regrets that [the captain] was not prepared to care for [the sloths] in a suitable manner.” Yet Rathbun did not accuse de Leon of being responsible for this situation. Instead, he detailed at length the proper care for sloths, and asked de Leon to try to obtain more specimens of sloth for the zoo. In closing, he wrote, “I wish to express to you the thanks of the Smithsonian Institution for your esteemed gift and trust to have the further benefit of your kind cooperation.”¹²⁷

De Leon’s correspondence throughout this affair suggested that he cared little for the welfare of the animals he collected and sent to the zoo. While he did “regret extremely the fate of the sloths,” he had clearly paid little personal attention to their care, and had found them a “considerable inconvenience.” He had kept them at the consulate before shipping them to the United States, but wrote of their presence: “although interesting they add but little to a house party.” When it came time to send them to the zoo, he did not oversee their conditions on board. To Rathbun, de Leon explained:

My servant took bread and bananas to the Captain of the Admiral but with characteristic stupidity, left them on the wharf; I sent him back after giving him some straight English, but the vessel had sailed. I am sorry the captain did not understand me as to their diet.¹²⁸

The poor condition and frequent death of animal specimens sent from outside the United States to Washington through the Smithsonian’s shoe-string government-collection network was one moral and ethical drawback of what was an otherwise practical solution. Looking in detail at the costs of this process and the Zoo’s financial resources demonstrates one reason why these

¹²⁷ R. Rathbun to Perry M. De Leon, October 16, 1900, Record Unit 74, Box 93, Folder 3, SIA.

¹²⁸ Perry M. De Leon to R. Rathbun, November 10, 1900, Record Unit 74, Box 93, Folder 3, SIA.

animal deaths did not appear to be of great concern to most people involved. Most of the animals procured through this network were not valuable assets - the Smithsonian rarely expended significant funds to purchase animals, and so their deaths did not represent significant financial losses. By having consuls collect animals in their local regions, the Zoo acquired specimens at the source, before capture, transport, and trade could raise their market value beyond what the Zoo could afford. In 1900, for example, the U.S. Consul at Singapore sent a list of animal prices at that port, which according to Baker were “far below those at which the same animals can be obtained here.”¹²⁹ Similarly, Langley evaluated the market value of an orangutan in British Somaliland versus that of an orangutan in New York. “I would say that the animal, if sound and in good condition, would be worth from \$125 to \$150 in New York,” he wrote. Because there was “great risk of losing these large apes during transportation,” he was willing to pay no more than \$50 for an orangutan at Zaila, in British Somaliland.¹³⁰

Transportation for animals collected for the Zoo during this period generally cost between \$75 and \$300 dollars. To acquire four caribou for the Zoo in 1899, the Zoo expended around \$250; \$100 for their capture, \$10 for caging, \$100 for transportation, and \$40 for their care at sea.¹³¹ Whether the Zoo received a prized exotic animal or a more common specimen, the transportation costs were basically the same. While a Nubian lion or a Siberian tiger could be purchased in the United States for upwards of \$1,000, the Zoo only had to pay a fraction of that cost to acquire those kinds of big game animals from abroad through its collection network.¹³²

¹²⁹ *Annual Report, 1900*, 89.

¹³⁰ S.P Langley to E.S. Cunningham, April 5, 1901, Record Unit 74, Box 92, Folder 7, SIA.

¹³¹ Martin J. Carter to S.P Langley, May 10, 1900, Record Unit 74, Box 92, Folder 6, SIA.

¹³² The equivalent of this \$75 to \$300 price range in 2017 would be approximately \$2,100 to \$8,500. Specifically, caging would today cost around \$300, care at sea, \$1,100, capture and transportation each \$2,800. The typical \$1,000 value of lions, tigers, or other large exotic cats was the equivalent of approximately \$30,000 in 2017. This does not mean that this is the current market value of such wild animals. “Consumer Price Index (Estimate),” Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis,

While it is impossible to determine the total monetary value added by these animals, it is reasonable to conclude that the more than 500 specimens acquired by the Zoo from government officials contributed thousands of dollars of value to the institution.

Conclusion

Langley's circular had an immediate and positive impact on the Zoo's collections. The year it was distributed, Frank Baker noted in his annual report to the Smithsonian that "it is expected that considerable accessions to the collection will be made" as a result of the circular.¹³³ This expectation was correct. Over the course of the following decade, and especially in the first five years after the Smithsonian published the circular, government officials abroad had great success in culling a large quantity and variety of live animals for the zoo. The majority of these specimens came from South America, Central America, and the Caribbean, with the second greatest quantity coming from Australia, but the Zoo also received animals from Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Middle-East. Animals acquired in Australia amounted to the greatest number of specimens gathered from any single country - nearly triple the number acquired from the next greatest source, Venezuela - but the greatest species diversity came from Venezuela and the Americas. By 1908, the Zoo had acquired more than five hundred animal specimens from abroad, of over one hundred different species, collected in at least twenty-six different countries and territories through the efforts of more than fifty individual Americans, almost forty of whom were officials of the United States government, either in the State Department, Army, Navy, or other agency. From 1899 to 1908, these international acquisitions constituted between four percent and thirty-six percent of the Zoo's total animal accessions each year. During that time,

<https://www.minneapolisfed.org/community/teaching-aids/cpi-calculator-information/consumer-price-index-1800>; William G Fitzgerald, "Romance of the Wild Beast Trade," *The Technical World Magazine* 4, no. 1 (1905): 690-691. 688-695.

¹³³ *Annual Report, 1899*, 56.

the zoo's animal population rose from around six hundred to fourteen hundred specimens, with new international accessions amounting to between four percent and seventeen percent of the total zoo population each year (see Tables 1 through 5). By utilizing the personnel and resources of the federal government, the Zoo's administrators significantly improved the zoo's collections, and engaged numerous United States agencies in a large-scale zoological project. Through this process, the Zoo succeeded in creating a novel and exclusive global animal collection network.

In 1899, Langley's circular titled "Animals Desired for the National Zoological Park" initiated a decade of successful international animal acquisition by the Zoo. In these years, the Zoo administrators, the Smithsonian, and government officials across the globe developed the connections and experience to function as a collection network, as an alternative to purchasing animals from the existing global wild animal trade. In doing so, the Zoo overcame its budgetary limits to improve and compete with other American zoos. It circumvented the traditional obstacles of federal oversight and turned its position as a federal institution into an advantage. It also created its own supply and demand for animals that differed in important ways from both the contemporary international animal trade and the zoo's pre-1899 North American collection network. The resulting collection of animals in Washington, D.C. was larger, more diverse, and more representative of global species than it would have been without this new network. At the turn of the century, the National Zoo successfully mobilized a large group of Americans abroad to use their positions as representatives of the United States government to help build a zoo in Washington worthy of the capital city of a new global power.

III: Red Blood and Red Tape Government Officials and International Animal Collection, 1899-1908

It was a stormy night on the northwestern coast of Venezuela, sometime in the mid 1880s. Eugene H. Plumacher, United States Consul to Maracaibo, went to bed after an hosting a little party of expatriate Americans and Venezuelan politicians and military officers. It had been an evening of much drinking, toasting to the glory of both nations and their presidents.

Plumacher fell fast asleep. Some hours later, he awoke to find his whole house flooded with several feet of water, and he hastily joined his nephew, his assistant Mr. Mollman, and his servants on top of the tables and chairs of the dining room to escape the gushing water.

They were not the only ones seeking refuge; Plumacher kept a collection of animals in his backyard, including alligators, monkeys, and a tiger, and they had all broken loose. Recalling the scene in his memoirs, Plumacher wrote,

If the alligators came the fat Indian cook would be first thrown to them, then the girl and if their appetites remained unappeased, no doubt Mr. Mollman would have sufficient patriotism to sacrifice himself as his loss would be of less moment than that of a United States Consul!¹³⁴

The flood did not dissuade Plumacher from continuing to build his ark. He had collected animals occasionally for the Smithsonian even before the National Zoo was established, and continued with renewed enthusiasm in 1899 after receiving the pamphlet “Animals Desired for the National Zoological Park.” He was among a few American Consuls who contributed not one but dozens of specimens to the National Zoo over the next several years. This chapter will analyze the National Zoo’s international collection network from the perspective of Plumacher and some of the other most prominent or productive collectors. It will explore the ways in which

¹³⁴ Chapter 10, Memoirs, Box 1, Folder 11, The Eugene H. Plumacher Papers, Manuscript Number MF, 1324, Tennessee State Library Archives.

individual collectors aligned with or diverged from the institutional mission and intellectual vision of the national zoo. Some were hard-boiled ‘men of science’ whose scientific and professional standards matched those of the zoo’s administrators at the Smithsonian. Others were complete amateurs, whose efforts on behalf of the Zoo demonstrated loyalty to the federal bureaucratic structures in which the Zoo operated. Still others adhered to neither science nor bureaucracy, but their rugged, manly nationalism and enthusiastic relationship with nature aligned with the zoo’s function of popularizing naturalism and asserting American ownership over the natural world. Just as the debate in Washington over the establishment of the Zoo had illustrated competing ideas about both nature and government, so too did these various United States officers in foreign stations display a variety of attitudes toward the relationship between government and the natural environment.

In the Smithsonian’s Annual Reports, over thirty American government workers were listed as having contributed animals to the National Zoo from their stations abroad (See Table 5). Not all of these people are traceable to published writings or unpublished papers; some appear in newspaper reports, others in scientific journals. Based on the existence of primary source material regarding their lives and work, this chapter will focus on five collectors: Frederic Webster Goding, E.S. Cunningham, E.H. Plumacher, and Mr. and Mrs. George R. Shanton. Their contributions to the Zoo ranged from a single donation to the procurement of over one hundred specimens.¹³⁵ I will argue that Goding and Cunningham, in their stations in Aden, Arabia, and New South Wales, Australia, participated in elite transnational scientific

¹³⁵ Evidence of the relationships of some of these people to the Zoo can be found in records of direct correspondence they had with the Smithsonian, in Unit 74, SIA. Other individuals’ connections to the Zoo are apparent only in the Smithsonian’s Annual Reports listing specimen donors, but can be illuminated through other sources. Further research could involve a more exhaustive search for papers pertaining to every name on the list; my research uncovered some, but certainly not all, of the available materials about these thirty to forty men and women, their relationships with the National Zoo, and their work for the United States government.

communities, and that Cunningham in particular was exposed to British styles of colonial governance and environmental management. In contrast, Plumacher, stationed in Maracaibo, Venezuela, operating as an ambitious amateur in politics and science, represented careerism in the Consular Service and growing American business interests in Latin American natural resources. Finally, Shanton, Chief of Police of the Panama Canal Zone, personal friend and appointee of President Roosevelt, epitomized the masculine American Progressive Era identity that endorsed expansionism, militarism, and man's mastery over nature.

Historiography

Two pieces of scholarship are directly relevant to the argument of this chapter. First, Diane Smith's work on the specimen collection practices in place in Yellowstone National Park between 1886 and 1916. During this period, before Congress established the civilian-run National Park Service, environmental management and wildlife collection was conducted by the U.S. Cavalry, who developed an extensive system of trapping and shipping wildlife to various zoos and game preserves. According to Smith, these government officers "established an extensive bureaucratic animal-accounting system" that became "integral to the Park's administration and culture." Smith's investigation of this early period of wildlife administration in Yellowstone revealed an era in which the Park was perceived as part of the American museum network of collection, curation, and display, and a time in which the United States Army became intimately involved in this network.¹³⁶ This Chapter uses her dissertation as a model for examining the participation of United States government officers in specimen collection and wildlife management projects.

¹³⁶ Diane Smith, "Animals and Artifacts: Specimen Exchanges and Displays in Yellowstone National Park, The National Museum, and the National Zoo, 1846 to 1916" (PhD diss., Montana State University, 2012), 2-10, quotation on 9.

The second piece of relevant scholarship is a chapter of Elizabeth Anne Hanson's dissertation on American Zoos devoted to animal donations made by the public to the National Zoo. Hanson looked at correspondence from the Smithsonian's archives regarding over 175 donations made to the Zoo between 1900 and 1930.¹³⁷ In her analysis, she included both donations made by members of the public within the United States and donations made by government officials stationed outside the United States. My research into international collectors specifically has shown that some of Hanson's conclusions still ring true, but that some of her claims could be updated.

Hanson's most basic argument remains accurate: the people who donated animals were not "marginal" to the project of building the zoo; these donors "participated quite literally in making the zoo and in shaping its meaning." Their involvement revealed interpretations of the zoo's meaning that deserve attention independent of the interpretations of the Zoo made by its primary administrators or by the larger zoo-going public; their donations communicated distinct ideas about what kind of institution a zoo should be, which animals it should display, and what these animals should exhibit about the human-animal relationship. In Hanson's evaluation, these donors' motivations included "a perceived civic duty," a desire to contribute to and participate in science, and an enthusiasm for popular natural history. Each of the various meanings donors ascribed to the zoo, according to Hanson, included a "corresponding concept of the relationship between humans and zoo animals."¹³⁸ Studying animal donations thereby allows historians to study American ideas about man, nature, and the environment.

Within this framework, Hanson too easily conflates donations made by the domestic American public with collections made by United States officials abroad. Generalizing about the

¹³⁷ Elizabeth Anne Hanson, *Animal Attractions: Nature on Display in American Zoos* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 76.

¹³⁸ Hanson, *Animal Attractions*, quotations on 74, 117, 76-78.

zoo's donors, she describes them as "amateurs, hucksters, sentimental pet lovers, and children." Although some of the collectors, Plumacher for example, were certainly not scientifically qualified, others like Goding and Cunningham were sophisticated 'men of science.' Further, Hanson's work does not elucidate their motivations or opinions fully - describing Plumacher, for example, she writes: "The U.S. Consul in Maracaibo, Venezuela, was enthusiastic, and typical of these overseas collectors who were both observant of the local fauna and seemed bored with their desk jobs."¹³⁹ This Chapter will attempt to expand and nuance this analysis, and make a contribution similar to what Smith achieved.

Goding and Cunningham

Frederic Webster Goding and E.S. Cunningham were two American officials who became especially valuable assets for the National Zoo during the decade after the State Department distributed Langley's circular to its officers outside the United States. They turned their diplomatic stations into important centers for the zoo's international collection network; Goding was stationed in New Castle, New South Wales, Australia, and Cunningham in Aden, Arabia. Both were 'men of science,' professionally trained, credentialed, and experienced, and they both enjoyed long and successful careers in the consular service.

Of all the collectors, Dr. Goding was the most effective, securing a total of around 160 specimens for the National Zoo between 1902 and 1905 - according to Baker, "the most important collections yet received from any one source."¹⁴⁰ These included multiples species of birds, kangaroos, and large wild dogs and cats. Goding was a medical doctor and entomologist, and had held various positions in local politics and higher education in the United States before

¹³⁹ Hanson, *Animal Attractions*, 117, quotation on 83-84.

¹⁴⁰ Annual Reports of the National Zoological Park, found in the appendices of *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution*, for the years 1902-1905.

beginning a thirty-year career in diplomatic service in Australia and then South America.¹⁴¹ Based in New Castle, he utilized his “wide acquaintance throughout the Australian region” to acquire a collection of animals that Baker described as “thoroughly representative” of Australian fauna. Some of the specimens were personal gifts from Goding and his social and scientific circle, and others “which were especially difficult to obtain,” Goding purchased on behalf of the National Zoo “through correspondents in remote parts of Australia and Tasmania.”¹⁴² Nearly all of the Zoo’s Australian acquisitions during this period came through Goding.¹⁴³

E.S. Cunningham’s specimen contributions to the National Zoo were much smaller in volume, but he was a valuable resource to the Zoo nevertheless. Cunningham was not a professional scientist, but he held a law degree from the University of Michigan. After serving in Aden, he went on to a long and distinguished career in the Consular Service.¹⁴⁴ He facilitated the shipment of only a handful of specimens from Aden over the course of the decade, but he was a regular correspondent with the Zoo administrators and offered important assistance in a key region of global animal trade. While the specimens he helped the Zoo acquire were fewer in number, they were much higher in market value - lions, leopards, and other large game. At Aden, Cunningham interacted with other people in professional zoology and the wild animal trade who made frequent visits to Aden, including a taxidermist from the British Museum and the animal trader Carl Hagenbeck. Cunningham made a point to visit Hagenbeck’s collections in Aden. To

¹⁴¹ Chris E. Olsen, “Dr. Frederic Webster Goding May 9, 1858-May 5, 1933,” *Journal of the New York Entomological Society* 42, no. 4 (1934): 443-445.

¹⁴² *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1903* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1905), 68-69.

¹⁴³ Annual Reports of the National Zoological Park, found in the appendices of *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution*, for the years 1902-1905.

¹⁴⁴ The University of Tennessee Special Collections Online (SCOUT). “Finding Aid for the Edwin S. Cunningham Law School Notebooks.” http://dlc.lib.utk.edu/spc/view?docId=ead/0012_001318_000000_0000/0012_001318_000000_0000.xml;query=;brand=default.

Langley, he wrote, “having always taken a great interest in all animals, I have always made it a point to see [Hagenbeck’s] specimens he would get and also gather any information I could from him as varieties found in Somaliland and Abyssinia.”¹⁴⁵ After Cunningham’s success in securing a pair of lions for the zoo, Langley granted him \$800 for future acquisitions of affordable species - not elephants, giraffes, and rhinoceros, for example, but antelope, warthog, cheetah, and others.¹⁴⁶

Cunningham’s correspondence with the National Zoo included many references to British colonial game laws and to their impact on indigenous hunting and trapping.¹⁴⁷ These kinds of prohibitions against exports of certain wildlife inhibited the livelihoods of indigenous hunters and collectors in the region. Cunningham’s access, as an American consul, to the formal and informal circles of power that might grant exceptions to these rules represented the unequal dynamics that allowed elite, white European and American sportsmen to benefit from the region’s natural environment, while restricting native access to these animal resources. John M. MacKenzie has written about this aspect of colonial environmental history, and his work shows a parallel to the elements of American wildlife management and the Zoo movement that emphasized white, western access to ‘exotic’ animals and landscapes, removed and symbolically separated from the native peoples who also inhabited those spaces. Both Cunningham and Goding operated in parts of the world that drew international scientists, hunters, and collectors, and thereby they both demonstrated growing American exposure to this old-world, European element of colonial environmental governance.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁵ E.S. Cunningham to Secretary Langley, September 22, 1899, Record Unit 74, Box 92, Folder 7, SIA.

¹⁴⁶ S.P. Langley to E.S. Cunningham, December 31, 1901, Record Unit 74, Box 92, Folder 7.

¹⁴⁷ E.S. Cunningham to Secretary Langley, September 22, 1899, Record Unit 74, Box 92, Folder 7, SIA; E.S. Cunningham to the Secretary, February 22, 1901, Record Unit 74, Box 92, Folder 7, SIA.

¹⁴⁸ John M. MacKenzie, *The Empire of Nature: Hunting, Conservation and British Imperialism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988).

Plumacher

E.H. Plumacher was the American consul who secured the second greatest quantity of animals for the National Zoo, from his station in Maracaibo, Venezuela. He sent a total of around fifty specimens, and made acquisitions every year from 1901 to 1907. Plumacher was the most passionate of the consuls about the National Zoological project, and apparently had great success in Venezuela in persuading others to aid in his patriotic animal collections; he managed to secure a guarantee of free shipping of National Zoo animals from Venezuela to New York, on the American steamship line Boulton, Bliss, & Dallet. Plumacher's career in the Consular service and his animal collection efforts reveal how the federal bureaucracy worked to the zoo's advantage, but also, how aiding the Zoo furthered an individual bureaucrat's professional goals.

Eugene Plumacher's career in the consular service was long but not particularly distinguished. Born in Prussia in 1838, he served in the Prussian and Swiss armies before immigrating to the United States as a commissioner of the Swiss Immigration Society. Plumacher found work teaching modern languages in Tennessee, and became a naturalized American citizen. He entered the consular service with hopes of gaining a position in Europe, but despite support from state politicians, he did not secure one. Instead, he was sent to Maracaibo, Venezuela to take a post as commercial agent. In 1878 he was promoted to U.S. Consul in Maracaibo, a position he retained until shortly before his death in 1910.¹⁴⁹

Plumacher evidently had great professional ambitions within the consular service and the State Department, but he failed to gain much recognition or advancement. In his memoirs, which he apparently hoped to publish, Plumacher exaggerated his own position. Contrary to the claim he made in his memoir that he was given his choice of any consulate in Venezuela, Plumacher

¹⁴⁹ Robert Wilson Hudson Byrd, "The Maracaibo Memoirs of Eugene H. Plumacher: 1877-1890" (Masters diss., Vanderbilt University, 1970), 2-3.

was stationed in Maracaibo after his request to be placed in La Guairá was denied.¹⁵⁰ His predecessor had not even been informed of his replacement before Plumacher's arrival. Later, in 1890, Plumacher was similarly surprised to discover that he was being replaced. Even though he believed he was in good standing with the consular service, Plumacher was ordered to hand over the office to his successor. The abrupt and unceremonious process by which the consular service placed and replaced consuls in this office suggested that Maracaibo was well outside the notice or care of the State Department - it was a port where political appointees not important enough for more coveted posts could be sent. Plumacher's response to his replacement illuminates his general sense of self-importance and the unfulfilled ambitions he had within the consular service. Even though he was shunted out of office in the exact same way that his predecessor had been, to make room for some new political appointee, he was astonished and disgusted.

That was all, not a word of explanation, nor warning, I was simply kicked out of the service like a drunken ward politician might be ejected from a meeting. I had served under both Republican and Democratic Administrations during twelve years, and had worked very hard in the interests of American trade.¹⁵¹

Both his original assignment to Maracaibo and his brief replacement years later indicate Plumacher's relative anonymity within the consular service and his lack of significant professional or political clout. Despite this position, Plumacher attempted to make his opinions known to his superiors at the State Department, even on matters that had nothing to do with his post. One issue of special interest to him was the establishment of the National Zoo. In 1880, ten years before the Zoo had even been established, Plumacher wrote to his superiors in the State Department about the prospect of a Washington Zoo:

Washington, the capital of our great republic is adorned with grounds like the Soldiers Home, the Smithsonian and others. They are large and splendidly adapted for the

¹⁵⁰ Byrd, "The Maracaibo Memoirs," 4.

¹⁵¹ Byrd, "The Maracaibo Memoirs," 160.

zoological garden. All the capitals in Europe have one of these attractive resorts and vie among each other in completeness. Is our capital less worthy than others? If the Hon. Secretary of State would bring the matter before Congress perhaps an appropriation for such an object could be obtained, and consular officers would be glad to furnish the animals. Here alone I can obtain jaguars, bears, pumas, snakes, alligators, and innumerable species of birds, in short all specimens of tropical animals and it would not cost much to stock a national zoological garden in the mode proposed, as consuls can always ship if not absolutely free at least at a small cost, and American railways would probably charge nothing for transit to Washington. A few years, with the hearty cooperation of the consular corps would serve to accomplish the work, and no doubt many consuls would take great interest in it.¹⁵²

Plumacher's predictions turned out to be largely correct - Congress did act to establish a zoo, and the consular service did become an important and enthusiastic asset to the National Zoo. However, there is nothing to suggest that Plumacher's advice and support had anything to do with the establishment of the Zoo or the idea to involve consular officers. His letter pushing for a zoo was probably not shared with the Secretary of State or passed along to anyone of importance. This letter from 1880 reveals a desire to improve his own image and that of the United States through symbolic institution of the zoo. Competition with European nations and general prestige-building were the reasons he wanted a zoo; it would be an "attractive resort" to impress an audience. He did not mention science.

The appearance of personal and national power were very important to Plumacher in Maracaibo as well. In his post, he went to great lengths to project an image of prestige and importance, connections, and resources. In his memoir, he devoted several paragraphs to describing the physical appearance of his home and his consular office and the many improvements he made upon them. He bought new furniture, linens, and utensils, had the United States arms repaired and varnished and used them as decorations, along with various flags. He also took care to have good brandy, French wine, and "excellent beer" on hand for entertaining

¹⁵² Plumacher to W. Hunter, April 7, 1880, Record Unit 74, Box 93, Folder 4, SIA.

guests in style, be they “presidents, senators, generals,” “conservative high toned foreign merchants,” or consular colleagues. These expenditures came out of Plumacher’s own income, as he was apparently willing to go much farther than the United States consular service to maintain the prestige of a consular officer. He was quite satisfied with all of his improvements despite their cost, writing:

All of my visitors were pleased and expressed much satisfaction that the government had been so liberal respecting the allowance granted for the improvement of the Consulate, while many American captains told me that there was no Consular Office in South America so nicely fetted up, and they thought I must have great influence at Washington in order to obtain permission to expend so much public money for this purpose. Alas, they did not know that I had only \$1,300 salary, or in the case of increase of trade as much as \$2,500 should the fees amount to so much, and that the allowance granted me for furniture etc of the office was the merest trifle and that by far the greater part of the amount there expended came out of my own pocket, but nevertheless so far I was satisfied, as I saw that by the aid of my outside earnings I could make at least an outwardly decent show, and I never told any one the truth respecting my great salary.¹⁵³

The only scholarly writing on Plumacher’s memoirs is an introduction to an edited volume of some of his chapters. The editor, Robert Wilson Hudson Byrd, concluded about Plumacher’s personality and career that he was a “super-egocentric,” a man of “extreme vanity,” and “moral decay.” Maracaibo was the commercial center for western Venezuela and northeastern Colombia, and the post was a lucrative one for Plumacher.¹⁵⁴ The city was isolated from mainstream Venezuelan life by geography and politics, but had a population of almost 30,000, and had churches, a theatre, colleges, and hospitals “to rival those of Caracas.” Maracaibo was home to “doctors, poets, historians, and statesmen,” and the merchant marines of all Western nations. All this contributed to Byrd’s assessment that “Maracaibo surpassed the cultural level of the American consul.” So, while Plumacher was able to make his fortune in

¹⁵³ Chapter 10, Memoirs, Box 1, Folder 11, The Eugene H. Plumacher Papers, Manuscript Number MF, 1324, Tennessee State Library Archives.

¹⁵⁴ Robert Wilson Hudson Byrd, “The Maracaibo Memoirs of Eugene H. Plumacher: 1877-1890” (Masters diss., Vanderbilt University, 1970), 4, 8, 6.

Maracaibo and gain a position of “some prestige” in the social life of the city, he was also prone to the vain posturing and self-aggrandizement of “a United States Consul far removed from adequate supervision by the State Department.”¹⁵⁵

Plumacher’s activities on behalf of the National Zoo fit into this picture of a vain, egotistical man striving for the appearance of high-level connections in the American government. Because correspondence between the National Zoo and American consuls had to go through the State Department, animal collections put Plumacher in direct communication with the Secretary of State or his deputies. As opposed to earlier discussions of the Zoo sent to Washington in dispatches that were likely never read, Plumacher’s letters about animal collection were guaranteed to be read and passed on through bureaucratic channels from the State Department to the Smithsonian to the Zoo and vice versa. This would have been an attractive situation for a man like Plumacher. Further, the extraction of animal specimens, as natural resources, from Venezuela fit with Plumacher’s other economic activities in the area. In 1905, he was charged by a New York attorney with extorting money from local merchants of Maracaibo. Although the case was dropped, he evidently admitted to heavy drinking and to having fathered several children by his housekeeper.¹⁵⁶ He was a representative of the United States with questionable ethics and an enormous will to improve his own image. The animals he collected became part of this mission.

Plumacher’s memoirs do not cover the period of the early 1900s when he collected animals for the zoo. While the Smithsonian’s annual reports do not mention donations from Plumacher before 1901 (see table F), Plumacher’s memoirs reveal that he was collecting specimens for the National Museum in the late 1870s. According to Plumacher, he had known

¹⁵⁵ Byrd, “The Maracaibo Memoirs,” 4, 8, 6, 5, 1, 2.

¹⁵⁶ Byrd, “The Maracaibo Memoirs,” 8.

Spencer Fullerton Baird, the second Secretary of the Smithsonian, for many years prior to his assignment to Maracaibo. Baird asked him to “interest myself in behalf of the Institute” while in Venezuela, and he agreed. He began making collections almost as soon as he was settled:

Having a large house with detached rooms yards and stables, I notified the natives that I would purchase all sorts of Zoological specimens, and my residence, with the influx of animals, now came to be a veritable Noah’s Ark. For many specimens that were brought me, I had no real use, but I was obliged to buy them in order to stimulate the zeal of my collectors. I had monkeys of all sorts and sizes, two alligators, one eleven feet in length and the other five, besides a number of little ones from six inches upward to eighteen. There were sloths and armadillos, snakes of different sizes and among them a boa about eighteen feet in length. I had also a young tiger and a tapir of the size of a calf; a number of mountain hogs (peccaries) porcupines and a black bear from the Cordillera.¹⁵⁷

These were the animals that got loose the night of the flood. This part of the memoir, along with the details of his life in the Consular Service, indicate that Plumacher’s animal collections had nothing to do with a love of nature or naturalism. Indeed, Plumacher appeared to be the opposite of a rugged sportsman or adventurous naturalist. He was fussy, and responded very poorly to the climate, plants, animals, and bugs of Maracaibo. His memoir is full of complaints about the temperature, numerous illnesses and ailments incurred from the South American environment. Upon his first arrival at his post, he almost immediately came down with a bad rash, an earache, and insomnia due to “the terrible heat and the persevering and never ending attacks of mosquitos, fleas and innumerable other pests whose names are not even known in more favored climes.” Further, Byrd noted that the descriptions of the natural environment of Maracaibo included in Plumacher’s memoir were either extremely similar to descriptions in other nineteenth century travelogues or directly plagiarized from other authors. These descriptions seemed to focus mostly on the economic potential of Venezuelan landscapes. Lake Maracaibo, for instance, was notable as a navigational route for commercial shipping, for its

¹⁵⁷ Chapter X, Memoirs, Box 1, Folder 11, The Eugene H. Plumacher Papers, Manuscript Number MF, 1324, Tennessee State Library Archives.

abundant stocks of fish, and or its “inexhaustible supply of valuable timber.” In general, the area contained “immense natural riches” that were “awaiting development.”¹⁵⁸

Plumacher’s memoirs indicate that for this consul, at least, animal collecting for the National Zoo was a way to make professional connections, improve his image in Maracaibo as a powerful government insider, and contribute to a project he felt improved American prestige among other nations. It was not about science, naturalism, or zoology. It didn’t even appear to involve any genuine affection for or interest in animals or the natural world of Venezuela. Just as the National Zoo, in some ways, functioned as an ornament of empire, a large quantity of animal specimens from Venezuela were the product of one bureaucrat's vanity project.

The Shantons

If Plumacher embodied the effete bureaucrat, George R. Shanton exemplified his exact opposite; the rugged man of force and his ‘strenuous’ life. In the Smithsonian’s Annual Report of 1907, it was his wife, “Mrs. Shanton,” who was listed as the donor of two Panama Curassows.¹⁵⁹ The Shantons did not have as rich or long a relationship with the National Zoo as did the other collectors discussed in this chapter, but their brief connection to the Zoo through this donation brought the Zoo into contact with a kind of American presence abroad that was different from Goding, Cunningham, or Plumacher. Shanton was not a scientist or a bureaucrat; he was a military man, a hunter and a national hero. Whereas Plumacher wrote a memoir that was never published, and Goding wrote scientific papers read only by academic communities, Shanton was a much more public figure, featured heavily in journalist Hugh Weir’s book about the Panama

¹⁵⁸ Byrd, “The Maracaibo Memoirs,” 35-36, iv, 66-67.

¹⁵⁹ *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1907* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1908), 74.

Canal Zone called *The Conquest of the Isthmus*.¹⁶⁰ Weir's depiction of Shanton, "The Tamer of Panama," glorified the domination of both the peoples and natural world of Latin America, and also promoted a view of government that deplored bureaucracy and praised strong leadership.

The Panama Canal Zone Police Force was organized by the Isthmian Canal Commission in 1904, and President Roosevelt personally selected Captain Shanton to be its chief. Shanton had proved his competence commanding a troop of "Rough Riders" during the Spanish American War of 1898, and hunting with Roosevelt on the Western Frontier.¹⁶¹ Weir depicted Shanton as a man battling both wilderness and rampant criminality in a land full of the "best citizens" and the "worst citizens" of all the world, who had come to profit and plunder. Much of Panama, according to Weir, was either a primeval jungle "white man's foot" had yet to explore, or else a chaotic "cesspool" of "human refuse." Shanton's ability to bring order to this lawlessness was one of the "most amazing" achievements in the history of the Canal.¹⁶²

With "hawk eyes" that "never close," Shanton could hunt down any prey, human or animal. For criminals or animals in the Zone, the justice Shanton delivered was swift and often arrived through barrel of a gun. Weir praised this "frontier" way of doing business; the army of men who came to labor on the Canal needed a leader and a discipliner who was not afraid to go beyond the "starched laws of the well-groomed, well-mannered" cities of the United States. Here in the Zone, "the edge of nowhere," rough hands and rough morals could only be checked by a man who himself knew what it meant to be "in the raw, stripped of the veneer of polite society." In one hand Shanton held his gun, while from the other he drank coconut milk straight from the

¹⁶⁰ Hugh Weir, *The Conquest of the Isthmus* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1909); newspaper articles

¹⁶¹ "A Brief History of the Panama Canal Zone Police," University of Florida Digital Collections. <http://ufdc.ufl.edu/UF00098884/00001/16?search=george+shanton>; Weir, *The Conquest of the Isthmus*, 114-115.

¹⁶² Weir, *The Conquest of the Isthmus*, 116-118.

shell; whether he was pursuing a Panamanian alligator on a hunt, or chasing outlaws through the jungle, he always reached his quarry in “a literal baptism of lead.”¹⁶³

In Shanton’s leadership, Weir found the imagery with which to criticize the bureaucracy of Washington. In order to bring America into the future, decisive action was preferable to the slow and stuffy deliberations of “black robed dignitaries... who seek to regulate the laws of a living generation by the moth-eaten rules of men dead half a century and more.” Shanton didn’t need such rules - he had his instinct, his strength, his vigor. He also had his faith - Shanton and his policemen were nearly all members of the Young Men’s Christian Association. According to Weir, Shanton believed in the power of the Y.M.C.A “even above the power of the revolver - which is a high place in his esteem.” In Shanton’s safe keeping were his nation’s “gold,” its “subjects,” and its “honor.” To protect and defend the Panama Canal Zone and maintain order was to advance the divine destiny of the United States. Much was at stake. For all of these reasons, Roosevelt had chosen a Chief of Police whose character was fashioned of “red blood, not of red tape.”¹⁶⁴

Along with this masculine picture of man over nature, Weir also painted a portrait of American femininity overcoming the wilderness. Though at their back doors, the women of the Zone faced a jungle “which has defied civilization for nearly four centuries,” they had organized clubs and a flourishing high-society life that allowed them to forget the hardships of the Latin American climate. Wrote Weir:

True, they must take quinine with their breakfast food to escape the fever mists and must wage a constant war with the little tropical ants to save their parlor furniture. Also they see monkeys and parrots and lizards much oftener than horses and mules, and must substitute cocoanuts for apples and palm trees for maples, and must accustom themselves

¹⁶³ Weir, *The Conquest of the Isthmus*, 126-132

¹⁶⁴ Weir, *The Conquest of the Isthmus*, 128, 138, 115.

to an average temperature of something over one hundred degrees. These are the facts of Nature. But the women of Panama have risen above them.¹⁶⁵

In this way, both Shanton and his wife, who was credited with donating to the zoo, promoted an image of the American abroad who met anarchy with civilization. Shanton's vigorous American manhood, and his wife's "optimistic, inspiring, unselfish womanhood," together brought foreign people and animals into the powerfully ordered dominion of the United States.¹⁶⁶ Evidence of their successes, whether in popular books like Weir's, or in a curassow exhibit at the National Zoo, indicated to the American public that they themselves might gain renewed vitality of spirit through the conquest of man and nature.¹⁶⁷

Conclusion

These collectors for the National Zoo – Goding, Cunningham, Plumacher, and the Shantons – all exemplified ways in which the American government and the individuals it employed were expanding internationally and interacting with the natural world during the Progressive Era. Each conformed in some manner to what Zackary Gardner identifies as the specific, "hyper-masculinized" bureaucratic identity around government work that emerged within the growing administrative state at the turn of the twentieth century. This identity, Gardner writes, was characterized by new professionalism, specialization, and militarism, and encompassed both the "rugged" -- Shanton an example -- and the "technocratic" -- Goding, Cunningham, Plumacher, or even the zoo's administrators, Baker and Langley.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁵ Weir, *The Conquest of the Isthmus*, 169.

¹⁶⁶ Weir, *The Conquest of the Isthmus*, 178.

¹⁶⁷ For a history of the Panama Canal Zone with regard to gender

¹⁶⁸ Plumacher's lack of success in his position in the Consular Service perhaps had something to do with what Gardner defined as the high-class barrier to entry in this new bureaucracy. An immigrant lacking the credentials of academia, he may have been more of an outsider than the others, who more fully benefited from the "elite formation process proselytized by Republican political elites."

These collectors represented distinct ways in which Americans responded to nature during the Progressive Era and integrated it into particular worldviews. For Goding and Cunningham, the proper approach to nature was to collect it, study it, order and categorize it. This was also a method by which to understand, classify, and assimilate new and unfamiliar peoples and places into existing ideologies. For Plumacher, it seems that animal specimens functioned as ornaments of prestige (in his case, representing a status he aspired to but did not actually have). Animal collection was for him a vanity project. Shanton and his wife demonstrated the function of nature as a mediator of sheer power. Man's ability to master nature – to cut through mountains, join oceans, kill or capture wild animals – confirmed his ability to bend other forces to his will. If America could conquer, tame and civilize nature, what else could it not control?

Zackary W. Gardner, "Uniforming the Rugged: Gender, Identity, and the American Administrative State during the Progressive Era, 1898-1917" (PhD diss., Georgetown University, 2016), 6-8, 63.

IV: International Animals, Foreign Zoologists: Race and Empire at the National Zoo, 1907

In 1907, an international scientific event gave the Smithsonian an opportunity to show off the National Zoo on a global stage. The International Zoological Congress was going to visit Washington for almost a week in September. Gathering in Boston and travelling to New York and Washington, this Congress' dozens of delegates would be engaged in presentations, conferences, social events, and tours of American urban scientific institutions, all centered around American zoos.

This Chapter will examine this year and this Congress as a moment of institutional maturity in the National Zoo's early history. While just eight years earlier, Secretary Langley had admitted in his "Animals Desired" circular that the Zoo was "far from adequate," he, Baker, and the Washington scientific community now saw it as a point of pride for the city and the country.¹⁶⁹ Their international animal collection efforts had been successful, and the Zoo's collections were now ready to be employed in the service of national pride, at an event that would also celebrate American scientific progress. While previous chapters have illustrated some of the competing ideas about nature and government at play in the National Zoo's history, this chapter will look at points of consensus among the zoo's administrators and supporters, specifically scientific racism and social Darwinism, that were manifest at the Zoo and brought out by the visit of the International Zoological Congress in 1907.

The International Zoological Congress, 1907

The Congress' visit to Washington was an opportunity and a challenge for Baker and the

¹⁶⁹ "Animals Desired for the National Zoological Park," Record Unit 74, Box 121, Folder 16, SIA.

Washington scientific circles. In anticipation of the visit, funds were raised for the entertainment of the delegates and allocations were made for improvements throughout the grounds of the Zoo. Baker had roads added and improved in the Zoo, put in new cement walkways, built a new small mammal house, and second bear house with new cages, and the banks by running water reinforced.¹⁷⁰ Meanwhile, Hugh M. Smith of the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries and the treasurer of the Committee on the Reception of the Seventh International Zoological Congress gathered donations toward the entertainment of the delegates. “Many European delegates will be in attendance,” Smith wrote, “and it is desired to give them as favorable an impression of Washington as possible.”¹⁷¹ Baker and his associates flexed all of their federal connections toward this end; Baker even wrote to President Roosevelt to request he place a government vessel at the Zoo’s disposal for transportation of the delegates along the Potomac.¹⁷²

The Zoological Congress arrived in Washington on September 3, bringing international scientific discussions in a “Babel of languages” to the Capital. They numbered around eighty delegates, including the directors of the Rotterdam, Melbourne, and Dublin Zoological Gardens. Their itinerary included a “smoker for the men” at the Cosmos Club, tea for the “ladies,” and tours of the Capitol, the monuments, Arlington Cemetery, and the Congressional Library. The women also toured the White House, the Corcoran Gallery, and the Treasury, while the men were given options to visit a long list of government “laboratories” and federal scientific institutions, many of which had been established within the previous two decades.¹⁷³ They included the Bureau of Chemistry, the Bureau of Animal Industry, the Bureau of Ethnology, the

¹⁷⁰ A. B. Baker to Frank Baker, August 19, 1907, Record Unit 74, Box 107, Folder 11, SIA; Frank Baker to Charles D. Walcott, September 9, 1907, Record Unit 74, Box 107, Folder 12, SIA.

¹⁷¹ Hugh M. Smith to Unknown Correspondent, July 23, 1907, Record Unit 74, Box 107, Folder 11, SIA.

¹⁷² Roosevelt declined this request, but his assistant Rudolf Forster suggested he go to the Department of State instead. Rudolf Forster to Frank Baker, July 23, 1907, Record Unit 74, Box 107, Folder 11, SIA.

¹⁷³ Frank Baker to Charles D. Walcott, 9 September 1907, SIA, Record Unit 74, Box 28, Folder 4.

Bureau of Fisheries, the Laboratory of Botanical Investigations, the Coast and Geodetic Survey, the Army Medical Museum, the Public Health and Marine Hospital Service, the Patent Office, and the Weather Bureau.¹⁷⁴

The Washington reception for the Zoological Congress was thoroughly representative of the city's scientific community and the federal government's scientific establishment. It exhibited not only the Zoo's progress but the development at a national level of advanced scientific institutions. The Honorary Reception Committee for the Congress included Doctor Alexander Graham Bell, Gifford Pinchot, Surgeon General Walter Wyman, Secretary of Agriculture James Wilson, and Commissioner of the District of Columbia Henry L. West. These and other 'men of science' in Washington used the formal speeches and the informal social engagements to promote their own individual institutional goals within the larger aim of impressing the world with American science and urban design. They also took care to highlight Washington, in comparison to other American cities, as the heart of American science and a beautiful, impressive city in its own right.

At the formal welcome event held at the Cosmos Club, Secretary Wilson made a speech about the various scientific fields and institutions of the American federal government, and the equal place of zoology among them in the government. About Washington, he said:

Washington is not only the political Capital of the United States; it is also the scientific center and the most beautiful city in the country. The people are the most representative, and it is rapidly becoming the social center, and I am sure you will enjoy yourselves while here.¹⁷⁵

Commissioner West followed Wilson, reiterating the virtues of the city:

We stand on a unique pedestal here in Washington. We do not for a moment try to vie

¹⁷⁴ Seventh International Zoological Congress: Washington Visit, Record Unit 74, Box 107, Folder 12, SIA.

¹⁷⁵ "Like Our Large Zoo: Foreign Scientists Are Pleased with Size of Park," *The Washington Post*, Sep 5, 1907.

with New York, Chicago, or Pittsburg in the enormity of our financial transactions, or in the height of our buildings, but we do say that when you look about you here you will see a city where in some degree, at least, high regard is paid to the physical beauty of the municipality.¹⁷⁶

On September 4, Baker took the delegates on a carriage tour throughout the National Zoo. According to Baker, “everyone appeared to be immensely pleased and delighted with the natural appearance of the park. It seemed to impress them as a new note in Zoological installation.”¹⁷⁷ Baker took great care in every detail of this tour, down to the food served at an outdoor luncheon. During this luncheon, a “group of negroes hired for the occasion sang plantation songs.” Baker wrote that this entertainment “pleased the foreigners mightily.” The affair was “in every way a great success.” Baker evaluated the visit with pride:

The visitors said many complimentary things which must, of course, be received with due allowance. I am convinced however that they were much pleased with the effective management of everything. There was absolutely no hitch at all at any point, no waiting, no delay anywhere, they were received and delivered with accuracy and despatch.¹⁷⁸

The zoological delegates themselves offered positive feedback to their hosts. *The Washington Post* reported the visiting scientists “have declared that they have found Washington to be a much finer and greater city than they expected.”¹⁷⁹ Because they had already visited zoos in Boston and New York, the foreigners were able to give fodder to the Washington view that the Zoo was more scientifically advanced than other similar institutions, commenting specifically on the much greater space animals were able to enjoy, and the more accurate habitats in which they were presented. One delegate from Budapest told *The Post*:

It is an excellent collection... and one of the finest things about it is the immense amount of room which is given to the animals. It is fortunate for them, and fortunate as well for the people who come here to study the animals, for they appear in somewhat more of

¹⁷⁶ “Like Our Large Zoo: Foreign Scientists Are Pleased with Size of Park.”

¹⁷⁷ Frank Baker to Charles D. Walcott, September 9, 1907, Record Unit 74, Box 28, Folder 4, SIA.

¹⁷⁸ Frank Baker to Charles D. Walcott, September 9, 1907.

¹⁷⁹ “Like Our Large Zoo: Foreign Scientists Are Pleased with Size of Park.”

their natural state than if they were very closely crowded together.¹⁸⁰

Another delegate, Dr. Raphael Blanchard of the University of Paris, spoke of their reception in Washington compared to Boston or New York: “In other cities we have been heartily greeted,” he told the Cosmos Club, “but here in Washington our welcome is the warmer and the more significant, since it is here that the most eminent of the nation’s scientists gather.”¹⁸¹ Blanchard also appears to have greatly enjoyed the plantation songs at the Zoo. According to Baker, “one negro with a guitar had a mouth that opened like a cavern; Blanchard turned -- looked at him and said ‘Humph! Chimpanzee!’”¹⁸² Blanchard and his fellow delegates thereby reinforced the Zoo’s standing as an impressive, scientifically advanced zoo, on par with other American zoos. They also reinforced the racialized view of ‘lower’ human groups and these races’ close relation to animals. On that day in September, the Zoo was a pinnacle of American scientific progress and an emblem of that scientific community’s racism.

Frank Baker, Zoology, and Scientific Racism

For Frank Baker, Superintendent of the National Zoo, this Zoological Congress was a moment of professional success, showcasing his accomplishments in managing and growing the Zoo. It was a culmination of his life’s work, which included the development of scientific racism. At the Zoo and at this Congress, Baker’s ideas about nature and race found confirmation and exhibition. In nature, Baker saw an interconnected, divinely ordered web of life. But he also saw a hierarchy, with the white race at its pinnacle. These views united him with the rest of the American zoological community, showing an area in which the National Zoo, though different in some ways from the traditional American zoo movement, did align with its peers.

¹⁸⁰ “Like Our Large Zoo: Foreign Scientists Are Pleased with Size of Park.”

¹⁸¹ “Like Our Large Zoo: Foreign Scientists Are Pleased with Size of Park.”

¹⁸² Frank Baker to Dr. Arthur Erwin Brown, September 9, 1907, Record Unit 74, Box 107, Folder 12, SIA.

Baker's scientific writings from his career at Georgetown illuminate the religious and philosophical meanings he gleaned from science. In completing the requirements for his degree, Baker wrote a dissertation on cell biology and disease. Most of the writing was devoted to scientific discussion, but the conclusion of the paper revealed some of Baker's early thinking on the interconnection of organisms and the potential benefits of studying animal biology to further human health. In his final statement, he concluded:

we are impelled to the conclusion that our lives are inextricably intertwined with those of the lowest organisms, and that only by diligent study of the laws that govern the whole domain of existence can we hope to thoroughly master the problems of disease. The greatest is dependent on the least. 'All are but parts of a stupendous whole' -- the day has past when science can contemptuously thrust aside the consideration of any living thing. Pathologists have hitherto been content to describe disease as it occurs in man only; were the study extended to the lower animals much light would probably be thrown on many obscure problems connected with our subject.¹⁸³

Here, Baker's interdisciplinary interests became apparent, as well as hints at the 'versatility' of his subsequent scientific career in Washington. Further, the passage offered a glimpse into the broader philosophy that guided Baker's life and research. Baker saw linkages between animal and human sciences, and sought to understand how the non-human organisms of the earth could improve our understanding of man. This understanding was not limited strictly to science; Baker's scientific conclusions contained a strong religious and philosophical element that echoed transcendental, naturalist thought. The "stupendous whole" to which he referred came out of the Alexander Pope poem "An Essay on Man," which described "Nature" as the body of this "whole" and God as its soul.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸³ Frank Baker dissertation, Box 113, GUA.

¹⁸⁴ "All are but parts of a stupendous whole" a misquoted line from "An Essay On Man" by Alexander Pope. The poem continues that the body of this "whole" is Nature, and "God the soul." It then concludes: "All nature is but art, unknown to thee: / All chance, direction, which thou canst not see: / All discord, harmony not understood; / All partial evil, universal good." "From an Essay on Man," Bartleby, <http://www.bartleby.com/236/52.html>.

Baker then added an epigraph, one stanza from Ralph Waldo Emerson's "Woodnotes." It read: "Not unrelated, unaffied, / But to each thought and thing allied / Is perfect Nature's every part; / Rooted in the mighty Heart."¹⁸⁵ By employing these pieces of poetry, Baker was expressing a late nineteenth century belief in the transcendental power of nature to reveal the true nature of man and God. Through scientific research and discovery, Baker and his contemporaries were edging closer not only to a fuller understanding of natural laws but also of divine order. Whereas nature enthusiasts of this time may have encouraged the average American to wander into the wilderness to experience spiritual awakening, Baker found it in the laboratory. Creating a diverse and representative collection of animals in the National Capital, similarly to creating National Parks like Yellowstone, would help bring this awakening to the public, and to other scientists.

In later writings, Baker continued to include smatterings of naturalist literature, but these quotations took on a new significance in the context of his developing scientific racism. Baker's 1890 paper in the *American Anthropologist* titled "The Ascent of Man" spelled out what Baker understood to be the achievements and possibilities of anthropological and anatomical study in revealing the existing hierarchy of human races and the history of human evolution from 'lower' creatures to the sophisticated Anglo Saxon race. This paper summarized the Lamarckian view of adaptation – the theory of inheritance of acquired characteristics – and systematically presented the various features of the human body that contained "records of the past history of the race... a previous state of civilization." Baker discussed the appendages, limbs, feet, pelvis, and other features and compared them to birds, and more frequently, to primates. He traced the most highly developed versions of these body parts to Caucasian people, and cited their under-developed versions as present in "the negro," "the South African," "Bushmen," "Australians," "the lower

¹⁸⁵ Frank Baker dissertation; "Woodnotes," Bartleby, <http://www.bartleby.com/400/poem/1070.html>.

tribes,” and the “men of the stone age.” According to Baker, the human body “abounds in testimony of this sort.” His own body, and the bodies of people of what he considered inferior races, contained the same answers that scholars looked for in history and archeology—they told the long story of human progress from four-legged creatures bound to the earth to human species who reached toward heaven. In human bodies could be found “Indications of the pathway by which humanity has climbed from darkness to light, from bestiality to civilization – relics of countless ages of struggle, often fierce, bloody, and pitiless.”¹⁸⁶

Baker included passages from Ovid’s *Metamorphosis* and Milton’s *Paradise Lost* to reinforce and dramatize his point. Man’s most critical, God-given feature was his “erect position.” Unlike animals that “groveling[,] regard the earth,” man possessed an “uplifted countenance” with which he was obligated to “look heavenward and hold his face erect towards the stars.” A creature with the ability to reason and to stand erect was able, as no other animal, to “Govern the rest, self-knowing.”¹⁸⁷ And, of course, Baker was eager to highlight his scientific view that “The Caucasian type of foot is evidently that best adapted for the erect position.”¹⁸⁸ In this writing, literature, religion, and science combined to enforce Baker’s triumphalist belief in Anglo Saxon superiority and dominion over all other living beings.

Despite the anthropological focus of the paper, Baker began it with an epigraph from Whitman concerning animals:

I think I could turn and live awhile with the animals -- they are so placid and self-contained. / They bring me tokens of myself / I do not know where they got those tokens, / I must have passed that way untold times ago and negligently dropped them, / Myself moving forward then and now and forever.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁶ Frank Baker, “The Ascent of Man” *American Anthropologist* 3, no. 4 (1890): 299, 301, 303.

¹⁸⁷ Baker, “The Ascent of Man,” 305.

¹⁸⁸ Baker, “The Ascent of Man,” 305-306.

¹⁸⁹ Baker, “The Ascent of Man,” 297. Baker, “The Ascent of Man,” 297.

Again, the epigraph he employed hinted toward the linkages he would seek to develop at the Zoo between human and animal sciences: the great purposes a zoological collection might serve in fields beyond zoology. Whereas Baker's earlier paper indicated his opinion that animal science may contain answers to questions of human disease and other problems, this later paper indicated another purpose zoological collections might serve: material evidence in a scientific justification for racial hierarchy. Thus, Baker's professional views married zoology to Darwinian and Lamarckian 'survival of the fittest' concepts in evolutionary theory, and to corresponding Social Darwinist notions that translated evolutionary theories into ideas about Anglo Saxon peoples as the 'fittest' race. This scientific and intellectual framework prepared Baker and his contemporaries in the Washington zoological community to seek an animal collection that was more than simply 'exotic.' Washington, the heart of growing American science, would need as many animal pieces as possible from that "stupendous whole."

Baker and the National Zoo were not alone in these views that found evidence of both divine order and white supremacy in nature and animals. William Temple Hornaday, for example, though he had plenty to disagree about with Secretary Langley and the Washington bureaucracy, shared the scientific community's racist views. Just as Baker used his profession – anatomy – to rationalize racism, Hornaday used the field of naturalism. Hornaday's published works included plentiful evidence of his explicitly racialized worldview. Wilderness conservation was part of the "white man's burden," he wrote, and the main culprits of the destruction of North American songbirds, for example, were recent immigrants, especially Italians, poor southern whites, and African Americans; "guerillas of destruction." He described African Americans especially as a primitive race, a drunken "army" with "glowing eyes," who

threatened natural American treasures.¹⁹⁰ When Hornaday left the National Zoo for the Bronx Zoo, he joined an even more stridently racist community among its private benefactors – Roosevelt’s Boone and Crockett Club set and the New York Zoological Society.¹⁹¹ This group included such assertive eugenicists as Madison Grant and Henry Fairfield Osborne, the former of whom wrote the 1916 book that Hitler would later refer to as his “Bible” – *The Passing of the Great Race*.¹⁹²

Baker and the other elites behind the National Zoo and the Smithsonian were among a community who believed that scientific management could be used both toward the maintenance of animals and nature and toward the maintenance of the white race. As the president-general of the Daughters of the American Revolution stated at a National Conservation Convention in 1910,

We, the mothers of this generation — ancestresses of future generations — have a right to insist upon the conserving not only of soil, forest, birds, minerals, fishes, waterways, in the interest of our future home-makers, but also upon the conserving of the supremacy of the Caucasian race in our land.¹⁹³

The turn-of-the-century scientific community embraced these variously conservationist and racial ideas as one. This was an era when the laws of natural science became a surrogate for God, appointing those elite experts who understood its secrets to be the authoritative interpreters of the Divine Plan. Nature was yet another way to legitimate the status quo.¹⁹⁴

Foreign Animals and Foreign Zoologists in the Press

Press coverage of the National Zoo’s animal acquisitions beginning in 1899 and of the

¹⁹⁰ Patrick H. Wirtz, “Zoo City: Bourgeois Values and Scientific Culture in the Industrial Landscape” *Journal of Urban Design* 2, no. 1 (1997): 61-83.

¹⁹¹ Vernon N. Kisling Jr., *Zoo And Aquarium History: Ancient Animal Collections to Zoological Gardens* (Boca Raton: CRC Press, 2001), 122-125.

¹⁹² Gray Brechin, “Conserving the Race: Natural Aristocracies, Eugenics, and the U.S. Conservation Movement,” *Antipode* 28, no. 3 (1996): 229-245.

¹⁹³ *Proceedings of the Second National Conservation Congress at Saint Paul, 1910* (Washington: National Conservation Congress, 1911), 276, Cited in Brechin, “Conserving the Race.”

¹⁹⁴ Brechin, “Conserving the Race;” Samuel P. Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency; the Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), 261-276.

later International Zoological Congress in 1907 mirrored this dualism of the Zoo's scientific, Darwinian principles and its Social Darwinian message about human hierarchy and competition. Specifically, primate acquisitions were characterized as 'missing links' in the evolutionary chain from monkey to man; at the same time, they were personified as prisoners of war in the international, political contests that were encouraging and encouraged by social Darwinian thought about the 'survival of the fittest' nation and race. This was particularly overt in the coverage of animals acquired from the new territories the United States gained at the turn of the twentieth century. Animals from these mostly tropical places were described in the press as "Colonial Guests for the Zoo." The National Zoo was already an "object lesson of importance," which gave "students of nature a comprehensive idea of the wide range of the animal kingdom in this country." Now, according to an 1899 article in the *Washington Star*, "specimens from Cuba, Porto Rico, Hawaii and the Philippines may be added, representing whatever there is in those islands of characteristic animal life, the educational and scientific value of the park will be very greatly increased."¹⁹⁵

One such article from 1899 was titled: "Grandfather of Man." It detailed new animal acquisitions from the Philippines, included a Philippine squirrel, fruit bat, and tamarou (a dwarf buffalo), and most importantly, a Tarsier. According to the author, "Senor Tarsier," was "no less a personage than a link." The Tarsier was a missing piece on the "evolutionary scale" from ape to man. Until its arrival in Washington, the Tarsier had been "practically unknown" except to the occasional traveler. Now, it could be studied by "government savants" and the public. The discovery of this "great-grandfather of mankind" was one of the many benefits of American presence in the Philippines. The article stated that "government naturalists" were turning their attention to the "strange fauna of the islands soon to become or already classed as our new

¹⁹⁵ "Colonial Guests for the Zoo," *Washington Star*, March 27, 1899, Record Unit 74, Box 285, SIA.

possessions.” These fauna, including the Tarsier, became United States subjects “with the ratification of the peace treaty.” The National Zoological Park was to become the place for “Uncle Sam” to “exhibit expansion of his lower animal kingdom.” This article demonstrated the scientific and political value of such territorial acquisitions. The Tarsier and his compatriots could communicate the modern, scientific understanding of evolution; man atop a biological pyramid through time. The Tarsier would also communicate a geographic and racial hierarchy: The United States atop an international order. Especially in the Western Hemisphere, the United States was “man” and its new territorial possessions were “monkey” or “tarsier” or any other lower rung on the evolutionary scale.¹⁹⁶

Another article made the connection between the Darwinian, racial, and political even more overt by naming a monkey caught in the Philippines after the Filipino General Emilio Aguinaldo. The article personified the monkey as the leader of a rebel army, a political and military enemy.

While it has not been officially announced from the War Department, it is a fact, nevertheless, that Aguinaldo of the Philippine Islands has been captured and is now in caged custody. The credit for this important military work is due, wholly and undeniably, to a member of the Schley family. Aguinaldo was brought to bay by Lieut. T. F. Schley of the 23d United States Infantry, who has recently been in Washington on leave as a result of wounds. The capture took place on the Island of Cebu, in the Philippine group, where Aguinaldo was located, in company with a number of his tribe. The Zoo officials, however, do not make the claim that their Aguinaldo is the only one in existence. There may be an insurgent leader in Luzon bearing the cognomen, who has so far escaped detention, but he is of little moment to the Zoo -- at present. The Washington prisoner, Aguinaldo, is a Filipino monkey, a rare specimen, presented by Lieut Schley. The other monkeys... seem, instinctively, to know him as a traitor to their adopted country. Aguinaldo is a very wise monkey and he is aware that his best interests demand temporary silence, to say the least. He indulges in unbroken doses of it.¹⁹⁷

The monkey had “so far escaped detention.” This statement reinforced the modern purposes of American expansion. The Philippines and other territories had hitherto escaped

¹⁹⁶ Clipping by the American Press Information Bureau, March 19, 1899, Record Unit 74, Box 285, SIA.

¹⁹⁷ “Grandfather of Man,” press clipping, Record Unit 74, Box 285, SIA.

American attention. But now, they would be civilized and improved by the United States. Scientific discoveries could now occur that would never have been made if the United States, its government, and its cadre of federal scientists did not have access to the island. Military, political, and scientific expansion went hand in hand. The other monkeys at the National Zoo, like non-white races in the United States, had been naturalized and transferred their loyalties to the United States. The article seemed to suggest that this would happen to Aguinaldo the monkey as well. A wild and violent animal, he would eventually become a citizen of the Zoo; no longer a rebel specimen, he would be a loyal subject.

While delegates like Blanchard clearly expressed a scientifically racist view of zoology, anthropology, and biology, the international zoologists at the 1907 Congress themselves suffered racial and ethnic stereotypes in the press. One article from their visit to the Bronx Zoo demonstrated that while these international zoologists were participating in the project of ordering and classifying nature and subsuming 'lower' races in the evolutionary scale, the press and public were ordering and classifying the delegates themselves. Blanchard described the black singer as a Chimpanzee; the *New York Times* personified many of the delegates as animals, too. Both used the framework of the Zoo to define human racial and political relationships. The article reflected these racial views, as well as the competitive tensions among foreign and American scientists.

The *New York Times* article was titled "Zoological "Highbrows" at the Bronx Zoo" (see Figures 4.1 through 4.3). It accurately captured the American zoo directors' frantic efforts to improve and polish up their zoos for the foreigners, as well as the foreign delegates' ability to pass scientific judgment on the institutions. It did so by giving the animals human characteristics:

There was tremendous prinking and brushing of teeth in preparation for the Seventh International Congress. For every bird, beast, and fish in the Zoo was well aware that the

Seventh International Congress knew the exact place where a pelican's pin feathers ought to be, and whether the dots and dashes sprinkled all over the coat of Grrrrr, the Brazilian jaguar, should or should not make sense in the Morse code.¹⁹⁸

The article captured the zoologists' desire to impress the foreign scientific establishment. The Congress, it reported, "consists of several hundred yards of the most erudite savants that ever peeked out from behind fuzzy beards and cried: 'Tag! You're ignorant!'" To counter this intimidating visit, it invoked the character of the rugged, nature-loving President Roosevelt. The shadow of Roosevelt "hung over the zoo" throughout the visit, offering the promising possibility that he would leap out, like a bear, to frighten the foreigners and expose them for frauds, in contrast to the American scientific establishment. "A rumor had got abroad," the *Times* wrote, that Roosevelt "was going to show up at the Zoo and denounce the visiting scientists as bearded nothings with a scandalous store of misinformation."¹⁹⁹

The presence of the Roosevelt-Bear lurking at the Zoo to attack the delegates exercised an underlying racial and ethnic anxiety around the 'foreign' groups represented among the zoological Congress. The *Times* depicted the foreign zoologists as unruly animals in a zoo, who must be disciplined by their zoo attendants. It depicted a "Russian" and a "Jap" getting into a fight, which the Zoo staff settled "under penalty of not having any lunch" or being "annexed."²⁰⁰ Another delegate, a "Soudanese" was described as speaking in blunt, monosyllabic sentences. "Succinct, those jungle people," the article commented. The international organization offered scientific legitimation to American zoos, but it also presented their managers and the public with

¹⁹⁸ "Zoological 'Highbrows' at the Bronx Zoo," *New York Times*, September 1, 1907.

¹⁹⁹ "Zoological 'Highbrows' at the Bronx Zoo."

²⁰⁰ This was a reference to the recent Russo-Japanese War, which had elevated Japan to rival status with the United States as a Pacific global power. It exemplified the strong nativist, anti-Japanese sentiments in the United States that in 1907 were creating a problem for President Roosevelt, and that resulted in that year's informal 'Gentlemen's Agreement,' in which the United States agreed not to embarrass Japan with a restriction on Japanese immigration, and Japan agreed not to grant passports to its citizens looking to immigrate to the American West Coast in search of labor. Katherine Benton-Cohen, unpublished chapter, "The Gentlemen's Agreement."

a multi-national, multi-ethnic, multi-racial collection of people. This was a time, as Daniel Rodgers has written, of great co-mingling among European and American elites - the European delegates brought old-world aristocratic scientific recognition. At the same time, Americans displayed ambiguous responses to the influence of old-world immigrant groups. The *Times* quoted one American attendant at the Bronx visit as remarking: "Say, I'm worried about myself. If I have seventeen languages shot into me for an hour longer I'll come out with an Esperanto rash. I'm going to have a doctor chloroform this incipient foreign accent of mine."²⁰¹

A combination of these sentiments was articulated through cartoons that accompanied the *Times* article. These cartoons showed Victorian ladies inspecting the animals and criticizing the Zoo as "sloppy." They also depicted the "shadow" of Teddy Roosevelt scaring a delegate away. These two images reinforced the desire for recognition from the international scientific establishment and the competitive edge American scientists hoped to impress upon the world. Finally, a cartoon at the top of the page showed a variety of delegates peering over a fence at the zoo. It depicted a variety of nationalities and races, using visual stereotypes of non-white people to distinguish them from the other zoologists.

Conclusion

The International Zoological Congress in Washington was a culmination of efforts by Frank Baker and the Washington scientific community to demonstrate the city and the country's position among the scientifically advanced nations of the world. It successfully impressed the international delegates, earning praise for the United States that simultaneously elevated Washington among American cities. Just eight years after the National Zoo had put out its call for animals to American officials abroad, it had succeeded in acquiring a collection of animals sufficient to impress the world. The expansion of the federal government and the expansion of

²⁰¹ "Zoological "Highbrows" at the Bronx Zoo."

the United States into new territories had given the National Zoo the tools, resources, support, and personnel to accomplish an ambitious task. The 1907 Zoological Congress demonstrated the worth of such a task and Baker's success accomplishing it. The delegates legitimated the scientific standing of the Zoo, the city, and the country, while reinforcing the racialized consensus in life sciences. At the same time, their own presence at an American zoo subtly fed the impulse to order and classify a hierarchical human and natural world. The Philippine tarsier and the Japanese zoologist peering into its cage both contributed to a social Darwinian framework that sought to demonstrate a hierarchy of species, races, and nations.²⁰²

²⁰² The years 1907-1908 are a fitting place at which to end this thesis. After stepping down from office, President Roosevelt set off on a hunting expedition to Africa, and for the first time, the National Zoo had an opportunity to participate in a legitimate international collecting expedition. The Smithsonian sent three naturalists along to join Roosevelt, and the resulting live animal acquisitions for the Zoo included two lions, two cheetahs, a leopard, and a warthog. *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1910* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911), 69.

Conclusion: “Shame on the Garden”

In 1910, a woman named Miss M. Gunderson sent a letter to Dr. Frank Baker, Superintendent of the National Zoological Park in Washington, D.C., addressed to the “Superintendent of The Garden of Hell.” What followed was a scathing condemnation of the National Zoo on behalf of the animals it imprisoned. “By what ‘right,’ by what demon’s right,” Gunderson asked, “do you condemn your victims to their cages?” To Gunderson, Baker and his zoo represented oppression and injustice, cruelty, torment, and an utter reversal of the reason and divine guidance by which “civilized man” professed to live. “When you drag [animals] from distant lands, capture, transport, and imprison them,” she continued, “you engage in deeds of such moral infamy as no animal but man, the king of bandits, has ever stooped to.”²⁰³

To Gunderson, the greatest crime of the Zoo was the hubris of the creature who believed he owned and controlled the earth, and could impose his will upon it without regard for the freedom and equality of other living things. About animals in cages, Gunderson wrote,

They are not machines, but our brothers, whether we are too blind and bigoted to see it or not and whether we will it or not; in the great evolutionary surge of life. Shame on the garden where lone and tortured and outraged captives pine their gloomy lives away to furnish degraded pastime for thoughtless onlookers who here learn anew the lesson of cruelty alone.²⁰⁴

Inverting the edenic imagery of a National Zoological Park, this letter sought to undermine the worldview that man was master of nature and animals. Most significantly, it attacked “that class of benighted naturalists” who founded and managed zoos. Gunderson’s greatest insult to Baker and his associates came in a heated passage that challenged, above all, their education, scientific and spiritual. What she implied was that for all the power, scientific

²⁰³ Daniel Vandersommers, “Laboratories, Lyceums, Lords: The National Zoological Park and the Transformation of Humanism in Nineteenth-Century America” (PhD diss., Ohio State University, 2014), 490-492; Letter originally from Record Unit 74, Box 102, Folder 2, SIA.

²⁰⁴ Vandersommers, “Laboratories, Lyceums, Lords,” 490-492.

credentials, and religious certainty these men enjoyed, they had completely misunderstood the meaning of the subjects they studied. “Are you Cartesians?” she asked. “Have the revelations of Darwin and Copernicus no significance to you? ... Are you in medieval darkness? Think you still that the heavens revolve around you, that gods take interest in your affairs, that you were made for eternal glory...?”²⁰⁵

In a very brief response, Frank Baker respectfully acknowledged the receipt of Miss Gunderson’s letter. He placed it in the Zoo’s permanent files, where it ended up in a folder of the Smithsonian Institution Archives titled “Administration: Complaints.”²⁰⁶

From a modern perspective, it is easy to be critical of the Progressive Era beliefs and policies that brought a National Zoo to the country, and animals to that Zoo. Gunderson’s heated letter tells us that as early as 1910, alternative ideas existed about the morality of such an institution. We cannot know what Gunderson’s beliefs were about other, related matters -- race, occupation, empire. But her words do provide a language with which to talk about not only animal cruelty, but the other ugly elements of America’s past that the National Zoo represented at the turn of the twentieth century. Although she was writing about zoo animals, Gunderson’s letter works as a satisfying condemnation of many, in Gunderson’s words, “blind and bigoted” attitudes in Progressive Era politics; the thinking that led to ethnographic displays of ‘inferior races’ at the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair, for example. Or the ideology that fueled such writings as *The Passing of the Great Race*, by Madison Grant, himself a prominent founder of the Bronx Zoo in New York.

Gunderson’s question, “are you Cartesians?” gets at the dualities that make the Progressive Era zoo movement so compelling. These parks were pleasure grounds for the public

²⁰⁵ Vandersommers, “Laboratories, Lyceums, Lords,” 490-492.

²⁰⁶ Vandersommers, “Laboratories, Lyceums, Lords,” 490.

filled with animals who were suffering. They were sites that united the beautification of urban environments and a popular love of nature with the racism and paternalism of American expansion. The National Zoo was part of a larger growth of federal scientific institutions who helped orient the government toward the acceptance and promotion of scientific progress. The men who founded and managed zoos were deeply invested in modernizing and improving the United States. They were members of an intellectual elite whose work in zoology, anatomy, and anthropology led them to deeply racist conclusions about human society and politics. At the forefront of an emerging concern for the American wilderness, these men saw a confirmation of white supremacy in the natural world. These kinds of contradictions create a desire to interrogate, as Gunderson did, the individual people who ran the zoo.

Gunderson's set of accusations reflects the set of questions with which this thesis began. What was the National Zoo's relationship to American imperialism? How did science and social politics intersect in the minds of the National Zoo's leaders? What significance did the "revelations of Darwin" in fact have for the people who managed the National Zoo? Did William Temple Hornaday, Frank Baker, and Secretary Langley in fact belong to "that benighted class of naturalists" who damaged the things that they displayed?

In exploring the ways in which the purpose of the National Zoo and the methods of its collections evolved between 1887 and 1908, this research complicates an observation that Elizabeth Hanson once made -- that "zoo directors often could not control what animals arrived at their park gates, and by implication, the meaning of their institutions."²⁰⁷ The deliberate and successful attempt by the Smithsonian to acquire animals from abroad through government officers demonstrated a high level of control over the acquisition of animals, and yet a loss of authority over the zoo's mission to Congress, the city, and the people. The expansion of the

²⁰⁷ Hanson, *Animal Attractions*, 75.

nation's international presence allowed federal officers the opportunity to capture and send animals to the capital from abroad, and thus ascribe their own meaning to these specimens and to the zoo. The system involved an enormous bureaucracy, but the process of building the zoo's collections was also fairly democratic.

This provides some hope about our ability to shape the meaning of such institutions today. Although the Zoo's development during this period reflects an often troubled intersection between America's burgeoning natural history consciousness, its increasing hegemony in the world, and the racism of its elite communities, it also reflects the scrappier, more democratic and publicly accountable nature of the institution compared to its peers in America.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

- Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1891*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1893.
- Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1899*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901.
- Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1900*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901.
- Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1901*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1902.
- Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1902*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1903.
- Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1903*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1905.
- Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1904*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1905.
- Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1905*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1906.
- Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1906*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1907.
- Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1907*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1908.
- Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1910*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911.
- Baker, Frank. "The Ascent of Man." *American Anthropologist* 3, no. 4 (1890): 297-320.
- Congressional Record Containing The Proceedings and Debates of the Fiftieth Congress, First Session, Volume XIX*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1888.
- Fitzgerald, William G. "Romance of the Wild Beast Trade." *The Technical World Magazine* 4, no. 1 (1905): 688-695.
- Proceedings of the Second National Conservation Congress at Saint Paul, 1910*. Washington: National Conservation Congress, 1911.
- Register of the Department of State: Corrected to July 1, 1905*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1905.
- Rhees, William Jones, ed. *The Smithsonian Institution: Documents Relative to its Origin and History, 1835-1899, Vol. II*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901.
- Smithsonian Institution Archives
Tennessee State Library Archives
- "The Posthumous Papers of Frank Baker." *Medical Life* 28, no. 12 (1921): 615-639.
- Todd, Chapman Coleman. *Report On Voyage of the U.S.S. Wilmington Up the Amazon River*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1899.
- Weir, Hugh. *The Conquest of the Isthmus*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1909.

Secondary Sources

- Baratay, Eric and Elisabeth Hardouin-Fugier. *Zoo: A History of Zoological Gardens in the West*. London: Reaktion, 2002.
- Barringer, Tim and Tom Flynn, eds. *Colonialism and the Object: Empire, Material Culture, and the Museum*. New York: Routledge, 1998.
- Barton, Gregory Allen. *Empire Forestry and the Origins of Environmentalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Bartleby. "From an Essay on Man." <http://www.bartleby.com/236/52.html>.
- Bartleby. "Woodnotes." <http://www.bartleby.com/400/poem/1070.html>.
- Benton-Cohen, Katherine. Unpublished chapter. "The Gentlemen's Agreement."
- Brechin, Gray. "Conserving the Race: Natural Aristocracies, Eugenics, and the U.S. Conservation Movement." *Antipode* 28, no. 3 (1996): 229-245.
- Buckingham, Kathleen Carmel, Jonathan Neil William David and Paul Jepson. "Diplomats and Refugees: Panda Diplomacy, Soft "Cuddly" Power, and the New Trajectory in Panda Conservation." *Environmental Practice* 15, no. 3 (2013): 262-270.
- Burnes, James M. "The People's Zoo: William M. Mann, The National Zoo, and the Birth of American Wildlife Conservation, 1889-1960." PhD diss., Lamar University, 2012.
- Byrd, Robert Wilson Hudson. "The Maracaibo Memoirs of Eugene H. Plumacher: 1877-1890." Masters diss., Vanderbilt University, 1970.
- Cincinnati, Noah. "Arks for Empires: American Zoos, Imperialism, and the Struggle for International Wildlife Protection, 1889-1936." PhD diss., Johns Hopkins University, 2012.
- Deiss, William A and R.J. Hoage, eds. *New Worlds, New Animals: From Menagerie to Zoological Park in the Nineteenth Century*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.
- Dolph, James Andrew. "Bringing Wildlife to the Millions: William Temple Hornaday the Early Years: 1854-1896." PhD diss., University of Massachusetts, 1975.
- Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. "Consumer Price Index (Estimate)." <https://www.minneapolisfed.org/community/teaching-aids/cpi-calculator-information/consumer-price-index-1800>
- Gardner, Zackary W. "Uniforming the Rugged: Gender, Identity, and the American Administrative State during the Progressive Era, 1898-1917." PhD diss., Georgetown University, 2016.
- Green, Julie. *The Canal Builders: Making America's Empire at the Panama Canal*. New York: Penguin Books, 2009.
- Hanson, Elizabeth Anne. *Animal Attractions: Nature on Display in American Zoos*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002.
- Hanson, Elizabeth Anne. *Nature Civilized: A Cultural History of American Zoos, 1870-1940*. PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1996.
- Hays, Samuel P. *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency; the Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890-1920*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959.
- Horowitz, Helen L. "Animal and Man in the New York Zoological Park." *New York History* 56, no. 4 (1975): 426-455.
- Horowitz, Helen L. "The National Zoological Park: "City of Refuge" or Zoo?" *Records of the*

- Columbia Historical Society, Washington, D.C.* 49 (1974): 405-429.
- Kisling, Vernon N. Jr. *Zoo And Aquarium History: Ancient Animal Collections to Zoological Gardens*. Boca Raton: CRC Press, 2001.
- LaFeber, Walter. *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1963.
- Lears, Jackson. *Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of Modern America, 1877-1920*. New York: Harper, 2009.
- MacKenzie, John M. *The Empire of Nature: Hunting, Conservation and British Imperialism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988.
- Mergen, Alexa. *From Bison to Biopark: 100 Years of the National Zoo*. Washington: Friends of the National Zoo, 1989.
- Miller, Ian Jared. *The Nature of the Beasts: Empire and Exhibition at the Tokyo Imperial Zoo*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013.
- Morgan, William Michael. *Pacific Gibraltar: U.S.-Japanese Rivalry over the Annexation of Hawai'i, 1885-1898*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2011.
- Nugent Hyson, Jeffrey. "Urban Jungles: Zoos and American Society." PhD diss., Cornell University, 1999.
- Olsen, Chris E. "Dr. Frederic Webster Goding May 9, 1858-May 5, 1933." *Journal of the New York Entomological Society* 42, no. 4 (1934): 443-449.
- Rodgers, Daniel T. *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age*. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1998.
- Rothfels, Nigel. *Savages and Beasts: The Birth of the Modern Zoo*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002.
- Skowronek, Stephen. *Building a New American State: The Expansion of National Administrative Capacities, 1877-1920*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.
- Stott, Jeffrey R. "The American Idea of a Zoological Park: An Intellectual History." PhD diss., University of California Santa Barbara, 1981.
- Smith, Diane. "Animals and Artifacts: Specimen Exchanges and Displays in Yellowstone National Park, The National Museum, and the National Zoo, 1846 to 1916." PhD diss., Montana State University, 2012.
- Smithsonian Institution Archives. "General History." <https://siarchives.si.edu/history/general-history>.
- Smithsonian Institution Archives. "Indian Elephants Dunk and Gold Dust." https://siarchives.si.edu/collections/siris_arc_382629
- Smithsonian Institution Archives. "National Zoological Park." <https://siarchives.si.edu/history/national-zoological-park>.
- Smithsonian Libraries. "Samuel P. Langley: Aviation Pioneer." <http://www.sil.si.edu/ondisplay/langley/intro.htm>
- Smithsonian's National Zoo & Conservation Biology Institute. "Bye Bye, Bao Bao." <https://nationalzoo.si.edu/events/bye-bye-bao-bao>.
- Smithsonian's National Zoo & Conservation Biology Institute. "Bao Bao's Departure FAQ." <https://nationalzoo.si.edu/animals/news/bao-baos-departure-faqs>.
- "The Exhibitionary Complex." In *Culture/Power/History: A Reader in Contemporary Social Theory*, edited by Nicholas B. Dirks, Geoff Eley, and Sherry B. Ortner. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994.
- The University of Tennessee Special Collections Online (SCOUT). "Finding Aid for the Edwin

- S. Cunningham Law School Notebooks.”
http://dlc.lib.utk.edu/spc/view?docId=ead/0012_001318_000000_0000/0012_001318_0000_0000.xml;query=;brand=default.
- Tyrrell, Ian. *Reforming the World: The Creation of America's Moral Empire*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010.
- University of Florida Digital Collections. “A Brief History of the Panama Canal Zone Police.”
<http://ufdc.ufl.edu/UF00098884/00001/16?search=george+shanton>.
- Vandersommers, Daniel. "Laboratories, Lyceums, Lords: The National Zoological Park and the Transformation of Humanism in Nineteenth-Century America." PhD diss., Ohio State University, 2014.
- Wirtz, Patrick H. “Zoo City: Bourgeois Values and Scientific Culture in the Industrial Landscape.” *Journal of Urban Design* 2, no. 1 (1997): 61-83.

Appendix A: Tables

Data for all tables taken from the National Zoological Park's annual reports, found in the appendices of *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution* for the years 1889-1908. See Annual Reports in the bibliography.

Table 1: International Animal Accessions by Country, 1889-1908

Country / Territory	# Specimens	Country / Territory	# Species
Australia	174	Venezuela	27
Venezuela	66	Australia	15
Cuba	56	Argentina	13
Argentina	38	Cuba	12
Canada	26	Ecuador	11
Brazil	23	Brazil	9
Ecuador	20	Mexico	8
Mexico	17	Abyssinia (Ethiopia)	7
New Zealand	14	New Zealand	5
Abyssinia (Ethiopia)	12	Panama	5
Japan	12	Paraguay	4
Canary Islands	7	Arabia (Yemen)	3
Panama	6	Canada	3
Paraguay	6	England	3
Arabia (Yemen)	5	Philippines	3
England	5	Canary Islands	2
Greenland	5	Greenland	2
Philippines	3	Puerto Rico	2
Colombia	2	Trinidad	2
Puerto Rico	2	Alaska	1
Trinidad	2	Colombia	1
Alaska	1	Germany	1
Germany	1	Japan	1

Liberia	1	Liberia	1
South Africa	1	South Africa	1
Sudan	1	Sudan	1

Table 2: International Animal Accessions by Region, 1889-1908

Region	# Specimens	Region	# Species
Americas	290	Americas	90
Oceania	188	Oceania	20
Africa	22	Africa	10
Asia	15	Europe	7
Europe	11	Asia	4
Middle East	5	Middle East	3

Table 3: International Animal Accessions by Year, 1889-1908

Year	# Specimens
1889	0
1890	0
1891	10
1892	13
1893	2
1897	6
1898	1
1899	30
1900	68
1901	54
1902	23
1903	170
1904	19
1905	81
1906	27
1907	20
1908	29

Table 4: Impact of International Animal Accessions on National Zoo Collections, 1889-1908

International Accessions by percent of total zoo population and by percent of total annual accessions domestic and international.

Year	# Specimens	Total Population	Percent Total Population	Total Accessions	Percent Total Accessions
1891	10	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1892	13	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1893	2	504	0.40%	251	0.80%
1897	6	567	1.06%	281	2.14%
1898	1	549	0.18%	215	0.47%
1899	30	675	4.44%	401	7.48%
1900	68	839	8.10%	444	15.32%
1901	54	878	6.15%	318	16.98%
1902	23	883	2.60%	314	7.32%
1903	170	1000	17.00%	470	36.17%
1904	19	1111	1.71%	470	4.04%
1905	81	1307	6.20%	618	13.11%
1906	27	1272	2.12%	437	6.18%
1907	20	1193	1.68%	343	5.83%
1908	29	1402	2.07%	591	4.91%

Table 5: List of International Donors and Collectors, 1889-1908

Names and locations written as they appeared originally in the Smithsonian's Annual Reports.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Date</u>
<i>Private Persons</i>		
Mr. Greaves	Port of Spain, Trinidad	1892
Mr. M.J. Flood	Sydney, Australia	1897
Carl Hagenbeck	Hamburg, Germany	1900, 1904
Mr. R. A. Gross, a merchant of Aden	Aden, Arabia	1901
E. Shunk	La Guairá, Venezuela	1901
Ms. M. C. H. Pickett	Marshville, Ontario	1902
unknown	Porto Rico	1902
Dr. H.T. McLaughlin	Omdurman, Sudan	1903
Julian Windeyer	Newcastle, New South Wales	1903
Henry W. Russell	Newcastle, New South Wales	1903
Mr. Garnick	Newcastle, New South Wales	1903
Mr. Kibble	Islington, New South Wales	1903
Doctor Russell	Newcastle, New South Wales	1903
Frank Underwood	Newcastle, New South Wales	1903
Fitzroy Stacy	Newcastle, New South Wales	1903
F. C. Hill	Cananea, Mexico	1905
Sam Mustain	Carbo, Mexico	1905
E. O. Mathews	Parral, Mexico	1905
Charles H. Jones	Campeche, Mexico	1907
Mrs. George R. Shanton	Ancon, Canal Zone, Panama	1907

W.B. Honey	Culebra, Canal Zone, Panama	1907
Capt. C. E. Radclyffe	Hyde, Wareham, Dorset, England	1906
unknown	Trinidad, West Indies	1908

United States Army & Navy

Liuutenant Todd of

U.S. Cruiser Washington	South American Andes	1906
Ensign Roger Welles, Jr, U.S. Navy	[1882 unknown] [1900 Isthmus of Panama] [1901 unknown]	1892, 1900, 1901
Lieut. Robert.E. Peary, U.S.N.	Greenland	1896, 1897
Commander Chapman C. Todd, U.S.N., U.S.S. Wilmington	Amazon River	1899
Brig. Gen. James H. Wilson, U.S.N., commanding the department of Matanzas and Santa Clara, Cuba	Cuba	1900
Lieut. Commander William Henry Hudson Southerland, U.S.N., commanding U.S.S. Scorpion	Orinoco River, Venezuela	1900
Lieut. William A. Lieber, Jr., U.S.A.	Philippines	1900
Capt. George F. Chase, U.S.A.	Philippines	1900
Maj. Charles A.P. Hatfield, U.S.A.	Puerto Principe, Cuba	1900, 1901
Crew of U.S.S. Agonti	unknown	1900
Capt. Wirt Robinson and		
M.W. Lyon, Jr.	Venezuela	1901
Crew of U.S.S. Mayflower	unknown	1904
Rear-Admiral R. D. Evans, U.S.N.	Philippines	1905

United States State Department

name unknown	South Africa	1906
name unknown	Alaska	1906
Hon. R.M. Bartleman	Caracas, Venezuela	1892
Hon. C.I. Croft	Cartagena, Columbia	1892
Mr. Byron G. Daniels,		
----- US Consul at Hull, England	Hull, England	1893
P.M. De Leon, U.S. consul-general, Guayaquil, Ecuador	Guayaquil, Ecuador	1898
Mr. M.W. Gibbs, Consul at Madagascar	Madagascar	1900
E. S. Cunningham, U.S. Consul at Aden	Aden, Arabia	1901, 1903
U.S. Consul, name unknown	Singapore	1900
Mr. W. H. H. Graham,		
----- US consul at Winnipeg	Winnipeg, Manitoba	1901
Mr. Martin J. Carter,		
----- US consul at St. Johns	St. Johns, Newfoundland	1901
Mr. K. K. Kennedy, Consul Para Brazil	Para, Brazil	1900
James M. Ayers, U.S. consul at Rosario	Argentine Republic	1900
Mr. Perry M. De Leon,		
----- US consul-general, Guayaquil	Guayaquil, Ecuador	1901
Mr. James R. Spurgeon, United States secretary of legation at Monrovia	Monrovia, Liberia	1901
Mr. E. H. Plumacher, U.S. consul at Maracaibo	Maracaibo, Venezuela	1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906, 1907
Mr. Solomon Berliner,	Tenerife, Canary Islands	1901, 1902, 1903

US consul at Tenerife

Dr. F. W. Goding,

US consul at Newcastle Newcastle, New South Wales 1902, 1903, 1905

R.P. Skinner, special envoy to King
Menelik of Abyssinia Abyssinia 1904

Hon. H.G. Squiers, envoy extraordinary
and minister plenipotentiary to Cuba Habana, Cuba 1905, 1906

J.N. Ruffin, consul at Asuncion,
Paraguay Asuncion, Paraguay 1905

Hon. H.G. Squiers, minister to Panama Panama 1908

Other Government Agencies

William Palmer Cuba 1900

Commissioners of the World's
Columbian Exposition of 1893 South America 1891

Messrs. Palmer and Riley, of the
National Museum Cuba 1901

Hon. Charles H. Allen, governor of
Porto Rico Lowell, Mass. 1902

Foreign Officials

Dr. Ishikawa, director Zoological
Garden at Tokyo Tokyo, Japan 1899

Gen. Clemente Dantin y Feliz
Bolondron, through Gen. James H.
Wilson Cuba 1900

Dr. J. Paes de Carvalho Para, Brazil 1900

Alfred Benitz Calchaqui, Argentine Republic 1900

The Zoological Society of London	London, England	1902
Thomas W. Gibson, superintendent for parks, department of Crown lands, Ontario	Ontario, Canada	1902
officer of the Sudan government	Omdurman, Sudan	1903
Major Burnage	Newcastle, New South Wales	1903
King Menelik of Abyssinia	Abyssinia	1904, 1905
Zoological Garden at Buenos Ayres	Buenos Ayres, Argentine Republic	1905, 1908
New Zealand Government	New Zealand	1905, 1906
Ras Mokonnen, Governor of Harrar Province, Abyssinia	Harrar Province, Abyssinia	1906
Joseph O. Kordina, of Austrian Embassy	Washington, D.C.	1906
Department of Crown lands, province of Ontario	Ontario, Canada	1906

Appendix B: Figures

Figure 1: Secretary Langley

Samuel Pierpont Langley (1843-1906) was the third Secretary of the Smithsonian, holding the position from 1887 until the year of his death. Langley was one of the founders of the National Zoological Park, and was integral to the zoo's international collection efforts. Photo dated August 22, 1887. "Samuel Pierpont Langley," Smithsonian Institution Archives, <https://siarchives.si.edu/history/samual-pierpont-langley>.



Figure 2: Frank Baker

Frank Baker (1841-1918) was appointed as Acting Manager of the National Zoological Park in 1890 by Secretary Langley, and held the position of Superintendent of the National Zoo from 1893 until 1916. Baker was also a professor of anatomy at Georgetown University and Assistant Superintendent of the United States Life Saving Service (later called the U.S. Coast Guard). Baker oversaw the park's day-to-day operations and was also heavily involved in the process of building the zoo's collections. "Frank Baker," Smithsonian Institution Archives, https://siarchives.si.edu/collections/siris_sic_10778.

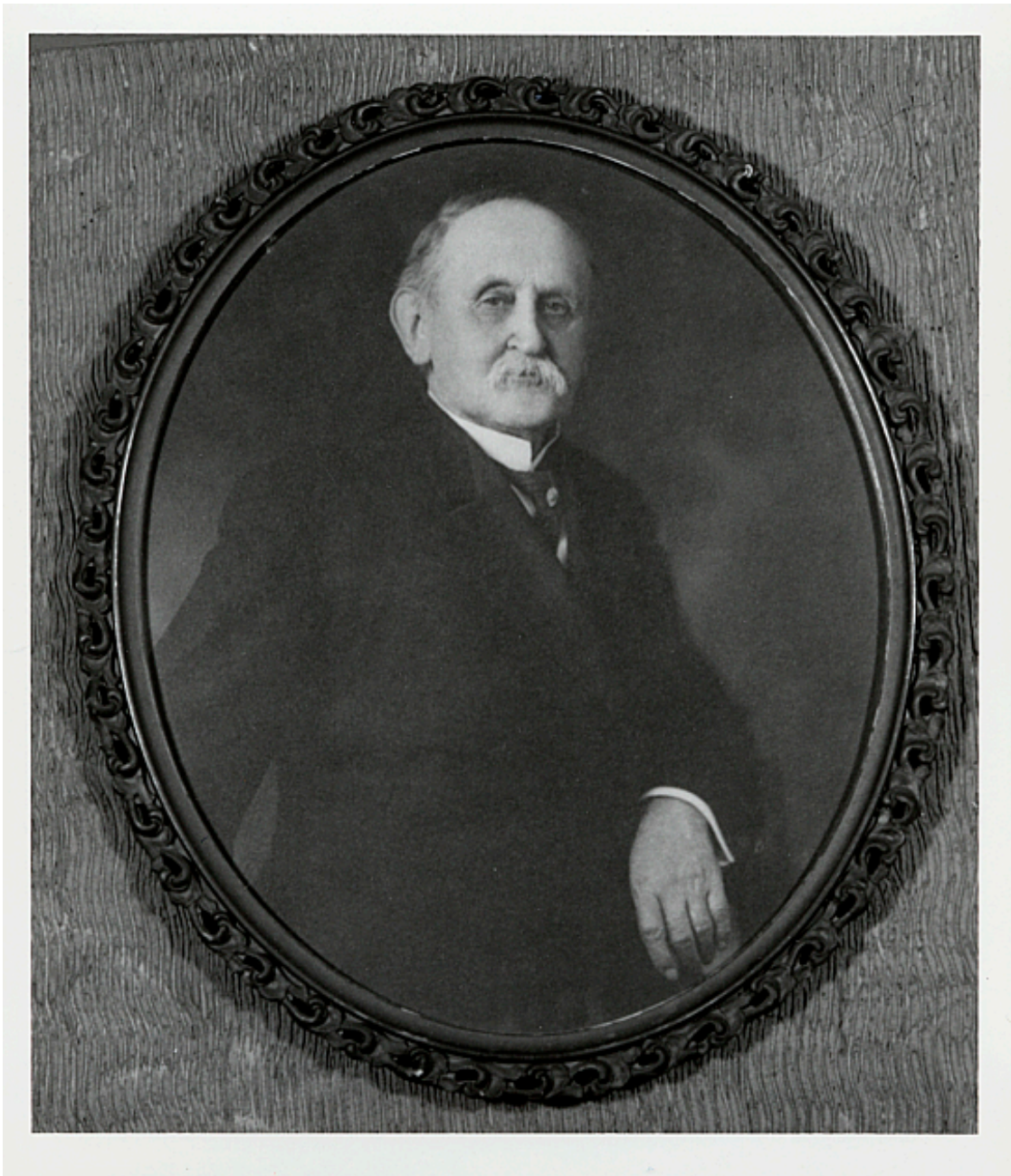


Figure 3.1: "Advice to Collectors"

Secretary Langley's Circular "Animals Desired for the National Zoological Park" was distributed in 1899 to officers of the U.S. government in foreign stations. Tarsiers and Flamingos were among a variety of species the circular pictured as desirable additions to the zoo's collections. Record Unit 74, Box 21, Folder 16, SIA.

ADVICE TO COLLECTORS.

ANIMALS ESPECIALLY DESIRED.

The new possessions of the United States are comparatively poor in animals, but it is especially desirable to have as full a representation of the fauna as possible. While all will be valued, those whose names are italicised are particularly desirable.

CUBA AND PORTO RICO afford the *manatee*, or sea-cow, which frequents bays and mouths of rivers; the *flamingo*, spoonbill, ibis, pelican, several species of parrots and parrakeets, a variety of pigeons, the ani, and other interesting birds. Boas of several kinds occur in these islands, and large lizards of different species are very abundant. The agouta (*Solenodon*) and the hutia (*Capromys*), animals a little larger than a common rat, and the crocodile are also found in Cuba, and an interesting macaw occurs in the Isle of Pines.



FLAMINGO.



TARSIER.

In the PHILIPPINE ISLANDS the most notable mammals are the "tamarau," a small wild buffalo found on Mindoro, several species of deer, the "babui," or wild hog, monkeys of two species, a small cat, two species of civet cat, or musang, fruit-eating bats of different species, several peculiar large rats, the *colugo*, or *flying lemur*, and the very remarkable and interesting *tarsier*, or "magou." Among these the last two and the "tamarau" are especially important. Specimens of the domesticated buffalo also are desired.

Of the birds, the eagles, hornbills, cockatoos, parrakeets, the pheasants and pigeons, the megapod, pelican, and the ground cuckoos are perhaps the most important. Among these, any *hornbills* or brilliant-plumaged *cockatoos* and *parrakeets*

Figure 3.2: Animals Desired from the Americas

“Animals Desired for the National Zoological Park” detailed many species from Central and South America that it hoped to add to its collections. In 1899, American government officers were traveling in greater numbers and frequency to this part of the world. Record Unit 74, Box 21, Folder 16, SIA.

6

National Zoological Park.

would be specially valued, but specimens of all the larger birds, of both land and water, are desired. The python and other snakes, large lizards and turtles would also be acceptable.

Below are mentioned a few of the more notable animals to be found in other regions, and those which are especially desired.



IGUANA.



SLOTH.

CENTRAL AMERICA.—*Tapir*, manatee, West Indian seal, *jaguar*, other cats (except the puma), monkeys, *sloth*,

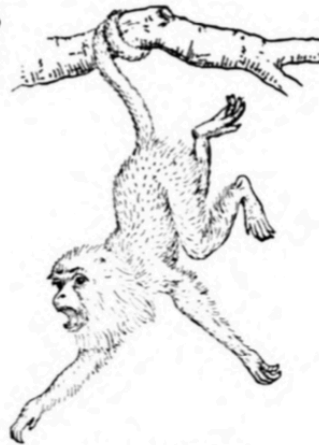
anteater, *coati-mundi*, *tayra*, *kinkajou*, tree porcupine, and other large rodents, curassows, parrots and macaws, *king vulture*, *flamingo*, *spoonbill*, *ibis*, crocodiles, large snakes, *iguanas* and other large lizards.

SOUTH AMERICA.—From the great river valleys of the east and north the following animals are desired:

Tapir, *sloth*, *anteaters*, *great armadillo*, *jaguar*, other cats (except the puma), otter,



TAPIR.



HOWLER MONKEY.

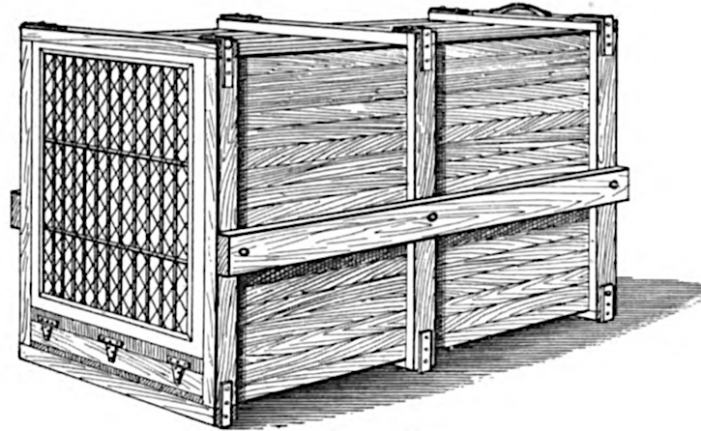
raccoon, wild dogs and foxes, deer, white-lipped peccary, *monkeys* and *marmosets*, *capybara*, *viscacha*, *paca*, *coypu*, porcupine and other large rodents, curassows of various species, *guans*, *tinamous*, *toucans*, parrots and macaws, *harpy* and other eagles, *king vulture*,

Figure 3.3: "Boxing"

"Animals Desired for the National Zoological Park" included detailed instructions for the boxing, shipping, and care of animal specimens. This guidance did not necessarily ensure an animal's safe passage to Washington. Record Unit 74, Box 21, Folder 16, SIA.

BOXING.

General instructions.—The larger animals, all adult flesh-eating animals, and most other species that are not gregarious should each be given a separate box or compartment. The smaller monkeys may be shipped together, but the adults of the larger species are likely to be ill-natured and should be shipped separately, as should also antelope, deer, and sheep, even though young. The young of most other animals may be shipped together.



SHIPPING BOX.

An illustration of a large shipping box is given above, and detailed plans of the same are shown upon the opposite plate. Similar boxes varying in size according to the size of the animals to be transported can readily be made by any fairly good carpenter and blacksmith. All boxes should be high enough to allow the animals confined in them to stand erect. The inside should be smooth, all cleats, etc., required to strengthen the box being put on the outside. Care should be taken that no nails project inside. Except in metal-lined boxes, holes for ventilation should be bored in the upper part of the box. No cracks should be left near the bottom, as the animals would be liable to get their feet caught in them.

The space in front, between the grating and the bottom of the box, should be kept closed by a removable footboard, except when the animals are being fed or watered. The rear doors should be kept locked, all feeding and cleaning being done through the other openings.

Figure 3.4: "Shipping Box for Lion or Tiger"

Secretary Langley included detailed boxing and shipping instructions in "Animals Desired for the National Zoological Park." Record Unit 74, Box 21, Folder 16, SIA.

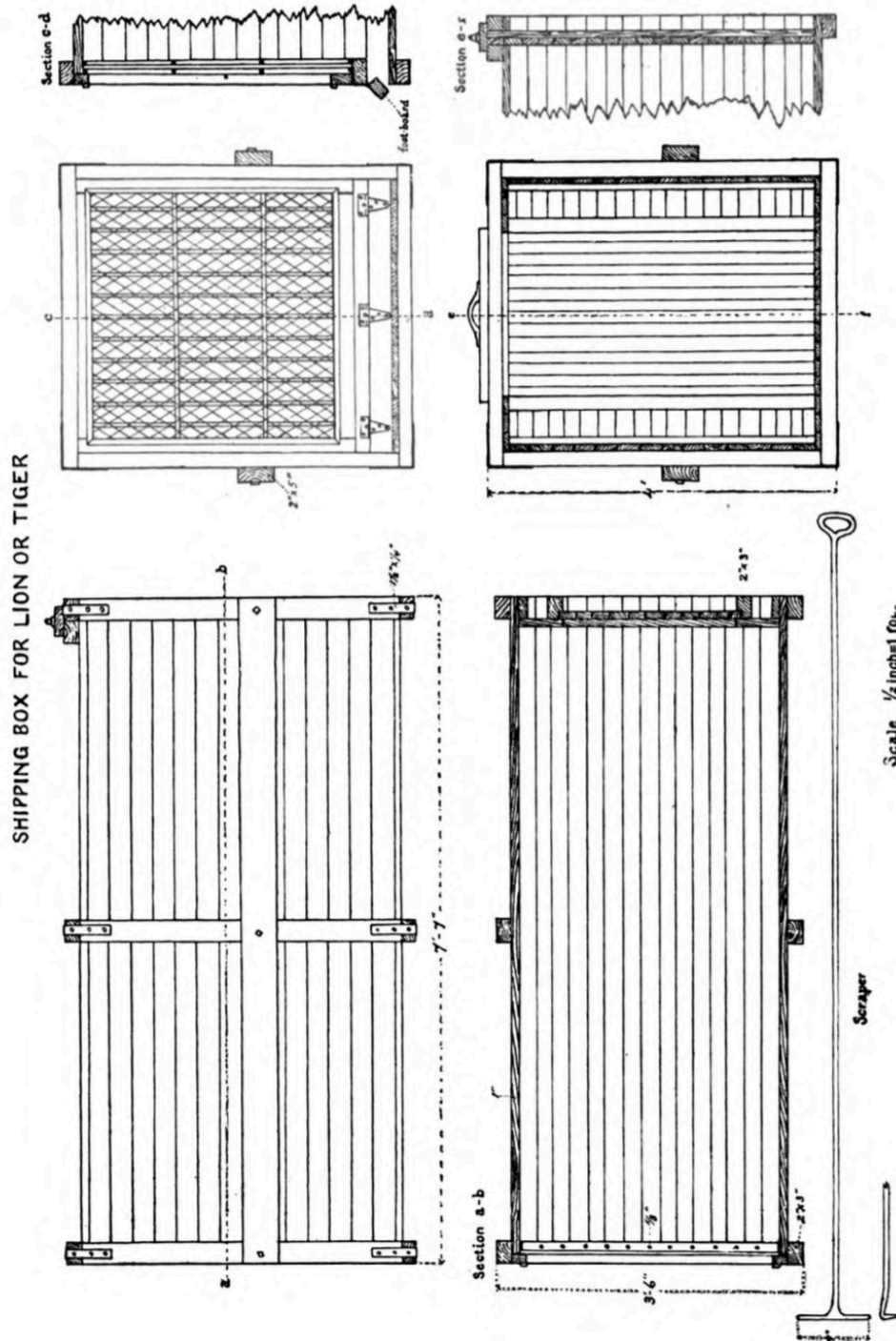


Figure 4.1: Zoological “Highbrows” at the Bronx Zoo

This cartoon demonstrates the racial and ethnic stereotypes the *Times* projected onto the visiting zoologists. “Zoological “Highbrows” at the Bronx Zoo.” *New York Times*, September 1, 1907.

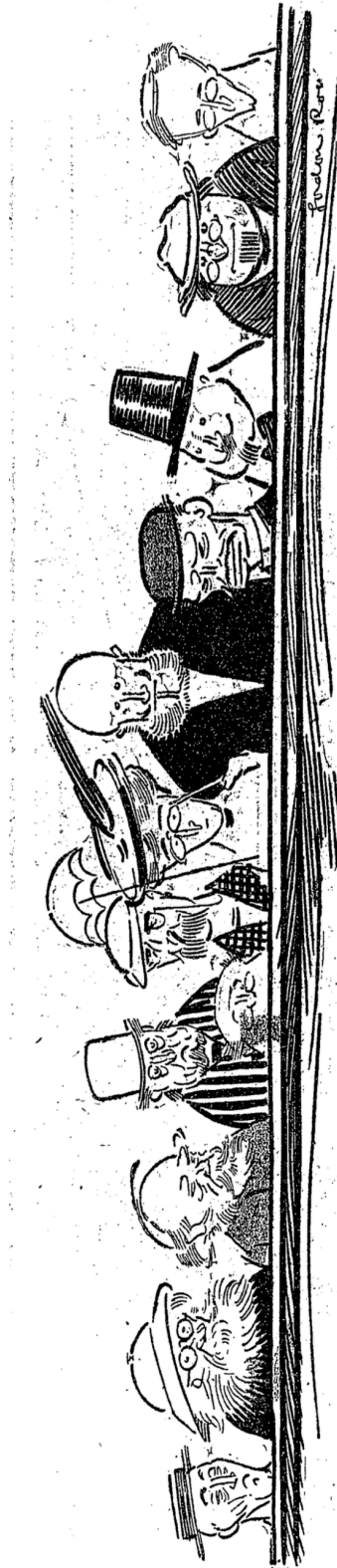
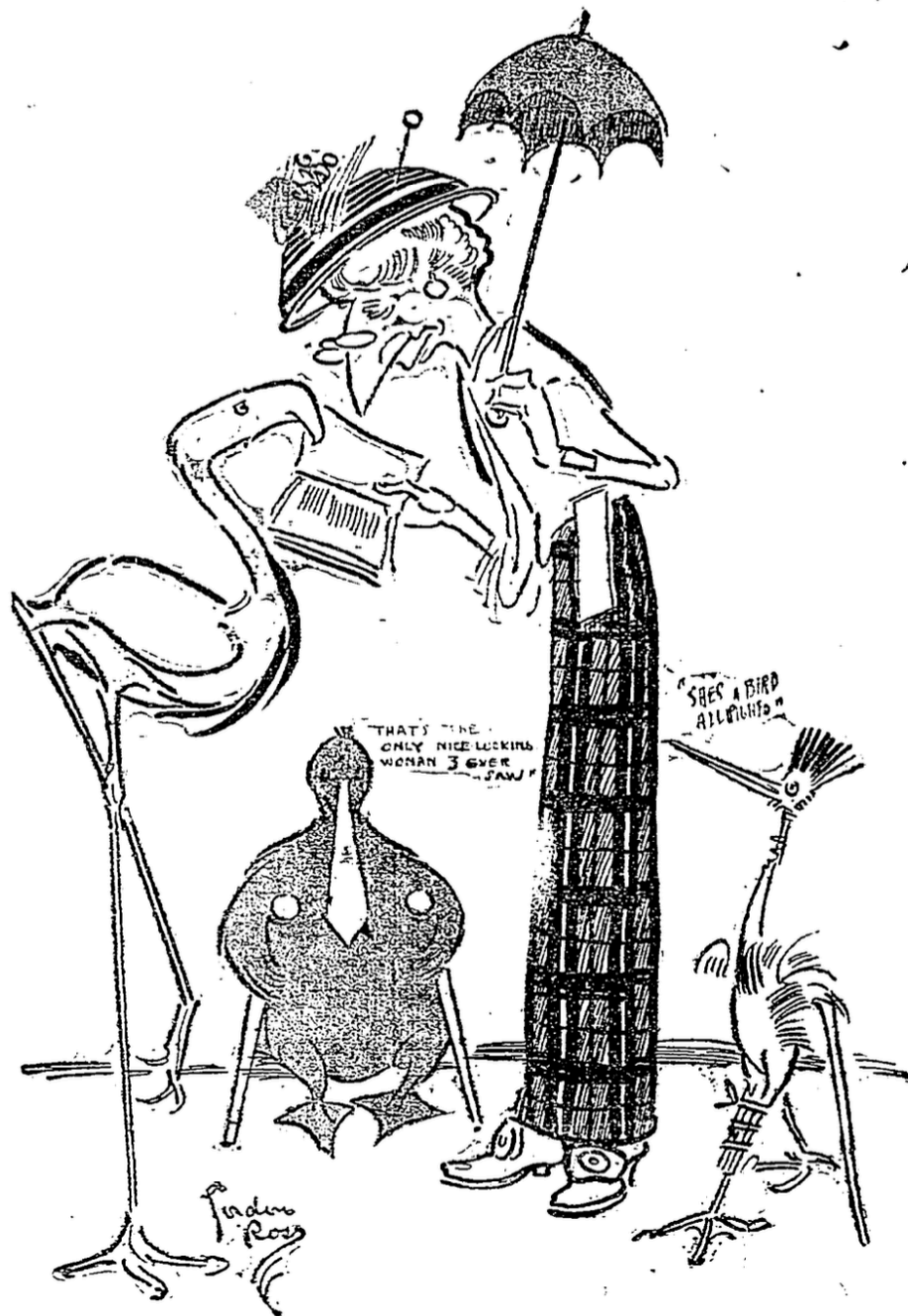


Figure 4.2: The Flamingo

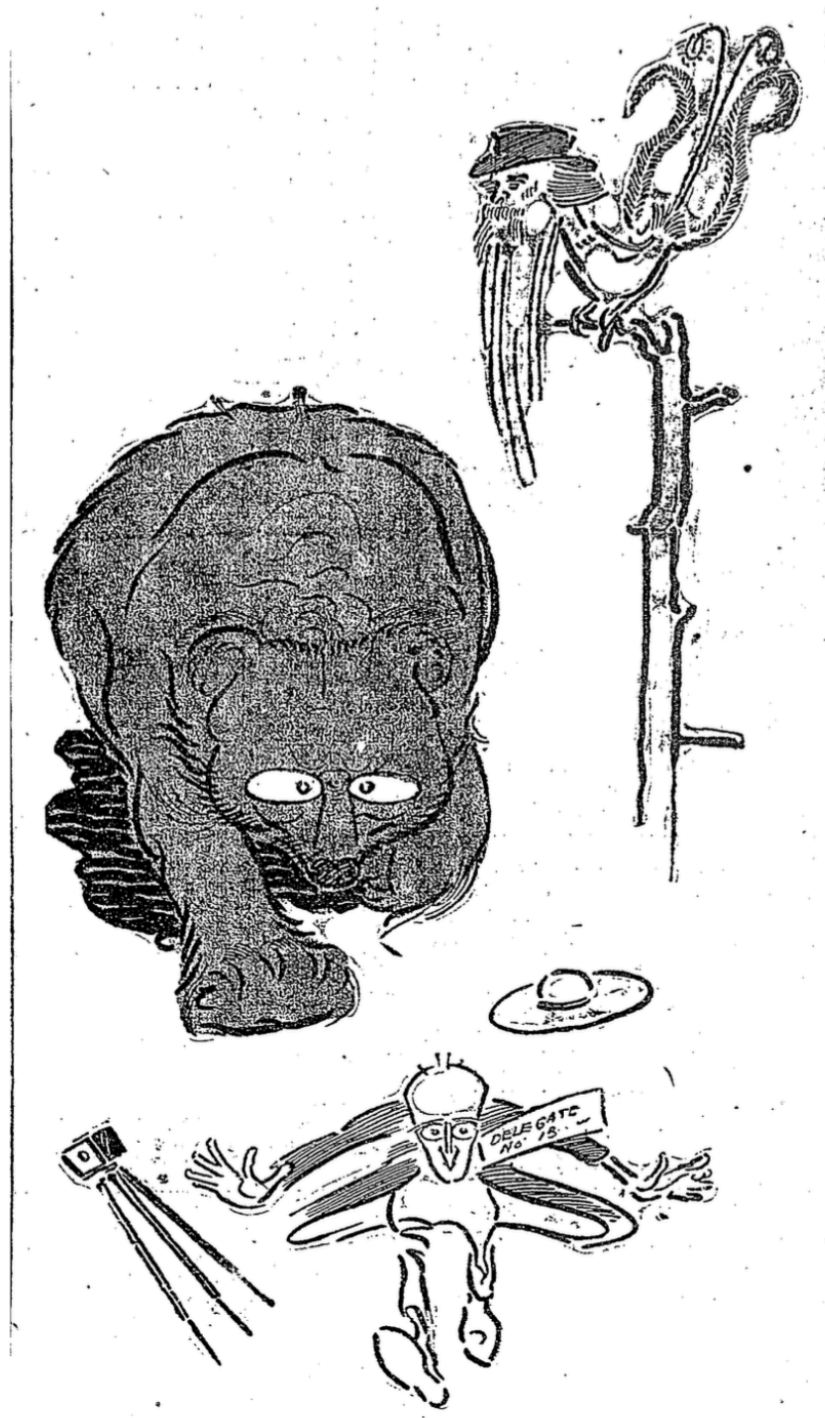
The New York Times article personified a visiting Victorian lady as a Flamingo, inspecting the Bronx zoo for flaws. Members of the International Zoological Congress brought their wives to the tour of the park, and many ladies luncheons and other social occasions were planned for them during the scientific conferences in Washington. "Zoological "Highbrows" at the Bronx Zoo," *New York Times*, September 1, 1907.



"Such Sloppiness," Said the Flamingo.

Figure 4.3: “The Sinister Shadow of T.R.”

The shadow of Teddy Roosevelt lurked behind the visiting zoologists, this cartoon in the *New York Times* suggested. While the foreign scientists inspected American zoos, their authority was checked by the United States’ President, personified as a bear. “Zoological ‘Highbrows’ at the Bronx Zoo,” *New York Times*, September 1, 1907.



The Sinister Shadow of T. R.