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ILLUSTRATION

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Two Yellow Kids: Frank Norris and Stephen Crane

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In the last week of April 1898 Stephen Crane arrived in Key West, followed by Frank Norris in the first week of May. During this "rocking chair period" of the war, America's southernmost port town was swarming with naval personnel and reporters eagerly waiting for Admiral William T. Sampson's fleet blockading the coast of Cuba to intercept the Spanish fleet of Admiral Pascual Cervera y Topete, making it safe for the navy to transport troops across the Straits of Florida and begin the invasion of Cuba. Crane was reporting for the *New York World* while Norris was a correspondent for *McClure's Magazine*, which failed to publish any of his dispatches.¹ In early May, together with other correspondents, Crane and Norris set forth from Key West on a two-day trip aboard the *Three Friends*, a dispatch boat chartered jointly by the *World* and the *New York Herald*, to garner what news they could of the stalled war from the American warships. In his posthumously-published report "On the Cuban Blockade" the fastidious Norris characterized Crane sarcastically as "the Young Personage" and was caustic about his disheveled appearance, which he described in a pen portrait resembling well-known photographs of Crane taken on this cruise by Sylvester Scovel or perhaps by his wife, Frances Cabanné Scovel (later Sargent): "His shirt was guiltless of collar or scarf, and was unbuttoned at the throat. His hair hung in ragged fringes over his eyes, his dress suit-case was across his lap and answered him for a desk. Between his heels he held a bottle of beer against the rolling of the boat, and when he drank was royally independent of a glass."

In the absence of information about the whereabouts of Cervera's fleet, The United States naval blockade was concentrated off the populous northwestern coast of Cuba in the area of Havana, the logical site for a land invasion of the island, but in the third week of May Commodore Winfield S. Schley's Flying Squadron confirmed that the Spanish fleet had taken refuge in Santiago Harbor, and the focal point of the blockade shifted. In a reversal of conventional military tactics where a fleet provides protection for an invading army, an army was sent a thousand miles to help destroy a fleet. The land invasion consequently occurred on the southeastern,

Caribbean side of the island, near Santiago de Cuba, 300 miles from the capital.

Crane was one of a handful of correspondents aboard the dispatch boat *Three Friends* who landed with the advance party of marines at Guantánamo Bay on 10 June. He reported the establishment of the marine base, dubbed Camp McCalla, and was cited for bravery in the skirmish between marines and Spanish guerrillas at Cuzco on 14 June. Correspondents were combatants in the Cuban War. Sylvester Scovel conducted reconnaissance missions before and after American entry into the war; Edward Marshall of the *New York Journal* was wounded at Las Guásimas, where Richard Harding Davis was praised for bravery; James Creelman, the *Journal's* bureau chief, led a charge that captured the fort at El Caney; James F.J. Archibald of the *San Francisco Post* was an aide-de-camp on the general's staff of the First U.S. Infantry and was shot in the arm while in command of a squad during the *Gussie* expedition; and William Randolph Hearst took Spanish prisoners after the great naval battle of 3 July.

Crane was perhaps the only correspondent to witness every land battle of the war, although he missed the destruction of the Spanish fleet in Santiago harbor on 3 July and, unlike Norris, was not present at the surrender of Santiago on the 17th. Richard Harding Davis commented that "[t]he best correspondent is probably the man who by his energy and resource sees more of the war, both afloat and ashore, than do his rivals, and who is able to make the public see what he saw. If that is a good definition, Stephen Crane would seem to have distinctly won the first place among correspondents in the late disturbance."² Davis's remarks have often been cited as contemporary affirmation of Crane's skill as a war correspondent,³ but it is evident from the context in which they were made that Davis was referring to the Cuban War stories later collected in *Wounds in the Rain* and not to Crane's dispatches. The understated prose style of the stories and the depiction in them of the mundane, dutiful heroism of the marines and soldiers, which in "War Memories" Crane called "the spectacle of the common man serenely doing his work, his appointed work," that are by some critics considered advances in Crane's fictional technique, are in no small measure owing to the circumstance that most of the stories are more or less artistic reworkings of his own experiences or those of other correspondents. Little note, for example, has been taken of the fact that even

the often-praised ironic ending of "The Price of the Harness," with a delirious soldier in a fever tent, "wringing from the situation a grim meaning by singing the Star-Spangled Banner with all the ardor which could be procured from his fever-stricken body," is apparently derived from the conclusion of Edward Marshall's account of the Las Guásimas engagement, "A Wounded Correspondent's Recollections of Guasimas," in the September 1898 issue of *Scribner's Magazine*.⁴

Norris's Cuban War experiences were considerably more restricted than Crane's. He may have been in the party of correspondents that accompanied Major General William R. Shafter and Admiral Sampson to confer with the insurgent general Calixto García at Aserraderos on 20 June. Norris attached himself to the First U.S. Infantry Regiment, made up of regulars from the San Francisco Presidio, among whom were a number of his friends, including Archibald. The First Regiment disembarked at Daiquirí, east of Santiago, on 22 June as part of Shafter's Fifth Army Corps, an event reported by Crane in the *World* on 7 July under the heading "Crane Tells the Story of the Disembarkment." Norris landed at Daiquirí on 23 June and marched the 10 miles to Siboney to join the regiment,⁵ which was delayed at Siboney for a week and then moved up to a point on the Santiago Road a few miles south of El Pozo. Crane in contrast accompanied the First Volunteer Cavalry, popularly known as the Rough Riders. On 24 June he caught up with the regiment on the jungle trail from Siboney to Las Guásimas and reported the ambush of the volunteers in the 26 June issue of the *World*. Because the First U.S. Infantry was sent to El Caney on 1 July, Norris missed the initial assault on the San Juan heights and reported only the battle for El Caney about two miles to the northeast, but he must have witnessed some of the subsequent skirmishes of the Santiago campaign in the next few days. Crane, who with Frederick Remington, Burr McIntosh, and Henry J. Wigham took up a vantage point at El Pozo, was able to observe both the San Juan and El Caney actions, although from a distance. He watched the American advance to the heights above Santiago from thickets in the foothills and later recorded what he was able to observe in his longest Cuban War dispatch, "Stephen Crane's Vivid Story of the Battle of San Juan," which did not appear in the *World* until 14 July because Crane came down with malaria, as Norris did later, and was unable to file it until he returned to the United States.

"Stephen Crane's Vivid Story of the Battle of San

Juan" belies its editorially supplied title by being prosaic, disjointed, and matter-of-fact; it is also the most jingoistic of Crane's reports from Cuba. The American troops advancing toward the Spanish entrenchments on the San Juan heights are impressionistically perceived as "a thin line of black figures moving across a field." There is a momentary "thrill of patriotic insanity" as the charge begins: "Yes, they were going up the hill, up the hill. It was the best moment of anybody's life." Abruptly the focus of the dispatch shifts to the wounded soldiers straggling along the road from El Pozo to San Juan under fire from bushwhacking Cuban guerrillas loyal to Spain and then back again to the assault against the Spanish fortifications on San Juan Hill. In a lengthy divagation, Crane comments on the contemptuous attitude of American troops toward the Cuban insurgents: "They despise them. They came down here expecting to fight side by side with an ally, but this ally has done little but stay in the rear and eat army rations, manifesting an indifference to the cause of Cuban liberty which could not be exceeded by some one who had never heard of it." Unlike most American correspondents, Crane did not have a consistently disparaging attitude toward the Cuban soldiers, but even his grudging admiration for their stoicism was negatively qualified by the judgment that they endure hardships "with the impenetrable indifference or ignorance of the greater part of the people in an ordinary slum."⁶ At the end of the dispatch Crane commends the American military surgeons and Red Cross volunteers for setting up a hospital to treat wounded enemy soldiers and condemns the guerrillas who pursued the opposite course, firing on the line of American wounded going to the rear, a theme he continues in "Spanish Deserters Among the Refugees at El Caney," datelined 5 July and printed in the *New York World* on 8 July.

El Caney, was a site of great carnage. In his June 1899 *Century* article, "With Lawton at El Caney," Norris described what he saw after the main blockhouse had been captured in grim naturalistic detail: "The dead were everywhere; they were in the trenches, in the fields of pineapple, in corners of the blockhouse, and in grisly postures half-way down the slope of the hill. The air was full of smells—the smell of stale powder, of smoke, of a horse's carcass two days unburied, of shattered lime and plaster in the blockhouse, and the strange, acrid, salty smell of blood." Such graphic description is absent from Crane's relatively detached

Cuban War reports. Even in his most introspective war fiction, Crane describes the sights and sounds but never the smell of war.⁷ Norris was acutely sensitive to odors. "In Cuba," he noted in his posthumously published report "Untold Thrilling Account of Santiago's Surrender," "everything, the very mud and water, has a smell." More stylistic attributes usually associated with Crane's impressionistic prose are discernible in Norris's "With Lawton at El Caney" than in Crane's pedestrian Cuban War correspondence,⁸ especially the color imagery of "red-tiled, fluted roofs," the "flame-colored" flag of Spain, "the mass of green bush and hill and pale-blue sky above it," and "the 'little ball of white cotton' from an exploding shell that 'popped out against the blue of the distant landscape'; the subjective apprehension of experience, recurrently expressed in similes such as the rhythm of marching that "picks a man up like an undertow," the lights of Santiago that are "a cluster of pin-points in a faint white glow as of a nebula," bursting shrapnel that wiped a man from the wall of the blockhouse "as a sponge would wipe a slate," and troops perceived as "specks in an opening between the trees, running about like excited ants"; and numerous personifications. A sentence such as "[s]omewhere off to the southward heavy guns were speaking at lazy intervals" could easily have come from *The Red Badge of Courage*.

In an abandoned house in El Caney, Norris found the body of a girl who had been stabbed, "a plain-looking girl, lying on the floor, her hair across her face like a drift of seaweed," he writes in impressionistic prose contrasting with the idealized presentment of his fellow correspondent, James F.J. Archibald, to whom she was "a beautiful young girl, dressed richly in a loose gown of light material."⁹ Neither Norris nor Archibald mentions that she had been raped, a detail added by Norris in an August 1899 letter to Ernest Peixotto¹⁰ that would have been unprintable in the *Century* or *Leslie's Weekly*, where, respectively, Norris's and Archibald's articles appeared.

During the standoff that followed the fighting of 1 and 2 July, a stream of refugees from besieged Santiago fearful of an American bombardment poured into El Caney. On 5 July both Crane and Norris were in the city. Norris's March 1899 *Atlantic Monthly* article, "Comida: An Experience in Famine," centers empathetically on the mass of starving people gathered in the town plaza before the church, especially the children and the elderly. For two days Norris helped prepare and distribute the meager supply of food available, spending the night flanked by an

amputated arm on one side and two yellow fever cases on the other and sleeping under a board caked with dried blood. He left El Caney deeply distressed by the wail of the crowd, "prolonged, lamentable, pitiful beyond expression,—the cry of people dying for lack of food." In contrast, Crane's perfunctory report, "Spanish Deserters among the Refugees at El Caney," commends the American military authorities for providing aid to the refugees and especially for setting up a hospital in the church to treat wounded enemy soldiers. He denounces the Spanish guerrillas who pursued the opposite course, firing on the line of American wounded going to the rear and on Red Cross workers and doctors. In his barely fictionalized "War Memories," Crane, perhaps conflating what he had seen on 2 and 5 July, refers only in passing to the crowd in the plaza, his attention fixated on the doorway of the church where a patient in a breech clout is undergoing surgery on an altar serving as an operating table. For Crane the scene suggests a metaphor: "this thin, pale figure had just been torn down from a cross." It is "an effect of mental light and shade" that "illumined all the dark recesses of one's remotest idea of sacrilege, ghastly and wanton."¹¹ In an ironic counterpoint of which for once Crane may not have been conscious, his companion, the British correspondent Sir Bryan Leighton, exclaims "[p]oor devil; I wonder if he'll pull through?" Nevertheless, in "War Memories" Crane sometimes relinquishes the objectivity and unconcern of his dispatches, notably when among the scores of wounded at a dressing station on a ford of the Aguadores River known as the Bloody Bend, he finds a schoolmate from Claverack College, Reuben McNab, shot through the lung. This experience, Crane confesses, "awed me into stutterings, set me trembling with a sense of terrible intimacy with this war which theretofore I could have believed was a dream—almost."¹²

In his last and most impassioned Cuban War dispatch for the *World*, "Regulars Get No Glory" (20 July), Crane bitterly protests the neglect by the press of the regular soldier in favor of the more socially prominent men who comprise the volunteer regiments such as Theodore Roosevelt's Rough Riders. Crane respected the volunteers but championed the regulars.¹³ For this reason, perhaps, the *World's* business manager Don C. Seitz recalled that Crane was dismissed from the *World* in part because he was assumed to be the author of an unsigned report datelined from Port Antonio on 15 July

and printed on the front page of the *World* the next day accusing the officers of the 71st Regiment, New York Volunteers, Reuben McNab's regiment, of timidity in the advance on San Juan.¹⁴ The *Journal* converted this report into a charge of cowardice against the entire regiment, and the *World* was embarrassed by an assault from the *Journal* and other newspapers that lasted a week. It is most unlikely that the offending article was written by Crane, who left Cuba on 8 July and whose dispatches invariably received bylines. The report is usually attributed to Sylvester Scovel, who, according to Edwin Emerson of *Collier's Weekly*, "gloried in his scoop,"¹⁵ but since Scovel also usually received bylines, it may have been a composite effort of the *World* staff to which Crane contributed before he left Cuba. Neither Crane nor Norris witnessed the rout of the 71st, but they both had friends in the regiment. Crane undoubtedly heard the story from Captain L.S. Linson, the brother of Corwin Knapp Linson.¹⁶ Norris's source was probably Captain Edward A. Selfridge, a former classmate at the University of California. In his *San Francisco Chronicle* interview on 28 August, Norris asserted that "[t]he troops did not run, as has been alleged," although he acknowledged that they "scattered badly. There was a lack of discipline. There was a want of confidence in the officers."¹⁷ Thus, inadvertently and unknown to one another, the careers of Frank Norris and Stephen Crane intersected for the last time.

Notes

¹The *World* printed some 24 of Crane's Cuban War dispatches, and some 25 more from Puerto Rico and Havana were subsequently published in the *New York Journal*, but for reasons unknown *McClure's Magazine* printed none of Norris's reports from Cuba, although *McClure's* covered the Cuban War extensively, and the circulation of the magazine doubled as a result. Two of Norris's Cuban War articles were published in his lifetime, both dealing with the battle for El Caney and its aftermath ("Comida: An Experience in Famine," *Atlantic Monthly*, March 1899: 343-48, and "With Lawton at El Caney," *Century*, June 1899: 304-309), and two others appeared posthumously ("Untold Thrilling Account of Santiago's Surrender," *New York Sun*, 13 July 1913, section 7: 1-2, and "On the Cuban Blockade," *New York Evening Post*, 11 April 1914, Final Edition, part 3: 6). There is also an extensive interview with Norris dealing with his Cuban war experiences in the *San Francisco Chronicle* on 28 August 1898 (reprinted in Joseph Katz, "Frank Norris on the Battles of El Caney and San Juan Hill," *Studies in American Fiction*, 12 [1984]: 218-21). "News Gathering at Key West," sometimes cited as a separate Frank

Norris dispatch, is a title that Franklin Walker adapted from Norris's text of "On the Cuban Blockade" in *The Letters of Frank Norris* (1956), apparently not knowing that it had been published previously.

²"Our War Correspondents in Cuba and Puerto Rico," *Harper's Magazine*, May 1899: 941.

³See for example Michael Robertson, *Stephen Crane, Journalism, and the Making of Modern American Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 150-51.

⁴Crane sent the story to his agent, Paul Revere Reynolds, on 27 September 1898.

⁵"With Lawton at El Caney": 305.

⁶"Hunger Has Made Cubans Fatalists," *New York World*, 12 July 1898: 4. In his *New York Journal* report from Havana, "'You Must!'—'We Can't!'" 8 November 1898: 6, Crane is more sympathetic to the insurgents in the Havana area whom he finds "very different from those patriots who so successfully did little or no fighting at Santiago." Disdain for Cuban insurgents was widespread among American correspondents and troops, and this alienated many Cubans who already suspected that the United States might renege on the promise of securing Cuban independence. See David F. Trask, *The War with Spain in 1898* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 210. Amy Kaplan's implication that Crane's "Vivid Story of the Battle of San Juan" is an important narrative reflection of American racism and cultural imperialism wrenches the article out of its historical context and greatly exaggerates its socio-political significance ("Black and Blue on San Juan Hill," *Cultures of United States Imperialism* [Durham: Duke University Press, 1993], 219-36). Norris, on the other hand, had no doubts about the superiority of Anglo-Saxon blood, "the blood of the race that has fought its way out of a swamp in Friesland, conquering and conquering and conquering and conquering, on to the westward, the race whose blood instinct is the acquiring of land" ("Untold Thrilling Account": 2).

⁷In "Stephen Crane's Vivid Story of the Battle of San Juan," Crane comments that the troops had to pass some "pretty grim sights" and "some pretty grim odors" on the road from El Pozo.

⁸An exception is "Bombardment of Santiago," a hitherto unknown Crane dispatch recently discovered by Joseph R. McElrath, Jr., in the 12 June *New York Evening World* that will appear in a forthcoming issue of *Stephen Crane Studies*. This dispatch is replete with the color imagery, abrupt transitions, and other impressionistic effects characteristic of Crane's war fiction.

⁹"What I Saw in the War: No. 1.—The Awful Panic in El Caney," *Leslie's Weekly*, 20 October 1898: 314.

¹⁰*Frank Norris: Collected Letters*, ed. Jesse S. Crisler (San Francisco: The Book Club of California, 1986), 52-53.

¹¹"War Memories": 290-91. Stephen Bonsal, special

correspondent for the *New York Herald*, who was at El Caney on 3 July, also describes the horrific amputation of a leg on the altar of the church doorway that served as an operating table (*The Fight for Santiago* [New York: Doubleday & McClure, 1899], 338-39).

¹²"War Memories": 278. Ghastly as such sights were to Crane and the other correspondents, there were relatively few American combat casualties in the Spanish-American War. Of the 5,462 deaths in the armed forces in 1898, only 379 resulted from combat (Trask, 160).

¹³To Richard Harding Davis the volunteers were amateurs and as such "a menace and a danger to the safety of the country" ("Our Correspondents": 994).

¹⁴*Joseph Pulitzer* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1924), 241. Seitz later wrote that Crane's firing was precipitated by his asking for an exorbitant increase in salary ("Stephen Crane: War Correspondent," *Bookman*, February 1933: 137-40).

¹⁵Stanley Wertheim and Paul Sorrentino, *The Crane Log: A Documentary Life of Stephen Crane* (New York: G.K. Hall, 1994), 329. According to Richard Harding Davis, the *World* fired Scovel for writing this article, as well as for striking or attempting to strike General Shafter at the ceremonies marking the surrender of Santiago.

¹⁶In a letter to his brother, Captain Linson reported that he had met Crane in Santiago, but it was no doubt in the San Juan area near Santiago that they met because Crane left Cuba before the city surrendered (Corwin Knapp Linson, "Little Stories of 'Steve' Crane," *Saturday Evening Post*, 11 April 1903: 20).

¹⁷Katz: 219.

Young Frank Norris as a Sports Journalist

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When surveying the works included in *The Apprentice Writings of Frank Norris*, I found my interest was again and again drawn strongly to Norris's sports journalism, about which surprisingly little has been written over the past century. It is a sizeable body of articles that merits attention, just as much as the other dimensions of Norris's canon of *Wave* writings treated by the speakers who have preceded me this morning.¹

With some twenty-seven Norris sports pieces to discuss I have had to make some tactical decisions. My brief association with the military (I am a visiting professor of English and Philosophy at the Air Force Academy) has given me language to talk of strategy and

tactics. My brief survey will consist of a reconnaissance, a fly-over to identify targets of opportunity. Also on this first pass I will make preemptive strikes on two areas and establish the co-ordinates on four topics I expect to return to at a later date.

§

Sports! How does one determine which of the more than one hundred and fifty pieces of Norris's apprentice writings deal with sports? Defining "sport" is an intriguing question. I remember the discussion and the assignment from my first week of Philosophy as a college student. Our skillful professor explained how Aristotelian metaphysics relied on definitions based upon a category and a difference—a genus and a species. He told us to assume that the genus of sports was "a human activity," and he assigned each team of two students the task of providing the species—the common distinguishing feature of sport. We fell for it. We thought we had been given a straightforward, five-minute assignment. What he provoked was a lively, dorm room debate that lasted the rest of day. My team offered as a defining characteristic that sports were activities that required putting on special shoes. I still think this is a good answer. Others offered comments about hobbies, leisure time, acquired skills, and team work. We did not suspect how tricky and difficult it is to define anything or that a number of distinguished and thoughtful philosophers had wrestled with similar issues. With regard to defining sports, for example, I have long admired the view of the American pragmatist William James that the need to adhere to artificially imposed rules and procedures is essential to sport. Such rules and procedures, he explains, constitute a context that establishes goals and delineates good and bad efforts. Without such stylized and self-imposed restraints the whole sporting enterprise loses interest and meaning. James notes:

As the aim of a football-team is not merely to get the ball to a certain goal (if that were so, they would simply get up on some dark night and place it there), but to get it there by a fixed *machinery of conditions*—the game's rules and the opposing players.²

Norris's journalistic pieces—he seems to me more a color-commentator than a play-by-play man—cover bicycling, track and field, polo, tennis, football, horsemanship, gymnastics, fencing, mountain climbing, hunting and fishing. (You need special shoes for all of these.) Norris paid special attention to football. Thirteen of

his twenty-seven articles covered big time, Bay area California and Stanford college football, as well as those teams' games with two clubs, Olympic and Reliance. Norris, I recall, broke his arm playing football. While he did not have the physical tools to be a gridiron star, clearly playing football helped him become a skilled and knowledgeable analyst. For example, in several pieces he explains how easily average spectators are duped. "From the bleachers a game of this sort looks like good football" (I: 148),³ or "It is easy to fool the bleachers, or by means of a certain amount of excited struggling and wild-eyed gesturing to deceive the average spectator into a belief that the team is playing hard football" (I: 176).

Expert Norris, however, reported one game as "third rate" (I: 133); and he commented on others that "the Olympic eleven still continues to use foul and unsportsmanlike tactics. . . . Several times the Olympic centre threw dirt and dust into Birdsall's [the center's] eyes at the moment the latter was snapping the ball" (I: 144), or that "the gains that were made were oftentimes the result of a happy chance that favored the runner, rather than the consequence of good interference and team play" (I: 148), or that "the team work on both sides was execrable" (I: 168). Norris was not uniformly critical, but his overall judgment was that the West Coast teams were no match for their East Coast rivals. So, it seems that Norris watched a few football games during his 1894-95 year at Harvard.

Norris had a firm handle on the intricacies of football as a game. One article number-crunches a season's worth of statistics to support his prediction that Stanford would beat California in the season ending game for the two rivals. However, Norris's real gift (clear even in these apprentice pieces for *The Wave*) was his appreciation of sport as pageant, as spectacle, as festival and as secular liturgy. Norris captures the magical ambiance of big-time sports venues. He also vividly conveys the enthusiasm of rabid fans, as well as the intensity of participants (and vicarious participants) in such contests and celebrations of human excellence.

In the interest of time and because Norris speaks so well, let us simply attend to his vivid depiction of the scene at a polo match:

Seen from the far side of the field, the grandstand (it's not a very *grand* stand) had the air of a cluster of blazing flowers set in the dark green of the landscape. There was the gleaming and swaying of brilliant parasols, and the flash of silks

and gay bonnets. There was the glitter of harness and clinking polo-chains; there was the satin sheen of perfectly groomed hides, and the dull glowing of the lacquered tally-hos. To see all these colors moving and twinkling and shimmering in and out under a California sun, in the out-of-doors of a perfect California day, was in itself alone worth the trip. And the pretty girls, . . . no, you can't match them anywhere else. (I: 45)

Ambiance is again of the essence as he records his experience of a tennis tournament:

Everywhere one looked the same charming picture repeated itself under an infinite variety of forms: the deep green of palms and grass; the gleaming pink and blue sun-shades; the frothlike whiteness of the girls' dresses; the momentary flash of a gay-colored hat, and the white, white sun-light flowing around everywhere and quivering in heat waves from off the soft asphalt of the tennis courts like some sort of transparent, iridescent sea of light. (I: 101)

And, again, there is the spectacle of afforded at a football game:

Then comes the great day. The sloping bleachers banked with tier after tier of watching faces, the air rent with slogans of the rival colleges, the flutter of the rival colors everywhere, a whirlwind of excitement centering about the struggling teams out there on the gridiron. (I: 138)

Even a football practice at Stanford is worthy of note. "Here they come; Rah-Rah-Rah, Rah-Rah-Rah," etc. It was 4:30, and some thirty men in vermilion sweaters, with black S's on the breasts came galloping down from Encina [Hall]. All at once the bleachers shouted. A jackrabbit had gotten up under the feet of that young Yale giant, Cross, and had gone bounding off, as though worked by springs in his hind legs. At once Cross started in chase, just as if the jack had been a fumbled ball, racing along intently, with enormous strides, for over a hundred yards. (I: 172)

Young Norris was skilled at capturing the enthusiasm, energy and adrenaline that comes with witnessing, as ABC Sports puts it, "the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat."

Incidentally, Norris descriptions of the ambiance of a football can be profitably compared with two of Stephen Crane's pieces on Harvard football published in the *New York Tribune* in 1 November of 1896 and 8 November 1897, during the same period in which Norris's provided coverage of West coast football⁴.

§

Let me close with four intriguing areas in Norris's apprentice sports journalism that I do not have the time to investigate here. First, big-time sports (especially baseball and football) were an important part of turn of the century American culture. Not only was Norris a fan, but, as a critic he was alert to the corrupting influence of sports in universities. For example, he questions the money colleges are willing to invest in what we today refer to as non-revenue sports, such as track and field, in the pursuit of publicity and "prestige." A second area worthy of note will be seen in the fact that these *Wave* articles appeared two years before the publication of Thorstein Veblen's classic study of "conspicuous consumption," leisure, and discretionary income in American society, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*. Norris's piece on a hunt club on the Del Monte peninsula is a textbook illustration of Veblen's position on "the matter of amusement and recreation" (II: 205). Third, the need for exercise, fresh air, and the benefits of the strenuous life were as obvious to Norris as to his contemporaries Stephen Crane, William James, and Theodore Roosevelt.

Finally, I am interested in whether spectators or participants enjoy epistemological privilege. I have examined this issue in a number of pieces by Stephen Crane. I find that Norris, too, is curious about the advantages and drawbacks of the interested and/or "disinterested spectator" (I: 177). Also, Norris, like Crane, is alert to the irony that those most involved and closest to the scene are sometimes ignorant or mistaken about what is happening to them and those around them.

It is clear, then, that the two volumes of Norris's apprentice writings bound in one oversized volume by the American Philosophical Society provide many targets of opportunity for those interested in Norris's sports journalism and the significance of sports in U.S. cultural life.

Notes

¹This paper was delivered at Eighth Annual American Literature Association Conference, 23 May 1997, in Baltimore, Maryland, at a session devoted to discussion of Frank Norris's 1896-98 writings for the San Francisco weekly magazine, *The Wave*.

²William James, *Pragmatism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975), 57.

³Volume and page references are to *The Apprentice Writings of Frank Norris*, 2 volumes in 1, ed. Joseph R. McElrath, Jr., and Douglass K Burgess (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1996).

⁴Note the similarities between Norris's descriptions of football games with these two by Stephen Crane. The first, "Harvard University Against the Carlisle Indians," appeared in the *New York Journal* (1 November 1896): "It was not by any means a model day for football. The sun was quite copper-like in its strength, and even light overcoats were not discernible until the latter half of the game. The mildness of the atmosphere made the practicing players seem like stuffed figures. High on the stands the waiting crowd had a great view of tenement houses and factories" (*The Works of Stephen Crane*, volume 8, ed. Fredson Bowers [Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1973], 670-71). A year later in the same newspaper, on 8 November 1897, his "How Princeton Met Harvard at Cambridge" limned the similarity between his and Norris's styles: "Before the game and before the crowd the huge new wooden stands resembled monstrous constructions of the Northwestern lumber region, but soon black clumps of people began to dot these great slanting expanses, and the crimson flags of Harvard flashed here and everywhere. The silhouette of the vast crowd against the blue sky was a moving and tremendous thing. The sun was bright, but a breeze that gradually became more chilly swept across the field from the north" (*Works*, volume 8, 673).

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