Discussion Questions

1. Chapter one, “Defeat,” depicts dramatic scenes from Roosevelt’s final election. What parallels exist between a risky political career and a risky Rain Forest expedition? What enabled him to survive both?

2. Compare Rondon’s and Roosevelt’s leadership styles. In what ways did these co-commanders complement each other? In what ways were they at odds?

3. Discuss the very concept of survival as it shapes The River of Doubt. In choosing provisions, what items did Roosevelt’s team consider necessary for survival? What aspects of survival (greater quantities of dry, mildew-free clothes, for example) did they overlook? What intangibles (especially in terms of emotions) are also necessary for such an expedition?

4. What aspects of humanity were represented by the various personalities in the group, ranging from exploitive Father Zahm and the rational Cherrie to the volatile Julio? Can such varied people coexist? How did you react to Roosevelt’s belief that it was necessary for Julio to be found and shot after he murdered one of the team members?

5. Do any contemporary American politicians possess Roosevelt’s public-speaking style? Why did he believe it was important to debate the former Chilean ambassador and deliver speeches refuting the protestors there?

6. Discuss the extraordinary medical history included in The River of Doubt. How was Roosevelt able to survive so much in his lifetime --- from gunshot and disease to a train wreck --- with only rudimentary medical care? What aspects of modern medicine would have made his expedition safer? Would safer conditions have undermined the thrill?

7. What did you discover about the intricate, sometimes surreal ecology and geography of the Rain Forest itself? What is the significance of the ancient history of South America’s formation, such as the plate tectonics that sculpted the Andes Mountains? What was it like to read descriptions of a region where few humans have adapted to the environment? Why is it important to preserve rather than develop these ecosystems?

8. In the end, what do you believe Roosevelt’s true missions were in this expedition? What was revealed about the nature of some geographic explorers when his success was met with deep skepticism? What motivates any explorer --- from ancient nomads to NASA scientists? What separates Roosevelt’s brand of adventurousness from that of contestants on television shows such as “Survivor”?

River of Doubt, by Candice Millard

9. Share your observations about the Cinta Larga, ranging from nutrition and family life to warfare. Does their self-sufficiency make them noble?

10. What did you discover about Roosevelt’s parenting style? Is his approach—particularly his insistence that his children learn to conquer rather than avoid obstacles—prevalent in many American schools today?

11. Do you believe that Kermit’s later despondency, which eventually drove him to suicide, was related more to genetics or to his life’s circumstances? Did his father expect too much of him? How did their relationship shift throughout this father-son expedition? How would you have fared on a similar mission with your mother or father?

12. How might Roosevelt respond to current concerns about the environment and climate change? How might he and his Progressive “Bull Moose” Party have fared in recent elections?

13. What separates The River of Doubt from other presidential narratives you have read? What writing techniques enabled the author to weave together science, travelogue, and history? What do the Notes and Acknowledgments sections reveal about her research techniques? If someone were to write a biography of you, what narratives could be constructed from your collection of letters and other memorabilia?

14. Discuss the historical context of Roosevelt’s trip, in terms not only of South American history but other aspects of world history from this time period, such as the sinking of the Titanic in 1912? Would World War I have unfolded differently if Roosevelt had defeated Wilson?

15. How were the first chapters of Roosevelt’s life, which were marked by poor health, resolved by this final South American chapter? Do his triumphs of endurance, from boxing at Harvard to valiant service during the Spanish-American War, form a timeline of progressively more dangerous challenges throughout his life? If so, did he finally meet his match with The River of Doubt? Why do you believe this expedition was, until now, less well known than his other triumphs?

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Candice Millard
From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia


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Personal life and education

Millard is a graduate of Baker University in Baldwin City, Kansas, and earned a master's degree in literature from Baylor University. She married Mark Uhlig in May 2001. [1] Millard lives in Leawood, Kansas, with her husband and three children.

Awards

In April 2012, Millard won the Edgar Award for Best Fact Crime Book for Destiny of the Republic. Subsequently, Millard went on to receive the 34th Thorpe Menn Award for Literary Excellence for Destiny of the Republic from the American Association of University Women, Kansas City Branch, in October 2012. [2]

Bibliography

- "Keepers of the Faith: The Living Legacy of Aksum" National Geographic (July 2001)
References


External links

- Official website (http://candicemillard.com)
- Candice Millard (https://twitter.com/candice_millard) on Twitter


Categories: 1960s births | Living people | American historians | American journalists | Baker University alumni | Baylor University alumni | Historians of the United States | People from Leawood, Kansas

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Cândido Rondon
From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Cândido Mariano da Silva Rondon, or Marechal Rondon (May 5, 1865 – January 19, 1958) was a Brazilian military officer who is most famous for his exploration of Mato Grosso and the Western Amazon Basin, and his lifelong support of Brazilian indigenous populations. He was the first director of Brazil’s Indian Protection Bureau (SPI/FUNAI) and responsible for the creation of the Xingu National Park. The Brazilian state of Rondônia is named after him. He was made Marshal, the highest military rank in Brazil.

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Early life

He was born on 5 May 1865 in Mimoso, a small village in Mato Grosso state. His father was of Portuguese ancestry, and his mother was an Indian from the Bororo people. Both of his parents died when he was 9 and he was raised by his grandparents. After finishing high school at the age of 16, he taught elementary school for two years, and then joined the Brazilian army. On joining the military, he entered officer’s school and graduated in 1888 as a second lieutenant. He was also involved with the Republican coup that overthrew Pedro II, the last Emperor of Brazil.

As an army engineer

In 1890, he was commissioned as an army engineer with the Telegraphic commission, and helped build the first telegraph line across the state of Mato Grosso. This telegraph line was finally finished in 1895, and afterwards, Rondon started construction on a road that led from Rio de Janeiro (then capital of the republic) to Cuiabá, the capital of Mato Grosso. Until this roadway was complete, the only way between these two cities was by river transport. Also during this time, he married his wife, Chiquinha Xavier, and together they had 7 children. From 1900 to 1906, Rondon was in charge of laying telegraph line from Brazil to Bolivia and Peru. During this time he...
opened up new territory, and was in contact with the warlike Bororo tribe of western Brazil. He was so successful in pacifying the Bororo, that he completed the telegraph line with their help. Throughout his life, Rondon laid over 4,000 miles of telegraph line through the jungles of Brazil.

The Marechal Rondon was honored with the title "Patron Weapon Communications Brazilian Army", by

Explorations

As a result of Rondon’s competence in constructing telegraph lines, he was put in charge of extending the telegraph line from Mato Grosso to the Amazon. In the course of constructing the line, he discovered the Jurujena river, in northern Mato Grosso which is an important tributary of the Tapajós river. He also discovered the Nambikwara tribe, which had until then killed all Westerners they had come in contact with. [1]

In May 1909, Rondon set out on his longest expedition. He set out from the settlement of Tapirapuã in northern Mato Grosso heading northwest to meet up with the Madeira river, which is a major tributary of the Amazon River. By August, the party had eaten all of its supplies, and had to subsist on what they could hunt and gather from the forest. By the time they reached the Jiparaná River, they had no supplies. During their expedition they discovered a large river between the Jurujena, and Jiparaná river, which Rondon named the River of Doubt. To reach the Madeira, they built canoes, and reached the Madeira on Christmas Day, 1909.

When Rondon reached Rio de Janeiro, he was hailed as a hero, because it was believed that he and the expedition had died in the jungle. After the expedition, he became the first director of the Brazilian Government’s Indian Protection Agency, or the SPI.

Expedition with Roosevelt

*Main article: Roosevelt-Rondon Scientific Expedition*

In January 1914, Rondon left with Theodore Roosevelt on the Roosevelt-Rondon Scientific Expedition, whose aims were to explore the River of Doubt. The expedition left the Tapiripuã, and reached the River of Doubt on February 27, 1914. They did not reach the mouth of the river until late April, after the expedition had suffered greatly. During the expedition, the river was renamed the Rio Roosevelt.

The Adventure down the River of Doubt was the most difficult of Roosevelt’s life. All the men on the trip, except the seemingly invincible Rondon suffered from ailments and constant maladies. Much of the success of the trip can be attributed to the tireless efforts of Kermit Roosevelt who, after vowing to bring his father out of the jungle alive, worked harder than even the hired labor.

Later life
After the expedition of 1914, Rondon worked until 1919 mapping the state of Mato Grosso. During this time he discovered some more rivers, and made contact with several Indian tribes. In 1919, he became chief of the Brazilian Corp of Engineers, and the head of the Telegraphic Commission.

In 1924 and 1925, he led army forces against a rebellion in the state of São Paulo. From 1927 to 1930, Rondon was put in charge of surveying all of the borders between Brazil and its neighbors. In 1930, he was interrupted by the Revolution of 1930, and he resigned from his position as head of SPI. During 1934–1938, he was in charge of a Diplomatic Mission, to mediate a dispute between Colombia and Peru over the town of Leticia. In 1939, he resumed his directorship of SPI, and expanded the service to new territories of Brazil. In 1952, he set up the first Brazilian National Park along the Xingu River, for the Indians living there. He died in 1958 in Rio de Janeiro at the age of 92.

**Homages**

Marshal Cândido Rondon is considered one of the foremost Brazilian heroes and patriots and has thus been honoured by population and government in many ways. He is the "Father of Brazilian Telecommunications" and May 5 is the National Day of Telecommunications, established in his honour. Had the glory of having your name written in letters of gold in massive Book of the Geographical Society of New York.

- State of Rondônia
- Fundação Cândido Rondon (http://www.fcr.org.br/)
- Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul
- Municipality of Marechal Rondon, Mato Grosso
- Municipality of Rondonópolis, Mato Grosso
- Faculdade Marechal Rondon (http://www.fmrn.edu.br/), São Manuel, São Paulo
- Museu Rondon, Federal University of Mato Grosso
- Marechal Rondon Library, Museu do Índio, Fundação Nacional do Índio, Botafogo, Rio de Janeiro
- Bosque Municipal Marechal Rondon, Londrina, Paraná
- Marechal Rondon International Airport, Cuiabá/Várzea Grande, Mato Grosso
- Marechal Rondon Highway, State of São Paulo
- Rondon's Marmoset (*Mico rondoni*), a small monkey.

In addition, thousands of streets, schools and other urban features and organizations have received Rondon's name.

**Positivism/Comtism**

From 1898 onward Rondon was an orthodox member of the *Igreja Positivista do Brasil* (Positivist Church of Brazil), which is a Religion of Humanity based in the thought of Auguste Comte. The credo he embraced from it emphasized naturalism, science, and altruism rather than any supernatural forces.[2]

**See also**
Cândido Rondon - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

- Roosevelt-Rondon Scientific Expedition
- Villas-Bôas brothers

Works cited

2. ^ Stringing Together a Nation: Candido Mariano da Silva Rondon and the ... By Todd A. Diacon: pgs 83–84
   (http://books.google.com/books?id=vDHZJ433ficC&pg=PA83&lpg=PA83&dq=%22positivist+church%22+brazil&source=web&ots=hQ8nhytmgT&sig=v._-4WtrWtbHIDmHF1tmoDnd1xNj0&hl=en#PPA84,M1)

External links

- Candido Rondon: A friend of the Indians (http://www.phfawcettsweb.org/rondon.htm) is a good site to learn more about Rondon's involvement with Furan.
- Candido Rondon: Explorer, Geographer, Peacemaker: 1865–1958
  (http://www.vidaslusofonas.pt/candido_rondon2.htm) has a timeline and good information about Rondon's life and work.


Categories: 1865 births | 1958 deaths | People from Mato Grosso | Brazilian explorers
| Brazilian people of indigenous peoples descent | Brazilian people of Portuguese descent | Comtism
| Explorers of Amazonia | Indigenous politics in Brazil

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Theodore Roosevelt

_Historic World Leaders, 1994_

**Born:** October 27, 1858 in New York, New York, United States  
**Died:** January 06, 1919 in Oyster Bay, New York, United States  
**Nationality:** American  
**Occupation:** President (Government)

"We've had quite a lot of Presidents, They come from near and far, --And few have tried to avoid the job--A couple merely annoyed the job-- But no one ever enjoyed the job With the gusto of T.R." -- Rosemary and Stephen Vincent Benét

Twenty-sixth U.S. president and Republican reformer, who was the youngest man to ever hold the office, first president to win a Nobel peace prize, and the person for whom the toy "Teddy Bear" was named.

- 1880 Graduated Harvard
- 1881 First elected to the New York State Assembly
- 1884 Delegate to Republican National Convention; purchased North Dakota ranch
- 1889 Appointed to U.S. Civil Service Commission
- 1895 Appointed New York City police commissioner
- 1897 Named assistant secretary of the navy
- 1898 Organized and served as colonel of "Rough Riders," during the Spanish-American War; elected governor of New York
- 1900 Elected vice president of U.S.
- 1901 Became president of U.S., following assassination of McKinley
- 1904 Elected president
- 1906 Awarded Nobel Peace Prize for role in Russo-Japanese War
- 1912 Lost Republican nomination for president; helped form Progressive Party of America, "Bull Moose Party"
- 1916 Refused Progressive Party's presidential nomination
- 1917 Rejected by Woodrow Wilson as military service volunteer in World War I
- 1919 Died at Oyster Bay, New York

_Name variation:_ called "Teedle" as a child, he preferred T.R. or Theodore, or the "Colonel" in later life and abhorred the public usage of "Teddy." Born in the Manhattan borough of New York City on October 27, 1858; died on January 6, 1919, at Oyster Bay, New York; son of Theodore Roosevelt, Sr., and Martha "Mittie" (Bullock) Roosevelt; married: Alice Hathaway Lee, October 27, 1880 (died February 14, 1884); married: Edith Kermit Carow, December 2, 1886 (died September 30, 1948); children: (four sons) Theodore, Jr., Kermit, Archibald Bullock, and Quentin; (two daughters) Ethel Carow and Alice Lee (the only child of his first marriage about whom the song "Alice Blue Gown" was written). Relatives: uncle of Eleanor Roosevelt, great-uncle of newspapermen Joseph and Stewart Alsop, fifth cousin and uncle by marriage to Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and third cousin twice removed of Martin Van Buren. Predecessor: William McKinley. Successor: William Howard Taft.
Although Theodore Roosevelt descended from an old Dutch family that settled in New York (then New Amsterdam) in the 1640s and belonged to the genteel aristocracy of Manhattan, the blood of many nationalities mingled in his veins. He was Dutch, German, Scotch-Irish, Welsh, French, and English. Of course, he thoroughly enjoyed his mixed ancestry and often talked at length concerning it. In the politics of "melting-pot" America, it had great value. Legend has it that while receiving people he would say, "Ah, you have a Welsh name! I have Welsh blood myself." "Well, you are German, so am I." Once, when meeting a Chinese dignitary, he supposedly boomed out automatically, "Congratulations, I am partly Chinese, too!"

As a child, "Teedle" suffered from asthma. Until the age of 11, he was a sickly, puny, fair-haired, nearsighted lad interested in natural history to the exclusion of most other childhood activities. Supposedly his father worried over the sorry specimen he saw and told T.R., "You have the mind but not the body and without the help of the body the mind cannot go as far as it should. You must make your body."

"Teedle," who worshiped his father, responded positively. The elder Roosevelt installed a gymnasium on the second floor of their New York townhouse where young Theodore spent long hours with punching bag, dumbbells, horizontal bars, and other exercise paraphernalia. Although his physique improved, reportedly he was thrashed by a bully in upstate New York in 1872. From that whipping emerged Theodore Roosevelt the warrior. He began boxing lessons, took wrestling instructions, and ultimately learned the Oriental art of self-defense, jujitsu.

Through physical activity he literally remade his body, becoming the robust, muscular individual who peers out from photographs in many history books. Until he wore out his body at the age of 60, Roosevelt lived what he preached, "the strenuous life," the life of fitness, which he believed kept man honed to a "fighting edge," his finest expression.

Nothing ever frightened him again. During his first term in the New York Assembly, he knocked a political opponent senseless. While ranching in the Dakotas, he disarmed a western badman in a saloon, slamming him to the floor. As president of the United States, while attending a reunion of the "Rough Riders" in Santa Fe, New Mexico, he threw the state's governor down a flight of stairs. And though his men hunched behind rocks and trees during the charge up Kettle Hill—not San Juan—near Havana, Cuba, during the Spanish-American War, Colonel Roosevelt with bullets splattering all about him spurred his horse ahead, stopping periodically to allow a few noble comrades to catch up. Years later, he paid his father the supreme compliment when he wrote in his Autobiography, "My father was the best man I ever knew." He was "the only man of whom I was ever really afraid."

But if T.R. could be violent, he could also be compassionate. His love for his first wife, Alice Lee, is one of the great tragedies in presidential history. When she died in 1884, he spent two years in mourning. In 1886, he married Edith Carow and with her raised two daughters—one by his first wife—and four sons. He was a great father— instructing, soothing, educating, comforting, and tending his brood. While he was president, laughter rang through the White House. The "Colonel" provoked it.

Still, he could hate mightily. Although he was descended from an old Georgia family through his mother, a southern beauty, Roosevelt, an ardent nationalist, despised the aging Jefferson Davis, calling him "the Benedict Arnold of his time." He could also be clever in his disdain. In the Autobiography, he tells how his friends were horrified that he intended to enter politics after graduating from Harvard. "The men I knew best," he writes, "were the men in the clubs of social pretension and the men with cultivated taste and the easy life." They considered politics a cheap affair of saloonkeepers and horsecar conductors. "I answered," he added, "that if this were so it
merely meant that the people I knew did not belong to the governing class . . . and that I intended to be one of the governing class."

He became one of the governing class with the help of Joe Murray, immigrant Irish lieutenant to the local ward boss of the 21st Assembly district, the German-born Jacob Hess. They played key roles in T.R.'s election to the State Assembly in 1881. Once in Albany, he immediately became identified with reformers and, despite supporting the tainted James G. Blaine for president in 1884, continued to be so. He enhanced his reputation among respectable, reform-minded, loyal Republicans with an unsuccessful effort to become mayor of New York City in 1886.

President Benjamin Harrison, for whom he campaigned two years later, named him to the three-member Civil Service Commission in 1889. Here, to the dismay of his colleagues, Roosevelt assumed the role of unofficial chairman and helped reorganize the board and its examinations. He also began a steady stream of speechmaking, championing "honesty" in government and "morality" in politics. These views, which he advocated for the remainder of his life, caused some historians to label him, "the apostle of the obvious." His friend, whom he later appointed secretary of war and state, Elihu Root, once remarked that T.R. was the only man he had ever known who discovered the Ten Commandments.

William Strong, the reform mayor of New York, made Roosevelt a commissioner of the city's corruption-ridden police force in 1895. His black cape, tooth grin, and pince-nez glasses soon became symbols of fear as he prowled the streets nightly to make sure New York's finest were at work. When he mistakenly tried to enforce Sunday blue laws closing saloons, New Yorkers decided that their police had been reformed sufficiently.

**Rough Riders Fight in Cuba**

T.R. was rescued by President William McKinley, who appointed him assistant secretary of the navy. He was involved in the decision to move Commodore George Dewey's India Squadron to Hong Kong from where it sailed against the Spanish fleet at Manila when war broke out. A big navy advocate, T.R. supported the "large policy" of expansionism. He was a jingoist, advocating war with Spain and telling his intimates that McKinley's handling of affairs demonstrated that the president "has no more backbone than a chocolate eclair."

When war came, he resigned from the Navy Department to organize the First U.S. Volunteer Cavalry or "Rough Riders," with whom he distinguished himself in Cuba. While America rejoiced in its easy victory in the "Splendid Little War" (it lasted ten weeks), Roosevelt discussed his exploits in a small book entitled, *The Rough Riders*. Never one to downplay his importance, when Finley Peter Dunne, whose columns appeared under the pseudonym of Mr. Dooley in the Chicago *Tribune*, read Roosevelt's book, he had Mr. Dooley say, "If I was him I'd call th' book 'Alone in Cuba.'"

"Boss" Tom Platt, Republican senator from New York, sponsored Roosevelt for governor in 1898. Not particularly fond of the nation's newest hero, Platt believed T.R.'s candidacy was the only way the state could be kept Republican considering the serious challenge mounted by Democrats. The Colonel won the governorship by a small majority and soon angered Platt by disregarding recommendations for patronage appointment. As governor, he developed a lengthy, but largely innocuous, reform program. Its main achievement was a tax on corporate franchises.

By 1900, the former Rough Rider was ready for a promotion, and the New York political bosses, especially Platt, were ready to be rid of him. Neither McKinley nor his close associate, Mark Hanna, was thrilled with the prospect.
of Roosevelt being the ticket's vice presidential nominee. Nevertheless, they did not intervene when western
deleagtes and eastern party bosses secured his nomination. During the campaign, Roosevelt stumped the
country while McKinley remained aloof. They won handily over the Democratic candidate William Jennings
Bryan, the so-called "Great Commoner."

McKinley Assassinated, Roosevelt Is President

In September 1901, Leon Czolgosz, with a gun hidden in his bandaged fist, shot President McKinley and put
T.R. in the White House. Although president by accident, few men have been as prepared to be chief executive.
Roosevelt was a respectable scholar, best remembered for his three-volume study, *The Winning of the West*. He
thought seriously about major social and military issues the nation faced. An easterner, he had tremendous
rapport with westerners. He also traveled abroad frequently and moved easily among the European governing
classes.

Professor Richard M. Abrams, University of California (Berkeley), believes Roosevelt was the first modern
president, stating that Roosevelt "put the presidency and the federal government at the center of peacetime
political action. He made the White House a national focus for the social mood." Still, his tangible
accomplishments, when compared to those of William Howard Taft or Woodrow Wilson, are not as great as one
might expect from the leading verbal champion of reform.

The late Columbia University historian Richard Hofstadter labeled T.R., "The Conservative As Progressive, ", and
that he seems to have been. His greatest achievement was making reform respectable and popular after its
radicalization by Populism, a southern and western crusade of dispossessed farmers and opportunistic
politicians. Whether Roosevelt was a sincere reformer is in doubt. Of course, the Colonel and reform were
symbiotic, mutually benefiting from their relationship. The more T.R. popularized reform, the more popular reform
made T.R.

Oratorically, he assailed big business, excoriating it for corrupting the economy, creating a plutocracy, and
establishing reverence for commercial greed. The press nicknamed him, "the trust buster." But in truth he
supported big corporations, if they behaved in an economically beneficial manner—lowered prices, raised wages,
created efficiency in production, and invested in scientific research to improve products. In 1912, as the
Progressive Party's presidential nominee, he championed big business in his "New Nationalism" platform, albeit
his patrician dislike of "very rich men" continued.

He was an opponent of the existing protective tariff system but, because of political considerations, did not
advance revision as an objective of his administrations. He supported moderate strengthening of the Interstate
Commerce Commission, established in 1887, with the passage of the Elkins Act (1903) and Hepburn Act (1906).
He also helped secure the Pure Food and Drug Act and Meat Inspection Act (1906). However, Dr. Harvey W.
Wiley, chief chemist of the Agriculture Department, deserves the lion's share of credit for these.

Always the advocate, T.R. did suggest a variety of changes that became laws later, including the income tax, a
national inheritance tax, federal regulation of stock-market speculation, and a federal eight-hour day and
workmen's compensation law for laborers. Although essentially unfriendly to organized labor, he intervened in
the anthracite coal strike of 1902 to promote a "square deal" for labor and management in ending the dispute.

He Champions Conservation of Natural Resources
Conservation of natural resources is where he is best remembered as a reformer. He depended heavily on Secretary of the Interior James R. Garfield and Chief Forester Gifford Pinchot for advice in this area. His program was not that of the preservationist, i.e., naturalist. Rather, his administration championed conservation through policies of "rational use" to provide resources for future generations by reclaiming arid lands, waterways, or water-power sites. He brought considerable land into the public domain to halt exploitation by private interests.

Roosevelt called into being the first National Conservation Convention, which helped spawn 41 state conservation commissions by 1910. He created the Inland Waterways Commission to promote flood control and improve navigation. He also created a Rural Life Commission, which critics dubbed the "Rural Uplift" Commission. After a comprehensive investigation of living conditions in rural areas it presented a lengthy report, which Congress refused to publish. Nevertheless, legislation pertaining to farmers in the Wilson Administration was influenced by this study.

A kind and generous man in many respects, T.R. created a monumental flap in his administration by inviting the distinguished black educator Booker T. Washington to the White House for lunch with him. When southern newspapers heard that for the first time in history a president had sat down to eat with an African-American, they exploded. One called the dinner "the most damnable outrage ever."

Roosevelt was most in his element in foreign relations. He helped shepherd Cuba to a form of self-government with the United States as a protector under the Platt Amendment. He was responsible for the establishment of an American Canal Zone in Panama, where the canal was built and where the United States acted "as if she were sovereign." He sent American customs collectors into the Dominican Republic and justified his action by stating the "Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine," thus making the U.S. the "policeman of the Western Hemisphere."

He spent a great deal of time with Japanese-American relations, trying to uphold the "Open Door Policy" of his predecessor through diplomacy and a show of force, as when he sent the "Great White Fleet" around the world in 1908. He failed to bolster the Open Door, but for his effort in the Peace of Portsmouth that ended the Russo-Japanese War, he won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1906. He fostered better relations with Great Britain, using the Alaskan Boundary Dispute (1903) to enhance American prestige and to prompt the American public to appreciate England's reasonableness in settling the affair. He also played a role in helping Britain and Europe avoid war in the Moroccan Crisis of 1905-06.

The appellation "Big Stick Diplomacy," which has been used to describe the foreign policy of his administration, is a bit misleading. He was quick-witted and at times bellicose but always sane and cautious in committing the nation. Unlike many of his contemporaries, he did see the necessity of involving the country more actively in world affairs. His position was that, like it or not, the stature of the United States, its large population, and industrial economy dictated involvement. As he saw it, the main question was whether American leaders would recognize and prepare for the new role or stumble blindly from crisis to crisis.

In spite of a great deal of worry over his presidential prospects in 1904, he was nominated on the first ballot by Republicans meeting in Chicago. He defeated the Democratic Party candidate, Judge Alton B. Parker, also of New York, in the popular vote, 7,623,486 to 5,077,911, and in the electoral vote, 336 to 140. In a moment of unguarded ebullience, Roosevelt pledged not to stand for re-election in 1908, although he would be only 50 years old when he left office. Because of the pledge, the best he could do later on was to pick his successor. He chose Secretary of War William Howard Taft, a politician who held but one elective office, president of the United States, 1909-13.
Soon after ending his time in office, Roosevelt hunted in Africa, toured in Europe, and settled down to a literary career when he returned home. But politics and governmental power still fascinated the Colonel. Reformer friends convinced him that Taft had betrayed "Rooseveltian policies." Taft, angered by criticism attributed to his old friend, allowed Attorney General George Wickersham to bring suit against the U.S. Steel Corporation for violating the Sherman Anti-trust Act with T.R.'s permission in the Tennessee Coal and Iron Company merger in 1907.

**He Leads "Bull Moose" Party**

Stung by accusations of improprieties on his part, Roosevelt threw his hat into the political ring against Taft for the 1912 Republican presidential nomination. When Taft defeated him, T.R. claimed that the nomination had been stolen and with ardent supporters bolted the Party, forming the Progressive Party of America at Orchestra Hall in Chicago. As the standard bearer for the "Bull Moose party," its unofficial name, he ran second to Woodrow Wilson, who was elected with only 42% of the popular vote. While campaigning in Milwaukee on October 14, 1912, Colonel Roosevelt was wounded by a would-be assassin.

Although he halfheartedly supported Progressive hopefuls in 1914 elections, when they tendered him the 1916 presidential nomination, he refused. With the entry of the United States into World War I, he offered his services to the military through Wilson, who rejected him. All of Roosevelt's sons served in the Great War. Quentin was killed in aerial combat in France in 1918. Theodore, Jr., was the prime mover in founding the American Legion of 1919, the veterans organization of the First World War. Both Theodore, Jr., and Kermit died while on active duty in World War II. President Theodore Roosevelt passed away peacefully in his sleep on January 6, 1919.

Ranked seventh among presidents in a 1962 poll of historians, he is the only 20th-century president enshrined on Mount Rushmore in South Dakota. Asked to comment on his time in office, he said, "I believe in a strong executive; I believe in power, but I believe that responsibility should go with power, and that it is not well that the strong executive should be a perpetual executive." He also said, "I have tried to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with my God."

**Further Readings**


• Mowry, George E. *Theodore Roosevelt and the Progressive Movement*. Wisconsin, 1946.

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The Amazon River extends approximately 3,900 miles (6,275 km) across the northern part of the South American continent. It is the world's second longest river, surpassed only by the Nile (about 4,145 miles or 6,670 km). The Amazon's drainage basin, or water catchment area, covers 2,053,318 square miles (5,318,100 sq km) and is the largest in the world. The main body of the Amazon flows across Brazil. With its tributaries it drains half the land of that country. Other tributaries flow into the Amazon from Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, and Venezuela. Brazilians call the main part of the river Rio Amazonas. Upstream from its junction with the Rio Negro at Manaus, Brazil, it is called the Rio Solimões.

The Amazon River closely follows the line of the equator from west to east. It drains the most extensive area of high rainfall in the world. This explains why six of its tributaries, and the Amazon itself, are among the largest rivers of the world. The discharge of water near the mouth of the Amazon is greater than that of any other river. It was measured at Obidos, Brazil, in 1960 and found to be 7,638,683 cubic feet (216,332 cubic meters) of water per second—about 12 times the volume of flow of the Mississippi River.

As one flies in an airplane over the Amazon River, it is difficult at first to grasp its immensity and diversity. For example, it takes 1 hour and 15 minutes to fly in a two-engine airplane across the delta and mouth of the Amazon from Belém to Macapá, the capital of the federal territory of Amapá. Furthermore, one island in the delta of the river—Marajó Island—is one fourth larger than the state of Rhode Island.

The flight upstream, westward from Belém, in a low-flying plane is an unforgettable experience on a clear day. The Amazon does not look like an ordinary river. It looks more like a great river-sea, or huge arm of the sea, on which oceangoing vessels are moving.
margins at the same time. The river itself appears in varying shades of light tan, although a few of its tributaries have a black color. The vegetation along the banks is green and yellow.

One way of defining the Amazon region is to call it the area covered by the Amazon tropical rain forest. This dense forest flourishes in the equatorial climate and influences almost every primary economic activity of the region. The Amazon tropical rain forest is, therefore, the element that best distinguishes the Amazon region geographically.

The area drained and served by the Amazon River has not yet been very productive or valuable to man. There have been sporadic periods of economic speculation in the area, based on forest products and rubber. But only the floodplain—comprising the two percent of the Amazon area—is reasonably well suited to agriculture. Hydroelectric potential is naturally small in rivers like the Amazon, where there are great volumes of water but little drop, or head, along their courses to turn hydroelectric turbines.

In the 1960s, Brazil began to pump resources into its vast tropical hinterland by allocating not less than three percent of its federal tax revenue to the Plan for the Economic Valorization of the Amazon. It had become apparent that the Amazon region would never progress economically with so few people spread over such a vast area, employing out-of-date technology, without economic aid. Government and private investments in the Amazon region have at last begun to integrate it economically and culturally with the rest of Brazil.

The Amazon and Its Tributaries

The sources of the Amazon River are many and scattered. The generally acknowledged source, 3,900 miles from the river's mouth, is high in the snowcapped Andes mountains of Peru. There, icy mountain streams find their way into the Apurímac and Marañón rivers and eventually into the Solimões, or Amazon, River. The Amazon in its main course is not a meandering river like the Mississippi and so many other large rivers. It is a broad, more or less straight channel dotted with lens-shaped islands that vary greatly in length and width. However, a ship may be forced to follow a meandering course, simply because it is navigating around the many islands that lie in the floodplain.

Going downstream, as virtually all of the early explorers did, one is impressed by the monotony of the thick green wall of tropical vegetation that stretches for miles.
only surface transportation route available to the traveler, the river and its banks are the best-known portion of its basin. Most people do not venture away from the river, and therefore the vast and varied Amazon region has usually been described in terms of its antechamber—the floodplain. From this fact has come the widespread misconception that the Amazon region is a vast flooded swamp.

The principal tributaries are full-fledged rivers. The largest right-bank, or northward-flowing, tributaries and their lengths are the Xingu, 1,800 miles (2,900 km); Tapajós, 1,100 miles (1,800 km); Madeira, 2,100 miles (3,380 km); Purús, 2,000 miles (3,220 km); and Juruá, 1,500 miles (2,400 km). The main left-bank tributaries are the Japurá, 1,500 miles, and the Negro, 1,400 miles (2,250 km). Some of the tributaries, like the Rio Negro, resemble the Amazon in that they do not meander. Others, such as the Purús and Juruá, have pronounced meander patterns. The reasons for this difference are not yet well understood.

Another characteristic that differentiates the tributaries is the color of their waters. The so-called "white rivers" get their color from the yellowish clay particles, carried in suspension, which reflect the light. Both the Amazon and its tributary, the Madeira, are white-water rivers. The Rio Negro is a "black-water" river that owes its black aspect to the humic acid from decomposed organic matters on the forest floor. There are also rivers—like the Tapajós and Xingu—that run over white sands and, when seen from the air or in shallow places, have a clear, emerald-green color.

**Navigation**

The Amazon River and its tributaries are navigable for long distances. The existence of this vast network of navigable water greatly influenced the original settlement of the region. People tended to establish themselves along the rivers' margins. The rivers were and still are the lifelines of the area. With the exception of the few people and goods now transported by air, everything still moves on the water. Before 1962 there was no road connecting the Brazilian Amazon with the outside world. Then the 1,250-mile (2,010-km) Belém-to-Brasília road was completed.

River navigation is heaviest along the Amazon itself and the larger tributaries like the Purús, Juruá, and Madeira, as well as on the lower courses of the smaller tributaries. The months of the high-water stage of the Amazon, from April to August, are the busiest
craft, which tend to be used in the outer area at the river’s mouth and along the coasts of Maranhão, Pará, and the territory of Amapá; canoes, which are used everywhere; and motorboats, used on the Amazon and the larger rivers. Motorboats will often tow dugout canoes upstream for a small fee, or for nothing.

In the lower courses of the Amazon and its tributaries the ocean tides determine when boats can best move upstream (with the rising tide) or downstream (with the ebbing tide). During spring tides, when the lunar pull is strongest and other conditions of the river and sea are optimal, great tidal bores (waves) as high as 13 feet (4 meters) rush upstream with a deafening roar and are a menace to all shipping. The onomatopoeic Indian name for this fearsome tidal wave is pororoca.

In addition to the smaller craft there are much larger river streamers, stern-wheelers, and oceangoing freighters, tankers, and passenger ships. But small multipurpose motorboats serve the needs of most people. For example, there are several 35-foot (10-meter) motorboats based in Manaus that make an 8-hour "milk run" to Careiro Island early every morning. They pick up milk from dairy farms along the riverbank and let off and take on passengers. Gasoline, diesel oil, and kerosene are included in the cargo of practically all the boats.

**The Amazon Basin**

The Amazon basin is a young sedimentary plain situated between two old, but not very high, crystalline plateaus. It is flanked on the north by the Guiana Highlands, on the west by the Andean Cordillera, and on the south by the Brazilian Highlands. This vast sedimentary area, the largest in the world, is really a very low Tertiary-period plateau, most of which presents a subdued relief of hills, ridges, and tablelands. Most areas are less than 200 feet (60 meters) above sea level, but some ridges rise as high as 400–800 feet (120–240 meters).

The element in the landscape that most impresses visitors to the Amazon is its gigantic equatorial forest, the Amazon *hylea*. Like a dense mantle or carpet, the forest covers almost the entire region. It is the equatorial variant of the tropical rain forest and is typical of continental areas that have high rainfall and a uniformly warm, excessively humid climate. The forest of the floodplain has greater botanical diversity than that of higher ground, or terra firme. The quantity and variety of the seeds carried by the annual floodwaters and deposited on the rich soils of the floodplain are very great.
great variety of useful hardwoods. On the floodplain the so-called "white," or soft, woods predominate—among them, the rubber tree (*Hevea*) and the kapok tree (*Ceiba pentandra*).

The high-density woods of the *terra firme* include mahogany (Portuguese, *mogno*) and other fine cabinet woods, and the Brazil nut tree (Portuguese, *castanheiro*), which provides good building timber. There are many oil-yielding palms in the forest and the familiar profusion of ropelike lianas and epiphytes. The competition for sunlight forces the trees and their parasite plants to strive upward, with trees sometimes reaching 160 feet (50 meters) above the ground. There are also some fairly large areas of savanna grassland.

The basin has varied insect, reptile, and bird populations, but there are few large mammals. There are no equivalents in the Amazon region—or in South America generally—of the large animals of Africa. Much of the wild game in the more populated areas has been killed by hunters or driven away when forest land has been cleared for crops or pasture.

**Climate**

The climate over most of the Amazon basin seems monotonous to people raised in mid-latitudes, but it does have two distinct seasons: a dry season, lasting three to five months, and a rainy season. Most areas receive 80 to 120 inches (200-300 cm) of rainfall per year and experience daytime temperatures above 80° or 90° F (27° or 32° C) and nighttime temperatures above 70° (21° C) or 80° F. The warmest months are September to November, at the end of the dry season and just before the rainy season.

From May through September, during the dry season, cold waves (*friagens*), resulting from a northward movement of an Antarctic polar air mass, sometimes penetrate into the western Amazon basin. They can lower temperatures for three or four days by as much as 18° to 27° F (9°-14° C). These cold waves, further aggravated by the region's consistently high relative humidity (85 percent), damage crops, kill fish in shallow pools, and bring misery to people who are unaccustomed to low temperatures and are unprepared with warm clothing or heated houses.

Along the eastern parts of the Amazon basin, winds from the east and southeast predominate. Farther inland, variable light winds are more common. The rainy season, from December through April, actually coincides with the latitudinal migration of moist air, bringing inundation. **Zebra-striped...**
and the areas where the sun's rays strike the earth's surface vertically. In general the most uncomfortable aspects of the climate can be minimized if there are shade and air movements. Modern, scientifically designed houses in Amapá have broad roofs that are insulated against the noonday heat and that shade most of the exterior walls from the sun's rays. The sides of the rooms are open and screened, allowing breezes to blow through the house. Until early in the afternoon, the atmosphere frequently absorbs the moisture that evaporates from land and water surfaces. Then a torrential thunderstorm will rage for 10 or 20 minutes, and the rest of the afternoon will be freshened and cooled by the shower. Around 4 P.M. the temperature begins to drop perceptibly—in contrast to the situation in mid-latitudes where the heat of summer days lasts longer.

**Population**

The population of the Amazon basin is situated almost exclusively along the rivers. Among the four million people living in the basin, probably not more than 75,000 are Indians. In Brazil alone there are probably no more than 50,000 Indians. Although the number of pure-blooded Indians is small, and most of them live far back in the remote areas of the region, a large proportion of the Amazon population has some traces of Indian blood. The largest population cluster is at the mouth of the Amazon, centered on Belém and along the coast from Bragança across Marajó Island to Amapá. The second cluster lies along the Amazon River at the junction of the Rio Negro, in and around the city of Manaus. There are, in fact, no cities of any importance that are not situated on a river. Many, like Manaus and Santarém, are found at the point where a major tributary joins the Amazon. These sites are obviously the natural locations for transshipment operations, commercial establishments, and processing activities.

**Early Exploration**

The Amazon River was first descended in 1541, from Peru, by the Spaniard Francisco de Orellana and his bedraggled group of soldiers. In the early decades of the 16th century the Spaniards especially, and the Portuguese to a lesser extent, were tramping all over the South American continent searching for gold and silver and for Indians who could be enslaved. Few permanent settlements resulted from these expeditions, but a vast area was explored. Sometimes observations were recorded, as, for example, an account of the "tall women warriors" of the interior of the
warriors in Greek mythology, and their name was given to that area of the continent. These "warriors" were probably Indian men who were mistaken for women because of their peculiar dress.

While the Spaniards were busy consolidating their gains in the Aztec and Inca regions of Central America and northwest South America, the Portuguese occupied the Amazon. They began in a small way in the early 16th century. Throughout that century and the 17th, there were short periods of economic activity by a handful of people, separated by long intervals of no activity. The Portuguese and their caboclo (copper-colored) descendants of mixed European and Indian blood carried on rudimentary subsistence agriculture, using Indian methods. They gathered drogas do sertão (back-country drugs), such as cinnamon, cloves, indigo, cacao, aromatic roots, sarsaparilla, and oleaginous seeds, as well as valuable woods, such as the pau Brasil, or brazilwood, for which Brazil was named. The first major turning point came in 1752 when the Portuguese embarked upon a kind of regional development program. They wanted to encourage colonization and establish a strong spice trade to replace the one they were losing to the Dutch and other European powers in the East Indies. The Portuguese Overseas Councils promoted agriculture and the raising of cattle. Several groups of missionaries were sent to the area to Christianize the Indians and assure their survival by encouraging farming. Military forts were built as early as 1616 at Belém, and small trading outposts were scattered over the back country.

In the 19th century some scientific expeditions were carried out in the Amazon. In the 1850s two United States naval lieutenants, William Lewis Herndon and Lardner Gibbon, traveled to Peru and the Amazon region and made a survey of its condition and future potential. Many Europeans studied and mapped parts of the area before and after the mid-19th century. One of the most recent projects was a 1960 expedition to measure accurately the Amazon River's volume. This joint Brazilian-United States venture revealed that the Amazon's outflow was much greater than had been thought.

**Development of the Amazon River**

The discovery of the rubber vulcanization process in 1839 had a great impact on the Amazon region. It made possible the industrial utilization on a large scale of one of the area's greatest natural resources—rubber. The zenith of the rubber boom in the Amazon, which attracted people from many parts of the world, came around
1910. This was the high point of Brazil's rubber economy. After growing steadily from the 1840s to 1913, it finally collapsed because of competition from the rubber plantations in Malaya.

The years from 1870 to 1910 also witnessed the migration of almost 200,000 refugees from northeast Brazil into the Amazon area. They fled a land of searing droughts to seek the riches of "black gold" (rubber)—or at least to achieve physical survival in the dark, dripping Amazon forests. The years following 1874 also saw a major colonization of the Belém-Bragança zone, which became the principal agricultural area of the Amazon region. The rural population densities there are still considerably higher than they are in any other part of the Amazon basin.

Since the 1930s Japanese immigrants have introduced the cultivation of black (Java) pepper and have achieved great success with it on the right-bank terra firme, near Belém. They also launched what is now the most successful commercial crop of the Amazon area—Indian jute. It is grown in the floodplain over much of the lower Amazon region. The gathering and collecting activities continue, but chiefly as a background for more recent and very different kinds of activities.

The 1950s and especially the 1960s witnessed striking changes in the Amazon region. The small territory of Amapá probably experienced the most impressive transformation. A large manganese deposit at Serra do Navio has been mined since the 1950s and has provided tax revenues for other activities. The mining company, Indústria e Comércio de Minério S.A. (ICOMI), was formed by 51 percent Brazilian capital and 49 percent United States (Bethlehem Steel) capital. It has invested money in subsidiary companies and projects to diversify the economy of its immediate territory and the larger region. In the mid-1960s sugarcane and dendé oil (from palm-nut trees) were in production, and subsistence food crops were being planned.

A plywood factory began production at Santana at an ideal location near the mouth of the river and at the terminus of the railroad running from Serra do Navio. The Regional Development Institute of Amapá (IRDA), an independent foundation receiving money from ICOMI and other sources, had urbanization plans under way for the Macapá-Santana region. Its plans included working in the areas of public health and education to achieve a balanced cultural development of the territory.

In the 1960s outside capital was attracted to north Brazil by exemption from 50 percent of the federal taxes on income derived...
from the Amazon. A large cement factory capable of supplying most of the whole Amazon basin was built outside of Belém in 1962. A petroleum refinery was built at Manaus, and a small industrial park was developed on the outskirts of Belém.

These developments in the private economic sector were the reflection of policies and objectives stated by the superintendent of the Plan for the Economic Valorization of the Amazon when the plan was established in 1953. Those objectives were 1) to secure the occupancy of the Amazon territory by Brazil; 2) to build an economically stable and progressive society in the Amazon region capable of fulfilling its social duties with its own resources; 3) to develop the Amazon in a way that parallels and complements the Brazilian economy.; and

The government followed with other development projects for the area, such as the "poles of development" policy (1974) to promote settlement and the Carajás project (1985), centered in the state of Maranhão, to develop mining, railroads, and cities. Of special importance for the transformation of the Amazon basin was the construction of roads, starting with the Belém-Brasília highway in the 1960s and culminating with the 3,100-mile (5,000-km) Trans-Amazonian Highway from Recife to the Peruvian border in the 1970s. Road construction encouraged the migration of settlers, who burned down large swaths of the rain forest to create pasture and croplands. The result was mixed, however, inasmuch as agricultural development was limited by adverse climatic conditions, the unsuitability of the soil for crops, and the great distances to markets. Moreover, protests were raised in many countries against the burning of rare tropical plant species and the resulting emission of carbon dioxide, which exacerbated global warming.

Kempton E. Webb
Columbia University
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The River of Doubt
Theodore Roosevelt’s Darkest Journey
by Candice Millard

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"If it is necessary for me to leave my bones in South America, I am quite ready to do so." Those words, written by Theodore Roosevelt before he embarked on the most challenging expedition of his life, nearly became prophecy. Determined to chart the course of a mysterious waterway known only as The River of Doubt, he and a brazen team of explorers set off on a death-defying adventure that, until now, has languished as a little-known chapter in history. Drawing on never-before-seen diaries and extensive resources as a former writer for National Geographic, Candice Millard at last uncovers the startling details of Roosevelt’s final, and arguably most fantastic, feat -- one that would forever change the maps of the Western Hemisphere.

A national bestseller that won coast-to-coast praise, The River of Doubt sets the stage with Roosevelt’s stinging election defeat in 1912, a humiliation that would spur him to accept an invitation to South America. He soon spun the invitation into an elaborate plan to travel one of the planet’s most dangerous rivers, which snakes through one of the planet’s most dangerous jungles. Roosevelt and his men would face innumerable hardships, and not everyone
on the team would survive. Cannibals, disease, and starvation were but a few of the threats, against a landscape where the flora and fauna were by turns gorgeous and nightmarish. Combining the suspense of Into Thin Air with the rich history of a presidential biography, The River of Doubt makes for an exhilarating journey. We hope that the following topics will enhance your experience of this riveting tour.

**Discussion Questions**

1. Chapter one, "Defeat," depicts dramatic scenes from Roosevelt's final election. What parallels exist between a risky political career and a risky Rain Forest expedition? What enabled him to survive both?

2. Compare Rondon's and Roosevelt's leadership styles. In what ways did these co-commanders complement each other? In what ways were they at odds?

3. Discuss the very concept of survival as it shapes The River of Doubt. In choosing provisions, what items did Roosevelt's team consider necessary for survival? What aspects of survival (greater quantities of dry, mildew-free clothes, for example) did they overlook? What intangibles (especially in terms of emotions) are also necessary for such an expedition?

4. What aspects of humanity were represented by the various personalities in the group, ranging from explosive Father Zahm and the rational Cherrie to the volatile Julio? Can such varied people coexist? How did you react to Roosevelt's belief that it was necessary for Julio to be found and shot after he murdered one of the team members?

5. Do any contemporary American politicians possess Roosevelt's public-speaking style? Why did he believe it was important to debate the former Chilean ambassador and deliver speeches refuting the protestors there?

6. Discuss the extraordinary medical history included in The River of Doubt. How was Roosevelt able to survive so much in his lifetime --- from gunshot and disease to a train wreck --- with only rudimentary medical care? What aspects of modern medicine would have made his expedition safer? Would safer conditions have undermined the thrill?

7. What did you discover about the intricate, sometimes surreal ecology and geography of the Rain Forest itself? What is the significance of the ancient history of South America's formation, such as the plate tectonics that sculpted the Andes Mountains? What was it like to read descriptions of a region where few humans have adapted to the environment? Why is it important to preserve rather than develop these ecosystems?

8. In the end, what do you believe Roosevelt's true missions were in this expedition? What was revealed about the nature of some geographic explorers when his success was met with deep skepticism? What motivates any explorer --- from ancient nomads to NASA scientists? What separates Roosevelt's brand of adventurousness from that of contestants on television shows such as "Survivor"?

9. Share your observations about the Cinta Larga, ranging from nutrition and family life to warfare. Does their self-sufficiency make them noble?

10. What did you discover about Roosevelt's parenting style? Is his approach --- particularly his insistence that his children learn to conquer rather than avoid obstacles --- prevalent in many American schools today?

11. Do you believe that Kermit's later despondency, which eventually drove
him to suicide, was related more to genetics or to his life's circumstances? Did his father expect too much of him? How did their relationship shift throughout this father-son expedition? How would you have fared on a similar mission with your mother or father?

12. How might Roosevelt respond to current concerns about the environment and climate change? How might he and his Progressive “Bull Moose” Party have fared in recent elections?

13. What separates The River of Doubt from other presidential narratives you have read? What writing techniques enabled the author to weave together science, travelogue, and history? What do the Notes and Acknowledgments sections reveal about her research techniques? If someone were to write a biography of you, what narratives could be constructed from your collection of letters and other memorabilia?

14. Discuss the historical context of Roosevelt’s trip, in terms not only of South American history but other aspects of world history from this time period, such as the sinking of the Titanic in 1912? Would World War I have unfolded differently if Roosevelt had defeated Wilson?

15. How were the first chapters of Roosevelt’s life, which were marked by poor health, resolved by this final South American chapter? Do his triumphs of endurance, from boxing at Harvard to valiant service during the Spanish-American War, form a timeline of progressively more dangerous challenges throughout his life? If so, did he finally meet his match with The River of Doubt? Why do you believe this expedition was, until now, less well known than his other triumphs?

Critical Praise

"A rich, dramatic tale that ranges from the personal to the literally earth-shaking."

"[A] fine account . . . There are far too many books in which a travel writer follows in the footsteps of his or her hero—and there are far too few books like this, in which an author who has spent time and energy ferreting out material from archival sources weaves it into a gripping tale."
—The Washington Post

"[N]o frills, high-adventure writing . . . Millard’s sober account is as claustrophobic as a walk through the densest jungle, and as full of vigor as Roosevelt himself."
—Entertainment Weekly
About the Author

Full text biography:

Candice Millard

Birth Date: 1967
Known As: Millard, Candice Sue
Place of Birth: United States, Ohio
Nationality: American
Occupation: Writer

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Personal Information
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Personal Information:

Born 1967; married Mark Uhlig, May, 2001; children: three. Education: Baker University, B.A.; Baylor University, M.A.
Addresses: Home: Leawood, KS.

Career Information:

Writer and journalist. Former writer and editor at National Geographic magazine.

Writings:


Media Adaptations:

*The River of Doubt* and *Destiny of the Republic* have been made into audiobooks, Random House Audio, 2006 and 2011.

Sidelights:

Candice Millard's first book, *The River of Doubt: Theodore Roosevelt's Darkest Journey*, recounts an expedition into the Amazon jungle taken by the U.S. president, his son Kermit Roosevelt, and various scientists. Also along was Brazilian Colonel Candido Rondon, who had discovered the source of the River of Doubt in 1909. After losing the presidential race to Woodrow Wilson in 1912, Roosevelt looked to adventure through the Roosevelt expedition in 1914 to help get over his political defeat. He and his companions encountered more problems than they anticipated, coming upon piranha and anaconda, enduring disease, near-starvation, Indian attack, and losing one man to drowning and another to murder.
In an interview with Josephine Anna Kaszuba Locke on the BookLoons Web site, Millard noted: “For me, what was most interesting about this expedition was the opportunity to get a very intimate picture of Roosevelt. To see him simply as a man—a leader not on the scale of nations and armies but among this small group of men who are fighting for their lives.” Writing in Library Journal, William D. Pederson observed that the author "turns this incredible story into one that cheaply matches an Indiana Jones screen adventure." In a review for Booklist, Brad Hooper suggested that those who like "American history and travel narratives will take delight in living through these exciting pages."

In Millard’s second book, *Destiny of the Republic: A Tale of Madness, Medicine and the Murder of a President*, she presents a combined biography of President James A. Garfield as well as his killer, Charles Guiteau. Guiteau was a delusional and possibly even insane man who became convinced that God wanted him to kill Garfield after Garfield refused to grant him a position in his administration. Millard provides a detailed picture of the tragedy and its effects, which allows readers a glimpse of the social, political, and cultural climate of the time.

Reviewing the work in the New York Times Book Review, contributor Kevin Baker assessed that Millard "makes, at times, the common biographer’s mistake of inflating her subject’s importance and virtues. Contrary to what she implies, neither Garfield’s administration nor his death brought about advances in civil rights, nor a grand reconciliation with the South, then busy creating the Jim Crow state. ... Though Garfield’s death had little historical significance, Millard has written us a penetrating human tragedy." Booklist contributor Brad Hooper claimed that this book "stands securely at the crossroads of popular and professional history." A Publishers Weekly contributor said: "Millard’s story doesn’t add much to previous understanding, but it’s hard to imagine it being better told." A Kirkus Reviews contributor assessed: "Millard follows up her impressive debut ... by ... demonstrating the power of expert storytelling to wonderfully animate even the simplest facts." Stephen L. Hupp, a contributor to Library Journal, observed that the work is “recommended for presidential history buffs and students of Gilded Age America.”

**Related Information:**

**PERIODICALS**

- *USA Today*. November 3, 2005, Deirdre Donahue, review of *The River of Doubt*, p. 7D.

**ONLINE**


**Source:** Contemporary Authors Online, 2012.
The **Roosevelt River** (Rio Roosevelt, sometimes Rio Teodoro) is a Brazilian river. It begins in the state of Rondônia and winds for about 400 miles (640 km) until it joins the Aripuanã River, which then flows into the Madeira River, thence into the Amazon.

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### History and exploration

Formerly called *Rio da Dívida* ("River of Doubt"), the river is named after Theodore Roosevelt, who traveled into the central region of Brazil during the Roosevelt-Rondon Scientific Expedition of 1913–14. The expedition, led by Roosevelt and Cândido Rondon, Brazil's most famous explorer and the river's discoverer, sought to determine where and by which course the river flowed into the Amazon.

Roosevelt and his son Kermit undertook the adventure after the former U.S. president's failed attempt to regain the office as the "Bull Moose" candidate in 1912. The Roosevelt-Rondon expedition was the first non-Amazonian-native party to travel and record what Rondon had named the "Rio da Dívida", then one of the most unexplored and intimidating tributaries of the Amazon. Sections of the river have impassable rapids and waterfalls, which hindered the expedition.

Roosevelt later wrote *Through the Brazilian Wilderness* recounting the adventure. After Roosevelt returned doubts were raised on his account of the expedition. Roosevelt promptly rebutted them in a public forum in Washington, D.C., sponsored by the National Geographic Society. In 1927 American explorer George Miller Dyott led a second trip down the river, independently confirming Roosevelt's discoveries.\(^{[1]}\)

### Notes


### References

**External links**

- *Through the Brazilian Wilderness* (http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/11746)
- Almanac of Theodore Roosevelt: Contains good photos of the expedition, and a reprint of the route map. (http://www.theodore-roosevelt.com/trbrazil.html)


Categories: Rivers of Brazil | Theodore Roosevelt | Brazil geography stubs

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Theodore Roosevelt

Contemporary Heroes and Heroines, 1998

Born: October 27, 1858 in New York, New York, United States
Died: January 06, 1919 in Oyster Bay, New York, United States
Nationality: American
Occupation: President (Government)
Nobel Peace Prize, 1906

"I believe in a strong executive; I believe in power, but I believe that responsibility should go with power...."

Born October 27, 1858, in New York, New York, Theodore Roosevelt was the twenty-sixth president of the United States and the first to win a Nobel Peace Prize. He is consistently ranked among the country's most outstanding and popular leaders. He died January 6, 1919, in Oyster Bay, New York.

One of the most colorful and charismatic figures ever to grace the American political scene was Theodore Roosevelt, the twenty-sixth President of the United States. A writer and scholar of note, a fearless explorer and adventurer, a courageous war hero, and a skillful politician, he tackled life with gusto and a flair for the dramatic. His immense popularity (especially among the nation's young people) helped him advance his reform proposals at home and turned the United States into a power to be reckoned with abroad. Among historians, Roosevelt is considered to be the first truly modern president, one who effectively made use of mass communications to expand the influence of his office and made the White House the center of national and worldwide attention.

The son of Theodore Roosevelt Sr., a successful merchant who moved in New York City's finest social circles, and Martha Bulloch Roosevelt, a Georgia-born beauty with an aristocratic background, "Teedie" (as he was known during childhood) was born in 1858 and grew up in Manhattan amid privilege and wealth. Until the age of eleven, however, he was a sickly, puny, nearsighted lad interested in natural history to the exclusion of most other childhood activities. Theodore Sr., concerned about his son, reportedly told him: "You have the mind but not the body and without the help of the body the mind cannot go as far as it should. You must make your body." Teedie took his father's suggestion to heart. Theodore Sr. installed a gymnasium on the second floor of the Roosevelt's townhouse, and his son embarked on a rigorous self-improvement program. He spent long hours with the exercise paraphernalia, greatly increasing his strength, stamina, and agility. He began taking lessons in both boxing and wrestling and eventually learned jujitsu, the Asian art of self-defense. Roosevelt remained a lifelong advocate of "the strenuous life," the life of fitness, which he believed kept man honed to a "fighting edge," his favorite expression.

Like many members of his social and economic class at that time, Roosevelt received his early education at home from private tutors. He displayed a lively intellectual curiosity and was an excellent student. Later, he continued his studies at Harvard University, where he again demonstrated his academic prowess and dreamed of becoming a natural scientist in the tradition of John James Audubon. But the school's emphasis was on laboratory work, not field study, which soured the young man on a scientific career. This realization, along with his father's sudden death in 1876, prompted Roosevelt to reassess his plans and consider a life of public service.
instead. Graduating with honors in 1880, he then entered Columbia University Law School. But the lure of historical writing and politics soon proved to be too strong for him to resist, and he abandoned the idea of becoming a lawyer.

In his autobiography, Roosevelt recalled how horrified his friends were at the thought of him entering politics. "The men I knew best," he wrote, "were the men in the clubs of social pretension and the men with cultivated taste and the easy life." They considered politics a tawdry profession fit only for members of the lower classes. Added Roosevelt: "I answered that if this were so it merely meant that the people I knew did not belong to the governing class ... and that I intended to be one of the governing class." He was elected to the New York State Assembly as a Republican in 1881 and immediately became identified with the reform wing of his party for the strong stand he took against corruption.

Roosevelt's promising political career, however, came grinding to a halt in 1884. During the presidential election campaign that year, he alienated many of his fellow reformers by supporting the candidacy of Republican James G. Blaine, whose reputation had been tainted by charges of wrongdoing in a business-related scandal. But a far more crushing blow was the loss of his beloved wife, Alice Hathaway Lee, whom he had married in 1880. She died just days after giving birth to their first child, a daughter who was also named Alice. Coincidentally, Roosevelt's mother died the very same day, compounding his grief. Removing himself from politics, Roosevelt spent much of the next two years or so in the Dakota Territory. He did some ranching and hunting and grew to love the beauty and wide open spaces of the western United States. He also devoted some of his time to writing, focusing mostly on histories, biographies, and magazine articles.

In 1886, Roosevelt returned to New York and re-entered public life with an unsuccessful bid to become mayor of New York City. (That same year, he married Edith Kermit Carow; they eventually had a daughter and four sons, and she became his most trusted advisor.) He still enjoyed the respect of a fair number of reform-minded Republicans, however, and in 1889, President Benjamin Harrison (for whom Roosevelt had campaigned the previous year) named him to the three-member Civil Service Commission. To the dismay of his colleagues, Roosevelt assumed the role of unofficial chair and helped reorganize the board and its examinations. He also began a steady stream of speechmaking, championing "honesty" in government and "morality" in politics. These views, which he advocated for the rest of his life, caused some historians to label him "the apostle of the obvious."

In 1895, New York Mayor William Strong made Roosevelt commissioner of the city's corruption-ridden police force. He soon became a familiar (and feared) sight as he prowled the streets nightly to make sure New York's finest were at work. The two years he spent as commissioner enhanced his reputation as an especially energetic reformer. Roosevelt next went to work for President William McKinley, who appointed him assistant secretary of the navy. A proponent of a bigger, stronger naval force, he worked to expand and modernize the fleet. He also favored war against Spain, whose colonial presence in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines stood in the way of U.S. plans to extend its own political and economic influence, especially in Latin America.

When war with Spain finally broke out in April of 1898, Roosevelt resigned from his government post to organize the First U.S. Volunteer Cavalry, better known as the "Rough Riders." A daredevil band of soldiers that included cowboys and aristocrats such as himself, the Rough Riders became national heroes in July as a result of their well-publicized exploits in the Battle of San Juan Hill near Havana, Cuba. As their dashing and gutsy leader,
Roosevelt was called simply "the Colonel," a nickname he relished for the rest of his life. Roosevelt chronicled his own experiences in a book titled *The Rough Riders.*

Roosevelt's fame once again made him an attractive political candidate. Later that same year, Tom Platt, a Republican senator from New York and the state party boss, sponsored him for governor. Platt believed Roosevelt was the only candidate capable of defeating the Democrats, who had mounted a serious challenge to the scandal-plagued Republicans. Roosevelt did indeed manage to win the governorship by a small majority, but he soon angered the party establishment with his independence and activism. He disregarded recommendations for patronage appointments, for example, and he developed a lengthy, but for the most part innocuous, reform program that targeted big business and corrupt politicians. He also spoke out about the need to conserve and protect the state's forests and other natural resources, foreshadowing the interest he would later have in this issue as president.

By 1900, Roosevelt's enduring popularity made a run for national office look promising. But neither President McKinley nor his close associate, Mark Hanna, were thrilled with the prospect of Roosevelt as the party's vice-presidential candidate. Nevertheless, they did not intervene when western delegates and eastern party bosses secured his nomination. During the campaign, Roosevelt—who had not really wanted to run--traveled across the country appealing to crowds of enthusiastic supporters with patriotic tales of the Spanish-American War. Meanwhile, McKinley remained aloof. On election day, the McKinley-Roosevelt ticket handily defeated Democratic candidate William Jennings Bryan.

With no power and little to do as Vice-President, Roosevelt soon grew bored and restless. But that all ended in September 1901 when McKinley was wounded in an assassination attempt and died a week later from an infection. Suddenly, Roosevelt found himself in the White House. Although he was the youngest man ever to hold the office of chief executive, he was prepared for the role in a way that few others had been. A respectable scholar and a prolific author, Roosevelt had long given serious thought to the major social and military issues facing the nation. Although he was an easterner by birth, he enjoyed a tremendous rapport with Westerners. And he had traveled abroad frequently and moved easily among members of the European governing classes.

In his speeches, "Teddy" Roosevelt (as he was affectionately known across the land) delivered scathing attacks on big business for corrupting the economy, establishing a ruling class of wealthy elites, and fostering respect for commercial greed. (This was at a time when the country was coming of age as an industrial power.) The press nicknamed him "the Trustbuster" in recognition of his well-publicized lawsuits against major corporations that he felt were monopolizing certain industries and limiting competition. His most famous case was against Standard Oil, which was forced to break up in 1907. In truth, however, Roosevelt supported big corporations if they behaved in an economically beneficial manner—in other words, if they lowered prices, raised wages, adopted more efficient production methods, and invested in scientific research to improve products. Thus, the goal behind his antitrust lawsuits was to demonstrate that the federal government had a right to regulate corporate behavior that threatened the free enterprise system.

Roosevelt was an opponent of the existing protective tariff system, but because of political considerations, he did not make revising it an objective of his administration. He supported moderate strengthening of the Interstate Commerce Commission (established in 1887) with the passage of the Hepburn Act (1906), which gave the government the power to regulate interstate railroad rates. He also helped secure passage in 1906 of the Pure
Food and Drug Act (which established the Food and Drug Administration) and the Meat Inspection Act, both forerunners of today’s consumer protection legislation.

Roosevelt also suggested a variety of reforms and new policies that did not become law until later, including the income tax, a national inheritance tax, federal regulation of stock-market speculation, a federal eight-hour workday, workers’ compensation legislation, and child labor statutes. Although basically unfriendly to organized labor, he nevertheless intervened in the anthracite coal strike of 1902 to come up with a fair settlement for labor as well as management and protect consumers from the prospect of cold houses, schools, and hospitals. It was the first time the federal government had involved itself to such an extent in labor-management affairs in the name of the public interest.

It is in the area of conservation of natural resources that Roosevelt is best remembered as a reformer. In fact, he was the first president to speak out forcefully on the topic (which few Americans had even heard of and fewer still cared about) and pursue a bold course of action. His program was not that of the preservationist or naturalist, however. Rather, his administration championed conservation through policies of “rational use” designed to ensure that natural resources would be available to future generations. To halt the exploitation of those resources by private interests, he reclaimed waterways, waterpower sites, arid lands, and land harboring mineral, oil, and coal deposits and placed them in the public domain. He also set aside some 150 million acres of western land as national forest, set up the first of fifty federal wildlife refuges, doubled the number of parks in the national park system, and created sixteen national monuments. In addition, Roosevelt called into being the first National Conservation Convention (1908), which helped spawn forty-one state conservation commissions by 1910.

Roosevelt was truly in his element, however, when he was dealing with foreign relations. His motto was “speak softly and carry a big stick,” which reflected his belief that a country had to be strong in order to survive. To that end, he built up the armed forces, focusing especially on the navy. In 1907, to display the new and improved U.S. battle fleet, he sent it on a cruise around the world. Roosevelt also worked hard to enhance the role of the United States in resolving international disputes. Unlike many of his contemporaries, he saw the need to involve the United States more actively in world affairs. As far as he was concerned, the country’s stature, its large population, and advanced industrial economy dictated involvement. The key question for him was whether American leaders would recognize and prepare for this new role or stumble blindly from crisis to crisis.

Because of its proximity to the United States, Latin America was a major concern of Roosevelt’s. Under the terms of the Platt Amendment, he helped guide Cuba to a form of self-government with the United States serving as a protector. He was also responsible for acquiring territory from Colombia for the Panama Canal Zone, a move that paved the way for work to begin on the canal itself in 1906. He headed off intervention by European powers in Venezuela and the Dominican Republic (ostensibly to protect the rights of European citizens residing there) by proclaiming the “Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine” in 1904. This policy emphasized a continuing prohibition against non-American intervention in Latin American affairs and effectively made the United States the “policeman of the Western Hemisphere.” Roosevelt later applied the corollary to justify a U.S. takeover of the Dominican Republic’s financial affairs.

Roosevelt also devoted a great deal of his time to Japanese-American relations, trying to uphold the “Open Door Policy” of his predecessor through diplomacy and a show of force. In 1906, for acting as mediator between the
combatants in the Russo-Japanese War (1904 to 1905), he became the first American ever to win the Nobel Peace Prize.

In addition, Roosevelt paid close attention to Europe, where he feared that a war might soon break out between the major powers. In particular, he fostered better relations with Great Britain, using the Alaskan Boundary Dispute (1903) not only to build up America's prestige but also to show the American public how reasonable England had been in settling the debate over the Alaska-Canada border. In addition, he quietly worked behind the scenes to help Great Britain and various European countries avoid armed conflict over a series of disagreements that occurred between 1904 and 1906.

Because he had become president by accident and not by the vote of the people, Roosevelt looked toward the 1904 election with a great deal of worry. As it turned out, however, he had little to fear. Running on his record, which he called the "Square Deal," he was nominated on the first ballot by Republicans meeting in Chicago and ended up easily defeating his Democratic opponent, Judge Alton B. Parker of New York. In a moment of unguarded ebullience following his victory, Roosevelt pledged not to stand for re-election in 1908, even though he would be only fifty years old upon leaving office. Because of this pledge, all he could do later on was to pick his successor. He chose Secretary of War William Howard Taft, a politician who had never before held elective office.

Taft won the 1908 election, and Roosevelt stepped down from office in early 1909. He then left the country for more than a year. In Africa, he hunted and went on a nature-study safari; afterwards, he toured Europe in grand style, paying visits to all the capitals. Back home by the summer of 1910, he resumed writing. (His lifetime output eventually numbered some two thousand published works, including several books and hundreds of articles.)

But politics still fascinated Roosevelt, and he soon found himself drawn into the fray once again. He decided to run against Taft for the 1912 Republican presidential nomination. When Taft won, Roosevelt claimed that the nomination had been stolen from him. Along with his most ardent supporters, he left the Republican party and hastily formed the Progressive Party of America. It soon acquired the nickname the "Bull Moose Party" after Roosevelt was wounded in an assassination attempt and then quipped that it would take "more than that to kill a bull moose."

As the Progressives' standard bearer, Roosevelt championed a rather radical agenda as part of his "New Nationalism" platform, which called for expanding the role of the federal government in regulating business and providing social services. But the party managed to elect only a few of its candidates to minor offices; Roosevelt himself, while he outpolled Taft, came in second in the presidential race against Democrat Woodrow Wilson, who also had a following among progressives. Roosevelt then watched in frustration as Wilson enacted many of the economic and social reforms he had proposed.

Although Roosevelt halfheartedly supported Progressive hopefuls in the 1914 elections, he refused the party's nomination to run again for president in 1916 and instead supported the Republican candidate, who lost to Wilson. When the United States entered World War I the following year, Roosevelt volunteered his services to Wilson, who rejected his offer to lead a division to France. Roosevelt had high hopes that the Republicans would nominate him for president in the 1920 election. But the years of conflict with his various political foes, the death of his son in World War I, and the lingering effects of tropical fevers he had contracted during a visit to Brazil in 1914 all took a heavy toll on his health. On January 6, 1919, Roosevelt passed away in his sleep at his home in
Oyster Bay, New York. He is the only twentieth-century president enshrined on South Dakota's Mount Rushmore monument, which places him in the company of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Abraham Lincoln.

Further Readings


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