

Until 1840 - most Americans lived east of the Mississippi  
By 1860 - 4.3 million Americans moved west of Mississippi

Spain held most of trans-Mississippi Region (except for Louisiana Purchase - TX, AZ, NM, NV, UT, western CO, CA, small parts of WY, KS, OK)

1821 - Mexico gained independence from Spain and inherited region

## Notes: Manifest Destiny and the Mexican War

- I. The Concept of Manifest Destiny** - conviction that the country's superior institutions and culture gave Americans a God-given right, obligation to spread civilization across the continent.  
Manifest Destiny justified expansion, but did not cause it ... agree or disagree?
- a. John O'Sullivan - journalist editor who invented the term
  - b. arguments in favor of Manifest Destiny
    1. God/Fate designed it (idea of westward expansion of civilization: America <- England/Europe <- Rome <- Greece <- Egypt)
    2. Extend democracy
    3. Future need for land
    4. Racism (only "savage" Indians and "half-breed" Mexicans live there)
  - c. The Oregon Territory
    1. John Jacob Astor (Astoria) - fur trader in the Northwest
    2. 1818 Treaty with England - joint occupation by US and England
    3. the "Mountain Men" (Jedidiah Smith, Kit Carson)
    4. the Oregon Trail (by 1845, 5000 Americans lived there)
  - d. The Mexican Southwest
    1. New Mexico (the Santa Fe Trail) - US traded weapons, tools, calicoes with NM inhabitants and eventually settled there (provided way for military conquest)
    2. California - NE traders carrying sea otter skins to China anchored in the harbors of CA. When trade died out (from extermination), commerce was built on California cowhides exchanged for clothes, boots, hardware, etc. manufactured in East
  - e. Texas  
fear of American occupation led Mexican govt. to strengthen borders by increasing population
    - a. SFA brought settlers who agreed to convert to Catholicism, loyalty to Mexico
    - b. most settlers from South (geography) - increased slavery settlers attracted by cheap land for cottondrew more Americans than any other area (by 1835, almost 30,000 Americans living in TX - far more than number of Tejanos)
    1. Sources of tension between Texans and Mexico
      - a. religion
      - b. slavery
      - c. own province within Mexico

2. Revolution of 1836
  - Texans led by Sam Houston; Mexicans led by Santa Anna
  - a. Santa Anna defeated Texans at Alamo, Goliad - Houston began a strategic (?) retreat eastward across Texas - lengthened supply lines for S. Anna, shortened supply lines (from LA) for Houston
  - b. Houston attacked and won independence at San Jacinto (1836)
  - c. S. Anna signed treaty with the Southern boundary of Texas at the Rio Grande - later stated invalid because he signed under duress
5. Problems with Annexation (1836 - 1845)
  - a. financially unstable
  - b. unrecognized by Mexican govt.
  - c. rejected by US
    1. Jackson did not want to risk war with Mexico
    2. northerners opposed admission of slave state
  - c. 1844 - annexation question arose again - Calhoun supported on basis of protection of South
- f. James K. Polk and the Election of 1844 - Polk won election based on Manifest Destiny ("54' 40 or fight", Texas annexation)
  - Whigs opposed annexation, fearing expansion of slavery
- g. Oregon Annexation (1846) - border compromised at 49th parallel (modern boundary) if Vancouver Island remained British
- h. Texas Annexation (1845 - passed by John Tyler)

## II. **The Mexican War (1846 - 1848)**

Mexico severed ties with the US when Texas was annexed - saw TX as part of an American plot ... the annexation of Texas humiliated Mexico and forced its officials to respond belligerently

- a. the Border dispute - Nueces or Rio Grande
- b. the Slidell mission
- c. Zachary Taylor and the start of the war?
- d. the fighting (Battle of Buena Vista)
- e. Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848)
  1. why not annex Mexico?
  2. Terms of the Treaty
    - a. the "Mexican Cession" (reopens slave vs. free debate)
    - b. Rio Grande is the border
- f. Opponents of the Mexican War
  1. Rep. Abraham Lincoln (Whig - Illinois) - "Mr. Polk's War"
  2. Henry David Thoreau - "Essay on Civil Disobedience" both think it is a war of aggression fought to spread slavery