

Document A: Andrew Jackson's Annual Message to Congress (Modified, 1830)

It gives me pleasure to announce to Congress that our benevolent policy of removal of the Indians beyond the white settlements is approaching a happy conclusion.

Their removal will open up large tracts of country to the settlement of the whites, and replace a few savage hunters with dense civilization. It will enable the Indians to pursue happiness in their own way and under their own rude institutions and will slow their decline, which is lessening their numbers. Perhaps it will even cause them gradually, under the protection of the Government and through the influence of good counsels, to cast off their savage habits and become an interesting, civilized, and Christian community.

What good man would prefer a country covered with forests and ranged by a few thousand savages to our extensive Republic, filled with cities, towns, and prosperous farms enriched with all the improvements of art and industry? Our great nation occupied by more than 12,000,000 happy people, and filled with all the blessings of liberty, civilization and religion?

The present policy of the Government is but a continuation of the same progressive change by a milder process. The tribes which occupied the countries now constituting the Eastern States were annihilated or have melted away to make room for the whites. The waves of population and civilization are rolling to the westward, and we now propose to acquire the countries occupied by the red men of the South and West by a fair exchange.

Source: transcript from Andrew Jackson's annual address to Congress in 1830. The main topic of his speech concerned his policy of Indian Removal that had just forced the Cherokee people out of Georgia, across the plains, and into Oklahoma in what is now known as the Trail of Tears.

Vocabulary

Benevolent: kind and generous

Rude: simple and primitive

Counsels: advice

Annihilated: destroyed

Document B: "A Plea for the West," Sermon by Lyman Beecher (Modified, 1835)

If this nation is, in the providence of God, destined to lead the way in the moral and political emancipation of the world, it is time she understood her high calling, and embraced the work...

It is equally plain that the religious and political destiny of our nation is to be decided in the West. There is the territory, and there soon will be the population, the wealth, and the political power. The Atlantic trade and manufacturing have advantaged the East. But the West is destined to be the great central power of the nation, and under heaven, must affect powerfully the cause of free institutions and the liberty of the world. ...It is equally clear, that the conflict which is to decide the destiny of the West, will be a conflict of institutions for the education of her sons: will we have superstition, or evangelical light; despotism, or liberty?

Source: Lyman Beecher was a travelling preacher known for giving charismatic sermons at "camp revivals," religious meetings typical during "the Second Great Awakening," an American religious movement that often drew on nationalistic feelings and spoke to the religious destiny of the United States.

Document C: The Monroe Doctrine (Modified, 1823)

When the interests of the United States are involved, the American continents are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers. The attempt by any European powers to extend their political system to any portion of either continent would endanger our peace and happiness. Therefore, we should consider any such interference with grave concern.

Source: The declaration of a more aggressive United States foreign policy under the Monroe administration.

Vocabulary

Providence: divine will

Emancipation: Freedom

Superstition: primitive spiritual beliefs

Evangelical: referring to a tradition of Protestant

Christianity

Despotism: Tyranny, rule by a dictator

Document D: "Manifest Destiny" and the Writing of John O'Sullivan (Modified)

John O'Sullivan, "The Great Nation of Futurity," 1839.

Our national birth (and the Declaration of Independence) was the beginning of a new history, which separates us from the past and connects us only with the future.

We are the nation of progress, of individual freedom, of universal enfranchisement. Our future history will be to establish on earth the moral dignity and salvation of man -- the undeniable truth and goodness of God. America has been chosen for this mission among all the nations of the world, which are shut out from the life-giving light of truth. Her high example shall put an end to the tyranny of kings, and carry the happy news of peace and good will to millions who now endure an existence hardly better than that of beasts of the field. Who, then, can doubt that our country is destined to be the great nation of the future?

John O'Sullivan, "Annexation," 1845.

It is time now for all opposition to annexation of Texas to stop. . . Texas is now ours. She is no longer to us a mere geographical space. She is no longer to us a mere country on the map....

The time has come for everyone to stop treating Texas as an alien, and to stop thwarting our policy and hampering our power, limiting our greatness and checking the fulfillment of our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions.

Source: John O'Sullivan was a writer and editor of a well-known newspaper around the time of the Mexican-American war. Most people give him the credit for coining the term "Manifest Destiny." In the 1830's, many English-speaking Americans moved to Texas. In 1845, the United States annexed Texas, leading to the Mexican-American war in 1846.

Vocabulary

Enfranchisement: the right to vote

Hampering: slowing down

Tyranny: cruel and oppressive government

Allotted: given

Endure: suffer

Providence: God

Thwarting: opposing

Document E: Burnet Letter

One general fact may account for all: the utter dissimilarity of character between the two people, the Texians and the Mexicans. The first are principally **Anglo Americans** [*eg. white, and English speaking*]; the others a **mongrel** [*dehumanizing term for people of mixed race*] race of degenerate Spaniards and Indians more **depraved** [*immoral or evil*] than they.

Source: An excerpt from an 1836 letter written by David G. Burnet, a New Jersey-born leader of the Texas revolution to Senator Henry Clay of the United States.

Document F: Lundy Pamphlet (Modified)

We have been asked to believe that the inhabitants of Texas have been fighting to maintain the sacred principles of Liberty, and the natural, inalienable Rights of Man:— whereas, their motives have been exactly the opposite. The immediate cause and main goal of this war—led by the slaveholders of this country, (with land speculators and slave traders)—has been to grab the large and valuable territory of Texas from the Mexican Republic, in order to re-establish the SYSTEM OF SLAVERY; to open a vast and profitable SLAVEMARKET; and, ultimately, to annex it to the United States.

Source: From an 1836 pamphlet called "War in Texas" by Benjamin Lundy, a well-known American abolitionist. The pamphlet helped convince influential American leaders to oppose the annexation of Texas.

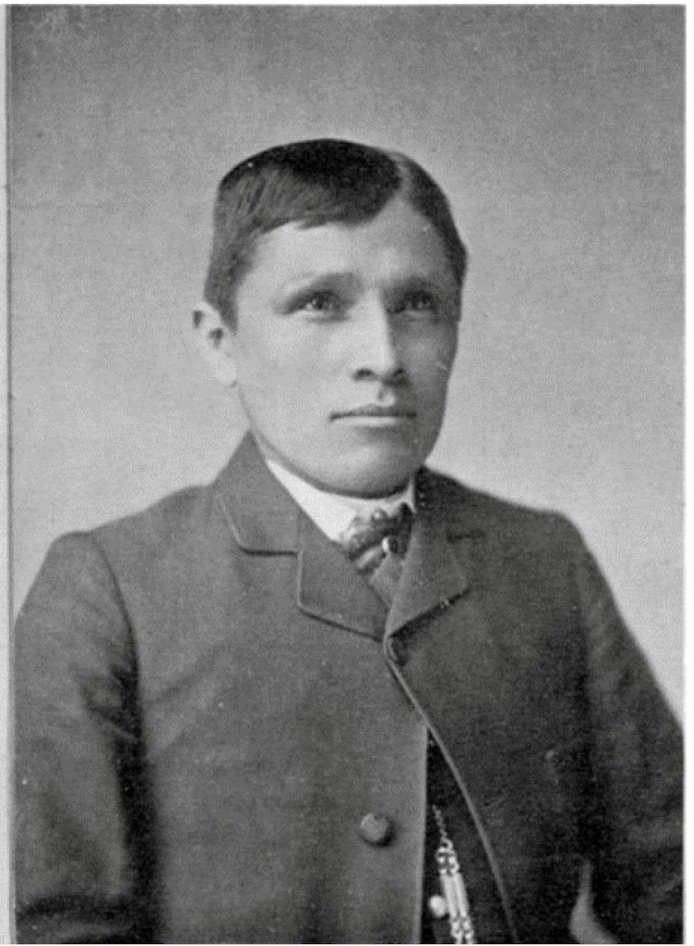
Document G: *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, excerpt from the majority opinion (Modified)

Black slaves for more than a century have been regarded as beings of an inferior order, and altogether unfit to associate with the white race, either in social or political relations. They are so far inferior, that they have no rights which the white man was bound to respect. It is lawful and just that the negro be reduced to slavery for his benefit. He was bought and sold, and treated as an ordinary article of property and trade.

Source: In 1838, Dred Scott, an enslaved man was taken into free territory by his master. In 1847, Scott sued for his freedom, claiming his continued enslavement was unlawful. In 1857, the Supreme Court ruled against him, citing, in part, the above argument, published by Chief Supreme Court Justice Roger Taney.

Central Historical Question: How did Americans justify expansion in the early 1800's?

	Relevant Quote	According to this doc, how did Americans justify expansion?
Document A		
Document B		
Document C		
Document D		
Document E		
Document F		
Document G		



Esther: A Story of the Oregon Trail by Anne Stephens (1862)

Our every footstep treads upon a grave! Beneath the thunder-rush of trains — beneath the quick, firm tread of business men, and beneath the gentle pressure of the daintily-slippered feet of lovely women, lie the bones of the war-painted warrior, beside his broken spear and stringless bow. The star that leads civilization westward shines badly upon the graves of a people almost extinct — a people, that have been hunted ruthlessly from their land. And now the Anglo-Saxon comes to plow it up and plant corn above the dead warriors, stooping now and then to pick up a stone arrow-head from the dirt, and examine it curiously.

The Indian sees his council-fires flicker out one by one. The star that leads westward has no resting place for him till it sets on the Pacific, writing on its waters the history of a people that have perished.