

RETHINKING MANIFEST DESTINY: WESTWARD EXPANSION AND AMERICAN INDIAN SOVEREIGNTY

TEACHER BACKGROUND

While commenting on the annexation of Texas in 1845, Democratic journalist John L. O'Sullivan wrote that it was, "the fulfillment of our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence." At that time, many Americans agreed with Sullivan, assuming that it was the divine right of those of European descent to settle America from sea to shining sea. As white Americans pushed westward throughout the nineteenth century, the rights of the American Indians were rarely considered. While the settlers who came to the Salt Lake Valley in the mid-nineteenth century migrated west for a variety of complicated reasons, the ideology of manifest destiny was evident in the history of white settlement in Utah and had devastating consequences for Utah's Indians.

OBIECTIVE

The student will be able to weigh the events of history influenced by the assumption of manifest destiny by examining the underlying concepts and points of view involved.

TEACHER MATERIALS

At a Glance: Manifest Destiny from the American Indian Perspective

We Shall Remain: The Ute (chapter 2, 3:25–8:19)

We Shall Remain: The Northwestern Shoshone (chapter 2, 2:19–11:32)

We Shall Remain: The Navajo (chapter 2, 5:27-9:02) We Shall Remain: The Goshute (chapter 2, 8:55-17:00)

STUDENT MATERIALS

John L. Sullivan Describes America's "Manifest Destiny"

The Domínguez-Escalante Expedition Encounters a Band of Utes

Heinrich Lienhard Describes the Salt Lake Valley Henry Smith's Account of Chief Seattle's Oration

William Clayton Describes Mormon Settlement of Utah

Toney Tillohash Discusses Paiute Relations with Mormon Settlers

Connor Chapoose Discusses Tensions with Mormon Settlers

Washakie LDS Ward

Ute Group in Salt Lake City

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED

Copy paper **Dictionary Textbook**

TIME FRAME

One period with homework

PROCEDURE

Give each student a sheet of blank copy paper to fold into four boxes. Have them write the word "destiny" across the top of the first box. Give them two minutes to brainstorm in that box on the meaning of the word destiny. (Depending upon time this may be a Think-Pair-Share.)

Have students title the next box "history." This box is for brainstorming on the question of "Does destiny play a role in the events of U.S. history?" (Think-Pair-Share)

The third box should be titled "manifest." Have a student look up this word in the dictionary and share the definition with the class to record in the box. (You may need to direct them to the definition that will be the most useful.)

The last box on the front side is for the definition of "manifest destiny" from the textbook glossary. On the backside of the page have the students find four references to manifest destiny in their textbooks. Each box can contain one reference page number, a short description, a notation as to whether the information available is fact or opinion, and the point of view offered on the event.

Each student now has a prewriting guide to write a five-paragraph document-based question evaluating the impact of manifest destiny on Indian cultures. Although most of the documents focus on Utah, instruct your students to keep the national context in mind.

ASSESSMENT/PRODUCTS

Pre-write page Essay

VARIATIONS/EXTENSIONS

Students can search www.UtahIndians.org to find documents to create their own DBQ on this theme.

Students can be split into groups representing differing historical points of view to debate the impact of manifest destiny.

Students can reflect on the religious themes that led to the conflict between the Wampanoag and the Pilgrims as shown in *We Shall Remain: After the Mayflower* (chapters 7, 8, 9) and how they compare with the religious themes of manifest destiny. This could be a discussion or an essay.

Students can discuss how Andrew Jackson's actions, as shown in *We Shall Remain: Trail of Tears* (chapter 4), facilitated manifest destiny and the settlement of the American West.

The events of *We Shall Remain: Geronimo* (chapters 2, 7) are geographically relevant to manifest destiny in Utah. Have students compare the situations.

Have students debate whether the events of 1973, as shown in *We Shall Remain: Wounded Knee* (chapter 6, 7), can be considered the final acts of manifest destiny.



ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

Alley, John R., Jr. "Prelude to Dispossession: The Fur Trade's Significance for the Northern Utes and Southern Paiutes." *Utah Historical Quarterly* 50 (Spring 1982): 104–23.

Reeve, W. Paul. *Making Space on the Western Frontier: Mormons, Miners, and Southern Paiutes.* Chicago and Urbana: University of Illinois, 2006.

STANDARDS ADDRESSED

State Standards

High School – United States History II: 1/3/a&e

High School – United States Government and Citizenship: 3/1/c; 4/3/a; 6/1/c

Accreditation Competencies

Social and Civic Responsibility/Demonstrates an appreciation of diversity and interdependence of all people/Understands the history, people, and traditions that have shaped local communities, nations, and the world

NCSS Standards

High School: 1/b&f; 2/c,d&e; 3/h,i&k; 4/g; 5/a&e; 6/f

AT A GLANCE: MANIFEST DESTINY FROM THE AMERICAN INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

Newspaper editor John L. O'Sullivan first coined the phrase "manifest destiny" in an 1845 editorial wherein he argued that it was America's "manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions." Historians have since used the term to characterize the expansionistic exuberance that typified the 1840s. By that point, white Americans had come to believe that both geographic expansion and population growth were a part of the national character. The United States had doubled in size with the addition of the Louisiana Purchase territory in 1803. James K. Polk ran for the presidency on an expansionist platform, and the U.S. would nearly double in size again with the annexation of Texas in 1845, the settlement of the Oregon boundary dispute with Britain in 1846, and the acquisition of what would come to be called the American Southwest following the U.S.-Mexican War in 1848. During the same time period, the population of the United States quadrupled. As O'Sullivan articulated it, and many Americans came to believe it, God seemed to destine that the United States span North America from coast to coast. As settlers spread across the continent to occupy these new lands, they brought Anglocentric worldviews that caused them to perceive the indigenous peoples they encountered in negative terms, which ultimately produced devastating land and population losses for Native Americans. In Utah, the story was no different.

Even though "manifest destiny" is most specifically applicable to the United States in the 1840s, it can be broadly defined to include any nation's impe-

rialistic and expansionistic thrusts. In this regard, Indians in the area that would come to be called Utah, encountered expansionistic ideals first with the Spanish imperialists and then with English, American, and French fur traders and trappers (for more information on this earlier period see "Rethinking First Contact: The Effects of European Arrival on the Established Cultures of North America"). Then, in the 1840s, non-Indian emigrants began to traverse Utah on their way to the West Coast. In 1841, a portion of the Bartleson-Bidwell Party became the first non-Indians to bring overland wagons through Utah. Government explorer John C. Fremont was not far behind. Fremont was married to Jessie Benton, daughter of Senator Thomas Hart Benton from Missouri, an ardent expansionist who ensured that his sonin-law's explorations were well funded and that they would enjoy immediate government publication. Three of Fremont's five western explorations took him to Utah, and his findings were published and widely read. Fremont greatly expanded the available knowledge about western lands and their potential for settlement. Before departing for the West from Illinois members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (commonly called the Mormons) read Fremont's report and used it to determine potential settlement locations.

In 1846, one year before the Mormon migration, an enterprising western promoter named Lansford W. Hastings persuaded four overland parties to leave the well-worn Oregon/California trail and take a proposed "cutoff" across the south end of the Great Salt Lake and the salt des-

ert. It proved an ill-conceived plan, as the area was not conducive to wagon travel. The last of the groups Hastings attracted to his cutoff was the ill-fated Donner Party, but the less-well-known Lienhard Party preceded the Donner group across Utah. Heinrich Lienhard, a young Swiss immigrant for whom the party was named, wrote in his journal of the impressive natural resources that the Salt Lake Valley seemed to offer. He suggested that he might have been tempted to stay and settle "had there been a single family of white men to be found living here."

The perceived isolation of the Great Basin, kept most overland immigrants moving westward, while it was that very isolation that attracted the Mormons to stay. Both perspectives failed to recognize the region's Native American peoples as having long-standing claims and deep cultural ties to the land. America's agents of manifest destiny tended to ignore or dismiss Indian occupation, choosing instead to see the West as a blank slate waiting to be "civilized." Because the Protestant majority in America viewed the Mormons themselves as uncivilized, heathen, and barbaric, the Utah manifest destiny story sometimes diverged from the national narrative, but it was also bleakly conventional.

Mormons differed from other overland migrants in important ways. They were, on average, poorer than the middle-class migrants who went to California and Oregon, they were not voluntary migrants but were forced from their homes, and they migrated as an entire people. Rather than agents pushing American progress, individualism, and acquisitiveness forward, Mormons saw themselves as builders of a communal and godly kingdom. They were religious refugees seeking isolation and a place where they could withdraw

from the world, economically, as well as spiritually. Despite these differences, the end result for the Native Americans was the same: they suffered loss of land and population and were removed to reservations.

As historian John R. Alley argues, both the Utes and Southern Paiutes initially welcomed Mormon settlers but for different reasons. The Utes saw Mormons as permanent trading partners. No longer would they have to go to Spanish settlements or wait for caravans along the Old Spanish Trail. The Southern Paiutes also invited the Mormons to settle because they saw the Mormons as a potential buffer against Ute slave raids and hoped to gain access to Euro-American material goods which the Utes had long used against them.

Utah's indigenous people did not fully understand the sheer numbers of Mormon settlers that would pour into the Great Basin during the last half of the nineteenth century. The Mormon doctrine of "the gathering" motivated converts to migrate to Utah and brought an influx of settlers from the eastern United States, Canada, Britain, and northwestern Europe. By 1860 over 42,000 Mormons had migrated to Utah Territory. They soon spread out across the Great Basin to occupy traditional Native American hunting, fishing, gathering, farming, and camping locales. By the time of his death in 1877, Brigham Young had directed the founding of over three hundred Mormon communities in the Intermountain West, making him one of America's foremost coloniz-

Native Americans experienced this colonization as a devastating series of events that dramatically changed their ways of life. Mormon settlers

brought diseases for which native peoples had no immunity. Mormon settlement also produced crippling land loss and diminished access to and availability of natural resources. As the Mormon population increased, the Native American population diminished. An estimated 20,000 Native Americans occupied Utah on the eve of the Mormon arrival; by 1900 the native population had dropped to about 2,000—a ninety percent decline over fifty years. It would not be until the mid 1980s that the population of Utah's indigenous peoples would recover to its pre-settlement level.

Naturally, conflict erupted between Mormons and Native Americans. After Mormons occupied Utah Valley in 1849, settlers and Indians fought. Brigham Young authorized a limited extermination before he finally concluded in 1852 that "it is cheaper to feed the [Native Americans] than it is to fight them." Even still, the Mormon attempt

to curtail the Ute slave trade and settlers' pressure on Ute lands and resources erupted into the Walker War. The Black Hawk War, which involved the Utes and some Navajos and Paiutes, followed. Although Utah's tribes were able to resist for a time, eventually all were removed from their ancestral lands and confined to reservations. The devastating ramifications of manifest destiny played out across Utah and reverberated into the twentieth century.

Viewed from the Indian perspective, the story of manifest destiny is tragic. However, it also demonstrates Indians' remarkable resilience and persistency. In the twenty-first century, Utah's Native American population is growing. In 2005 about 33,000 Native Americans lived in Utah, comprising about 2 percent of the state's population. Tribes occupy about 4 percent of the land in the state.

JOHN L. SULLIVAN DESCRIBES AMERICA'S "MANIFEST DESTINY"

Newspaper editor John L. O'Sullivan first coined the phrase "manifest destiny" in an 1845 editorial wherein he argued that it was America's "manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions." Here he describes the reasons he believes white Americans are so exceptional.

The American people having derived their origin from many other nations, and the Declaration of National Independence being entirely based on the great principle of human equality, these facts demonstrate at once our disconnected position as regards any other nation; that we have, in reality, but little connection with the past history of any of them, and still less with all antiquity, its glories, or its crimes. On the contrary, our national birth was the beginning of a new history, the formation and progress of an untried political system, which separates us from the past and connects us with the future only; and so far as regards the entire development of the natural rights of man, in moral, political, and national life, we may confidently assume that our country is destined to be the great nation of futurity.

It is so destined, because the principle upon which a nation is organized fixes its destiny, and that of equality is perfect, is universal. . . . What friend of human liberty, civilization, and refinement, can cast his view over the past history of the monarchies and aristocracies of antiquity, and not deplore that they ever existed? What philanthropist can contemplate the oppressions, the cruelties, and injustice inflicted by them on the masses of mankind, and not turn with moral horror from the retrospect?

America is destined for better deeds. It is our unparalleled glory that we have no reminiscences of battle fields, but in defence of humanity, of the oppressed of all nations, of the rights of conscience, the rights of personal enfranchisement. Our annals describe no scenes of horrid carnage, where men were led on by hundreds of thousands to slay one another, dupes and victims to emperors, kings, nobles, demons in the human form called heroes. We have had pa-

triots to defend our homes, our liberties, but no aspirants to crowns or thrones; nor have the American people ever suffered themselves to be led on by wicked ambition to depopulate the land, to spread desolation far and wide, that a human being might be placed on a seat of supremacy....

We are the nation of human progress, and who will, what can, set limits to our onward march? Providence is with us, and no earthly power can.

. . .

Yes, we are the nation of progress, of individual freedom, of universal enfranchisement. Equality of rights is the cynosure of our union of States, the grand exemplar of the correlative equality of individuals; and while truth sheds its effulgence, we cannot retrograde, without dissolving the one and subverting the other. We must onward to the fulfilment of our mission—to the entire development of the principle of our organization—freedom of conscience, freedom of person, freedom of trade and business pursuits, universality of freedom and equality. This is our high destiny, and in nature's eternal, inevitable decree of cause and effect we must accomplish it. All this will be our future history, to establish on earth the moral dignity and salvation of man—the immutable truth and beneficence of God. For this blessed mission to the nations of the world, which are shut out from the life-giving light of truth, has America been chosen; and her high example shall smite unto death the tyranny of kings, hierarchs, and oligarchs, and carry the glad tidings of peace and good will where myriads now endure an existence scarcely more enviable than that of beasts of the field. Who, then, can doubt that our country is destined to be the great nation of futurity?

John L. O'Sullivan, "The Great Nation of Futurity," The United States Democratic Review 6, no. 23 (1845): 426-30

THE DOMÍNGUEZ-ESCALANTE EXPEDITION ENCOUNTERS A BAND OF UTES

The Domínguez-Escalante expedition began in July 1776 and was led by two Spanish padres, Francisco Atanasio Domínguez and Silvestre Veléz de Escalante, who wanted to establish a trade route from the Spanish colony at Santa Fe to the newly founded colony on the west coast at Monterey. Spanish officials were also interested in finding potential converts to Christianity, exploring Spain's northern frontier, and learning of its peoples, plants, and animals. Spanish accounts of this expedition provided the earliest historical record of many of Utah's Native Americans.

"On the 29th, about ten in the morning, five Sabuagana Yutas, yelling loudly, let themselves be seen on top of some hills on the other side. We figured them to be those whom we had sent to be sought out, but as soon as they arrived where we were we realized that they were not from among those summoned. We gave them wherewith to eat and smoke, but after a long parley—its subject being the quarrels they had been having this summer with the Yamparica Comanches [possibly Comanche, Eastern Shoshone, or a different band of Ute Indians]—we could not draw out of them anything useful for our plan, because theirs was to fill us with fear by exaggerating the danger to which we were exposing ourselves of being killed by the Comanches if we continued our course. We refuted the validity of these pretenses, by which they were trying to stop us from going ahead, by telling them that our God, who is everyone's, would defend us if we should happen to run into these foes."

Fray Angelico Chavez, trans., *The Domínguez-Escalante Journal: Their Expedition through Colorado, Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico in* 1776, ed. Ted J. Warner (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1976), 27.

HEINRICH LIENHARD DESCRIBES THE SALT LAKE VALLEY

Heinrich Lienhard, a young Swiss immigrant, traveled through the Salt Lake Valley with an emigrant train in 1846. He wrote in his journal of the impressive natural resources that the Salt Lake Valley seemed to offer.

On the 7th [of August 1846] we reached the flat shore of the magnificent Salt Lake, the waters of which were clear as crystal, but as salty as the strongest salt brine. It is an immense expanse of water and presents to the eye in a northeasterly [northwesterly] direction nothing but sky and water. In it there are a few barren islands which have the appearance of having been wholly burnt over. The land extends from the mountains down to the lake in a splendid inclined plane broken only by the fresh water running down from ever-flowing springs above. The soil is a rich, deep black sand composition [loam] doubtless capable of producing good crops. The clear, sky-blue surface of the lake, the warm sunny air, the nearby high mountains, with the beautiful country at their foot, through which we on a fine road were passing, made on my spirits an extraordinarily charming impression. The whole day long I felt like singing and whistling; had there been a single family of white men to be found living here, I believe that I would have remained. Oh, how unfortunate that this beautiful country was uninhabited!

Heinrich Lienhard's journal, as quoted in William Mulder and A. Russell Mortensen, eds., *Among the Mormons: Historic Accounts by Contemporary Observers* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1973), 224.

HENRY SMITH'S ACCOUNT OF CHIEF SEATTLE'S ORATION

The following is the oration allegedly spoken by Chief Seattle, leader of the Duwamish and Suquamish Indians of Puget Sound, to Isaac Ingalls Stevens, governor of the Washington Territory, in 1854 or 1855. Physician Henry Smith was supposedly present for Seattle's speech, and he wrote it down in 1887. However, because over three decades passed before Smith wrote out his account, it is unclear to this day whether these words should be attributed to Chief Seattle or Henry Smith. Depending on its source, the speech says different things about the meaning of manifest destiny.

Yonder sky that has wept tears of compassion upon our fathers for centuries untold. . . . The son of the White Chief says his father sends us greetings of friendship and good will. This is kind of him, for we know he has little need of our friendship in return because his people are many. They are like the grass that covers the vast prairies, while my people are few: they resemble the scattering trees of a storm-swept plain. . . . There was a time when our people covered the whole land as the waves of a windruffled sea covers its shell-paved floor, but that time has long since passed away with the greatness of tribes almost forgotten. . . . When the last Red Man shall have perished, and the memory of my tribe shall have become a myth among the white man, these shores will swarm with the invisible dead of my tribe, and when your children's children think themselves alone in the field, the store, the shop, or in the silence of the pathless woods, they will not be alone. . . . The White Men will never be alone. Let him be just and deal kindly with my people, for the dead are not powerless— Dead—I say? There is no death. Only a change of worlds.

Henry A. Smith, "Chief Seattle's 1854 Oration," *Seattle Sunday Star*, Oct. 29, 1887, as quoted in T. C. McLuhan, *Touch the Earth: A Self Portait of Indian Existence* (New York: Promontory Press, 1971).

WILLIAM CLAYTON DESCRIBES MORMON SETTLEMENT OF UTAH

The following is an excerpt from William Clayton's journal written on July 22, 1847 overlooking the Salt Lake Valley. Clayton was an English convert to Mormonism and was a part of the first group of Mormons to enter the Salt Lake Valley.

For my own part I am happily disappointed in the appearance of the valley of the Salt Lake, but if the land be as rich as it has the appearance of being, I have no fears but the Saints can live here and do well while we will do right. When I commune with my own heart and ask myself whether I would choose to dwell here in this wild looking country amongst the Saints surrounded by friends, though poor, enjoying the privileges and blessings of the everlasting priesthood, with God for our King and Father; or dwell amongst the gentiles with all their wealth and good things of the earth, to be eternally mobbed, harassed, hunted, our best men murdered and every good man's life continually in danger, the soft whisper echoes loud and reverberates back in tones of stern determination; give me the quiet wilderness and my family to associate with, surrounded by the Saints and adieu to the gentile world till God says return and avenge you of your enemies.

William Clayton's Journal, as quoted in William Mulder and A. Russell Mortensen, eds., *Among the Mormons: Historic Accounts by Contemporary Observers* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1973), 225–26.

TONEY TILLOHASH DISCUSSES PAIUTE RELATIONS WITH MORMON SETTLERS

F: Were these people [Kanab-area cattle ranchers] pretty good to the Indians?

T: Oh yeah, they pretty good.

F: Did they help people along with food and everything?

T: Oh, they give them work on the farm. They little farms, and let them work there. They want to move. The government want 'um move all the Kaibabs. They move them over into San Juan out that way. They say they going to move over there in San Juan, Utah.

F: Over there around Blanding maybe?

T: Yeah, right there on the Colorado, on the Colorado River.

F: And did the Mormons favor this?

T: There was Dave Wooley, and he says he can't move 'um. He says they belong to us. This is the way they were raised. They gonna—we not going to send them away. Like that, they say that's our helper. They gonna stay right here. They told them, you know, that a government man they can't move 'um. So they leave us alone.

F: Is that when they established the reservation at Moccasin?

T: Yeah, that's when. Not him. This a different, different man. They was just a little school there. Day school was abolished over that, over into Shivwit. Then they move it to, oh, to Panguitch. The little—Panguitch below the Panguitch cities, towns.

F: Yes, in those early days did the Mormons try to get the Indians to follow their religion?

T: Who?

F: Did the Mormons try to get the Indians to become Mormons?

T: Oh yes, I'm a Mormon.

F: Yes.

T: Yeah, they baptize kids when they get, oh, eight years old. A lot of them got baptized.

F: Did they follow that religion, the Indian people, or did they keep their own?

T: Both the Indians and the Mormon people, too. Some of them are Indians. They go out to Mormon bishop. Bishop—that a bishop, Indian bishop.

F: A special Indian bishop?

T: Yeah, Mormon bishop. They call 'um 'bishop.' He's right there, farm, on the reservation, but he lives down in St. George now, right here, over on the left side.

F: You don't know his name?

T: Yes, Stewart Snow.

F: Oh.

T: You know him?

F: No, but I've heard his name.

T: But he belong to the Shivwit. He live with us. His house there.

CONNOR CHAPOOSE DISCUSSES TENSIONS WITH MORMON SETTLERS

B: Well, Connor, . . . would you discuss with me a little bit how you think the Utes feel about whites in general, and how do you think they felt toward the whites when they first came in contact with the whites, and how that feeling has changed, if it has, over the years since then?

C: Well, I think, Jack, one of my comments on that is that I've always referred to it as I've heard so many of our councilmen comment to a party that appeared before meetings with our older Indians. They always asked at these meetings, "Are you a white man or a Mormon?" Some place in their line of thinking or to their knowledge or experience they believed they had been mistreated by so-called Mormons. When they tried to work with them other than by tricks and other means, they were more or less distrustful of so-called Mormons. But I would say, as far as we say a white person, I think Mormons were just as white as white people, but in beginning those meetings, they would ask that question, "Are you a Mormon or a white man?" I guess there was two distinctions in their meanings there, because they wouldn't trust the so-called Mormon, if he was representing the Mormons. The Indian was not in a position to do business with the Mormons at all, because some place, some where, they had done wrong....

B: Do you know of any reason why this should have been the case?

C: Yes, as I said, the Mormons had mistreated them, and they thought they would not trust them.

B: After the Mormons came into the valley here, they mistreated the Indians?

C: Yes. At the same time that they said they were doing right, I think a lot of them in the histories there, they did discredit themselves. They did much things as were wrong. They falsified their statements and their manners, and their rulings that the Indians were savages and hostile. But they're the ones that damned themselves by disguising themselves as Indians and even killed their own people in order just to discredit the Indians so they could say it was Indians.

B: I see.

C: I think that was one of the main things. They disguised themselves to gain possession of certain things which the Indians were disqualified for. Of course, on the Mormons' side, they did make it look like the Indians were the ones doing this, when they were the ones doing one of the most savage acts themselves and discrediting the Indians who weren't actually doing it. Thinking up these schemes to possess certain things, and they done it through false intent to discredit the Indians. So that was the reason the Indians did feel awfully strong against the Mormons at the time.

Connor Chapoose, interview with John Boyden, Sept. 16, 1960, Salt Lake City, Utah, interview no. 8, Doris Duke American Indian Oral History Project, American West Center, University of Utah, t.s., 22–24.

WASHAKIE LDS WARD



The Washakie settlement was a farm established in the 1880s by members of the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone and officials from the LDS Church. This photo shows members of the Washakie LDS ward meeting with Mormon Church officials in Salt Lake City, April 5, 1931.

UTE GROUP IN SALT LAKE CITY



This photo shows a group of Utes in front of the Zion's Cooperative Mercantile Institution in Salt Lake City, circa 1870. The Utes display their weapons and horses.