

1830s-1850s  
**Territorial Expansion of the United States**

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**Focus Questions**

- How did the political effects of expansion heighten sectional tensions?
- How did the concept of manifest destiny affect continental expansion?
- How was the frontier development in Oregon, Texas, and California similar and different?

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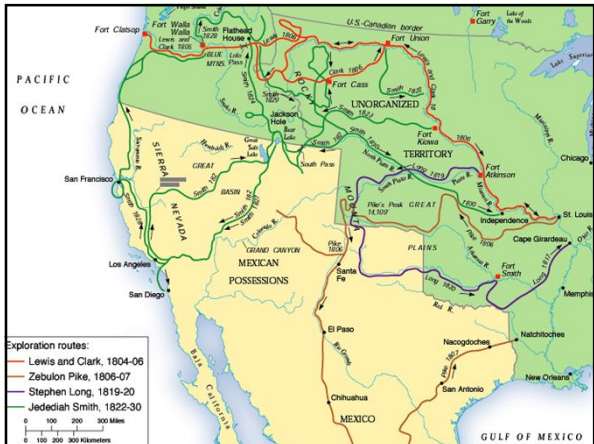
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**Manifest Destiny**

- In 1845, journalist John O'Sullivan coined the phrase "manifest destiny" to imply Americans had a basic right to spread across the continent and conquer whomever stood in their way.
- Westward expansion would increase trade and enable whites to "civilize" the Indians.



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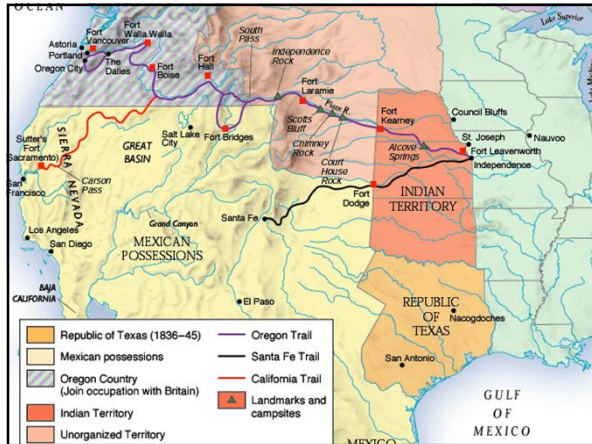
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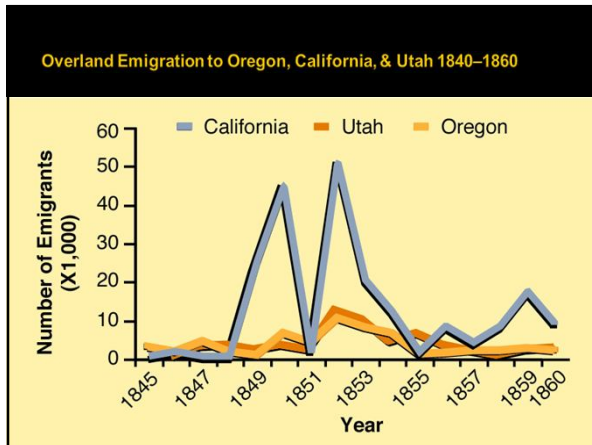
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## Oregon

- After 1818, the United States and Britain jointly controlled Oregon territory, though the British dominated the region.
- Along with fur trappers, missionaries were among the earliest white settlers.
- Conflicts with Indians resulted in periodic bloodbaths.
- Disease greatly reduced the Indian population.
- By the mid-1840s "Oregon Fever" broke out, spurred by the promise of free land. Joint occupation ended in 1846, when the Canadian border was drawn in its current location.

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## Mexican Texas

- In Texas, multiethnic settlements revolved around the presidio, mission, and rancho.
- Mexican authorities sought American settlement as a way of providing a buffer between its heartland and the Comanches.
- Stephen F. Austin promoted American emigration.
- Generally, slaveholders who came to grow cotton in their self-contained enclaves, Americans viewed Texas as an extension of Mississippi and Louisiana.



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## Toward Texas Independence

- For a brief period, Texas was big enough to hold Comanche, Mexican, and American communities:
  - Mexicans maintained ranches and missions in the South;
  - Americans farmed the eastern and south central sections;
  - the Comanche held their hunting grounds on the frontier.
- In 1828, a new Mexican centrist government broke the balance when it sought to control Texas by restricting immigration, outlawing slavery, and raising taxes.

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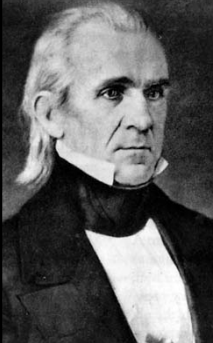
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### Origins of the War



- James K. Polk was committed to expanding United States territory.
  - Peacefully settled the Oregon controversy.
- Increasing tensions with Mexico
  - Broke diplomatic relations with US.
- Polk wanted to extend U.S. territory to the Pacific
  - Encouraged takeover of California.
- A border dispute led Polk to order troops to defend Mexico.

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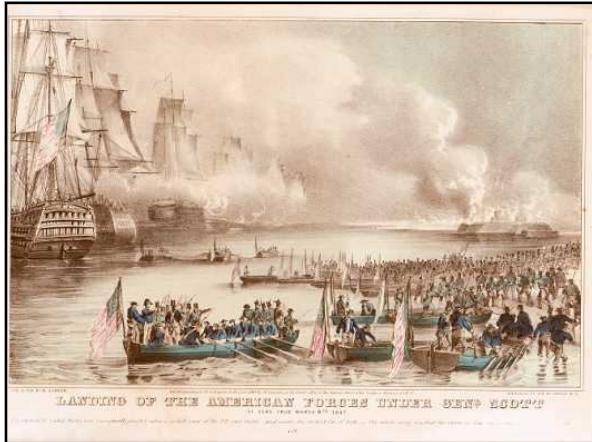
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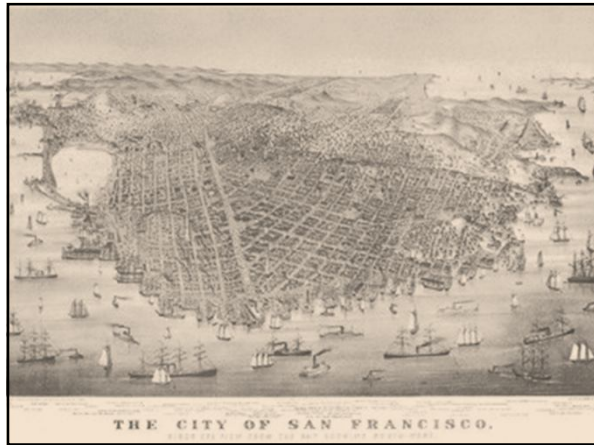
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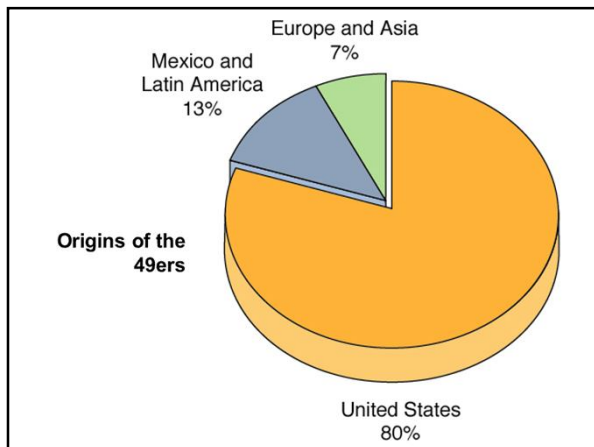
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## The Wilmot Proviso

- Northern Whigs opposed expansion on antislavery grounds.
- The Wilmot Proviso caused a controversy over the status of slavery in the new territories.
- A bitter debate on the Proviso raised serious sectional issues and caused the first breakdown of the national party system.

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## Free-Soil

- The growth of the Liberty Party indicated that northern public opinion was shifting towards an antislavery position.
- The Free-Soil Party offered a compromise for northern voters by focusing on stopping the spread of slavery.
- The Free-Soilers appealed to northern values of freedom and individualism, as well as racism, for they would ban all African Americans from the new territories.




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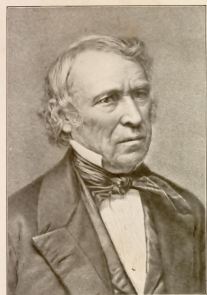
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## The Election of 1848



- In the election of 1848, candidates had to discuss their views on the slavery expansion.
  - Lewis Cass, the Democrat, favored popular sovereignty but was vague on details.
  - The Whig war hero, Zachary Taylor, refused to take a position on the Wilmot Proviso.
  - The Free-Soil Party ran Martin Van Buren as a spoiler.
    - By taking Democratic votes from Cass, Van Buren helped Taylor win the election.
    - Taylor died in office.

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1830s-1850s

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