



# Unit 2: Westward Expansion





## Unit 2 Essential Questions

**How has American membership transformed across time and place?** (AKA: How has membership been expanded and/or denied?)

**What are the causes and effects of American ambition?**

# America the Beautiful (1895)


1. Oh, beautiful for spacious skies,  
For amber waves of grain,  
For purple mountain majesties  
Above the fruited plain!  
America! America!  
God shed his grace on thee,  
And crown thy good with brotherhood  
From sea to shining sea.

2. Oh, beautiful for pilgrim feet,  
Whose stern, impassioned stress  
A thoroughfare of freedom beat  
Across the wilderness!  
America! America!  
God mend thine ev'ry flaw,  
Confirm thy soul in self-control,  
Thy liberty in law.


3. Oh, beautiful for heroes proved  
In liberating strife,  
Who more than self their country loved,  
And mercy more than life!  
America! America!  
May God thy gold refine,  
Till all success be nobleness,  
And ev'ry gain divine.

4. Oh, beautiful for patriot dream  
That sees beyond the years  
Thine alabaster cities gleam,  
Undimmed by human tears!  
America! America!  
God shed his grace on thee,  
And crown thy good with brotherhood  
From sea to shining sea.





Why might this work be  
considered a prime  
expression of “American  
exceptionalism”?



# American Exceptionalism

American exceptionalism is not the same as saying the United States is "different" from other countries. It doesn't just mean that the U.S. is "unique." Countries, like people, are all different and unique, even if many share some underlying characteristics. Exceptionalism requires something far more: a belief that the U.S. follows a path of history different from the laws or norms that govern other countries. That's the essence of American exceptionalism: The U.S. is not just a bigger and more powerful country — but an exception. It is the bearer of freedom and liberty, and morally superior to something called "Europe." Never mind the differences within Europe, or the fact that "the world" is bigger than the U.S. and Europe. The "Europe" versus "America" dichotomy is the crucible in which American exceptionalist thinking formed. ---Ian Tyrell, The

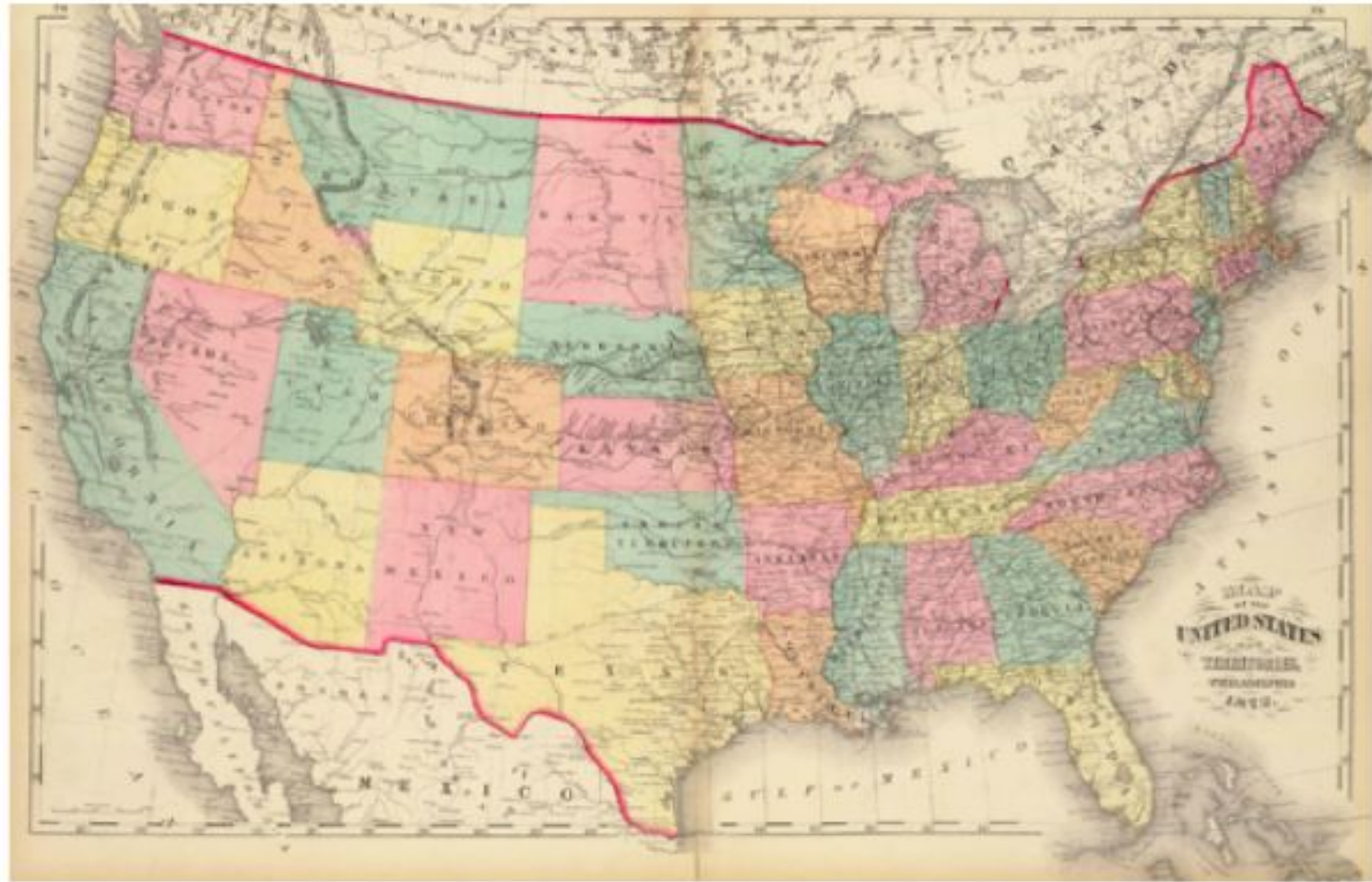
Week, Oct 21, 2016

**John Gast,  
American  
Progress,  
1872**

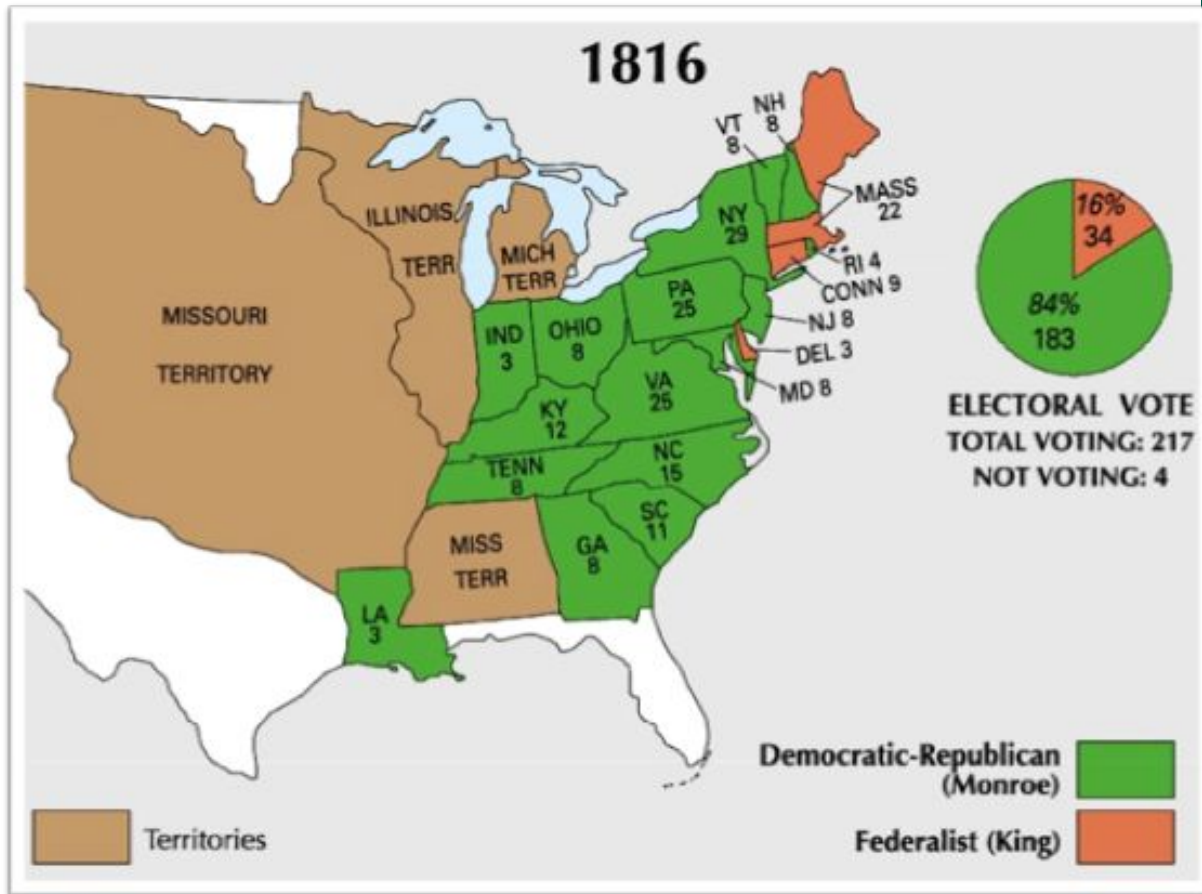




**Map of  
the  
United  
States,  
1872**



# Contemporary Map of the 1816 United States





**John Melish, Map of the U.S., 1816**

## Melish's comments on his 1816 map of the United States

*To present the country this way was desirable . . .*

*The map shows at a glance the whole extent of the United States territory from sea to sea.*

*In tracing the probable expansion of the human race from east to west, the mind finds an agreeable resting place on its western limits. The view is complete and leaves nothing to be wished for. It also adds to the beauty and symmetry of the map.*

Source: John Melish. Map of the United States with the contiguous British and Spanish Possessions. Philadelphia, 1816.

“To present a picture of it was desirable in every point of view. The map so constructed, shows at a glance the whole extent of the United States territory from sea to sea; and in tracing the probable expansion of the human race from east to west, the mind finds an agreeable resting place on its western limits. The view is complete, and leaves nothing to be wished for. It also adds to the beauty and symmetry [balance] of the map; which will, it is confidently believed, be found one of the most useful and ornamental [decorative] works ever executed [created] in this country.”

—John Melish, 1816

1. According to Melish, why did he decide to draw the map of the United States this way?
2. How does this relate to Manifest Destiny?

# Manifest Destiny

The philosophical concept that it was the United States' destiny to expand from coast to coast.

# Discussion...

Why did Americans think they were so special?

Are you surprised by the reasons that O'Sullivan gives for expansion? Do you think he really believes that God wants Americans to expand?

This theory that Americans are so special is called "American Exceptionalism."

What do you think about this theory?

The  
Mexican-American  
War (overview)





# Notes for American Yawp reading on Texas, Mexico, and America...

LINK: [http://www.americanyawp.com/text/12-manifest-destiny/#IVTexas\\_Mexico\\_and\\_America](http://www.americanyawp.com/text/12-manifest-destiny/#IVTexas_Mexico_and_America)

## American Yawp, Chapter 12, IV: Texas, Mexico, and America

Read the passage and answer the following questions in your notes:

1. Why was Mexico worried about so many Americans moving into their country and what was their response in 1829 and 1830?
2. Who were the Texians and what did they do in 1836?
3. What was the result of the Texas Revolution?
4. What was the Runaway Scrape?
5. What was the Treaty of Velasco and what was the reaction of the new Mexican government, the U.S., and other nations?
6. Why did American politicians fear adding Texas to the Union?
7. What platform did Polk run on for President and what did President Tyler do in the final days of his presidency?
8. What was Mexico's reaction to the annexation?
9. Why did Polk send Slidell to Mexico City?
10. How did Polk use the killing of 11 US soldiers to his advantage?
11. Why was the war controversial in the U.S.?
12. What was the result of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo?
13. What were some of the major impacts for both Mexico and the U.S. after the war?

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/americas-forgotten-war-south-of-the-border/3/>