

UNITED STATES HISTORY: QUARTER 2

Question: Was Manifest Destiny a success for all Americans? Use the documents to support your response.

Background: Manifest Destiny was the belief that the United States was destined to expand from the Atlantic seaboard to the Pacific Ocean. It has also been used to advocate and justify other territorial acquisitions. Advocates of Manifest Destiny believed that expansion was not only good, but that it was obvious ("manifest") and certain ("destiny"). Originally a political catch phrase of the 19th century, "Manifest Destiny" eventually became a standard historical term, often used as a synonym for the expansion of the United States across the North American continent.

Document 1

"And that claim is by the right of our manifest destiny to overspread and to possess the whole of the continent which Providence has given us for the development of the great experiment of liberty and federated self-government entrusted to us."

Journalist John L. O'Sullivan, an influential advocate for the Democratic Party, writing that the United States had the right to claim the whole of Oregon, 1845.

Document 2



1872 artist John Gast painted a popular scene of people moving west that captured the view of Americans at the time. Called "American Progress"

Document 3



American westward expansion is idealized in Emanuel Leutze's famous painting *Westward the Course of Empire Takes its Way* (1861). The title of the painting, from a 1726 poem by Bishop Berkeley, was a phrase often quoted in the era of Manifest Destiny, expressing a widely held belief that civilization had steadily moved westward throughout history.