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Chapter 14

**Directions**: answer the following questions completely. No answer should be one word or sentence. Use the who, what, when, where, why, and how as a guide to answering the questions.

1. **Describe the experience of a typical settler travelling on the Overland Trails and why settlers migrated west.** The experience of a typical settler travelling on the Overland Trails were slow and often full of death and disease. People and their families rode on the Overland Trails to the West in the United States to seek a better life for their families, often aiming for Oregon or California. California would be annexed by the United States in 1850. These travelers rode in wagon caravans, which was faster than other transportation methods at the time, but due to the dirt paths, it made the journey difficult. Settlers who traveled on the Overland Trails had to cross rivers in their way to head to the west. Crossing a river took a lot of energy, where people had to somehow force their luggage and horses across raging rivers. Many of these settlers died due to disease, starvation, or accidents. Overall, the Overland Trails were a risky and dangerous path that many settlers took and faced the risks for a better life. Some would make the arduous journey while many other unfortunate groups perished.
2. **Explain manifest destiny; is it a religious ideology, a racist ideology, or both.** Manifest destiny was both a religious and racist ideology. First of all, manifest destiny was a religious belief since many Americans believed they had the right, by God himself, to expand westward across the North American continent. Moreover, it was also a racist ideology because many Americans believed that they were superior to groups and people that were on their land. Since the Americans believed that they were superior, they took over and conquered land without care to the indigenous people living on the land. For instance, the annexation of Texas showed how Americans acted and what their beliefs were. At the time, Texas was owned by Mexico and then the United States wanted to annex Texas in 1845. Americans did not like the Tejanos, thinking that the Tejanos were inferior to them. Since Americans show Mexicans and Tejanos inferior to them, they believed it was their purpose and duty to take their land, with God’s acceptance. In addition, the same thing could be said with the Natives. Americans took over the land of the Natives and even attempted to convert the Natives to Christianity.
3. **Why did Texas declare independence from Mexico in 1836 and why were Americans reluctant to accept it as a new state in the Union?** Texas declared independence from Mexico in 1836 mainly because of the slavery issues. Mexico had encouraged new settlers from the United States to go to Texas. This was because Mexico wanted to increase the economic development of Texas since Mexico still owned Texas. This encouragement and promotion of Texas brought many of the Americans to come to Texas to settle. This made many Mexicans move out of Texas, eventually making the population of Texas mostly Americans. Some Americans settlers brought their slaves and were worried that Mexico would outlaw slavery. Sam Houston, the leader of the Texan forces, would attack the Mexican army as defense since the Mexicans attacked first. The Mexican army was defeated at the Alamo, which allowed Texas to declare independence from Mexico in 1836. Then, Americans were reluctant to accept Texas as a new state in the Union because of slavery. The states had to had an equal amount of slave states and free states to make the states have equal power in Congress. With the addition of Texas, it was a while until the Americans accepted Texas.
4. **Discuss the causes of the Mexican War.** The causes of the Mexican War were the American influence and westward expansion into California and Texas. Furthermore, other causes of the Mexican War included Mexico’s standpoint on slavery and the annexation of Texas. The United States of America wanted to buy more land from Mexico, but Mexico declined their offer. This action prompted President Polk to send his troops to the border of Mexico to attack the Mexicans. Mexico believed it was still their territory, so they attacked back, thinking they were defending their land. Moreover, Mexico had already outlawed slavery and did not like how the Americans were bringing slaves into Texas. In addition, Mexico was against the annexation of Texas by the United States since Mexico still thought Texas was still owned by them. President James Polk would send an envoy to negotiate with Mexico $20,000,000 and damage claims in exchange for New Mexico and California. Yet, Polk’s envoy were attacked before the negotiation and was led to Polk making a Declaration of War, which started the Mexican War.
5. Identify each of the following and their **significance**:
   1. **Mountain men** – Mountain men were people during the early 19th century who were inspired by the fur trade. They would abandon civilization and be in isolation to pursue beaver pelts and be a nomad in the wilderness. The Mountain Men trapped animals for their fur and for meat to survive, which meant that they acted very primitive. They even hung out around Natives and took shelter in primitive forts. They were significant because they were the first whites to go around the Rocky Mountains and are the reason that the United States had a joint ownership with Britain over the Oregon Territory in 1848. They knew about the land before any other Americans did.
   2. **Oregon fever** – The Oregon Fever was not a real condition that affected the human body. The Oregon Fever was a term for the Americans going westward in the United States on the Oregon Trail in the 1830s and 1840s. The Oregon Trail was a 2,000-mile-long trial that connected the Missouri River with Oregon. By word of mouth, the Americans heard that the regions in the West were very fertile with lots of forests. Thus, many Americans and their families used wagons trains to head to the West to Oregon to live a better life. The movement was a massive migration and by 1845, there were about 500,000 settlers in Willamette Valley of Oregon.
   3. **Stephen F. Austin** – Stephen F. Austin was a Missouri resident who inherited a huge land grant from his father. His father originally was given the land grant by Spanish authorities. This allowed people to live on Austin’s land the day America expanded into Texas. Austin was significant because he founded the first settlement of Americans in Texas. As more people moved to Texas, it encouraged others to move to Texas too. Austin would sell some of the land to those who wanted to buy land in Texas. There would be conflicts too, like how Mexico would make importing slaves illegal and there would be slaveowners who moved to Texas.
   4. **Tejanos** – Tejanos were Spanish-speaking Mexicans or Spanish people who were born and live in Texas. The Tejanos were outnumbered by the Anglos, who were white people, and slaves ten to one. The Tejanos were important in the United States during this time period because they were an important factor in the Texas Revolution. The Texas Revolution in 1836 were led by Anglo-American immigrants and fought for their independence of Texas. After Texas was independent, the Americans didn’t trust the Tejanos, thinking they were spies and drove them out of Texas.
   5. **Sam Houston** – Sam Houston was the commander in chief of the Texas forces. Houston was previously a governor of Tennessee and an army officer. He helped to train the Texan Army and helped to command an army that defeated and captured Santa Anna. When Sam Houston moved to Texas in 1832. Then, in 1836, an attack was launched by Sam Houston against the Mexicans at one of their bases and killed all of the members at the encampment after learning about the Anglo defeat at the Alamo. The Mexican army dwindled in numbers, and this allowed Houston and his Texan army to capture Santa Anna. This was important to American history because a treaty would be formed that gave Texas to the Republic of Texas.
   6. **Lone Star Republic** – The Lone Star Republic was a nickname for Texas after the Texas Revolution. It was the name of the country when Texas was its own independent country separate from the United States after the Texans defeated the Mexicans in 1836. Sam Houston was the first president right away in the Lone Star Republic and was named a slave state. They were Republican because the United States were waiting for a free state to join the Union. This was because the number of free states and slave states had to remain equal to each other, which allowed for equal representation in Congress. Sam Houston wanted to join the Union under Andrew Jackson’s ruling. Andrew Jackson didn’t recognize the Lone Star Republic at first, but on his last day in office, he officially recognized the Republic of Texas as its own independent country. The Lone Star Republic promoted conflict and tension rose due to slavery. The Lone Star Republic lasted from 1836 until annexation in 1845.
   7. **Bear Flag Republic** – The Bear Flag Republic was a name for the short-lived California Republic that only lasted a month. The Bear Flag Republic was established by American settlers who revolted against Mexico. California would be annexed and join the United States after hearing news that the war with Mexico reached the United States. John C. Fremont would convince American settlers to form militias and prepare for a battle with Mexico. Fremont also led the Bear Flag Republic during its short time being an independent country. Fremont led 60 frontiersmen and went to California to declare their independence from Mexico in 1845. The Bear Flag Republic showed how desperate and eager Americans were to move westward, even if there were conflicts in the west. The Bear Flag Republic became California in the United States after the United States claimed the territory after hearing there were attacks from Mexico.
6. **What did the United States gain from the Mexican War and discuss the controversial issue that arose because of it?** The United States gained from the Mexican War about 1,000,000 square miles of land from the Mexican War. From this war, the United States would get California, Utah, Texas, Nevada, and parts of Wyoming, Colorado, Arizona and New Mexico. The controversial issues that arose because of the new territories were slavery and Natives. The question that was brought up was, should these new territories have slavery or not? Slavery was already a big issue, as it would spark the American Civil War and anti-slavery movements. Furthermore, the issue of Natives living in the territory was an issue because Americans didn’t like the Natives living in land that they were living in. There wouldn’t be any space or regions to make reservations to move the Natives to. From all of the new territory the United States gained, there came a lot of problems.