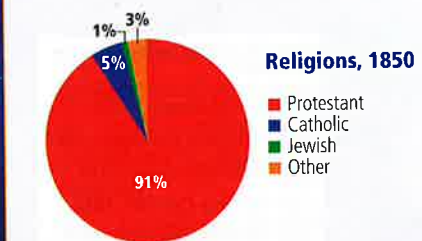
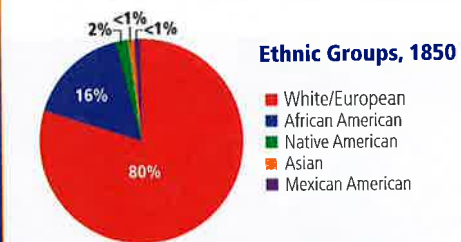


History and Geography

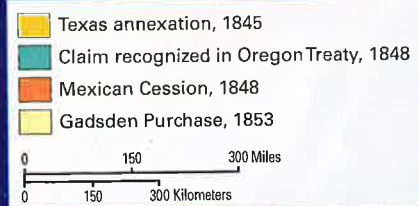
America's Growth by 1850

In the 1830s a new dream began to shape the American mind—manifest destiny. Manifest destiny was the belief that the United States should extend all the way to the Pacific Ocean. By 1850 that dream had become a reality. In 1845 the United States annexed Texas. In 1848 it acquired Oregon and the huge Mexican Cession. By 1853, with the Gadsden Purchase, the United States had taken the basic shape it still has today.

America's Population, 1850: 23.6 million



Gold Fever The discovery of gold in California in 1848 set off a massive migration. In 1849 some 80,000 forty-niners headed toward California. San Francisco, located on an excellent natural port, grew quickly as a result.

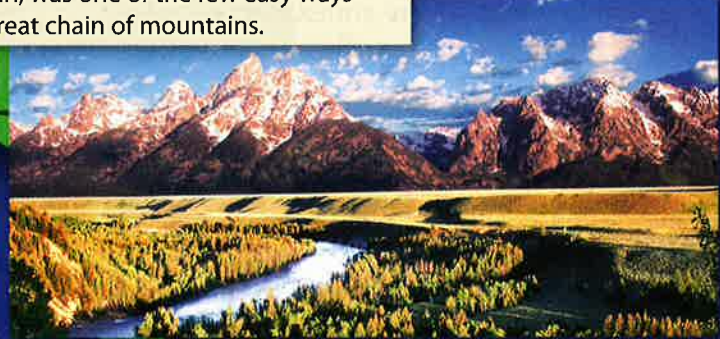


Water Rights Water was critical in the dry West. Bitter disputes arose over who had the water rights to streams. Gold rush miners developed a simple system: whoever used the water first owned the rights to it. In other parts of the West, the community as a whole had a right to use the water source.

Manifest Destiny Supporters of manifest destiny believed it was God's will that the United States should expand and spread democracy across North America. Huge numbers of settlers headed west to tame new lands.



The Rocky Mountains The Rocky Mountains were a gigantic obstacle to settlers on their way west. Pathfinders like Lt. John C. Frémont traveled widely in the region, making maps and noting possible trails. The South Pass, through which the Oregon Trail ran, was one of the few easy ways through the great chain of mountains.



Interpret Maps

- 1. Movement** Why did San Francisco grow so rapidly?
- 2. Human-Environment Interaction** Why was water so important in the West?