1840-1848
MANIFEST DESTINY
TYLER & POLK
REVIEWED!

American Pageant (Kennedy) Chapter 17
American History (Brinkley) Chapter 13
America’s History (Henretta) Chapter 13
The South remained politically, culturally, and ideologically distinct from the north.

As overcultivation depleted arable land in the Southeast, slaveholders relocated their agricultural enterprises to the new Southwest, increasing sectional tensions over the institution of slavery.

States’ rights, nullification, and racist stereotyping provided the foundation for the Southern defense of slavery as a positive good.

African Americans developed both overt and covert ways to resist the dehumanizing nature of slavery.

Abolitionists, although a minority in the North, will develop a variety of strategies to campaign against slavery.
Election of 1840

• Whigs chose William Henry Harrison

• Vice President John Tyler
  – Former Democrat
Beef with President Tyler

• Tyler still holds many Democrat beliefs

• Starts to block goals of the Whig party (led by Henry Clay and Daniel Webster)

• Attempts to annex Texas
  – Defeated by Congress
Texas Annexed!

- Lame duck President John Tyler submitted proposal and Congress annexed Texas
- Accomplished by a joint resolution (only need a majority of both houses)
- Does not need 2/3 approval by Senate
GOALS OF JAMES K. POLK

- Lower the tariff
- National Expansion: MANIFEST DESTINY
  - Expansion into Oregon
    - “54° 40’, or Fight!” threat to England
  - Annexation of Texas
  - Acquisition of CA
MANIFEST DESTINY

• Belief that it was America’s destiny to conquer and civilize the entire continent
  – Built upon belief of white superiority

• Term coined by John O’Sullivan in 1845
  – Western expansion been going on for some time
    • Louisiana Purchase (1803)
      – Missouri Compromise 1820
    • Jackson’s Indian Removal policies in 1830s

• Issue of slavery complicates the issue of western expansion
The Oregon Dispute: “54° 40′ or Fight!”

- Anglo-American Convention of 1818: U.S. and England agreed to peacefully jointly occupy Oregon territory.
- Oregon Trail: Many American settlers flood into the area.
- Major issue in the Election of 1844.

✓ Oregon Treaty 1846: 49th parallel, No war needed.
Mexico still viewed Texas as part of Mexico
  – Dispute over river Rio Grande & Nueces river
Polk attempts to buy California from Mexico
  – Slidell Mission: Mexico refuses offer of $25 million for CA
Polk sends Zachary Taylor into disputed territory between Mexico and Texas
  – U.S. forces attacked in April 1846
Mexican American War begins: 1846-1848
Northern Whigs oppose the war

- See it as an attempt by Southerners to extend slavery

Lincoln introduces the “Spot Resolution” demanding to know if attack really took place on U.S. soil

- Wilmot Proviso: attempted to ban slavery in any territory acquired from Mexico

- Passed by House, rejected by Senate
Mexico gave up claims to Texas
- Accepts Rio Grande border

Mexico gave the U. S. California, New Mexico, and rest of Southwest.
- Increases U.S. territory by 1/3

Mexico lost about half of its territory
- Strains relations between the U.S. and Mexico
New Controversies:
(or the return of old)

New territories were brought into the Union which forced the issue of slavery into the center of national politics!