The scorn of our formidable neighbor who does not know us is Our America’s greatest danger. And since the day of the visit is near, it is imperative that our neighbor know us, and soon, so that it will not scorn us. Through ignorance it might even come to lay hands on us. Once it does know us, it will remove its hands out of respect. One must have faith in the best of men and distrust the worst.

—José Martí,

January 10, 1891
Conquerors and Victims:  
The Image of America Forms  
(1500–1800)

We saw cues and shrines in these cities that looked like gleaming white towers and castles: a marvelous site.  
—Bernal Díaz del Castillo, 1568

The arrival of European explorers to America began the most astounding and far-reaching encounter between cultures in the history of civilization. It brought together two portions of the human race that until then had known nothing of each other’s existence, thus establishing the basic identity of our modern world. French writer and critic Tzvetan Todorov has called it “the discovery self makes of the other”; while Adam Smith labeled it one of “the two greatest and most important events recorded in the history of mankind.”

Of the Europeans who settled America, those who hailed from England and Spain had the greatest impact. Both transplanted their cultures over vast territories. Both created colonial empires from whose abundance Europe rose to dominate the world. And descendants of both eventually launched independence wars that remade the political systems of our planet.

That common history has made Latin Americans and Anglo Americans, like the Arabs and Jews of the Middle East, cousins in constant conflict, often hearing but not understanding each other. Most of us know little of the enormous differences between how the Spanish and English settled America, or how those disparities led after independence to nations with such radically divergent societies. For just as adults develop key personality traits in the first years of childhood, so it was with the new nations of America, their collective identities and outlooks, their languages and social customs, molded by centuries in the colonial womb.

This first chapter seeks to probe how both Latin American and Anglo American cultures were shaped from their colonial beginnings in the
1500s to the independence wars of the early 1800s, particularly how each culture took root in separate regions of what now makes up the United States.

What kind of people were the original English and Spanish settlers and how did the views and customs they brought with them affect the America they fashioned? What was the legacy of the settlers’ religious beliefs, racial policies, and economic relationships? How did the colonial systems of their mother countries influence their political traditions? How were the rights of individuals regarded in the two groups of colonies? How did divergent views toward land, its ownership and its uses, promote or retard the development of their societies? To what degree did the various Amerindian civilizations the Europeans conquered influence the settlers’ own way of life?

**WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE**

The native population at the time of first contact has been much debated. Estimates vary wildly, though there seems little doubt that it equaled or surpassed that of Europe. Most likely, it was around 60 million; some scholars place it as high as 110 million. The greatest number, perhaps 25 million, lived in and around the Valley of Mexico, another 6 million inhabited the Central Andes region, while the territory north of the Rio Grande was home to perhaps another 10 million. A bewildering level of uneven development prevailed among these Native Americans. The Han and Capoque were still in the Stone Age, nomads foraging naked along the bayous of the North American Gulf Coast. The slave-based city-states of the Aztecs, Mayas, and Incas, on the other hand, rivaled the sophistication and splendor of Europe. The Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan was a bustling metropolis, meticulously designed and ingeniously constructed in the middle of a lake, where it was accessible only by well-guarded causeways, it contained some 250,000 inhabitants when Hernán Cortés first entered it. (London’s population at the time was a mere 50,000 and that of Seville, the greatest city in Castile, barely 40,000.) The Spaniards were awestruck. One of Cortés’s captains, Bernal Díaz del Castillo, left a vivid description of what he and his fellow Spaniards beheld that first day from the top of the central Aztec temple:

We saw a great number of canoes, some coming with provisions and others returning with cargo and merchandise; and we saw too that one could not pass from one house to another of that great city and the other cities that were built on water except over wooden draw-

But Aztec civilization could not compare, tell us, to its predecessor, the city-state of T for several centuries before it collapsed my behind soul-stirring pyramids and intricate to its resplendent past. Nor did the Aztecs a the Mayans, America’s Greeks, whose matl surpassed any in antiquity and whose sc Classic Period (A.D. 300 to 900) the hemis script.

Farther north, beyond the Rio Grande, existed when the Europeans arrived, all from traditions, though only the Pueblos of N Confederation in the Northeast approach reached by the natives of Meso- and Sout descended from the even larger and more ished in present-day Colorado, New Me twelfth and thirteenth centuries A.D. before peared. By the time the first Spaniards an Pueblos numbered around sixteen thou cities of multilevel adobe apartments built Acoma, Zuñi, and Hopi. A peaceful, sed survived off the ocean of barren scrub plantively in river bottoms. They practiced suppl that revolved around their ceremonial taught their young that “competitiveness tion to lead were… offensive to the sup

The Iroquois Confederation, formed shaman, or chief, Hiawatha, was the large native societies in North American hist the hinterland of Lake Superior to the b all other Indians, the Iroquois became gr and a decisive force in the competition lor its control. They lived in towns of up wooden longhouses protected by double
bridges or by canoe. We saw...shrines in these cities that looked like gleaming white towers and castles: a marvelous sight.

Some of our soldiers who had been in many parts of the world, in Constantinople, in Rome, and all over Italy, said they had never seen a market so well laid out, so large, so orderly, and so full of people.4

But Aztec civilization could not compare in grandeur, archaeologists tell us, to its predecessor, the city-state of Teotihuacan, which flourished for several centuries before it collapsed mysteriously in A.D. 700, leaving behind soul-stirring pyramids and intricate murals and artifacts as clues to its resplendent past. Nor did the Aztecs approach the sophistication of the Mayans, America’s Greeks, whose mathematicians and astronomers surpassed any in antiquity and whose scholars invented during their Classic Period (A.D. 300 to 900) the hemisphere’s only known phonetic script.

Farther north, beyond the Rio Grande, hundreds of native societies existed when the Europeans arrived, all with their own languages and traditions, though only the Pueblos of New Mexico and the Iroquois Confederation in the Northeast approached the level of civilization reached by the natives of Meso- and South America. The Pueblos were descended from the even larger and more advanced Anasazi, who flourished in present-day Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries A.D. before they, too, mysteriously disappeared. By the time the first Spaniards arrived in the region in 1540, the Pueblos numbered around sixteen thousand. They were living in small cities of multilevel adobe apartments built on high plateaus, among them Acoma, Zuñi, and Hopi. A peaceful, sedentary civilization, the Pueblos survived off the ocean of barren scrubland and buttes by planting extensively in river bottoms. They practiced a complicated animist religion that revolved around their ceremonial center, the kiva, where they taught their young that “competitiveness, aggressiveness and the ambition to lead were...offensive to the supernatural powers.”5

The Iroquois Confederation, formed around 1570 by the Mohawk shaman, or chief, Hiawatha, was the largest and most durable alliance of native societies in North American history. Its influence stretched from the hinterland of Lake Superior to the backwoods of Virginia. Feared by all other Indians, the Iroquois became gatekeepers to the huge fur trade and a decisive force in the competition between the English and French for its control. They lived in towns of up to several thousand residents in wooden longhouses protected by double or triple rings of stockades. So-
cial authority in each of the five Iroquois nations was matrilineal. Women chose the men who served as each clan's delegates to the nation's council, and each nation, in turn, elected representatives to the confederation's fifty-member ruling body, the Council Fire. That council decided all issues affecting the confederation by consensus.

The Europeans who stumbled upon this kaleidoscope of Amerindian civilizations were themselves just emerging from a long period of backwardness. The Black Death had swept out of Russia in 1350, leaving 25 million dead. There followed a relentless onslaught of epidemics that so devastated the continent that its population declined by 60 to 75 percent in the span of a hundred years. So few peasants were left to work the land that feudal society disintegrated, the price of agricultural labor soared, and new classes of both rich peasants and poor nobles came into being. The sudden labor shortage spurred technical innovation as a way to increase production, and that innovation, in turn, led to the rise of factories in the cities. The social upheaval brought about a new mobility among the long-suffering peasantry, and with it a new aggressiveness. Rebellions by the starving poor against their feudal lords became more frequent. Some even assailed the all-powerful Catholic Church, whose bishops preached piety to the common man while surrounded by the privileges of the nobility.6

By the fifteenth century, the frequency of plagues ebbed, population rebounded, and the continent emerged into a dazzling era of artistic and scientific achievement. The first printing presses disseminated the new knowledge widely, through books written in scores of vernacular languages, ending forever the monopoly of Latin and the stranglehold of the clergy on learning. In 1492, as Columbus launched Europe's historic encounter with the Amerindians, Renaissance geniuses like Hieronymus Bosch and Leonardo da Vinci were at the apex of their fame; the German master Albrecht Dürer, was twenty-one; Niccolò Machiavelli was twenty-three; Dutchman Desiderius Erasmus was twenty-six; the Englishman Thomas More was fourteen; Copernicus was only nineteen, and Martin Luther a boy of eight.

The revolutions in production and in knowledge were reflected in politics as well. For the first time, strong monarchs ruled England and Spain, kings who were determined to create unified nations out of fiefdoms that had quarreled and warred against each other since the fall of the Roman empire.

Foremost among those monarchs were King Ferdinand of Aragón and Queen Isabella of Castile, who joined their twin kingdoms and finally ousted the Moors in 1492 from the Kingdom of Granada, the last Arab

stronghold in Europe. For most of the p

had occupied the Iberian Peninsula, the

termittent crusades by Christian Spaniard

crusades—the Spanish call them La Rec

te centuries in slowly shunting the M

Granada remained in Arab hands.

Ironically, the Moorish occupation of Spain for its imperial role in America. Try and the city of Córdoba into the Wes

try the study of science and philosophy, w

hardened warrior ethos in the hidalgo; those hidalgos who later rushed to fill armies in the New World. The wars pro

tion, with Spanish kings gradually adop

warriors with grants from land they rec

conquista reinforced a conviction among true defenders of Catholicism.

Unlike Spain, which grew monolithi

gland emerged from the Middle Ages b

people. The most bloody of those cont

the Roses, which finally drew to a close

House of Lancaster vanquished Richard

VII quickly distinguished himself by a t

and reliable system of taxation, the fir

success was due in no small measure to 

ing, to the flowering of English nation;

cessions to local self-government. He t

selves to be better off than any largel

right, for neither the widespread and squalor that afflicted much of the cont

tury could be found in England. Slave

kingdom, and English serfs already en

European counterparts. The yeoman

large middle class between the gentry st

stability and provided a counterweigh

At the same time, Parliament and the

accorded the average citizen greater h

nobles than any other political sys

Such were the conditions in 1497 wh

bus's discoveries, dispatched explore

landed in Newfoundland and laid clai
stronghold in Europe. For most of the previous eight centuries, Moors had occupied the Iberian Peninsula, where they withstood fierce but intermittent crusades by Christian Spaniards to reclaim their land. Those crusades—the Spanish call them La Reconquista—had succeeded over the centuries in slowly shunting the Moors farther south, until only Granada remained in Arab hands.

Ironically, the Moorish occupation and La Reconquista prepared Spain for its imperial role in America. The occupation turned the country and the city of Córdoba into the Western world’s premier center for the study of science and philosophy, while the fighting engendered a hardened warrior ethos in the hidalgos, Spain’s lower nobility. It was those hidalgos who later rushed to fill the ranks of the conquistador armies in the New World. The wars provided vital practice in colonization, with Spanish kings gradually adopting the practice of paying their warriors with grants from land they recovered in battle. Finally, La Reconquista reinforced a conviction among Spaniards that they were the true defenders of Catholicism.

Unlike Spain, which grew monolithic through La Reconquista, England emerged from the Middle Ages bedeviled by strife among its own people. The most bloody of those conflicts was the thirty-year Wars of the Roses, which finally drew to a close in 1485 when Henry Tudor of the House of Lancaster vanquished Richard III of the House of York. Henry VII quickly distinguished himself by creating a centralized government and reliable system of taxation, the first English monarch to do so. His success was due in no small measure to the prosperity of English farming, to the flowering of English nationalism, and to his enlightened concessions to local self-government. Henry’s subjects proudly believed themselves to be better off than any people in Europe, and they were largely right, for neither the widespread class divisions nor the famine and squalor that afflicted much of the continent during the fifteenth century could be found in England. Slavery, for instance, did not exist in the kingdom, and English serfs already enjoyed greater liberties than their European counterparts. The yeomanry, small farmers who comprised a large middle class between the gentry and the serfs, fostered economic stability and provided a counterweight to curb the power of the nobility. At the same time, Parliament and the traditions of English common law accorded the average citizen greater protection from either the king or his nobles than any other political system in Europe.

Such were the conditions in 1497 when Henry, fired by news of Columbus’s discoveries, dispatched explorer John Cabot to America. Cabot landed in Newfoundland and laid claim to North America for the British...
Crown, but he perished in a subsequent trip before establishing a colony. That failure, along with the discovery of gold and silver in Mexico and Peru a few decades later, permitted Spain to catapult to the pinnacle of sixteenth-century world power. Meanwhile, the English, bereft of colonies and increasingly consumed by religious and political strife at home, were reduced to sniping at Spanish grandeur through the exploits of their pirates.

When they finally did embark on a New World empire a century later, the English brought with them not just their tradition of local self-government but the vestiges of their domestic conflicts as well, most important of which were the religious schisms and sects that arose after Henry VIII broke with the pope in Rome and established the Church of England. Among those sects, one in particular, the Puritans, was destined to leave a vast imprint on American society.

Another “British” conflict that was to greatly influence the New World was the colonizing of Catholic Ireland and the bloody repression that accompanied it. By their callous treatment of the Irish, Anglo-Norman Protestants set the stage for the massive Irish flight that followed. English leaders justified that occupation by claiming that the Irish were a barbarian people, but in doing so, they gave birth to notions of Anglo-Saxon superiority that they would later use to justify their conquest of Native Americans.

**EARLY SPANISH INFLUENCE IN THE UNITED STATES**

The textbooks most of us read in grammar school have long acknowledged that Spanish *conquistadores* crisscrossed and laid claim to much of the southern and western United States nearly a century before the first English colonies were founded at Jamestown and Massachusetts Bay. But most Anglo American historians have promoted the view that the early Spanish presence rapidly disappeared and left a minor impact on U.S. culture when compared to our dominant Anglo-Saxon heritage.

Those early expeditions, however, led to permanent Spanish outposts throughout North America, to the founding of our earliest cities, Saint Augustine and Santa Fe, and to the naming of hundreds of U.S. rivers, mountains, towns, and even several states. Moreover, they led to a Spanish-speaking population—more accurately, a Latino/mestizo population—that has existed continuously in certain regions of the United States since that time. That heritage, and the colonial society it spawned, has been so often overlooked in contemporary debates over culture, language, and immigration that we would do well to review its salient parts.

Juan Ponce de León was the first Eurosoil. His fruitless search for the Fountain of 1513 of La Florida. He returned eight years later with the Calusa Indians before he could.

Nearly two decades after Ponce de León’s death, Hernando de Soto, the conqueror of the great cities of gold, started his conquest of the continent’s great rivers, but did not reach Louisiana, but he and half his men perished.

The most extraordinary exploit of a Spanish Moor named Estevanico. The wandering through the North American mile trek, one of the great exploration crossings of North America by Euroq 1525. Estevanico wrote for the king of Spain separated and enslaved by coastal tribes. He managed to escape and took up the life of a trapper, existing on the land. “Wherever I went, the Indians treated me with respect, for they liked my commodities.”

His rudimentary medical knowledge and his skill in dealing with sick Indians. From that point on, he was a man. Once a year, when the variety of...
Juan Ponce de León was the first European to touch what is now U.S. soil. His fruitless search for the Fountain of Youth led to his discovery in 1513 of La Florida. He returned eight years later but was killed in battle with the Calusa Indians before he could found a settlement.

Nearly two decades after Ponce de León’s death, Francisco Vásquez de Coronado and Hernando de Soto, their imaginations fired by the treasures Cortés had seized in Mexico, each led major expeditions in search of the fabled cities of gold. Starting from central Mexico in 1539, Coronado and his men marched north into present-day Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas, planting the Spanish flag wherever they went. By the time the expedition returned in 1542, the Spaniards had discovered the Grand Canyon, crossed and named many of the continent’s great rivers, but discovered no gold. The same year Coronado set out, De Soto led an expedition out of Cuba that explored much of Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Louisiana, but he and half his men perished without finding any treasure.

The most extraordinary exploit of all, however, was that of Álvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, who arrived in Florida in 1527—fifteen years before De Soto—as second-in-command to Pánfilo de Narváez, the bungling onetime governor of Cuba whom King Charles of Spain authorized to complete the colonization of Florida. After landing on the peninsula’s western coast, Narváez led a three-hundred-man expedition inland near present-day Tallahassee, then foolishly lost touch with his ships and was killed. His men, unable to withstand the constant Indian attacks, headed west along the Gulf Coast on makeshift barges.

Only four survived the ordeal, among them Cabeza de Vaca and a Spanish Moor named Estevanico. The four spent the next seven years wandering through the North American wilderness. Their six-thousand-mile trek, one of the great exploration odysseys of history, and the first crossing of North America by Europeans, is preserved in a report Cabeza de Vaca wrote for the king of Spain in 1542. At first, they were separated and enslaved by coastal tribes, where Cabeza de Vaca was beaten so often his life became unbearable. After a year in captivity, he managed to escape and took up the life of a trader between the tribes: “Wherever I went, the Indians treated me honorably and gave me food, because they liked my commodities. I became well known; those who did not know me personally knew me by reputation and sought my acquaintance.”

His rudimentary medical knowledge enabled him at one point to cure some sick Indians. From that point on, the tribes revered him as a medicine man. Once a year, when the various tribes gathered for the annual
picking of prickly pears, he was reunited with his fellow Spaniards, who remained enslaved. At one such gathering in 1533, he engineered their escape and they all fled west through present-day Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. As they traveled, word spread of the wondrous white medicine man and his companions, and soon thousands of Indians started to follow in a caravan of worshipers. The four did not finally reconnect with Spanish civilization in northern Mexico until 1534. By then, Cabeza de Vaca had been transformed. He no longer regarded the Native American as a savage, for he now had an intimate understanding of their culture and outlook. Instead, the barbarity of his fellow Spaniards toward the Indians now filled him with despair. His description of his trip through an area where Spanish slave traders were hunting Indians remains a powerful revelation into the nature of the Conquest:

With heavy hearts we looked out over the lavishly watered, fertile, and beautiful land, now abandoned and burned and the people thin and weak, scattering or hiding in fright. Not having planted, they were reduced to eating roots and bark; and we shared their famine the whole way. Those who did receive us could provide hardly anything. They themselves looked as if they would willingly die. They brought us blankets they had concealed from the other Christians and told us how the latter had come through razing the towns and carrying off half the men and all the women and boys.  

THE TOLL OF CONQUEST

The devastation Cabeza de Vaca warned of still defies comprehension. By the late 1500s, a mere century after the Conquest began, scarcely 2 million natives remained in the entire hemisphere. An average of more than 1 million people perished annually for most of the sixteenth century, in what has been called “the greatest genocide in human history.”

On the island of Hispaniola, which was inhabited by 1 million Tainos in 1492, less than 46,000 remained twenty years later. As historian Francis Jennings has noted, “The American land was more like a widow than a virgin. Europeans did not find a wilderness here; rather, however involuntarily, they made one.”

Fewer natives perished in the English colonies only because the Amerindian populations were sparser to begin with, yet the macabre percentages were no less grisly: 90 percent of the Indian population was gone within half a century of the Puritan landing on Plymouth Rock; the Block Island Indians plummeted from 1,500 to 51 between 1662 and 1774; the Wampanoag tribe of Martha’s Vineyard dropped from 313 in 1675 to 173 in 1705; and the Susquehannocks nearly disappeared, falling from 6,500 in 1680 to 100 in 1720.

Much of this cataclysm was unavoidable. Smallpox, measles, tuberculosis, and bubonic plague were deadly diseases that the Indians had never encountered before. A few Indian accounts of the arrival of the Franciscan missionaries in the early 1520s survive. They describe how the Indian men and women of central Mexico were so devastate by the destruction of their way of life that they failed to resist the invaders’ diseases. The Indian women were the first to die, and the racism of the invaders was so intense that they would not let the living ones stay with the dead. This resulted in the wholesale extermination of the indigenous population.

Once again the Spaniards started killing. The flight from the city began and lasted for two months. The people cried: “We have suffered enough! Let us go live on weeds!”

A few of the men were separated from the rest and taken prisoner. They were then sold into slavery and forced to work in the fields. The Spaniards treated them with hot irons, either on the cheek or the ear, to mark them as slaves.

Less than a quarter century after the arrival of the Spanish, the death toll had reached 10 million. As part of that campaign, he authored a book, A Short History of the American People, which has become one of the most famous of those polemics.
1774; the Wampanoag tribe of Martha’s Vineyard declined from 3,000 in 1642 to 313 in 1764; and the Susquehannock tribe in central Pennsylvania nearly disappeared, falling from 6,500 in 1647 to 250 by 1698.13

Much of this cataclysm was unavoidable. The Indians succumbed to smallpox, measles, tuberculosis, and bubonic plague, for which they had no immunity, just as Europeans had succumbed to their own epidemics in previous centuries. But an astounding number of native deaths resulted from direct massacres or enslavement. If the Spaniards exterminated more than the British or French, it is because they encountered civilizations with greater population, complexity, and wealth, societies that desperately resisted any attempt to subjugate them or seize their land and minerals.

The battle for Tenochtitlán, for instance, was rivaled in overall fatalities by few in modern history. During the eighty-day siege of the Aztec capital by Cortés and his Texcoco Indian allies, 240,000 natives perished.14 A few Indian accounts of the battle survive today only because of Franciscan missionaries like Bernardino de Sahagún and Diego de Durán, who as early as 1524 developed a written form of the Nahuatl language, the lingua franca of central Mexico. The missionaries urged the Indians to preserve their tragic songs and reminiscences of the Conquest, and several of those accounts, such as the following section from the Codex Florentino, vividly describe what happened at Tenochtitlán:

Once again the Spaniards started killing and a great many Indians died. The flight from the city began and with this the war came to an end. The people cried: “We have suffered enough! Let us leave the city! Let us go live on weeds!”

A few of the men were separated from the others. These men were the bravest and strongest warriors. The youths who served them were also told to stand apart. The Spaniards immediately branded them with hot irons, either on the cheek or the lips.15

Less than a quarter century after the arrival of Columbus, the Indian genocide sparked its first protest from a Spaniard, Fray Bartolomé de las Casas, who had arrived in Santo Domingo as a landowner but opted instead to become a Franciscan missionary. The first priest ordained in America, he quickly relinquished his lands and launched a campaign against Indian enslavement that made him famous throughout Europe. As part of that campaign, he authored a series of polemics and defended the Indians in public debates against Spain’s greatest philosophers. The most famous of those polemics, A Short Account of the Destruction of the
Indies, recounts scores of massacres by Spanish soldiers, including one ordered by Cuba’s governor Pánfilo Narváez, which Las Casas personally observed. In that incident, according to Las Casas, a group of natives approached a Spanish settlement with food and gifts, when the Christians, “without the slightest provocation, butchered before my eyes, some three thousand souls—men, women and children, as they sat there in front of us.”

Las Casas’s untiring efforts on behalf of the Amerindians led to Spain’s adoption of “New Laws” in 1542. The codes recognized Indians as free and equal subjects of the Spanish Crown, but landowners in many regions refused to observe the codes and kept Indians in virtual slavery for generations. Despite his heroic efforts, Las Casas, who was eventually promoted to Bishop of Chiapas in Guatemala, also committed some major blunders. At one point he advocated using African slaves to replace Indian labor, though he ultimately recanted that position. While his polemics were among the most popular books in Europe and led to widespread debate over the toll of colonization, they greatly exaggerated the already grisly numbers of the Indian genocide, thus making Las Casas the unwitting source of the Spanish “Black Legend” propagated by Dutch and British Protestants.

Spain, of course, had no monopoly on settler barbarism. In 1637, the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony mistakenly concluded that local Pequots had killed two white men, so they set out to punish them. Assisted by other Indian enemies of the tribe, the Englishmen attacked the Pequot village on the Mystic River while its braves were absent, and roasted or shot to death between three hundred and seven hundred women and children before burning the entire village. Forty years later, during King Philip’s War, colonists and their mercenaries conducted similar vicious slaughters of women and children. An estimated two thousand Indians perished in battle and another thousand were sold into slavery in the West Indies during the conflict. And South Carolina’s Cherokee War (1760–1761) turned so brutal that a colonist defending a fort against Indians wrote to the governor, “We have now the pleasure, Sir, to fatten our dogs with their carcasses and to display their scalps neatly ornamented on the top of our bastions.”

This type of savagery, often reciprocated by Indians desperate to defend their land, became a hallmark of Anglo-Indian relations far after the colonial period. A particularly gruesome example was carried out by Andrew Jackson in 1814. Settlers and land speculators from the Carolinas had started moving into the territory shortly after the War of Independence. When the settlers tried to push out the Indian inhabitants, the Creeks resisted and the U.S. Army, led by the war’s decisive battle at Horseshoe B 1814, Jackson’s men massacred and cut off skinned the dead bodies to tan the Indian hide reins.

The Role of the

While all European settlers justified their actions as God’s will, the Spanish and English methods of subjugation, and this event colonial societies. English kings, for instance, “conquer, occupy and possess” the lands but said nothing of the people inhabiting the land. Dom Alexander VI, sough to make any pagans found on it “enraged in good morals.” In Spain, both Catholic and conversion as a unified effort. Priests on the expedition, people of Christian or landing in Mexico, Bernal Díaz remixed first Indian baptisms, of twenty women and the Tabascans of the coast: “One of the Doña Marina. She was a truly great prit and the mistress of vassals... they were to become Christians. Cortés gave one of the.

As the Conquest proceeded, priests performed. Doctors could sometimes be routinely grabbed as and settlers. The priests even performed exorcisms and Indians, especially among the Peruvian historian Garcilaso de la Vega, to a Spanish officer and an Inca prince Saint Augustine, Florida, recorded twenty in the early 1700s, at a time when only near the town. Far more important the the extraordinary number of consensus: among the conquistadores of Chile, boat fifty mestizo children, his service to God incurred in doing so.

The first English colonies, by contra
Creeks resisted and the U.S. Army, led by Jackson, intervened. During the war's decisive battle at Horseshoe Bend, Alabama, on March 27, 1814, Jackson's men massacred and cut off the noses of 557 Creeks, then skinned the dead bodies to tan the Indian hides and make souvenir bridle reins.  

**THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH**

While all European settlers justified the Indian conquest and genocide as God's will, the Spanish and English differed substantially in their methods of subjugation, and this eventually led to radically different colonial societies. English kings, for instance, ordered their agents to "conquer, occupy and possess" the lands of the "heathens and infidels," but said nothing of the people inhabiting them, while Spain, following the dictates of Pope Alexander VI, sought not only to grab the land but also to make any pagans found on it "embrace the Catholic faith and be trained in good morals." In Spain, both Crown and Church saw colonizing and conversion as a unified effort. Priests accompanied each military expedition for the purpose of Christianizing the natives. Within a month of landing in Mexico, Bernal Díaz reminds us, Cortés presided over the first Indian baptisms, of twenty women given to the Spanish soldiers by the Tabascans of the coast: "One of the Indian ladies was christened Doña Marina. She was a truly great princess, the daughter of caciques and the mistress of vassals . . . they were the first women in New Spain to become Christians. Cortés gave one of them to each of his captains."  

As the Conquest proceeded, priests performed such baptisms by the thousands. Before the holy water could dry on their foreheads, the Indian women were routinely grabbed as concubines by Spanish soldiers and settlers. The priests even performed occasional marriages between Spaniards and Indians, especially among the elite of both groups, thus fostering and legitimizing a new mestizo race in America. For example, Peruvian historian Garcilaso de la Vega, called El Inca, was born in 1539 to a Spanish officer and an Inca princess, while the parish register of Saint Augustine, Florida, recorded twenty-six Spanish-Indian marriages in the early 1700s, at a time when only a few hundred natives resided near the town.  

Far more important than legal marriages, however, was the extraordinary number of consensual unions. Francisco de Aguirre, among the conquistadores of Chile, boasted that by fathering more than fifty mestizo children, his service to God had been "greater than the sin incurred in doing so."  

The first English colonies, by contrast, began as family settlements.
They maintained strict separation from Indian communities, sometimes even bolstered by segregation laws. In North America, Indians rarely served as laborers for settlers or as household servants, and unmarried sexual unions between natives and whites were rare except for captives of war.

The English, furthermore, never saw proselytizing among the Indians as important. True, the Virginia Company listed missionary work as one of its purposes when the Crown granted Jamestown its charter in 1607. And nine years later, the Crown even ordered funds raised from all parishes in the Church of England to erect a college for the natives. But the company never sent a single missionary to Virginia and the college was never built. Officials simply diverted the money for their own ends until an investigation of the fraud prompted the Crown to revoke the company’s charter and take over direct administration of the colony in 1622.

Likewise, the New England Puritans segregated themselves from the Indians, not even venturing out of their settlements to win converts until decades after their arrival. In 1643, sections of Harvard College were built with money raised by the New England Company among Anglicans back home. While donors were told the funds would be used for Indian education, some of the money ended up buying guns and ammunition for the colonists. So minor was Puritan concern for the Indians’ souls that by 1674, fifty-five years after the founding of Plymouth Colony, barely a hundred natives in all New England were practicing Christians.

At one time or another, clerics Roger Williams of Rhode Island, Cotton Mather of Massachusetts Bay, and Samuel Purchas of Virginia all vilified the natives as demonic. The Reverend William Bradford, one of the original Pilgrim leaders, insisted they were “cruel, barbarous and most treacherous . . . not being content only to kill and take away a life, but delight to torment men in the most bloody manner.” Throughout colonial history, only Williams’s Rhode Island colony and the Quakers of Pennsylvania showed themselves willing to coexist in harmony with their Indian neighbors. Despite their low view of the Indians, the English settlers did not try to bring them under heel. At first, they merely purchased or finagled choice parcels of land from some tribes and pressured others to move toward the interior.

In the Spanish colonies, however, the natives were far more numerous, and the policies of the Catholic Church far more aggressive. Church leaders did more than merely recognize Indian humanity or accommodate mestizaje. The Church dispatched an at and Jesuit monks, who served as the vanguard of colonialism. The monks who flocked to the rise of capitalism in Europe as auguring a new order Americans they imagined a simple one who could more easily be convinced they abandoned Spain to set up their missions. But whatever the motives of the Jesuits—some had a true mission—many were more interested in the land ownership or money, the missionary tillings of the land and even communal labor.

Europeans imagined, so much so that even the natives proved less malleable than the first Americans. The monk was the model of the primitive Church.” So land ownership or money, the missionary tillings of the land and even communal labor.

Long before those Jesuit expulsions, role in colonizing major parts of the United States. The Franciscans, who founded nearly to Georgia, and Alabama during the 1600s. Saint Augustine was the first settlement, in which as many as twenty thousand Jesuits and Franciscans lived in the Southwest later turned into thriving settlements.
mestizaje. The Church dispatched an army of Franciscan, Dominican, and Jesuit monks, who served as the vanguard of sixteenth-century Spanish colonialism. The monks who flocked to America perceived the chaotic rise of capitalism in Europe as auguring an era of moral decay. In the Native Americans they imagined a simpler, less corrupted human being, one who could more easily be convinced to follow the word of Christ. So they abandoned Spain to set up their missions in the most remote areas of America, far from the colonial cities and encomiendas.

Those missions—the first was founded by Las Casas in Venezuela in 1520—became the principal frontier outposts of Spanish civilization. Many had farms and schools to Europeanize the Indians and research centers where the monks set about learning and preserving the native languages. Quite a few of the monks were inspired by Thomas More, whose widely read *Utopia* (1516) portrayed a fictional communal society of Christians located somewhere on an island in America. One of More’s most ardent admirers was Vasco de Quiroga, who established a mission of thirty thousand Tarascans in central Mexico and rose to bishop of Michoacán. Quiroga, like More, talked of trying to “restore the lost purity of the primitive Church.” Since Indians had no concept of land ownership or money, the missionaries easily organized cooperative tilling of the land and even communal housing, just as More espoused.

The natives proved less malleable and far less innocent than the Europeans imagined, so much so that early colonial history is filled with countless stories of monks who met hideous deaths at the hands of their flocks. Despite those tragedies, the monks kept coming, and as the years passed, some of their missions even prospered. That prosperity enraged colonial landowners, who increasingly regarded mission Indian labor as unwanted competition for the products of their plantations. In 1767, the colonial elite finally succeeded in getting the Jesuits, the most independent of the monastic orders, expelled from the New World. By then, 2,200 Jesuits were working in the colonies and more than 700,000 Indians resided in their missions.30

Long before those Jesuit expulsions, Spanish monks played a crucial role in colonizing major parts of the United States. Most important were the Franciscans, who founded nearly forty thriving missions in Florida, Georgia, and Alabama during the 1600s and numerous others in the Southwest. Saint Augustine was the headquarters for the Florida missions, in which as many as twenty thousand Christianized Indians lived.31 While most of the Florida missions eventually were abandoned, several in the Southwest later turned into thriving towns, with Spanish monks to-
day recognized as the founders of San Antonio, El Paso, Santa Fe, Tucson, San Diego, Los Angeles, Monterey, and San Francisco.

The Florida missions and settlements left a greater imprint on frontier American culture than we might believe. That influence was not always a direct one. Rather, it came by way of the Indians and Africans who remained after the missionaries were gone and who carried on some of the customs they learned from the Spanish settlers. Indians who traded with Europeans at Pensacola in 1822 were “better acquainted with the Spanish language than either the French or English,” notes historian David Weber, and Englishmen who settled in Virginia, Carolina, and Georgia encountered Indians who were already cultivating peach trees the Spanish had introduced from Europe. Weber notes that the missionaries of Florida and New Mexico “taught native converts to husband European domestic animals—horses, cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and chickens; cultivate European crops, from watermelon to wheat; raise fruit trees, from peaches to pomegranates; use such iron tools as wheels, saws, chisels, planes, nails, and spikes; and practice those regarded as essential for civilization as the.

The knowledge the missionaries imparted agriculture, language, customs, or technology last monk departed. Rather, it remained that by the time Anglos began settling in the “civilized tribes,” among them the Choctaw. Even some of the most nomadic nations, the Apaches, Comanches, and Kic Spanish society. In one unusual case, Apax mayor of San Jose, California.

Apart from the missions, the Church colonial life. It functioned side by side with sometimes even above it. In every town, structure adjacent to which was erected and the casa real. While the Crown collected the Church collected its 10 percent tithe white and colored, as well as tribute from the main moneylenders, and bishops held social life of colonists and natives alike. buffer for the Indians against the worst of also discouraged independence or self-sufficiency from the natives it protected.

Even Europeans who dared question were liable to be called before the all-potent threaten anyone up to the governor who which routinely prohibited the circulation and works of art it deemed sacrilegious toward Church doctrine impeded for civil ingenuity, or creativity in Latin America.

No English colonial Church enjoyed a that of the Catholic Church in the Span of sects among Protestants meant each leaders wished to set up a theocratic colonumscribed area, as the Puritans did in The Puritan witch trials of the late 1680s sex County rivaled the worst atrocities and women were executed and more thetics proved incapable of controlling ever so, Roger Williams rebelled and four where he permitted all manner of wors
planes, nails, and spikes; and practice those arts and crafts that Spaniards regarded as essential for civilization as they knew it."

The knowledge the missionaries imparted to the Indians, whether in agriculture, language, customs, or technology, did not disappear when the last monk departed. Rather, it remained part of Indian experience so that by the time Anglos began settling in the Southeast, they discovered the "civilized tribes," among them the Creeks, the Cherokees, and the Choctaws. Even some of the most nomadic and fierce of the Southwest nations, the Apaches, Comanches, and Kiowas partially assimilated into Spanish society. In one unusual case, Apache Manuel González became mayor of San Jose, California.³²

Apart from the missions, the Church reached into every corner of colonial life. It functioned side by side with Spanish civil government, sometimes even above it. In every town, the church was the dominant structure adjacent to which was erected the central plaza, the cabildo, and la casa real. While the Crown collected its royal fifth from the elite, the Church collected its 10 percent tithe from everyone, rich and poor, white and colored, as well as tribute from the Indians. Parish priests were the main moneylenders, and bishops held unparalleled power over the social life of colonists and natives alike. While the Church served as a buffer for the Indians against the worst abuses of Spanish civil society, it also discouraged independence or self-sufficiency and it demanded obedience from the natives it protected.

Even Europeans who dared question Church authority or doctrine were liable to be called before the all-powerful Inquisition, which could threaten anyone up to the governor with excommunication or prison, and which routinely prohibited the circulation of thousands of books and works of art it deemed sacrilegious. Its demand for blind faith toward Church doctrine impeded for centuries the spread of tolerance, ingenuity, or creativity in Latin American thought.

No English colonial Church enjoyed a monopoly power approaching that of the Catholic Church in the Spanish territories. The proliferation of sects among Protestants meant each denomination, even when its leaders wished to set up a theocratic colony, could do so only within a circumscribed area, as the Puritans did in Massachusetts and Connecticut. The Puritan witch trials of the late 1680s in Salem and surrounding Essex County rivaled the worst atrocities of the Inquisition. Twenty men and women were executed and more than 150 imprisoned, but the fanatics proved incapable of controlling everyone. Long before the witch trials, Roger Williams rebelled and founded the Rhode Island colony, where he permitted all manner of worship, and other colonies followed
similar liberal policies. Catholic Maryland enacted a religious tolerance law and Quaker William Penn set up his Pennsylvania colony, which, likewise, welcomed all believers. New York City turned into such a hodgepodge of religious groups that its English governor reported in 1687: "Here, bee not many of the Church of England, [and] few Roman Catholics, [but] abundance of Quakers—preachers, men and women, especially—singing Quakers, ranting Quakers, Sabbatarians, Anti-sabbatarians, some Anabaptists, some Independents, some Jews: in short, of all sorts of opinions there are some, and the most part of none at all."33

After Parliament declared religious freedom in the colonies with the Toleration Act of 1689, the emigration of sects from Europe soared. Thousands of Germans, among them Lutherans, Moravians, Mennonites, and Amish, settled in the Middle Colonies and the hinterlands of the South, as did Scotch-Irish Presbyterians in the South.

THE ROLE OF RACE

Beyond their religious practices, the English and Spanish colonial worlds diverged substantially in their attitudes toward slavery and race. The long period of Arab domination left an indelible legacy of racial and cultural mixing that the Spanish immigrants carried to the New World. Moorish occupiers of the Iberian Peninsula had invariably taken Spanish wives, setting off an era of miscegenation so extensive that "by the fifteenth century there were dark-skinned Christians, light-haired Moors, hybrids of every shape and complexion in Castile," according to one historian. Some Muslims, called Mudejars, continued to live under Christian rule, while some Christians, called Mozarabs, learned to speak Arabic and adopted Muslim habits. The dress, foods, and traditions of Moors and Spaniards permeated each other's societies. In architecture, for instance, the horseshoe arches, tiled floors and walls, and open interior courtyards so commonly associated with Spanish design in America, all drew from Arabic inspiration.34

This tradition of racial mixing made it more acceptable for Spanish settlers to engage in sexual unions with both Amerindians and Africans. This was especially true for settlers from Andalusia in southern Spain, the province that endured the longest period of Moorish occupation, and which supplied nearly 40 percent of the early settlers to America.35 At the beginning of the Conquest, Seville, Andalusia's main port, was Spain's most cosmopolitan city and the nexus for commerce with Africa. It quickly turned into the bustling crossroads for transatlantic trade as well. By the middle of the sixteenth century, the city counted nearly 100,000 inhabitants from all parts of Europe, including 6,000 African slaves.36

But racial mixing did not mean racial extension of America gradually rebounded, and a greater role in colonial plantation production upper classes became increasingly fearful the slave revolution, the Council of the slave body for colonies, banned all marriage blacks or mulatos. Despite the ban, marriages continued, with dispensations often honor of the woman was at stake. Upon marriage, with the coloured race puts in jeopardy the largest proportion of whose population c

Apart from the ban on white-colored or itself played a distinctive role in Spanish avenues the Church utilized to mitigate were so evident in the English colonies. Slave owners, for instance, to separate marriage between slaves and free persons that in selected parishes of Havana than a third of all marriages were between a slave and a free person. In marriage among slaves was equal to or higher

Perhaps even more important than for social impact of consensual unions. Nineteenth century witnessed the level America. Illegitimate births among free to 50 percent. Among the white upper among any other European elite.39 Thos between white men and nonwhite won marriage because they did not subvert th

The prevalence of both consensual with the strong influence of the Catholic Church between how the English and 5 slaves, especially toward the end of the 18th colonial powers had allowed masters to have revolution, the British, French manumission, while the Portuguese and codified the practice.
100,000 inhabitants from all parts of Europe and the Mediterranean, including 6,000 African slaves.36

But racial mixing did not mean racial equality. As the Indian population of America gradually rebounded, and as black slave labor assumed a greater role in colonial plantation production, the Spanish and Creole upper classes became increasingly fearful of revolt—so fearful that after the Haitian revolution, the Council of the Indies, the Crown’s administrative body for colonies, banned all marriages between whites and free blacks or mulatos. Despite the ban, the practice of mixed racial marriages continued, with dispensations often granted in cases where the honor of the woman was at stake. Upon denying one such request in 1855, the civil governor of Oriente Province in Cuba remarked, “There is little doubt that the dissemination of ideas of equality of the white class with the coloured race puts in jeopardy the tranquillity of the Island, the largest proportion of whose population consists of the said race.”37

Apart from the ban on white-colored unions, the institution of marriage itself played a distinctive role in Spanish society. It was one of the many avenues the Church utilized to mitigate the worst aspects of slavery that were so evident in the English colonies. The Church would not permit slave owners, for instance, to separate married couples, and it sanctioned marriage between slaves and free persons. Historian Herbert Klein reports that in selected parishes of Havana between 1825 and 1829, more than a third of all marriages were between slaves, and nearly a fifth were between a slave and a free person. In many parts of Cuba, the marriage rate among slaves was equal to or higher than among whites.38

Perhaps even more important than formal marriage, however, was the social impact of consensual unions. No European society before the nineteenth century witnessed the level of free unions found in Latin America. Illegitimate births among free persons of all classes were close to 50 percent. Among the white upper classes, they were higher than among any other European elite.39 Those unions, which were invariably between white men and nonwhite women, were preferable to official marriage because they did not subvert the class structure.

The prevalence of both consensual unions and miscegenation, along with the strong influence of the Catholic Church, led to major differences between how the English and Spanish regarded the rights of slaves, especially toward the end of the eighteenth century. Until then, all colonial powers had allowed masters to free their slaves. But after the Haitian revolution, the British, French, and Dutch started to restrict manumission, while the Portuguese and Spanish colonies promoted and codified the practice.
Harvest of Empire

As a result, only in the Portuguese and Spanish colonies did giant classes of free blacks develop, and with them the mulato group (in some countries they were called pardos or morenos) that so distinguished Latin America’s rainbow racial spectrum from North America’s stark black-white system of racial classification. In the United States, for instance, the first federal census in 1790 reported that “free coloreds” were less than 2 percent of the population, while black slaves were 33 percent.46 The same proportion of free blacks to slaves was roughly true in the British, Dutch, and French Caribbean colonies. But the opposite trend prevailed in the Portuguese and Spanish colonies, where free blacks or coloreds outnumbered slaves, with perhaps 40 to 60 percent of free blacks able to purchase their emancipation outright.47 The viceroyalty of New Grenada, which included Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador, had 80,000 slaves and 420,000 free coloreds in 1789.48 Cuba had 199,000 slaves and 114,000 free coloreds in 1817.49 By 1872, free coloreds composed 43 percent of Brazil’s population, outnumbering both pure whites and black slaves.

Color and status so deeply demarcated the English colonies, however, that the free colored class was considered an abnormality only barely tolerated.50 A drop of black blood made you black in Anglo-Saxon society, while in the Portuguese and Spanish world, mestizos and mulatos, no matter how dark, were invariably regarded as part of white society, although admittedly second-class members.

Racism obviously persisted in both groups of colonies, but in the Iberian ones it assumed a muted form, its operation rendered more complex by the presence of a huge mixed-race population. The quest for white purity in Latin America became confined to a tiny upper class, while dispensations for lower-class whites to marry outside their race were routinely granted. The reasons were simple. For rich whites, marriage was first and foremost a question of securing inheritance lines. Racial mixing was not allowed to subvert the class structure, though on occasion even some of the elite officially “recognized” their mixed-race children, ushering them partially into white society. The arcane types of mixed-race offspring that developed in Latin America were astounding. Beyond mestizos and mulatos, there were zambos (Indian and black), coyotes (mestizo and Indian), salta-atrás (those with Negroid features born of white parents), chinos (offspring of Indian and salta-atrás), cuarterones (quadroons), and even more exotic distinctions.

For the Anglo-Saxon colonies, on the other hand, interracial marriage was taboo, by any class of whites. Even after independence and emancipation, it remained banned, and while rape or unsanctioned unions obvi-
ously occurred, Anglo-Saxons almost never married children, no matter how light-skinned their father.

Land and Politics in the New World

Beyond religion and race, the Spanish radically in the way they managed their Spanish’s colonies were royal affairs from the first century, when gold and silver producing more than 2 billion pesos’ worth of supply before Columbus’s first voyage, was gold, and silver, mostly in silver, by 1800.) They only led to massive inflation at home. Defined as more than 200,000 Spaniards in the first century of colonization. Countish countryside and flocked to Seville an land trade.52 The Crown’s expulsion of the Mestizo country’s professional and commercial with their wealth to the financial center Genoa.53 With Spain forced to resort to selling the spiraling costs of administration from the mines of Mexico and the Dutch and English bankers and went to supply the colonies.

When they finally started their own after Spain, the English and the Dutch approach. They relied instead on rich oil and on a new type of business venture London Company, the Plymouth Comp. the Dutch West Indies Company all seek to populate the new territories. While the Pilgrims and other colonists, the same cannot be said of the colonists for these new capitalist concern. It meant the chase for enormous profit: dians; from wood and iron and other raw to England; and from charging hefty rat contants and dissidents to the New Worl
ously occurred, Anglo-Saxons almost never recognized their mixed-race children, no matter how light-skinned the offspring or how poor the father.

LAND AND POLITICS IN THE TWO SOCIETIES

Beyond religion and race, the Spanish and English colonies diverged radically in the way they managed their economic and political systems. Spain’s colonies were royal affairs from the start. Conquistadores functioned as direct agents of the Crown. And Spain’s main object, at least for the first century, was gold and silver; by 1600, its colonies had already produced more than 2 billion pesos’ worth, three times the total European supply before Columbus’s first voyage. The total surpassed 6 billion pesos, mostly in silver, by 1800. The flood of silver coin, however, only led to massive inflation at home. Domestic industry and agriculture stagnated as more than 200,000 Spaniards left for the New World during the first century of colonization. Countless others abandoned the Spanish countryside and flocked to Seville and Cádiz to engage in mercantile trade. The Crown’s expulsion of the Moors and Jews only exacerbated the economic crisis, since those two groups had provided much of the country’s professional and commercial vitality. Jewish merchants fled with their wealth to the financial centers of London, Amsterdam, and Genoa. With Spain forced to resort to huge loans from foreign banks to meet the spiraling costs of administering its vast empire, much of the production from the mines of Mexico and Peru passed into the coffers of Dutch and English bankers and went to pay for manufactured goods to supply the colonies.

When they finally started their own American colonies nearly a century after Spain, the English and the Dutch rejected Spain’s state-sponsored approach. They relied instead on rich nobles financing individual colonies and on a new type of business venture—the joint stock company. The London Company, the Plymouth Company, the Virginia Company, and the Dutch West Indies Company all secured charters from their monarchs to populate the new territories.

While the Pilgrims and other colonists indeed fled religious persecution, the same cannot be said of the companies that transported them. Utopia for these new capitalist concerns was far less spiritual in nature. It meant the chase for enormous profit: from trading for furs with the Indians; from wood and iron and other raw materials that could be shipped to England; and from charging hefty rates for relocating England’s malcontents and dissidents to the New World. In 1627, for instance, the Lon-
London Company declared one of its objectives to be: "The removing of the surcharge of necessitous people, the matter or fuel of dangerous insurrections, and thereby leaving the greater plenty to sustain those remaining with the Land."48

The mass exodus from England and Europe, however, was not simply a spontaneous emigration of the continent’s persecuted and destitute, as immigrant myth would have us believe. More than half the population of the thirteen colonies before 1776 was composed of indentured servants. Among these were fifty thousand convicts who were released from English jails during the seventeenth century to populate the Maryland and Virginia colonies, and a considerable number of children who had been kidnapped and sold into servitude.49

Land speculators who worked in tandem with merchants orchestrated and engineered much of the exodus. Labor agents scoured the British Isles and the Rhineland for recruits to work the huge tracts of American land the speculators owned, enticing farm families to sell their property and seek instant wealth in the New World.50 William Penn, for example, employed recruiting agents in London, Dublin, Edinburgh, and Rotterdam. Penn’s merchant friend in Rotterdam, Benjamin Furly, was so successful advertising the colony in the Rhine Valley that he turned Pennsylvania into the center for German immigrants to the colonies.51

At first, England left colonial administration in the hands of the companies, since the Crown was preoccupied with its own domestic strife and religious battles. But by the end of the 1600s, Parliament assumed direct administration through its Board of Trade, the counterpart to Spain’s Council of the Indies. Even then, however, England kept its New World bureaucracy rather tiny.

The Spanish empire, on the other hand, spawned such a huge colonial bureaucracy that 1.1 million people held religious office of some kind in the Spanish colonies by the seventeenth century, and nearly half a million held government jobs.52 Like most bureaucracies, the colonial Church and civil government slowed the pace of decision making, buried innovation under mountains of reports and edicts, and stifled all manner of dissent. In fairness to Spain, its empire was the largest the world had ever seen. From Oregon all the way to Patagonia, it stretched over some of the world’s most impassable mountains, longest rivers, most forbidding deserts and impenetrable jungles. The population of its colonies, ten times that of the mother country, required far more effort to control than the more compact and less densely populated English colonies east of the Allegheny Mountains.

Latin America’s great size and mineral wealth required an enormous supply of laborers. Indians and mestizos miner, built its cities and churches, tended its fields, and engaged in hard labor. As the mining declined in importance, African slaves. Nearly 70 percent of the colonies until the Revolution was composed of non-free artisans in the cities or moved to the farms. By the time of the Revolution, the colony was composed of independent yeomen. That agrarian group—simple, unencumbered government control, and determined to make the immense and fertile wilderness—would form North American society, or at least of its visible parts.

Radically different land policies further Spanish colonial society. Frenzied speculation of the English territories.54 "Every farmer came a land speculator—every town tradesman who could scrape together a few thousand dollars became a speculator—every town council made itself into a land speculator."55 Both the English colonists and federal governments fostered those in charge of government created large estates through corrupt land holdings. By 1697, for example, four Ht Cortiandts, Philipse, Livingstons, and Van Twems occupied 1.6 million acres spanning mid-New York State, creating that state’s great estates. Where the English had their tradit Speniards had the opposite, the mayorazgos. urban holdings were made legally indivisible in generation through the eldest son’s right to assign portions of the family estate but they could never own and, most impossibly.

The biggest mayorazgos went to the most modest allotments were assigned to the even smaller grants to civilian settlers. A
supply of laborers. Indians and *mestizos* mined the empire’s gold and silver, built its cities and churches, tended its herds, and grew its food. And once mining declined in importance, African slaves harvested the new gold, sugar, as well as tobacco, cocoa, and indigo. For a Spaniard in America to engage in hard labor was almost unheard-of.

In the English colonies, on the other hand, Amerindians never formed part of the labor force. The colonial economy depended on three groups of workers: free white farmers, propertyless whites (both indentured and free), and African slaves. Nearly 70 percent of all white immigration to the colonies until the Revolution was made up of indentured servants. Those servants, having completed their required years of work, became free artisans in the cities or moved to the frontier to start their own farms. By the time of the Revolution, the majority of the white population was comprised of independent yeomen, small farmers, and fishermen. That agrarian group—simple, unassuming, skeptical of far-off government control, and determined to create a new life out of an immense and fertile wilderness—would form the cultural core of the new North American society, or at least of its white majority.

Radically different land policies further demarcated English and Spanish colonial society. Frenzied speculation in land was ubiquitous in the English territories. “Every farmer with an extra acre of land became a land speculator—every town proprietor, every scrapping tradesman who could scrape together a modest sum for investment,” says one historian. Both the English colonial administrators and, later, the state and federal governments fostered speculation. Time and again, those in charge of government created overnight fortunes for their friends and themselves through corrupt schemes aimed at amassing huge holdings. By 1697, for example, four Hudson Valley families, the Van Cortlandts, Philipses, Livingstons, and Van Rensselaers, had amassed for themselves 1.6 million acres spanning six present-day counties in mid-New York State, creating that state’s new landed aristocracy.

Where the English had their tradition of land speculation, the Spaniards had the opposite, the *mayorazgo*, in which a family’s rural and urban holdings were made legally indivisible, handed down from generation to generation through the eldest son. Other family members could be assigned portions of the family estate to administer and profit from, but they could never own and, most importantly, could not sell that portion.

The biggest *mayorazgos* went to the original *conquistadores*. More modest allotments were assigned to their lower-ranking soldiers, and even smaller grants to civilian settlers. As the generations passed, inter-
marriage within the elite created labyrinthine mergers of old estates. Merchants, miners, and later immigrants often tried to purchase titles or marry into the established mayorazgos. The giant estates only got bigger, never smaller, and individual buying and selling of land for quick profit was rare. The mayorazgos, together with the labor system of the encomiendas, thus became the basis for Latin America’s latifundio system, in which a tiny portion of the white population owned most of the land and all others were reduced to laborers.

In contrast to both the English and Spanish, Native Americans invariably saw land as a resource to be used by all and owned by none. Even in the most stratified Indian societies, land was owned ultimately in common. Among the Aztecs, for instance, the calpulli, or extended clan, apportioned land to each member. The members, in turn, remitted a portion of their crops to clan leaders, who used that portion to pay the emperor’s tribute. No matter how many treaties the Indian nations may have signed to placate white settlers, they invariably saw themselves as ceding use of the land, not perpetual ownership.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the English and Spanish settlers brought with them vastly different political traditions. When each group attempted to transplant those traditions in the New World, they found themselves deeply influenced by the Amerindians who had preceded them. In Mexico, for instance, the Aztec ruler, chosen from within the royal family by a council of nobles, stood atop a highly differentiated class society. He exacted tribute from his own people and from conquered or dependent city-states like Tacuba, Texcoco, Tlaxcala, and Tarasca. The Spaniards did not dismember those centralized structures of power; instead, they appropriated them from above, erecting the scaffolding of their colonial organization, from viceroys to middle-level corregidores, over an already autocratic Indian foundation. And they astutely relinquished control of the cabildos (town councils) outside of the major cities to the Indian majority, turning the traditional chiefs into political mediators and into suppliers of Indian labor to the encomiendas.

The Aztecs, as we have seen, were far different from the Iroquois with whom English settlers alternately fought and allied for 150 years before independence. Lewis Henry Morgan, the founder of American anthropology and the first to systematically study the Iroquois, wrote in 1851, “Their whole civil policy was averse to concentration of power in the hands of any single individual, but inclined to the opposite principle of division among a number of equals.”

The Iroquois constitution, preserved over the years in oral tradition and recorded on wampum belts, led to which was based on consensus decision. Their Confederation, according to a modern parliament, congress, and legislators scholars have documented how the Iroq ideas of our own Founding Fathers. This: individual rights, insists historian Felix C thought, as does “universal suffrage for within a state we call federalism, the hal of the people instead of as masters.”

Some go even further. “Egalitarian de them today in the United States owe littl ogist Jack Weatherford. Rather, “they e as American Indian notions translated i ture.” Several of the Founding Fathers system of checks and balances. Benjami dian treaty accounts in 1736, and he stu while serving as Indian commissioner During one Anglo-Indian conference in oratory of Iroquois shaman Canassatego their own federation, that he began as colonies. Thomas Jefferson frequently quois, and he praised their morality and of Virginia. And Charles Thompson, se vention, admiringly described the Iroqi triarchal confederacy.

Other Iroquois principles that have democracy are the separation of militar Hiawatha required Iroquois sachems a rately) and the impeachment of electri tribes were far ahead of the Founding very and they recognized the voting rig to know the simplicity of Iroquois so with its ability to blend individual liber clan to restrain antisocial behavior. Or known among them.

England founded colonies throughh America did the traditions of English parliamentary representation flourish, the influence of Iroquois traditions on former British colonies, India, Jamaica
and recorded on wampum belts, led to a unique brand of democracy, which was based on consensus decision making by elected representatives. Their Confederation, according to Morgan, contained “the germ of modern parliament, congress, and legislature.” Since Morgan, numerous scholars have documented how the Iroquois influenced the democratic ideas of our own Founding Fathers.60 This country’s fierce devotion to individual rights, insists historian Felix Cohen, has its roots in Iroquois thought, as does “universal suffrage for women . . . the pattern of states within a state we call federalism, the habit of treating chiefs as servants of the people instead of as masters.”61

Some go even further. “Egalitarian democracy and liberty as we know them today in the United States owe little to Europe,” argues anthropologist Jack Weatherford. Rather, “they entered modern western thought as American Indian notions translated into European language and culture.”62 Several of the Founding Fathers were influenced by the Iroquois system of checks and balances. Benjamin Franklin published the first Indian treaty accounts in 1736, and he studied native societies extensively while serving as Indian commissioner for Pennsylvania in the 1750s. During one Anglo-Indian conference in 1744, he was so moved by the oratory of Iroquois shaman Canassatego, who urged the colonies to form their own federation, that he began advocating such a system for the colonies.63 Thomas Jefferson frequently delved into the traditions of Iroquois, and he praised their morality and oratory in his Notes on the State of Virginia. And Charles Thompson, secretary to the Continental Convention, admiringly described the Iroquois government as “a kind of patriarchal confederacy.”64

Other Iroquois principles that have found their way into American democracy are the separation of military and civilian power (the code of Hiawatha required Iroquois sachems and war chiefs to be elected separately) and the impeachment of elected leaders. In some ways, the five tribes were far ahead of the Founding Fathers, for they prohibited slavery and they recognized the voting rights of women. Settlers who came to know the simplicity of Iroquois society were invariably impressed with its ability to blend individual liberty and the moral authority of the clan to restrain antisocial behavior. Crime, for instance, was almost unknown among them.

England founded colonies throughout the world, but only in North America did the traditions of English common law, local control, and parliamentary representation flourish, and a good part of that is due to the influence of Iroquois traditions on the settlers. By comparison, other former British colonies, India, Jamaica, or South Africa, for example,
failed to produce the unique combination of strong and stable representative government with individual liberty found in the United States. In Latin America, meanwhile, each effort by former Spanish colonies such as Mexico, Gran Colombia, and Brazil to replicate our democratic model met with failure.

Thus, by the early nineteenth century, three hundred years of colonialism had divided the New World into two huge contending cultural groups, the Anglo-Saxon and the Spanish-Latin, with smaller groups of Portuguese, Dutch, French, and Caribbean English colonies. The colonists of the two dominant societies had ineradicably undergone a transformation. They were no longer Englishmen or Spaniards. They were now Anglo Americans and Latin Americans. They had adapted their religion, political and economic views, their speech, their music, and their food to the new land. They had built an uneasy intertwined identity with the natives they conquered and the Africans they brought as slaves. Latin America became a land of social inclusion and political exclusion. English America welcomed all political and religious views but remained deeply intolerant in its social and racial attitudes. Latin America, subsumed by the force of its Indian and African majority, became a land of spirit, song, and suffering among its masses, its elite living a parasitic existence on immense estates. North America’s white settlers, segregated from the races over which they held sway, developed a dual and contradictory identity and worldview: on the one hand, a spirit of will, work, and unwavering optimism among its small farmer masses, on the other, a predilection among its elite for cutthroat enterprise, land speculation, and domination of the weak and of non-Europeans.

The conquest of America profoundly challenged and transformed the beliefs of settlers, natives, and slaves alike, while it raised troubling questions for Europeans back home: Were all men God’s children? What was savagery and what was civilization? Would the New World’s racial mixing create a new cosmic race of men and women? Was Church, king, or state the ultimate arbiter of society, or were individuals free to create their own destiny? The answers they chose—and the conflicts between those answers—molded the two main New World cultures that arose. Why the Spanish colonies, so rich in resources at the dawn of their nineteenth-century independence, stagnated and declined while the young North American republic flourished, is the subject of our next chapter.

The Spanish Border and the Making of (1810–1846)

However our present interests may rest it is impossible not to look forward to rapid multiplication will expand beyond the whole northern if not the southern

W

Spain’s American colonies were tory, and population than the i next few decades, however, the four Spar New Granada, Peru, and Rio Plata—fragments separate nations, most of them crippled stagnation, by foreign debt, and by ou States, on the other hand, expanded dratation, fashioned a stable and prosperous cign control.

Why such a staggering difference in d country usually attribute it to the legacies of nationalism. The austere Protestant democra merchants, they say, was ideally suited virgin frontier in a way that the Cathol America were not.¹

That view, however, ignores the disco that emerged between the United State first days of independence. It masks h century U.S. growth flowed directly from speaking America. That conquest, how basis for the modern Latino presence in of this chapter.
However our present interests may restrain us within our limits, it is impossible not to look forward to distant times, when our rapid multiplication will expand beyond those limits, and cover the whole northern if not the southern continent.

—Thomas Jefferson, 1801

When they embarked on the road to independence in 1810, Spain’s American colonies were far richer in resources, territory, and population than the infant United States. Over the next few decades, however, the four Spanish viceroyalties—New Spain, New Granada, Peru, and Rio Plata—fragmented into more than a dozen separate nations, most of them crippled by internal strife, by economic stagnation, by foreign debt, and by outside domination. The United States, on the other hand, expanded dramatically in territory and population, fashioned a stable and prosperous democracy, and warded off foreign control.

Why such a staggeringly difference in development? Historians in this country usually attribute it to the legacies of English and Spanish colonialism. The austere Protestant democracy of Anglo-Saxon farmers and merchants, they say, was ideally suited for carving prosperity from a virgin frontier in a way that the Catholic, tyrannical societies of Latin America were not.¹

That view, however, ignores the discordant and unequal relationship that emerged between the United States and Latin America from the first days of independence. It masks how a good deal of nineteenth-century U.S. growth flowed directly from the Anglo conquest of Spanish-speaking America. That conquest, how it unfolded and how it set the basis for the modern Latino presence in the United States, is the subject of this chapter.
Our nation’s territorial expansion during the 1800s is well documented, but less attention has been given to how that expansion weakened and deformed the young republics to the south, especially those closest to the ever-changing U.S. borders. Annexation of the Spanish-speaking borderlands evolved in three distinct phases: Florida and the Southeast by 1820; Texas, California, and the Southwest by 1855; and, finally, Central America and the Caribbean during the second half of the century, a phase that culminated with the Spanish-American War of 1898. Those annexations transformed an isolated yeoman’s democracy into a major world empire. In the process, Mexico lost half of its territory and three-quarters of its mineral resources, the Caribbean Basin was reduced to a permanent target for Yankee exploitation and intervention, and Latin Americans were made into a steady source of cheap labor for the first U.S. multinational corporations.

Popular history depicts that nineteenth-century movement as a heroic epic of humble farmers heading west in covered wagons to fight off savage Indians and tame a virgin land. Rarely do those accounts examine the movement’s other face—the relentless incursions of Anglo settlers into Latin American territory.

Ahead of the settlers came the traders and merchants—men like Charles Stillman, Mifflin Kenedy, and Richard King in Texas; Cornelius Vanderbilt, George Law, and Minor Keith in Central America; William Safford, H. O. Havemeyer, and John Leamy in the Antilles; and John Craig in Venezuela—all of whom amassed huge fortunes in Latin American lands and products. The merchants were joined by adventurers and mercenaries like General John McIntosh (Florida), Davy Crockett (Texas), and William Walker (Nicaragua), who swore allegiance to inexperienced or weak Latin American governments, then forcibly overthrew them in the name of freedom.

Most U.S. presidents backed the taking of Latin America’s land. Jefferson, Jackson, and Teddy Roosevelt all regarded our country’s domination of the region as ordained by nature. The main proponents and beneficiaries of empire building, however, were speculators, plantation owners, bankers, and merchants. They fostered popular support for it by promising cheap land to the waves of European immigrants who kept arriving on our shores, and they bankrolled an endless string of armed rebellions in those Spanish-speaking lands by white settlers. To justify it all, our leaders popularized such pivotal notions as “America for the Americans” and “Manifest Destiny,” the latter term emerging as the nineteenth-century code-phrase for racial supremacy.

But along with the conquered lands Americans, who were pushed farther out by treaties, and several million Mexicans. Cub who were placed under U.S. sovereignty
But along with the conquered lands came unwanted peoples: Native Americans, who were pushed farther west, then herded onto reservations, and several million Mexicans, Cubans, Filipinos, and Puerto Ricans, who were placed under U.S. sovereignty. Even when Congress officially
declared some of the conquered peoples U.S. citizens, the newly arrived Anglo settlers routinely seized their properties, and those seizures were then upheld by the English-speaking courts the settlers installed. The Mexican Americans of the Southwest became a foreign minority in the land of their birth. Spanish-speaking, Catholic, and largely mestizo, they were rapidly relegated to a lower-caste status alongside Indians and blacks. Cubans and Filipinos eventually won their independence but found their nations under the thumb of Washington for decades afterward, while Puerto Rico remains to this day a colony of second-class citizens.

THE REVOLUTIONARY YEARS: FROM INSPIRATION TO BETRAYAL

At the beginning of the 1800s, few Latin Americans could have foretold how the United States would treat them. The U.S. War of Independence, after all, was an enormous inspiration to intellectuals throughout the Spanish colonies. Some Latin Americans even fought alongside George Washington’s rebel army. Bernardo de Gálvez, the Spanish governor of Louisiana, opened a second front against the English when he invaded British-controlled West Florida, defeated the garrison there, and reclaimed the peninsula as a Spanish colony. Merchants in Havana, meanwhile, supplied critical loans and supplies to Washington.

After the Revolution triumphed, Latin American patriots emulated the Founding Fathers. Fray Servando de Mier, a leading propagandist of Mexican independence, traveled to Philadelphia during Jefferson’s presidency and often quoted Thomas Paine in his own polemics against monarchy. In 1794, Antonio Nariño, a wealthy Bogotá intellectual and admirer of Benjamin Franklin, translated and secretly published the French Assembly’s Declaration of the Rights of Man. José Antonio Rojas, the prominent Chilean revolutionary, met Franklin in Europe and later shipped numerous crates of Raynal’s writings about the North American revolution to Chile. In 1776, Rojas penned his own list of Chilean grievances against the Spanish monarchy. Simón Bolívar, the great Liberator of South America, traveled throughout the United States in 1806. Inspired by its accomplishments, he launched Venezuela’s independence uprising a few years later.

Perhaps the best example of the close ties between revolutionaries of the north and south was Francisco de Miranda, the “Morning Star” of Latin American independence. Born in 1750 into a prosperous merchant family in Caracas, Miranda joined the Spanish army at seventeen. He later traveled to North America, where he served first with Gálvez’s Spanish troops in Florida, then with France’s troops. Handsome, erudite, and befriended by several U.S. leaders, including Robert Morris, and he met with President’s odyssey through Europe, where he served in Napoleon’s army and a lover of Miranda returned to the United States a man’s backing for a campaign to liberate America. Like all the well-known patriots of Latin Spain was a criollo from the upper class. That following for independence among his own unlike the Anglo-American revolutionaries within their own society. Of 13.5 million colonies in 1800, less than 3 million were peninsulares, born in Spain. Latin America fear of the 80 percent of the population mixed-race, and that apprehension intensified the U.S. Revolutionary War, when several among the Indians of South America.

The specter of those uprisings made them demand from Spain simply better treatment. They railed against high taxation, for restrictions the Crown imposed on trade condemned Spain’s discrimination against only peninsulares a monopoly on overseas trade from top posts in the colonial government, only to mining and agriculture. But no complain, the criollos dared not risk opening revolt from the multitudes they had a way.

In the end, the spark for Latin America within the colonies but from Europe. In 1804 and installed his brother Joseph as king, would lead to the breakup of the entire Spanish people rejected the French invasions throughout the country, and laud their imprisoned king to the throne. With Europe, criollo leaders in the colonies faced resistance. They formed juntas of their cities and assumed control of their local affairs. The rebel juntas in Spain soon convened to promulgate a liberal constitution, one
Spanish troops in Florida, then with French general Comte de Rochambeau's troops. Handsome, erudite, and charismatic, Miranda was befriended by several U.S. leaders, including Alexander Hamilton and Robert Morris, and he met with President Washington. After a long personal odyssey through Europe, where he served as both a decorated general in Napoleon's army and a lover of Russia's Catherine the Great, Miranda returned to the United States and sought to win our government's backing for a campaign to liberate the Spanish colonies.5

Like all the well-known patriots of Latin America, however, Miranda was a criollo from the upper class. That limited his ability to win a mass following for independence among his own countrymen, for the criollos, unlike the Anglo-American revolutionaries, were a distinct minority within their own society. Of 13.5 million people living in the Spanish colonies in 1800, less than 3 million were white, and only 200,000 of those were peninsulares, born in Spain. Latin American rebels lived in constant fear of the 80 percent of the population that was Indian, black, and mixed-race, and that apprehension intensified during the final years of the U.S. Revolutionary War, when several major uprisings broke out among the Indians of South America.6

The specter of those uprisings made the criollos content at first to demand from Spain simply better treatment, not full-blown independence. They railed against high taxation, for more autonomy, and against the restrictions the Crown imposed on trade outside the empire. They condemned Spain's discrimination against them, how the Crown granted only peninsulares a monopoly on overseas trade, how it excluded criollos from top posts in the colonial government, and how it confined them only to mining and agriculture.7 But no matter how much they might complain, the criollos dared not risk open rebellion for fear of unleashing revolt from the multitudes they had always oppressed.

In the end, the spark for Latin America's revolution came not from within the colonies but from Europe.8 In 1808, Napoleon invaded Spain and installed his brother Joseph as king, setting off a chain of events that would lead to the breakup of the entire Spanish colonial empire. The Spanish people rejected the French invaders, formed local resistance juntas throughout the country, and launched a guerrilla war to return their imprisoned king to the throne. When they heard of the events in Europe, criollo leaders in the colonies followed the lead of the Spanish resistance. They formed juntas of their own in all the major American cities and assumed control of their local affairs in the name of the king.

The rebel juntas in Spain soon convened a new Cortes, and that Cortes promulgated a liberal constitution, one that granted full citizenship to
colonial subjects in the American colonies for the first time. But the Cortes stopped short of full equality when it refused to permit the colonies, whose population far outnumbered Spain’s, a proportionate share of delegates. That refusal angered the most radical criollo leaders, who decided to break with the new Spanish government and declare their independence.

From then on, the Latin American revolution charted its own course. Even Napoleon’s defeat at Waterloo and the ouster of the French from Spain a few years later failed to bring the shattered empire back together. King Ferdinand, who was restored to the throne after Napoleon’s defeat, refused to accept the loss of his colonies and sent his army to subdue the upstart Latin Americans. A series of wars ensued throughout the continent between loyalists and rebels, and in several regions between the patriotic leaders themselves. The conflicts differed from country to country, yet everywhere the human toll was immense. The mammoth size of the colonies made for an epic, disordered, and bloody canvas. Mexico’s independence wars, for instance, began in 1810 after parish priest Miguel Hidalgo led an uprising of thousands of Indian peasants and miners in the town of Dolores in the rich Bajío region northwest of Mexico City, using a statue of the Indian Virgen de Guadalupe to rally his followers. By the time the wars ended in 1821, more than 600,000 were dead, 10 percent of the country’s population. Venezuela had lost half of its nearly 1 million inhabitants. Overall, the Latin American wars lasted much longer and proved far more destructive to the region’s inhabitants than the U.S. War of Independence, which claimed only 25,000 lives.

Despite their turbulent and debilitating fight for independence, the Latin American patriots always looked to the United States for their example. Several of the new nations modeled their constitutions on ours. During their wars, they pleaded for military aid from us, and after their victory, they sought friendship and assistance for their postwar reconstruction.

Most U.S. leaders, however, coveted the Spanish colonies as targets for the nation’s own expansion and held little regard for the abilities of the Latin American patriots. “However our present interests may restrain us within our limits,” Jefferson wrote to James Monroe in 1801, “it is impossible not to look forward to distant times, when our rapid multiplication will expand beyond those limits, and cover the whole northern if not the southern continent.” Democracy no better suited Spanish America, John Adams said, than “the birds, beasts or fishes.”

Miranda was the first to be surprised by the U.S. attitude. In 1806, after securing £12,000 from the British government for an expedition to liberate Venezuela, he rushed to the United States for help, but President Jefferson and Secretary of State Monroe hoped in vain to keep Spain friendly to the United States. “We have not been able to ascertain whether the Spanish government is still disposed to make war on its rebellious colonies,” Jefferson wrote to his brother-in-law, James Madison, who was secretary of state. “We have reason to believe that they will endeavor to prevent any attack on the United States.”

A decade later, with independence finally achieved, the liberation armies battling fiercely against Spanish forces in the United States rebuffed Bolivar as a traitor to his own people. Once the expedition landed in Spanish territory, the Spaniards mistook it for a contingent of American volunteers. The Spanish army, which quickly routed the rebels, captured and took command of the country.

A decade later, with independence finally achieved, the liberation armies battling fiercely against Spanish forces in the United States rebuffed Bolivar as a traitor to his own people. Once the expedition landed in Spanish territory, the Spaniards mistook it for a contingent of American volunteers. The Spanish army, which quickly routed the rebels, captured and took command of the country.

Among those who brackenrige Latin Americans were becoming increas-
ate Venezuela, he rushed to the United States in expectation of further help, but President Jefferson and Secretary of State Madison rebuffed his appeals. Despite their refusal, Miranda managed to put together a rebel force from Anglo volunteers he recruited along the Eastern Seaboard. Once the expedition landed in Venezuela, however, Miranda’s countrymen mistook it for a contingent of British soldiers. Instead of heeding his call for a revolt, the Venezuelans sided with the Spanish army, which quickly routed the rebels. Miranda barely managed to avoid capture and flee the country.

A decade later, with independence fever sweeping South America and the liberation armies battling fiercely against a powerful Spanish force, the United States rebuffed Bolivar as strongly it had Miranda. Monroe, first as Madison’s secretary of state and then as president, insisted on neutrality toward the South American wars. Like Jefferson before him, Monroe hoped to keep Spain friendly enough so it would eventually sell its Cuba and Florida colonies to the United States, a feeling shared by most of our nation’s leaders. “We have no concern with South America,” Edward Everett, editor of the influential North American Review, wrote at the time. “We can have no well-founded political sympathy with them. We are sprung from different stocks.”

Latin American freedom, however, did have support among many ordinary Americans, even a few in high places, who opposed our neutrality. Among those was Henry Marie Brackenridge, whom Monroe sent to the region to assess the situation in 1817 as part of a U.S. commission. “The patriots . . . complain that our government is cold towards them, as if ashamed to own them,” Brackenridge reported back. By then, the Latin Americans were becoming increasingly suspicious of U.S. intentions. That suspicion turned to bitterness after an incident that year involving two merchant ships, the Tiger and the Liberty. Soldiers from Bolivar’s Republic of Gran Colombia seized the ships near the Orinoco River in Venezuela after discovering that their hulls were filled with military supplies for the Spanish army. The White House demanded that Colombia release the ships and indemnify their owners. Bolivar responded by condemning the two-faced U.S. policy. In a series of angry diplomatic letters, he reminded the White House that the U.S. Navy had intercepted and captured several merchant ships, even British ships, laden with supplies for his revolutionary army. So why were North Americans now supplying his enemy?

Unknown to Bolivar, this peculiar brand of neutrality was about to pay off handsomely. The Adams-Onís Treaty of 1819 ceded Florida to the United States, but as part of those negotiations Monroe promised Spain
that our country would continue denying aid to the Latin American patriots. The Latin American leaders, unaware of the secret agreement, could not believe how the United States kept turning its back on them. Bolivar, who had once praised our country as a “model of political virtues and moral enlightenment unique in the history of mankind,” turned increasingly antagonistic to it by 1819. That year, he remarked: “In ten years of struggle and travail that beggar description, in ten years of suffering almost beyond human endurance, we have witnessed the indifference with which all Europe and even our brothers of the north have remained but passive spectators of our anguish.”

But there were deeper reasons behind the U.S. reluctance to see the Latin Americans succeed. Always foremost in the minds of southern planters and their congressional delegates was the issue of slavery. The planters watched with alarm as Latin America’s independence wars dragged on, how Creole leaders like Bolivar were enlisting thousands of pardos, mestizos, Indians, and slaves in their armies, repaying the castes with greater social mobility and the slaves with their freedom.

Our slave owners were well aware that after Bolivar’s second defeat by the Spanish army, Haiti’s president, Alexandre Pétion, had helped finance his return to South America in 1815, outfitting seven ships and six thousand men with weapons and ammunition on condition that Bolivar emancipate Venezuela’s slaves. The Liberator’s subsequent public condemnations of slavery enraged planters in this country. “Slavery is the negation of all law, and any law which should perpetuate it would be a sacrilege,” he proclaimed at the founding congress of Bolivia in 1826. Clearly, plantation owners here feared that emancipation fervor would spread from Latin America into the United States—by 1850, all the former Spanish colonies that had won their independence had abolished slavery—and that fear turned them into implacable foes of Latin American liberation.

Abandoned by the U.S. government from their inception, reviled by the conservative monarchies of Europe, the Latin American republics concluded that their only reliable ally was England. Some six thousand English, Scotch, and Irish, most of them unemployed veterans from the British wars against Napoleon, signed up for Bolivar’s army in 1817–1819. Among those volunteers was Daniel O’Leary, who went on to serve as Bolivar’s top secretary. That British aid, together with the daring battlefield strategies of Bolivar, San Martín, Bernardo O’Higgins, Santander, and the other great generals, succeeded by 1826 in routing the last of the Spanish armies on the continent.

All of Spain’s vast empire except Cuba That year, Bolivar convened the first Pan American Congress, elaborating his dream for a hemispheric confederation of the revolutionary nations so worried about sending representatives until the aftermath, our government made clear t opposed to any expedition to liberate Ci

FREEDOM, FILIBUSTERS, AN

If the South American liberators found aloof, Latinos living near the U.S. border downriver hostile, The gobbling up 1810 and 1819 set the pattern for U.S. expansion. Jefferson’s Louisiana Purchase group of Spanish-speaking people went not “purchase” Florida in the same way in which the Adams-Onis Treaty was more akin to a combination of decades of unceasing pressure to give up the territory; an area was added to the current state since it stretched to the towns of Natchez and Baton Rouge.

The few thousand Spaniards inhabited towns had made great strides, since the early 18th century, in building ties with the nearby two centuries, the Creek, Choctaw had formed a buffer between Spain and Kentucky. Known as the readily adopted European dress, tools, bered about forty-five thousand in the however, was an irritant to the Anglos Indians on the warpath and to escapetunities. Moreover, the plantation owner mixing between fugitive slaves and among the Seminoles.

By the early 1800s, so many Anglo that Spanish soldiers in its thinly po longer control the territory. In a gambit, Spain agreed to legalize the new had to pledge loyalty to the Crown, ra
ROOTS (LAS RAICES)

All of Spain’s vast empire except Cuba and Puerto Rico was now free. That year, Bolivar convened the first Pan American Congress, where he elaborated his dream for a hemispheric confederation. His plan for uniting the revolutionary nations so worried U.S. leaders that Congress delayed sending representatives until the gathering had adjourned, and afterward, our government made clear to Bolivar that it was adamantly opposed to any expedition to liberate Cuba and Puerto Rico.

FREEDOM, FILIBUSTERS, AND MANIFEST DESTINY

If the South American liberators found policy makers in Washington aloof, Latinos living near the U.S. borderlands found their Anglo neighbors downright hostile. The gobbling up of chunks of Florida between 1810 and 1819 set the pattern for U.S. expansion across the Spanish borderlands. Jefferson’s Lousiana Purchase in 1803 had brought the first group of Spanish-speaking people under the U.S. flag. But our nation did not “purchase” Florida in the same way it purchased Louisiana. The Adams-Onis Treaty was more akin to a street corner holdup. It culminated two decades of unceasing pressure on Spain by southern speculators to give up the territory, an area which was then much larger in size than the current state since it stretched along the Gulf Coast all the way to the towns of Natchez and Baton Rouge.

The few thousand Spaniards inhabiting Florida’s fortified Gulf Coast towns had made great strides, since the Franciscan missions of the sixteenth century, in building ties with the Indians of the Southeast. For nearly two centuries, the Creek, Choctaws, Cherokees, and Chickasaws had formed a buffer between Spanish Florida and Anglo settlers in Georgia and Kentucky. Known as the “civilized tribes” because they readily adopted European dress, tools, and farming methods, they numbered about forty-five thousand in the year 1800. The Florida colony, however, was an irritant to the Anglos, since it provided refuge both to Indians on the warpath and to escaped slaves from the southern plantations. Moreover, the plantation owners regarded with horror the racial mixing between fugitive slaves and Indians that was commonplace among the Seminoles.

By the early 1800s, so many Anglo settlers were moving into Florida that Spanish soldiers in its thinly populated garrison towns could no longer control the territory. In a gamble aimed at reasserting that control, Spain agreed to legalize the newcomers, but in return the settlers had to pledge loyalty to the Crown, raise their children as Catholics, and
refrain from land speculation or political assembly. The policy backfired, since it made it easier for settlers to immigrate and only postponed Spain’s loss of the colony.

In 1810, a group of settlers in West Florida launched a direct challenge to that authority. They resorted to a form of rebellion that eventually turned into a hallmark of Anglo adventurers and buccaneers throughout the Spanish borderlands: a band of newcomers or mercenaries simply captured a town or territory and proclaimed their own republic. The Spanish called them filibusteros (freebooters), and the uprisings were known as filibusters. In one of the earliest attempts, a group of Anglo settlers captured the Spanish garrison at Baton Rouge on September 23, 1810, and declared their independence. The rebellion prompted President Madison to send in federal troops to occupy the surrounding territory, and Congress later incorporated the area into the new state of Louisiana. The rest of West Florida fell into U.S. hands during the War of 1812, after General James Wilkinson, head of the U.S. Army and a master at filibustering, captured the Spanish garrison at Mobile in 1813 and Andrew Jackson captured Pensacola in 1814. Spain’s government, still paralyzed by the Napoleonic wars, was in no condition to resist any of the incursions.

Other filibuster revolts soon spread to East Florida (see table 1). Most of the revolts garnered backing from political leaders in the South who were anxious to expand slave territories and to speculate in Florida land. One of those leaders, Andrew Jackson, had engaged in repeated speculation throughout his life. In 1796, for instance, Jackson bought a half-interest in five thousand acres of the Chickasaw Bluffs in Mississippi for $100. He immediately sold a portion for a sizable profit. Twenty years later, as a U.S. Army commander, Jackson forced the Chickasaws to negotiate a treaty opening the territory to white settlers. He promptly sold the remaining part of his investment for $5,000. But the parcel of land that always fired Old Hickory’s imagination most was Florida. Several times, his soldiers invaded East Florida on the pretext of hunting down Seminole bands. Thanks to Jackson’s repeated forays and to the filibuster revolts of Anglo settlers there, Spain gradually concluded that the U.S. thirst for Florida would never be quenched; the Adams-Onís Treaty was the result. In it, Spain ceded to the United States an area larger than Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, and Switzerland for a mere $5 million. Spain hoped that by giving up Florida it would salvage the remainder of its tottering empire, especially the province of Tejas, which had already been the scene of four separate filibuster revolts by bands of Anglos between 1801 and 1819. As its only concession in the treaty, Washington officially renounced all other claims on Sabine River as its border with Spain’s Texas.

Such was the situation in 1822, when P. St. Vincent retook the city of Mobile and St. Louis, and Tousard’s expedition finally subdued the Seminole. The United States had a lot to gain from the war: the annexation of Texas, the acquisition of New Mexico, and the founding of a republic in the republic of Texas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1801</td>
<td>Philip Nolan crosses into Texas and captures and shoots by Spanish soldiers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1809</td>
<td>General James Wilkinson’s “volunteer expedition.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1810</td>
<td>Anglo settlers declare a republic and the Federal troops occupy the area of Louisiana.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1812</td>
<td>Former general John McIntosh of Canada, declaring the Republic of Florida.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1813</td>
<td>General James Wilkinson captures Texas and Louisiana.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1817</td>
<td>Henry Perry invades Texas and Louisiana.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
officially renounced all other claims on Spanish lands and accepted the Sabine River as its border with Spain’s Texas colony.

Such was the situation in 1822, when President Monroe, who for years had refused to aid the Latin American revolution, suddenly did an about-face and became the first world leader to recognize Mexico’s independence. Monroe followed that up the next year with an even more audacious act. He declared the Americas off-limits to any new European colonization with his famous Monroe Doctrine. Actually, Monroe issued the warning quite reluctantly, and only after much British prodding. The British pressure was brought on by the defeat of Napoleon and the subsequent decision of Europe’s Holy Alliance to back an attempt by Ferdinand VII to recover Spain’s Latin American colonies. England was already ensconced as Latin America’s biggest trading partner, and British foreign minister George Canning feared that any recolonization of the region would close off that commerce. So Canning urged Monroe to join him in warning the European powers to stay out of America. Canning, however, wanted reciprocity for his alliance. He wanted Monroe to renounce any plans to colonize Texas or Cuba, something Monroe would not do.²⁸

**TABLE 1**

**THE FILIBUSTERING RECORD**

*(Invasions by U.S. Citizens into Spain’s Colonies or the Latin American Republics during the 1800s)*

1801—Philip Nolan crosses into Texas with a band of armed men; he is captured and shot by Spanish soldiers.

1809—General James Wilkinson’s “volunteers” occupy parts of West Florida.

1810—Anglo settlers declare a republic in Baton Rouge, West Florida. Federal troops occupy the area and Congress annexes it into Louisiana.

1812—Former general John McIntosh captures Amelia Island and Ferndina, declaring the Republic of Ferndina. Spanish troops defeat him.

1812—Former U.S. lieutenant Augustus Magee, Mexican Bernardo Gutiérrez, and a group of Americans invade East Texas and are routed.

1813—General James Wilkinson captures Mobile in West Florida.

1817—Henry Perry invades Texas and marches on La Bahía.
1819—Mississippi merchant James Long invades Texas but fails to establish the Republic of Texas.

1826—Hayden and Benjamin Edwards seize Nacogdoches and proclaim the Republic of Fredonia. Mexican soldiers defeat them with help from Stephen Austin.

1835—General Ignacio Mejía and two hundred Americans raid Rio Panuco in Tamaulipas. His defeat prompts Mexico to ban American immigration.

1836—Sam Houston and Texas rebels, along with a small number of Tejano federalists, revolt against General Santa Anna’s rule. They defeat Santa Anna at San Jacinto and proclaim the Republic of Texas.

1839—Antonio Canales, a Mexican federalist, S. W. Jordan, and five hundred Americans declare the Republic of the Rio Grande. They become divided and are defeated by Mexican troops.

1848—Former Spanish army officer Narciso López, backed by publisher William O’Sullivan, invades Cuba with Anglo rebels. His uprising fails.

1849—López returns and invades at Cárdenas, but is routed once again. Of his six hundred men, all but five are North American.

1851—López invades a third time, this time at Bahía Honda. Once again, North Americans are a majority of his four hundred volunteers. Spanish troops capture and execute him.

1853—William Walker invades Mexico and declares the Republic of Sonora. Mexican troops chase him back across the border.

1855—Walker arrives in Nicaragua, seizes power and rules as dictator for two years until he is routed by the combined armies of Central America and Cornelius Vanderbilt.

1858—Walker invades Nicaragua again and is routed a second time.

1860—Walker invades Honduras, is captured, tried, and executed.

Seeking to maneuver between the geopolitical schemes of England and the Holy Alliance, Monroe chose instead to act alone. After years of refusing support to the Latin American revolution, he suddenly reversed course. On December 2, during his annual address to Congress, he issued the most important policy statement in hemispheric history, announcing that the Latin American countries were “henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers . . . it is impossible that the allied powers should extend their political system to any portion of [the continent] without express consent.”

The new policy was hailed at first by those who believed the United States’ neutrality toward the continents and the peaceful spread of liberty.” The European monarchies, instead of the guns of the powerful British navy, could not check the expansion of the North American republic. Nonetheless, the Monroe Doctrine was a clear indication of the region at least manage befell much of Africa and Asia when the areas between them during the great centuries of European exploration.

Notwithstanding the Monroe Doctrine, governments successfully prosecuted war in Latin America during the revolutions of the 1810s and 1820s. With only occasional U.S. failures to honor its own policy, which it turned the doctrine into a policy of non-interference in Latin America, a succession of great powers that plagued the United States with misgivings about the spread of liberty in the twentieth century, a succession of unresolved contradictions in ideals of freedom and our predilection for democracy.

The earliest example of that contradiction was the War of 1812, which began with the declarations of independence of the United States and ended with the Treaty of Ghent, which restored the pre-war status quo. The settlement of the Louisiana Purchase, which added 828,000 square miles of land to the United States, was the first step in that direction.

The settlement of the Louisiana Purchase, which added 828,000 square miles of land to the United States, was the first step in that direction.
any portion of [the continent] without endangering our peace and happiness.”

The new policy was hailed at first by Latin American leaders. At last, they thought, U.S. neutrality toward their struggle would end. “An act worthy of the classic land of liberty,” said Colombia’s president Santander. The European monarchies, of course, were more worried about the guns of the powerful British navy than the threats of the upstart North American republic. Nonetheless, with England and the United States as nominal protectors of Latin American independence, the new countries of the region at least managed to avert the catastrophes that befell much of Africa and Asia when the European powers divided those areas between them during the great colonial partitions of the late nineteenth century.

Notwithstanding the Monroe Doctrine’s strong language, European governments successfully pursued more than a dozen major interventions into Latin America during the rest of the century, and numerous minor ones, with only occasional U.S. opposition.30 Worse than the many U.S. failures to honor its own policy was how subsequent presidents turned the doctrine into its opposite. Latin America, especially the Caribbean Basin, was turned into a virtual U.S. sphere of influence. Bolivar, weary of the growing arrogance from North Americans, declared before his death that the United States seemed “destined by Providence to plague America with torments in the name of freedom.”31 During the twentieth century, a succession of presidents used Monroe’s words to justify repeated military occupations of Latin American nations. This duel interpretation of the doctrine’s provisions continues to this day. It underscores an unresolved contradiction of U.S. history—between our ideals of freedom and our predilection for conquest.

The earliest example of that contradiction came during the next phase of borderlands expansion, the repeated annexations of Mexican territory between 1836 and 1853. Prior to these annexations, the United States of Mexico, as the new country called itself, and the United States of America were eerily similar in territory and population. In 1824, Mexico comprised 1.7 million square miles and contained 6 million people, while the United States stretched for 1.8 million square miles and had 9.6 million people. That equivalence was radically transformed over the next three decades as Anglo settlers poured onto Mexican land.

The settlements began with Moses and Stephen Austin and the town of San Felipe de Austin. Moses, who had lived in Missouri when Spain controlled the Louisiana territory, secured permission from the Spanish crown in 1820 to found a town of Anglo families in the province of Tejas.
Within a year, Austin died and Mexico won its independence, but his son Stephen chose to carry out his father’s plan. The new Mexican government honored Spain’s grant so long as Austin’s settlers took an oath of allegiance to Mexico and converted to Catholicism. San Felipe was so successful that dozens of other Anglo colonies in Texas soon followed.  

Farther south, at the mouth of the Rio Grande, Connecticut merchant Francis Stillman landed by ship near Matamoros in 1825. Impressed by the demand for Texas rice, he assembled a crew and sailed up the Rio Grande. Near Brownsville, where his son James Stillman grew up to be a titan of American industry, he joined forces with Mexican authorities and founded the United States National City Bank and as the notoriety Rockefeller and J. P. Morgan.

But it was too late. By then, Anglo settlers in Tejas were better organized. “Where others send in a squatter,” said a secret report of state, “we send in a settler.” In the immigration debate, “[the Americans] sent in the government.” Local Mexican authorities, unlike the Spanish, welcomed the economic boom that accompanied immigration. Just as today Anglo businessmen routinize the expansion of their empire, they crossed illegally into the country and started settling.

When General Santa Anna seized power, his first act was to abolish the excise laws that prior Mexican government officials had used to fund the Texas Alamo. For more than a century, the Alamo was a symbol of Texas independence and part of American mythology. Its 187
Francis Stillman landed by ship near Matamoros with a cargo of hay and oats in 1825. Impressed by the demand for his goods, Stillman sent his son Charles to the area to set up a branch of the family business. Charles, or Don Carlos as the Mexicans referred to him, proved to be a wizard at trade. Before long, he was the biggest merchant and landowner in the region. By 1832, three hundred foreigners were living in Matamoros, most of them North Americans. Among them was James Power, who married Dolores de la Portilla, an heiress of the rich De la Garza landowning family. Power thus initiated a form of land acquisition that hundreds of Anglo adventurers in the Southwest copied—he married into the Mexican elite and thereby acquired a mayorazgo. Across the river from Matamoros, Don Carlos Stillman founded the town of Brownsville, where his son James Stillman was born in 1850. That son would grow up to be a titan of American finance as the president of First National City Bank and as the notorious ally of robber barons John D. Rockefeller and J. P. Morgan.

Far to the north of the Rio Grande, Anglo settlers had started moving into East Texas in the 1820s. Many were illegal squatters drawn by fraudulent sales of land at 1 to 10 cents an acre from speculators who had no legal title. Some of those squatters soon took to filibustering. The Hayden Edwards revolt, in particular, prompted the Mexican government to bar further immigration by U.S. citizens. It even abolished slavery in 1829 in hopes of cutting off economic incentives for southerners to emigrate.

But it was too late. By then, Anglo settlers far outnumbered the Mexicans in Tejas. “Where others send invading armies,” warned Mexican secretary of state Lucas Alamán, in an eerie precursor to our modern immigration debate, “[the Americans] send their colonists. . . . Texas will be lost for this Republic if adequate measures to save it are not taken.” Local Mexican authorities, unlike the government in Mexico City, welcomed the economic boom that accompanied the influx of foreigners, just as today Anglo businessmen routinely welcome Mexicans who have crossed illegally into the country and are willing to work for low wages.

When General Santa Anna seized power in Mexico City in 1833, one of his first acts was to abolish the exemptions from taxes and antislavery laws that prior Mexican governments had granted the Texans, giving them the excuse they needed to break from Mexico City’s “tyranny.”

Few incidents in U.S. history so directly confront our cultural identity as does the Texas War of Independence and its legendary Battle of the Alamo. For more than a century and a half, the fort’s siege has been a part of American mythology. Its 187 martyred defenders, among them
William Barret Travis, Jim Bowie, and Davy Crockett, have been immortalized as American heroes despite the fact that they openly defended slavery, that they were usurping the land of others, and that they were not even American citizens. Technically, they were Mexican citizens rebelling to found the Republic of Texas.

Most of the Anglo settlers had been in the province less than two years. Many were adventurers, vagabonds, and land speculators. Travis had abandoned his family and escaped to Texas after killing a man in the United States. Bowie, a slave trader, had wandered into the Mexican province looking to make a fortune in mining. Sam Houston, commander of the victorious rebels, and Crockett were both veterans of Andrew Jackson’s grisly victory over the Creeks at Horseshoe Bend, and they shared Old Hickory’s racist and expansionist views toward Latin America.

Houston, a onetime governor of Tennessee, was part of Jackson’s White House kitchen cabinet before moving to Texas in 1832. While Houston plotted the rebellion, Jackson offered unsuccessfully to purchase Texas outright from Mexico. The two men were so close that Jackson’s enemies, among them former president John Quincy Adams, accused Houston of being Jackson’s secret agent in Texas. Although historians have found no documentary proof of this, Jackson certainly was aware of his disciple’s plans for the Mexican province.

After the Alamo defeat, Houston’s rebel army won the war’s decisive battle at the Battle of San Jacinto, captured Santa Anna, and forced him to sign a treaty recognizing Texas independence in exchange for his freedom. But the Mexican government refused to sanction the treaty, and the precise boundaries of Texas remained in dispute for some time. The territory remained nominally independent until its annexation in 1845 only because northern congressmen kept blocking its admission to the union as a slave state. While the debate raged, cotton farming took hold in the Texas Republic and its leaders allowed the territory to be turned into a major transit point for smuggling slaves from Cuba into the southern states.

Texas annexation touched off a fever for even more westward expansion. The slogan of the Monroe Doctrine, “America for the Americans,” was barely two decades old when a new battle cry suddenly replaced it in the popular imagination—“Manifest Destiny.” John O’Sullivan coined the term in July 1845 in his *United States Magazine and Democratic Review*. O’Sullivan, a publicist for the Democratic Party and friend of several presidents, counted Poe, Longfellow, and Whittier among the contributors to his influential magazine and was a steadfast advocate of expansion into Latin America, especially in the midst of several filibuster expeditions.

Proponents of Manifest Destiny saw cultural makeup and bereft of democ Calvinist beliefs reinforced those territorial claims could point to the nation’s interest in canals, steamboats, and railroads, as it to conquer the frontier. Newspapers abounded with articles by noted phrenologists Dr. Josiah C. Nott, who propounded theories of the superiority of Indians, blacks, and Mexicans.

“To the Caucasian race is the world’s secret, discoveries, inventions, and improve in science and the arts,” Caldwell wrote *Original Unity of the Human Race*. No one was spared Caldwell’s views on eugenic,purification and the eugenics to keep the white race pure. The world’s inferior races have been Caucasian, the latter have sunk into the speech in 1844.

The phrenologists were not some in whose ideas were part of mainstream thought, traveled from town to town, carrying on of the brain, giving speeches and distributing money to read heads. World-famous Morton, the Philadelphia ethnologist tion of human skulls on earth, buttressed his studies on the relative size, capacity of different races. Morton, according to that the capacity of the crania of the dark-skinned races, is smaller than that of whites even extended those differences to “mixed-breeds.” Contrasting whites in skinned Spaniards,” he wrote. “It is clear that fading away before the superior race, absorbed.”

With southern planters pressing to Congress, and many northerners opposed to Manifest Destiny, the national outcry came overwhelming. To no one’s surprise, the union precipitated war with Mexico.
expansion into Latin America, especially Cuba, where he personally financed several filibuster expeditions.

Proponents of Manifest Destiny saw Latin Americans as inferior in cultural makeup and bereft of democratic institutions. Our country’s Calvinist beliefs reinforced those territorial ambitions perfectly. Americans could point to the nation’s prosperity, to its amazing new networks of canals, steamboats, and railroads, as proof of their God-given destiny to conquer the frontier. Newspapers and magazines of the day were replete with articles by noted phrenologists like Dr. George Caldwell and Dr. Josiah C. Nott, who propounded the superiority of white Europeans over Indians, blacks, and Mexicans.

“To the Caucasian race is the world indebted for all the great and important discoveries, inventions, and improvements, that have been made in science and the arts,” Caldwell wrote in his influential *Thoughts on the Original Unity of the Human Race*. Nott, one of the South’s best-known surgeons, took Caldwell’s views one step further. He urged the need for eugenics to keep the white race pure. “Wherever in the history of the world the inferior races have been conquered and mixed in with the Caucasian, the latter have sunk into barbarism,” Nott proclaimed in a speech in 1844.

The phrenologists were not some marginal intellectual sect. By 1850, their ideas were part of mainstream thought in this country. Proponents traveled from town to town, carrying casts of skulls and detailed charts of the brain, giving speeches and distributing free books, and charging money to read heads. World-famous scholars such as Samuel George Morton, the Philadelphia ethnologist who possessed the largest collection of human skulls on earth, buttressed their conclusions with “scientific” studies on the relative size, capacity, and composition of the brains of different races. Morton, according to Nott, “has established the fact, that the capacity of the crania of the Mongol, Indian, and Negro, and all dark-skinned races, is smaller than that of the pure white man.” Nott even extended those differences to single out other Caucasians or “mixed-breeds.” Contrasting whites in the United States “with the dark-skinned Spaniards,” he wrote, “It is clear that the dark-skinned Celts are fading away before the superior race, and that they must eventually be absorbed.”

With southern planters pressing to increase their proslavery votes in Congress, and many northerners captivated by the racialist theories of Manifest Destiny, the national outcry to annex more Mexican land became overwhelming. To no one’s surprise, the entry of Texas into the union precipitated war with Mexico. It was a conflict that even the last
president of the Texas Republic, Anson James, regarded as shameful. James blasted President Polk and war hero General Zachary Taylor for their attempts “to induce me to aid them in their unholy and execrable design of manufacturing a war with Mexico.” More than 100,000 U.S. soldiers served in the war, and nearly 14,000 perished, the highest mortality rate of any war in our history. Their advance into Mexico produced horrifying incidents of brutality and racism by U.S. troops. A few even drew the public condemnation of generals Grant and Meade. Grant later admitted the war was “one of the most unjust ever waged by a stronger against a weaker nation.”

As the army advanced toward Mexico City, however, those same theories of Mexican inferiority sparked a national debate over how much of Mexico the United States should claim. By taking too much land, some argued, the country would be absorbing millions of racially mixed Mexicans, which in the long run might threaten the Anglo-Saxon majority. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo finally forced Mexico to relinquish that half of its territory that was the least densely populated and that included the present-day states of New Mexico, California, Nevada, parts of Arizona, Utah, and the disputed sections of present-day Texas. Five years later, the United States added an additional strip of land in Sonora, the Gadsden Purchase.

Also included in the 1848 treaty was the crucial 150-mile-wide Nueces Strip, between the Rio Grande and Nueces rivers. The U.S. negotiators demanded its inclusion as part of Texas despite the fact that Spain, and later Mexico, considered the strip part of Coahuila province. The Nueces, which is equal in size to present-day Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Jersey combined, was especially important because it included the fertile Lower Rio Grande Valley and because the plains north of that valley were teeming with wild horses and cattle. The herds, introduced by Spanish settlers in the early 1700s, numbered more than 3 million head by 1830. Securing control of those herds, and of the original Spanish land grants in the region, soon produced vast fortunes for early Anglo settlers like Charles Stillman, Richard King, and Mifflin Kenedy.

Out of those Mexican lands, the U.S. cattle industry was born, even though the majority of ranch hands in the industry’s early decades were anything but Anglo. The vaqueros, or cowboys, were generally mestizos or mulatos, sometimes even blacks or Indians. Certainly this was true on the famous King Ranch below Corpus Christi, which eventually grew to nearly 1 million acres. So dominant was the Mexican vaquero in the industry that Anglo cowboys copied virtually all the culture of the range from them. As historian Carey McWillia from the vaquero:

his lasso or lariat, cinch, halter, mecate c chaparejos, “taps” or stirrup tips (lapa) hat (barboquejo), the feedbag for his halter or bosal. Even his famous “ten great” translation of a phrase in a Spanish-Mexicanקהלanedо” which referred to a festoon.

The Nueces Strip and the northern part regions where the original Mexican inh the Anglos even after annexation of the range, even that used by Anglo Am and Spanish words, among them bronco, brrodeo, calro, loco, lariat. Yet the cowboi one Hollywood has propagated around t Anglo sitting tall in the saddle, with Mexico portrayed either as bandits or doltish p Texas, however, was not the richest p California was. From the early 1800s, N reached the Pacific sent back glowing c colony. Despite those reports, few Anglos fore the Mexican War because of the long through Indian country necessary to get the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was sig t’s Mill on the American River. The stampede. Prospectors streamed into the ico, and South America, even from Hawa California’s non-Indian population roe overwhelming the original Mexican in about 13,000, and the territory’s several I The first Mexican and South American fona fields had a distinct advantage, for s and silver mining that dated back to the e they had more initial success than the in East. That success frustrated the white p ical attacks, even lynchings, of Mexicans. l eign miners tax to give Anglos a better e Even though the gold fields petered o
from them. As historian Carey McWilliams has noted, the cowboy got from the vaquero:

his lasso or lariat, cinch, halter, mecate or horsehair rope, “chaps” or chaparejos, “taps” or stirrup tips (lapaderas), the chin strap for his hat (barboquejo), the feedbag for his horse (morral) and his rope halter or bosal. Even his famous “ten gallon hat” comes from a mistranslation of a phrase in a Spanish-Mexican corrido “su sombrero galoneado” which referred to a festooned or “gallooned” sombrero.

The Nueces Strip and the northern part of New Mexico were the only regions where the original Mexican inhabitants remained a clear majority over the Anglos even after annexation. Because of that, the language of the range, even that used by Anglo Americans, is derived mostly from Spanish words, among them bronco, buckaroo, burro, mesa, canyon, rodeo, corral, loco, lariat. Yet the cowboy myth in popular folklore, the one Hollywood has propagated around the world, is of a lone white Anglo sitting tall in the saddle, with Mexicans of the Old West invariably portrayed either as bandits or doltish peasants riding donkeys.48

Texas, however, was not the richest prize of the war with Mexico—California was. From the early 1800s, New England sea captains who reached the Pacific sent back glowing reports of that far-off Spanish colony. Despite those reports, few Anglos had settled in the Far West before the Mexican War because of the long and difficult overland passage through Indian country necessary to get there. Then, two weeks before the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed, gold was discovered at Sutter’s Mill on the American River. The news touched off an overnight stampede. Prospectors streamed into the territory from the East, Mexico, and South America, even from Hawaii and Australia. Within a year, California’s non-Indian population rocketed from 20,000 to 100,000, overwhelming the original Mexican inhabitants, who numbered only about 13,000, and the territory’s several hundred thousand Indians.

The first Mexican and South American prospectors to reach the California fields had a distinct advantage, for they drew on a tradition of gold and silver mining that dated back to the conquistadores. Not surprisingly, they had more initial success than the inexperienced Anglos from back East. That success frustrated the white prospectors and soon led to physical attacks, even lynchings, of Mexicans. In 1850, the state imposed a foreign miners tax to give Anglos a better edge.

Even though the gold fields petered out within a few years, the Cali-
fornia discoveries provided immediate dividends to the entire country, just as Aztec gold and silver had for sixteenth-century Spain. The mines turned out more than a quarter billion dollars in ore during their first four years. Their revenues spawned a generation of new bankers who rapidly turned to financing myriad other ventures throughout the West. Eventually, the Anglo immigrants shifted their attention to the state’s more enduring wealth: its soil. Thousands seized or squatted on the large estates of the native Californios. Within two decades of the Sutter’s Mill discovery, most Mexicans in the state had been driven off their land.

Just as Texas became the country’s cotton and cattle center after the war, and California and Nevada its source for gold and silver mining, Arizona and New Mexico gave birth to two other critical U.S. industries—copper and wool.

New Mexico had served as a nexus for sheep raising from early colonial times, the first herds arriving with conquistador Juan de Oñate in 1598. By then, Spain already boasted the oldest and most advanced sheep culture in Europe. Its herdsmen introduced the churro and merino breeds to North America. The churro, a small, scruffy animal ideally suited to the arid Southwest, made possible the existence of many far-flung and remote Spanish outposts in the region. Sheep provided not only food and clothing to settlers and soldiers but also were a main source of cash. Over the centuries, New Mexicans evolved an intricate tradition of sheep raising, with formally defined rights, ranks, privileges, even organizations among the shepherding workforce. As cattle did for South Texas, sheep raising defined much of the culture of New Mexico, Colorado, and parts of California. But the sheep did more than provide culture; they created enormous wealth. Two years after New Mexico became a U.S. territory, southwestern herders were clipping a mere 32,000 pounds of wool annually. By 1880, the number of pounds had zoomed to 4 million. 49

What shepherding was for New Mexico, copper became for Arizona. The Spaniards opened their first silver and copper mine, the Santa Rita, in western New Mexico in the early 1800s. That was followed by the Heintzelman mine in Tubac, Arizona, which employed eight hundred men by 1859. Then came the famous Clifton and Bisbee mines in the 1870s. Between 1838 and 1940, Arizona mines produced $3 billion in metal, most of it copper. Workers in the mines were overwhelmingly Mexicans, either natives to the territory or migrants recruited from across the border by labor contractors. “By the mid-1880s,” writes Chicano historian Rudy Acuña, “Chihuahuan farmers, after planting their

crops, traveled to eastern Arizona and New Mexico, working long hours and living in miserable conditions, returning home at harvest time.” 50

But the Mexican contribution to the Mexican economy was not limited to the fields and mines. Before the coming of the railroads, many teamsters and mercantile workers made their living in the Southwest. In the late 1860s, the Santa Fe Railroad opened, and the population of the ceded territories was swollen by the influx of settlers from the United States. As a result, Mexican influence on the region was significant, and the population figures might suggest.

The combination of mineral and agricultural production, plus the annexed Mexican lands, plus the Mexican population that migrated to the region, provided the century's western prosperity. That combinatorial effect, combined with the expansion of our country's electrical, automotive, and railroad industries, 51 Yet this historic Mexican economic and cultural influence on the region is evident in the daily lives of the people who live there now.

**ANGLO SETTLEMENTS HEAD SOUTH**

The Mexican annexations of 1836 to 1848 served to satisfy the expansionist schemes of some called for seizing more of Mexico's territory. Southern planters especially coveted the isthmus, where a half-dozen fledgling quests were made.

Perhaps the foremost representative of the expansionist era was William Walker. A Tennessee-born lawyer and adventurer, Walker was a man of many talents. He was a skilled soldier, a politician, and a heretic. Originally trained as a doctor, he was a man of many talents, including a pastrymaker and a politician. His career was marked by both success and failure. He died in 1853, a victim of his own ambitions and the ambitions of others.

Walker appeared in New Mexico in 1849 and quickly established himself as a prominent figure in the state's political landscape. He was known for his aggressive and sometimes violent behavior, which earned him the nickname of the "Swashbuckling General." His positions included governor, senator, and congressman, among others.

Despite his personal and political endeavors, Walker was ultimately unable to forge a lasting legacy in New Mexico. His legacy was largely overshadowed by the contributions of other leaders and figures who came to prominence in the state's history. Nevertheless, his influence and impact on the state's development cannot be overlooked.
crops, traveled to eastern Arizona and local mines, working for day wages, returning home at harvest time.”

But the Mexican contribution to American prosperity didn’t stop there. Before the coming of the railroads, Mexican workers provided the main teamster workforce in the Southwest, moving goods across the territory in long mule caravans. And after the railroads arrived, they were the section hands and laborers who maintained them. While the Mexican population of the ceded territories was only 116,000 in 1848, it grew steadily after the war as hundreds of thousands more came and went between Mexico and the United States as migrant laborers, which meant that Mexican influence on the region was far greater than the early population figures might suggest.

The combination of mineral and animal wealth the Anglos found on the annexed Mexican lands, plus the Mexican laborers Anglo businessmen recruited to extract it, provided the underpinnings of twentieth-century western prosperity. That combination made possible the vast expansion of our country’s electrical, cattle, sheep, mining, and railroad industries. Yet this historic Mexican contribution has been virtually obliterated from popular frontier history, replaced by the enduring myth of the lazy, shiftless Mexican.

ANGLO SETTLERS HEAD SOUTH OF THE BORDER

The Mexican annexations of 1836 to 1848, however, were not sufficient to satisfy the expansionist schemes of Manifest Destiny proponents. Some called for seizing more of Mexico’s mineral-laden northern territory. Southern planters especially coveted the tropical Central America isthmus, where a half-dozen fledgling republics seemed ripe for conquest.

Perhaps the foremost representative of those expansionists was William Walker. A Tennessee-born lawyer and journalist, Walker hardly fit the image of the swashbuckling mercenary dictator he would become. Originally trained as a doctor, he was soft-spoken, a mere five feet, five inches tall, and weighed a paltry 120 pounds. After a stint as a reporter in San Francisco, Walker appeared in November 1853 in Baja California with a small band of armed followers. From there, he launched an uprising in Mexico’s Sonora province, proclaimed the Republic of Sonora, and named himself its president. Within a few weeks, Mexican troops chased him and his ragtag followers back to the United States, where federal agents arrested him for violating U.S. neutrality laws. His auda-
icious uprising made him an instant folk hero of the expansionist press, and all the newspapers reported extensively on his trial and eventual acquittal.

After the trial, Walker shifted his attention farther south, to the little-known isthmus of Central America that had broken away from Mexico in 1823 and formed a loose confederation called the United Provinces of Central America. A few British and North American businessmen, fired by dreams of building a canal across the isthmus to link the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, had started visiting the region shortly after its independence.\(^{52}\) In 1838, the confederation splintered into five independent countries, and the leaders of those countries were soon locked in intermittent shooting wars with each other. By then, the U.S. government, already concerned about a future canal, reached agreement with Colombia on the need to build that waterway through Panama, which was then a Colombian province. That agreement, cemented in a treaty in 1846, stipulated that the United States would guarantee the neutrality of any future canal.\(^{53}\)

The California Gold Rush, however, created an instant demand for a faster route to the Pacific Coast. The only sea route at the time, from New York to San Francisco around Cape Horn, took four months, and the narrow Central American isthmus offered the best bet for cutting that time dramatically.

Two competing New York merchant groups had recently secured contracts from Congress to carry mail between California and the East Coast by steamship lines and then overland through Panama. The U.S. Mail Steamship Company, operated by George Law and Marshall O. Roberts, had the Atlantic portion of the route, while William H. Aspinwall’s Pacific Mail Steamship Company had the western portion. Using a generous $900,000 annual subsidy Congress allotted them for the mail, the companies decided to transport people as well. Unfortunately, the part of the trip that involved an arduous fifty-mile trek by mule train across Panama’s jungle was too forbidding for the average person heading for California. So Aspinwall negotiated a deal with the Colombian government to build a railroad across the isthmus. His Panama Railroad took six years and $2 million to build, and it claimed four thousand lives, most of them West Indian and Chinese laborers whom Aspinwall imported. Once completed, however, the line paid for itself three times over within the first few years of operation.\(^{54}\)

While Aspinwall was building his line in Panama, Cornelius Vanderbilt, perhaps the most ruthless baron of his age, moved to carve out a quicker competing route through Nicaragua. Vanderbilt and Joseph L. White, a former congressman, founded the Company, a combination steamship and railroad operation sooner than Aspinwall’s railroad. The $5 million the first year, with profits of be

Aspinwall’s railroad and Vanderbilt’s inadequacy for U.S. merchants who want goods to travel on ships. Most engineers favored a canal route through Nicaragua. Shorter, Nicaragua’s was easier to build, corporate the natural waterways of the Managua.

As a result, Nicaragua started to draw Washington politicians and Anglo fortunates ashore to defend Vanderbilt’s company, and in 1854, the navy bomb of San Juan/Greytown over another firm company and local authorities.\(^{55}\)

Colonel Henry L. Kinney, a land speculator and Rangers, arrived in 1854. Kinney immediately of Nicaraguan land but trader Samuel had been “granted” the land in 1839 by the government, as might be expected, refused to 70 percent of its territory. Shareholders land and Mint Company included U.S. and Warren Faben, President Pierce’s Greytown.\(^{56}\)

A New York Times correspondent wrote: “Central American fluential position in the family of nation’s climate and soil are availed of by a rac plant the tainted, mongrel and decaying fully.”\(^{58}\)

To enforce his dubious claim, Kinney launched a revolt against the government of Vanderbilt, anxious that the land dispute pressured the British and U.S. government to be

Despite Kinney’s setback, Yankee influence. More than six hundred North America 1855.\(^{59}\) By then, England, still the most powerful, it would challenge any U.S. project. That year, the two nations
White, a former congressman, founded the Nicaragua Accessory Transit Company, a combination steamship and railroad line that began operation sooner than Aspinwall's railroad. The Nicaragua company grossed $5 million the first year, with profits of between 20 and 40 per cent.55

Aspinwall's railroad and Vanderbilt's steamship line, however, were inadequate for U.S. merchants who wanted a canal through which their goods could travel on ships. Most engineers and politicians in the country favored a canal route through Nicaragua. While a Panama route was shorter, Nicaragua's was easier to build, they argued, since it could incorporate the natural waterways of the San Juan River and giant Lake Managua.

As a result, Nicaragua started to draw increasing attention from both Washington politicians and Anglo fortune hunters. In 1853, U.S. sailors went ashore to defend Vanderbilt's company in a dispute with the local government, and in 1854, the navy bombarded and destroyed the town of San Juan/Greytown over another financial dispute between a U.S. company and local authorities.56

Colonel Henry L. Kinney, a land speculator and founder of the Texas Rangers, arrived in 1854. Kinney immediately purchased 22 million acres of Nicaraguan land from trader Samuel H. Shepherd, who claimed he had been "granted" the land in 1839 by the Miskito king. The Nicaraguan government, as might be expected, refused to recognize Kinney's claim to 70 percent of its territory. Shareholders in Kinney's Central American Land and Mint Company included U.S. attorney general Caleb Cushing and Warren Faben, President Pierce's commercial agent in San Juan/Greytown.57

A New York Times correspondent who lauded Kinney's colonization scheme back then wrote, "Central America is destined to occupy an influential position in the family of nations, if her advantages of location, climate and soil are availed of by a race of 'Northmen' who shall supplant the tainted, mongrel and decaying race which now curses it so fearfully."58

To enforce his dubious claim, Kinney armed some followers and launched a revolt against the government, but he was forced to flee after Vanderbilt, anxious that the land dispute not affect his own investments, pressured the British and U.S. governments to oppose his claims.

Despite Kinney's setback, Yankee influence in Nicaragua kept growing. More than six hundred North Americans were living in the country by 1855.59 By then, England, still the most powerful nation in the world, made clear that it would challenge any U.S. plans to dominate a transoceanic canal project. That year, the two nations negotiated the Clayton-Bulwer
Treaty, in which they agreed to jointly guarantee the neutrality of any future canal, and to refrain from occupying or controlling any of the Central American countries. Neither nation, of course, bothered to consult any of the governments in the region affected by the treaty.

But politicians and merchants weren’t the only ones suddenly eyeing Nicaragua. Walker, undaunted by his Mexican fiasco, set sail from San Francisco in 1855 with a band of fifty-six mercenaries he had recruited, supposedly to fight for a faction in Nicaragua’s continuing civil war. Shortly after arriving, Walker rebelled against the faction that employed him, seized control of the country, and, in one of the most bizarre episodes of Latin American history, declared himself president.

During his time in office, Walker reinstituted slavery, declared English a coequal language with Spanish, and ordered all lands to be registered. The latter decree facilitated passing many land titles into the hands of Anglo American settlers. Both Walker and the Nicaraguans, however, were actually pawns in a nefarious high-stakes contest for control of the region’s commerce by competing groups of U.S. investors. A group of Transit Company officials who had temporarily wrested control of the shipping line from Vanderbilt helped finance Walker’s army, while George Law, owner of the U.S. steamship line in Panama and Vanderbilt’s chief competitor, supplied Walker with guns. In order to defeat his economic rivals, Vanderbilt bankrolled the allied armies of Costa Rica, Salvador, and Honduras, which defeated and routed Walker in 1857.

Some have attempted to dismiss the Walker adventure as a minor footnote of American history. But during his two years of psychotic and racist rule, more than eleven thousand North Americans settled in Nicaragua, equal to one-third of the total white population in that country at the time. Most of those immigrants were Walker supporters and anywhere from three thousand to five thousand joined his occupying army. In this country, thousands rallied in the major cities to cheer Walker as a hero. A Broadway musical based on his exploits became an overnight hit; the Pierce administration sanctioned his outright aggression by recognizing his government; and the Democratic Party convention of 1856, influenced by Walker’s actions, nominated James Buchanan, a more rabid proponent of Manifest Destiny, over his opponent Pierce.

As president, Buchanan proceeded to welcome Walker to the White House after his expulsion from Nicaragua. By then, a thousand U.S. citizens had been killed in Walker’s War—a death toll far greater than the Spanish-American or Persian Gulf wars. Walker made two more unsuccessful attempts to return to power in Nicaragua. On his final try in 1860, he landed in Honduras, where local officials executed him.

By then, Manifest Destiny and the fever rapidly eclipsed by the conflict over slavery had run North and South. Following the end of the American canal route, the Central American Walker episode, refused to consider the project, and Walker assured that Colombia and Nicaragua that involved American control over the Panama Railroad.

So Central America turned to Europe, seeking to replicate the Suez Canal, secured Colombia’s interest in the U.S. plan for the project, but De Lesseps’s company withered in the biggest financial scandal in history. Finished canal abruptly ended, the West Indian colonies of Colón and Panama City.

De Lesseps’s failure left the U.S.-owned canal as the fastest means of transportation across Central America in the nineteenth century, the railroad remained the main route in Latin America and the Colombian government. The trip by ocean steamer and the canal was the fastest means of transport between 1869, when the first transcontinental Panama line also became a constant source of revenue for the United States, and in the same decade, Santo Oteri and the West Indians from New Orleans set up banana plantations in Honduras and Guatemala. Their firm
1860, he landed in Honduras, where local soldiers promptly captured and executed him.

By then, Manifest Destiny and the fervor for expansion were being rapidly eclipsed by the conflict over slavery and the war between the North and South. Following the end of the Civil War, the triumphant northern industrialists turned their attention to buying up the western frontier and building a railroad system to connect that frontier to the rest of the country. While a few U.S. policy makers still dreamed of a Central American canal route, the Central American leaders, bitter over the Walker episode, refused to consider the project for decades. The memory of Walker assured that Colombia and Nicaragua would balk at any project that involved American control over their territory.

So Central America turned to Europe instead. In 1880, Frenchman Ferdinand de Lesseps, seeking to replicate his triumph in building the Suez Canal, secured Colombia’s permission to begin work on a Panama waterway. Like Vanderbilt’s line through Nicaragua and the Panama railroad, the De Lesseps project opted to use West Indian blacks as imported laborers. The French transported fifty thousand blacks to work on the project, but De Lesseps’s company collapsed in 1889, engulfing Europe in the biggest financial scandal in history. When all work on the half-finished canal abruptly ended, the West Indian workers were left stranded. As a result, West Indian colonies suddenly sprouted in the towns of Colón and Panama City.63

De Lesseps’s failure left the U.S.-owned Panama Railroad as the only means of transportation across Central America. Throughout the nineteenth century, the railroad remained the single largest U.S. investment in Latin America and the Colombian government’s prime source of revenue. The trip by ocean steamer and the Panama Railroad continued to be the fastest means of transport between the two American coasts until 1869, when the first transcontinental railroad began operating. The Panama line also became a constant source of conflict, as U.S. troops intervened more than a dozen times before 1900 to enforce American control or protect the line from warring Colombian factions.64

For the rest of the nineteenth century, railroads and banana growing became the prime interest of the Anglo merchants who settled on the isthmus. In 1870, Charles Frank, a steward on the Pacific Mail Steamship Line, began growing bananas on land the Panama Railroad owned. During the same decade, Santo Oteri and the Machecua brothers, Italian immigrants from New Orleans, set up banana plantations along the coast of Honduras and Guatemala. Their firm eventually became the Standard
Fruit Company. In 1871, Costa Rica’s president granted tycoon Henry Meiggs Keith the contract to build a railroad from the capital of San José to the country’s undeveloped Atlantic Coast. Keith, like others before him, imported thousands of West Indian and Chinese laborers for construction. He and his nephew, Minor Keith, eventually branched out into fruit growing. By 1886, their Tropical Trading and Transport Company was shipping twenty thousand tons of bananas annually to the United States.

Far more important than Central America, however, was Mexico. The reign of dictator Porfirio Díaz (1876–1911) turned the country into a paradise for foreign investors. By the time Díaz was overthrown, U.S. investment in Mexico totaled $2 billion. Led by the Rockefellers, Guggenheim, E. H. Harriman, and J. P. Morgan, North Americans ended up controlling all the country’s oil, 76 percent of its corporations, and 96 percent of its agriculture. The Hearst family, whose newspapers and magazines routinely lauded Díaz, owned a ranch with a million cattle in Chihuahua. U.S. trade with Mexico, which amounted to only $7 million in 1860, jumped tenfold by 1908. By then, the United States was consuming 80 percent of Mexico’s exports and supplying 66 percent of its imports.

THE LURE OF THE GREATER ANTILLES

The same quest for trade, commerce, and conquest that propelled Americans into Mexico and Central America brought them to the Greater Antilles. As early as 1809, Thomas Jefferson had been eyeing Cuba. “The annexation of Cuba to our federal republic will be indispensable to the continuance and integrity of the Union itself,” wrote John Quincy Adams in 1823. But U.S. leaders were unwilling to risk a war with the British navy over the island. They preferred allowing a weak Spain to keep control of Cuba rather see it independent or under the sovereignty of another nation. As Martin Van Buren expressed it, “No attempt should be made in that island to throw off the yoke of Spanish independence, the first effect of which would be the sudden emancipation of a numerous slave population, the result of which could not be very sensibly felt upon the adjacent shores of the United States.”

Spain, after all, permitted North Americans to invest in Cuban property, and that was the most important matter. By 1823, as many as fifty North Americans owned plantations valued at $3 million just in the province of Matanzas. Those planters soon joined with Cuban criollos and Spanish landlords to seek annexation to the United States. Planter D. B. Woodbury and merchant William F. Safford founded the city of Cárdenas in 1828 as a port to export sugar there that sections became virtual North guage is more common there than in any itor to Matanzas in 1859. As early as 184 $100 million outright for the island. For upped the offer to $130 million, without s. While U.S. presidents sought to buy sought to capture it with guns, just as th Nicaragua. Between 1848 and 1851, thrattacked the island. Each was led by Narcis army officer who favored annexation to three attempts, North Americans made six hundred who attacked Cárdenas in 1860.

Railroad construction in the late 1850s engineers and mechanics to the island from the North did not slow until the War of Independence, known as the Ten native Cubans and Yankee settlers to fle

The North Americans returned as soon They rapidly dominated sugar production, other island industries, Bethlehem and manganese, and nickel subsidiaries, and than $50 million by 1890. By then, 94 G were going to the United States. Amor Dow Baker, a Massachusetts captain wh bananas from Jamaica to the United St ping agent Andrew Preston in 1885 to Fuit Company. Their firm was importin annually before the turn of the century.

So important did Cuba become to the it already accounted for nearly one-for merce. On the eve of the Spanish-A Spanish colony in name only.

A similar pattern developed in the D independence in 1804, Haitian armies in paniola and freed the Dominican slavesal elite. The occupation eventually sp drove out the Haitians and led to the public in 1844. The first emissary from V the following year. Hogan immediately
Cárdenas in 1828 as a port to export sugar. So many U.S. citizens moved there that sections became virtual North American enclaves. "Our language is more common there than in any other Cuban city," wrote a visitor to Matanzas in 1859. As early as 1848, President Polk offered Spain $100 million outright for the island. Four years later, President Pierce upped the offer to $130 million, without success.

While U.S. presidents sought to buy Cuba, American adventurers sought to capture it with guns, just as they did with Florida, Texas, and Nicaragua. Between 1848 and 1851, three filibustering expeditions attacked the island. Each was led by Narciso López, a rich former Spanish army officer who favored annexation to the United States, and in all three attempts, North Americans made up most of the combatants. Of six hundred who attacked Cárdenas in 1849, for instance, only five were Cuban.

Railroad construction in the late 1850s brought thousands of Anglo engineers and mechanics to the island. This flow of immigrant labor from the North did not slow until the early 1870s, when the first Cuban War of Independence, known as the Ten Years' War, forced thousands of native Cubans and Yankee settlers to flee.

The North Americans returned as soon as the war ended, however. They rapidly dominated sugar production and established beachheads in other island industries. Bethlehem and Pennsylvania Steel started iron, manganese, and nickel subsidiaries, and U.S. investments grew to more than $50 million by 1890. By then, 94 percent of Cuba's sugar exports were going to the United States. Among the new arrivals was Lorenzo Dow Baker, a Massachusetts captain who had initiated a steady trade of bananas from Jamaica to the United States. Baker joined Boston shipping agent Andrew Preston in 1885 to form a new company, the Boston Fruit Company. Their firm was importing 16 million bunches of bananas annually before the turn of the century.

So important did Cuba become to the United States that by the 1880s it already accounted for nearly one-fourth of our nation's world commerce. On the eve of the Spanish-American War, the island was a Spanish colony in name only.

A similar pattern developed in the Dominican Republic. After Haiti's independence in 1804, Haitian armies invaded the eastern end of Hispaniola and freed the Dominican slaves, but they also oppressed the local elite. The occupation eventually sparked a popular rebellion that drove out the Haitians and led to the founding of the Dominican Republic in 1844. The first emissary from Washington, John Hogan, arrived the following year. Hogan immediately fixed his sights on the military
potential of spectacular Samana Bay in the northeast. Samana, he reported back home, is “capable of providing protection to all the navies of the world.” Dominican president Pedro Santana negotiated an initial deal to provide the bay as a coal refueling station to the U.S. Navy. Santana even broached the idea of the U.S. annexing his country, but opposition in both nations quickly scuttled the scheme.

Next to arrive was William L. Cazneau, who had been involved in Texas secession and later backed Walker in Nicaragua. Cazneau, a fervent expansionist, resurrected the annexation scheme. He won over William Seward, the secretary of state for both Andrew Johnson and Ulysses S. Grant. At Seward’s suggestion, Grant publicly announced he favored it, and the white Dominican elite, who were desperate to safeguard against another Haitian invasion, welcomed his offer.

The rest of the Caribbean, however, was too alive with revolutionary ferment to accept annexation quietly. Puerto Rican and Cuban patriots were locked in battle against Spanish rule, while popular movements were in open rebellion against conservative oligarchies in Haiti and the Dominican Republic. When the Haitian rebels triumphed in 1869, they offered their capital of Port-au-Prince as a safe haven to all Caribbean democrats. Among those who accepted the offer were Puerto Rico’s Ramón Emeterio Betances and Dominican generals Gregorio Luperon and José Cabral.

In the midst of all this ferment, Grant signed his annexation treaty with Dominican dictator Buenaventura Báez. Grant’s idea was to turn the Caribbean country into a colonizing venture for any American blacks who were dissatisfied with the post–Civil War South. The treaty outraged patriots throughout the Antilles, who saw it as the beginning of direct American control of their islands. When he learned of it, Luperon prepared to invade his homeland from Haiti to overthrow Báez. The dictator appealed for U.S. help and Grant ordered the navy to “resist any effort to invade Dominican territory by land or sea.” Grant’s navy may have been all-powerful in the Caribbean, but the president had overestimated his strength at home. The Senate, still dominated by post–Civil War Reconstruction radicals, did not share his dreams for a Caribbean empire. Led by Massachusetts abolitionist Charles Sumner, chair of the Foreign Relations Committee, it defeated Grant’s treaty in 1870.

The treaty’s failure, however, did not deter American planters, who had suddenly discovered another weak, underdeveloped Latin American country that was ripe for exploiting. Before 1850, the bulk of Dominican trade had been with Europe, largely exports of tobacco, cocoa, and coffee. That changed rapidly as Spanish planters relocated to the country. Independence. The newcomers, with their technology, turned sugar into the lucrative crop overnight. Not far behind the transplanted Italian, and North American planters. A son William first acquired the Consuelo in the late 1880s. Then, in 1893, the family, which would become one of the largest sugar growers, turned heavy industrialists, first from Wall Street bankers, and filled his warehouses with the sugar’s products.

By the time of his death in 1896, the United States had economic possession of the United States.

The pattern in U.S.–Latin American relations continued. During the first seventy-five years of America’s leadership, the Floridas, then Texas, and Cuba, followed with consternation as Nicaragua, of López and his mercenaries, the arrogant way North America treated it, from the racist labels those Americans placed the U.S. in the U.S. popular press; they gave way to massive economic control, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, and colonies, and much of Central America of an expanding U.S. empire.

Anglo Americans, on the other hand, remained benign. Their view of the capture of historian Frederick Jackson of the frontier the essence of North American progress. “American social development began then, 1893,” has been continually written.” That frontier was for Turner a “friendly and civilization.” He believed that “the
and coffee. That changed rapidly after three thousand Cuban and Spanish planters relocated to the country during the first Cuban War of Independence. The newcomers, with their advanced steam-driven mill technology, turned sugar into the leading Dominican crop almost overnight. Not far behind the transplanted Cuban planters were British, Italian, and North American planters. Americans Alexander Bass and his son William first acquired the Consuelo Mill in San Pedro de Macorís in the late 1880s. Then, in 1893, the family established the Central Romana, which would become one of the largest plantations in the Western Hemisphere. As the sugar crop expanded, so did the importance of the American market. By 1882, less than forty years after independence, half of all Dominican trade was with the United States. The arriving Americans found a ready benefactor and ally in General Ulises Heureaux, the country’s dictator from 1886 until 1899, when he was assassinated by Liberal Party rebels. During his reign, Heureaux reduced tariffs for U.S. imports, concluded numerous secret deals that benefited U.S. sugar growers, borrowed heavily abroad, first from Dutch financiers and later from Wall Street bankers, and filled his jails with anyone who opposed his policies. By the time of his death, his nation had become another economic possession of the United States.

The pattern in U.S.–Latin American relations by now was unmistakable. During the first seventy-five years of their independence, Latin America’s leaders had watched incredulously as their northern neighbor annexed first the Floridas, then Texas, then another huge chunk of Mexico. They followed with consternation the exploits of Walker in Nicaragua, of López and his mercenaries in Cuba; they were aghast at the arrogant way North American leaders treated them in diplomatic circles, at the racist labels those leaders used to describe Latin Americans in the U.S. popular press; they watched fearfully as annexation schemes gave way to massive economic penetration, so that by century’s end, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Spain’s Cuban and Puerto Rican colonies, and much of Central America had become economic satellites of an expanding U.S. empire.

Anglo Americans, on the other hand, saw a radically different and more benign canvas. Their view of the country’s growth was perhaps best captured by historian Frederick Jackson Turner, who saw in the conquest of the frontier the essence of North American democracy, individualism, and progress. “American social development,” Turner said in a famous speech in 1893, “has been continually beginning over again on the frontier.” That frontier was for Turner the “meeting point between savagery and civilization.” He believed that “this fluidity of American life, this ex-
pansion westward with its new opportunities, its continuous touch with the simplicity of primitive society, furnish the forces dominating American character.” Turner, however, focused exclusively on how European settlers confronted Native Americans and a virgin land. His analysis mentioned nothing of Mexicans and other Latin Americans encountered on the frontier, either as settlers or immigrant laborers, or of their contribution to shaping our national character.

Moreover, this view of the frontier as a democratizing element obscures how western expansion permitted violence to flourish against outsiders as a solution to political problems. Whenever a politician such as Sam Houston or Davy Crockett found his rise barred by opponents at home, he simply packed his bags, conquered some new territory, and created a state where he and his allies could dominate. The frontier thus became an outlet for violence and corruption, for those within American society who wanted the fewest rules and least control.

U.S. territorial expansion did not climax with the closing of the western frontier; rather, it reached its culmination with the Spanish-American War of 1898. The mysterious explosion of the USS Maine, together with the prowar fever created by Hearst and other expansionist publishers, convinced President McKinley to seek a declaration of war from Congress. But McKinley balked at recognizing the Cuban rebel army’s provisional government as a partner in that war. “Such recognition,” McKinley told Congress, “is not necessary in order to enable the United States to intervene and pacify the Island.”

Cuban patriots, who were on the verge of victory after thirty years of proindependence struggle, had other ideas. “If intervention shall take place on that basis, and the United States shall land an armed force on Cuban soil,” warned Horatio S. Rubens, a lawyer for the Cuban resistance, “we shall treat that force as an enemy to be opposed.”

Apropos the Cubans had a combat-hardened army of thirty thousand, Congress rebuffed McKinley and opposed any intervention that did not recognize Cuba’s right to independence. Led by Senator Henry M. Teller of Colorado, Congress adopted a joint resolution declaring war that renounced any U.S. “intention to exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction, or control over said island except for the pacification thereof.”

Thanks to the Teller Amendment, the Cuban rebels welcomed the U.S. invasion and provided critical support to General William R. Shafter’s U.S. troops. But once on Cuban soil, Shafter and his soldiers, mostly southern white volunteers, treated the black Cuban soldiers with utter contempt. “Those people are no more fit for self-government than gunpowder is for hell,” Shafter would say. After the capture of Santiago in the key battle of the war, Shafter barred Cuban leaders from assuming control of their government.

A line of historians, beginning with the study American Business and the Spanish-American War, insisted that McKinley and the U.S. businees unwillingly into the war and into a colonial empire. expansion intellectuals like Roosevelt, Mahan, and Henry Adams. In The Rise of the Strongman Schlesinger asserts that Wall Street acted over war. Those historians somehow downplay the story of twentieth-century U.S. expansion such as Martin Sklar, Walter LaFeber, and James T. Kline. They demonstrate that we were demanding rapid expansion into America. Foner, in particular, points out that Rockefeller, and Morgan all turned aiding Congress’s declaration.

Spain, a never a match for the rising United States, had long sought: plopping Cuba, the juiciest palm, and securing Anglo American do the next century. The Treaty of Paris that the United States direct control not on Rico, Guam, and the Philippines.

The end of the war brought a new harvest. March 30, 1899, banana merchants B Boston Fruit Company with Minor King. They called the combined firm the United Fruit Company. United Fruit owned more than 230,000 acres and 112 miles of railroad. More than 90% of the United Fruit Company’s stock was held by U.S. investors. The Spanish borderlands had been a century would reveal the price of that
the key battle of the war, Shafter barred Cuban soldiers from the city, refused to allow their general, Calixto García, to attend the Spanish surrender, and permitted the old Spanish colonial authorities to remain in charge of civilian government.92

A long line of historians, beginning with Julius W. Pratt in his 1934 study, *American Business and the Spanish American War*, have since insisted that McKinley and the U.S. business establishment were dragged unwillingly into the war and into a colonial empire by Hearst and by pro-expansion intellectuals like Roosevelt, Henry Cabot Lodge, Alfred T. Mahan, and Henry Adams. In *The Rise of Modern America*, Arthur M. Schlesinger asserts that Wall Street actually favored peace with Spain over war. Those historians somehow divorce the war from the entire story of nineteenth-century U.S. expansionism in Latin America. Others, such as Martin Sklar, Walter La Feber, and Philip Foner, offer less idealized accounts. They demonstrate that key sections of American business were demanding rapid expansion into the markets of Asia and Latin America. Foner, in particular, points to how corporate titans Astor, Rockefeller, and Morgan all turned avidly prowar in the months preceding Congress’s declaration.93 Spain, a teetering, stagnant power, was never a match for the rising United States. Its defeat finally achieved what Jefferson, John Quincy Adams, and the other Founding Fathers had long sought: plopping Cuba, the juiciest plum of the Caribbean, into U.S. palms, and securing Anglo American domination over Latin America for the next century. The Treaty of Paris that formally ended the war gave the United States direct control not only of Cuba but also over Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines.

The end of the war brought a new wave of Yankee companies. On March 30, 1899, banana merchants Baker and Preston merged their Boston Fruit Company with Minor Keith’s Central American holdings. They called the combined firm the United Fruit Company. At its inception, United Fruit owned more than 230,000 acres throughout the region and 112 miles of railroad.94 More than any other U.S. company, United Fruit became the twentieth-century symbol of U.S. imperialism. It would evolve into a corporate octopus, controlling the livelihood of hundreds of thousands and toppling governments at will.

The Spanish borderlands had been brought to their knees. The next century would reveal the price of that conquest.