

Manifest destiny



Manifest destiny was a widely held belief in the 19th century United States that its settlers were destined to expand across North America. There are three basic themes to manifest destiny:

- The special virtues of the American people and their institutions
- The mission of the United States to redeem and remake the west in the image of agrarian America
- An irresistible destiny to accomplish this essential duty

Historian William E. Weeks has noted that three key themes were usually touched upon by advocates of manifest destiny:

- the **virtue** of the American people and their institutions;
- the **mission** to spread these institutions, thereby redeeming and remaking the world in the image of the United States;
- the **destiny** under God to do this work

Legacy and consequences

The belief in an American mission to promote and defend democracy throughout the world, as expounded by Thomas Jefferson and his "Empire of Liberty", and continued by Abraham Lincoln, Woodrow Wilson and George W. Bush, continues to have an influence on American political ideology.