

## Week 1.1- Western Expansion

- ❖ Westward expansion
  - Unblemished grandeur
  - People went on geographical expeditions to survey and paint the landscapes of the west
- ❖ The promise of the west
  - Expansionist view, “manifest destiny” is the idea that the west was given to Americans by god and thus ours as Americans, our responsibility to take advantage of it and make it ours
  - A critical part of what it is to be an American
  - The first settlers into the west represents the holy family
  - The idea of bringing railroads into the west and civilization
  - Appealing to people because land was untarnished by warfare
  - During early months after war the west brought more opportunities for families
- ❖ The homestead act
  - Passed in 1862
  - Could purchase this land for very little money, but you had to live on it and improve it for 5 years
  - The general sizes of the land purchased were generally not a sufficient amount to actually make profit.
  - Did not discriminate on the color of skin, only on how much you could afford
- ❖ Wagons and traveling
  - Wagons were best form of travel, and
  - Malaria, yellow fever, poor cooked food, and Indians hurt travelers
  - Everything had to fit inside a fairly small wagon including (tools for farms, food, spare parts)
  - Most people traveled in large numbers because they thought it would protect them from all the earths elements
- ❖ Squatters
  - People would “squat” on their land until they could officially register for it
  - There wasn’t many trees to build things
- ❖ Settling out west
  - Labor was over bearing-life was too hard
  - Prosperity was key in surviving in the west
  - Sod houses were very common because there was an absence of trees
  - Women-vital parts of settling out west, they were physically needed to help harvest and help make prosperity
  - Everybody who was physically capable to do something, had to
- ❖ Education

- Most children traveled by horse back or mules to school
- Most didn't get an education because of poverty
- End resulting in a low class of whites
- ❖ Native Americans
  - Indians were seen as wards of the president
  - Indian lands were set aside in the west of the Mississippi river
  - Relentless hunting of buffalo threatened the tribes ways of life
  - Resulting in the Indian wars out west
  - Rights given to African Americans were not given to Indian
  - Apache Indians had the biggest war
  - Thousands more apaches were killed than American soldiers
  - "blood thirsty outlaws"
  - Buffalo hunt was a spiritually activity
- ❖ The ghost dance
  - The loss of buffalo and land, made Indians responded differently
  - 1890 experienced a spiritual vision, all the animals killed by white men and all Indian ancestors will return when a new earth is formed
  - Was a movement, where the Indians danced?
  - The U.S. army took it as a sign of an attack
- ❖ Daws severalty Act
  - No longer were Native Americans allowed to own land as a tribe.
  - Required to own land individually families, and live like European Americans
  - Indian children were forced to go to white school or boarding schools
  - Indians were left as a permanent under class
- ❖ The railroad and Chinese people
  - Trans continental railroad
  - Remarkable feat of engineering and physical labor
  - 12,000 Chinese laborers working under horrible labor
  - Chinese communities as a whole were the most successful immigrant stories
  - Chinese managed to settle without losing their heritage
- ❖ Railroad
  - Went east and west
  - Trains brought industrial opportunities to places all over the country
  - Western migration was profound after the civil war
- ❖ Chinese in the west
  - Most in the 1880s-1890s only to make money and to go home
  - Initially they worked in mines
  - Found themselves legally excluded in the mining acts in California and Colorado
  - Settled in communities along the California coast
  - They shrimped and fished
  - Gradually they brought their wives and children from china

- Intense hostility grew between white western settlers and Chinese immigrants
- ❖ Chinese exclusion Act
  - First act against a specific race
  - Became permanent until \_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ Mining in the west
  - One of the industries that paralleled nicely with the imagine of the west
  - Silver mining made the most money for corporation
  - In mining towns the men greatly outnumbered the women
  - There wasn't enough wives and families and children
- ❖ Ranching
  - The only way to make profit was to sell your land to ranchers and then work for them
  - The earliest ranchers were Mexicans and then replaced by Americans herdsmen
  - Became big businesses for cattle companies
  - Cattle ranching adapted very well to the railroads
- ❖ The imagined west
  - The American cowboy and his horse
  - A type of American, what it meant to be an American
  - This west was populated with cowboys and Indians
  - It never really existed
  - The history of native Americans were vanishing
- ❖ Out west
  - Artists and journalists were some of the first people out west
  - Publishing their own personal encounters of the happenings of out west
  - Were the inspiration for tons of western themed movies