Virginia presidents of this era, Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe, were all ardent expansionists. Each openly or tacitly supported military operations and filibustering expeditions designed to pry all or part of the Gulf Coast from Spain. In 1819, Spain bowed to the inevitable and signed a treaty surrendering East and West Florida to the United States in exchange for various considerations, including a promise of greater security for its remaining territory in North America.

Although the broad outlines of this story are well known to specialists, the details lie scattered in a host of monographs, articles, and popular works published over the last seventy-five years. The strength of this work is that it draws these threads together and presents them in a single, compact book. Unfortunately, the work rarely rises above the level of summary. The authors rely mainly on secondary sources and printed primary sources. As a result, they must speculate on some issues that a more thorough examination of the sources almost surely would have clarified. The authors' failure to mine fully the papers of Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe and the war, state, and navy departments is particularly puzzling since these collections have been microfilmed and thus are widely available.

Readers will find this work a serviceable overview of American expansion into the Gulf Coast region, but a definitive and compelling account based on a thorough review of the abundant source material remains to be written.

DONALD R. HICKEY, professor of history at Wayne State College in Nebraska, is the author of The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict (1989) and is currently working on a companion volume on the Quasi-War, America's undeclared naval war with France in the late 1790s.

Manifest Destiny and Empire: American Antebellum Expansionism.

This collection of Walter Prescott Webb Memorial Lectures, sponsored by the University of Texas at Arlington, focuses on the sources of mid-nineteenth-century United States imperialism. Some of the essays raise interesting questions; others are simple United States-bashing, now so fashionable as to be trite. The collection is introduced by the distinguished historian Robert W. Johannsen, who also provides, given the title of the collection, a crucially important essay on "The Meaning of Manifest Destiny," linking it to the distinctive political discourse of the day rather than to the common-sense rhetoric of the middle class. Romanticism figured strongly in this discourse, which linked Whigs, Democrats, southerners, and even Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas as strange rhetorical bedfellows.
John M. Belohlavek chastises lawyer Caleb Cushing for trying to be on both sides of the expansion question at once. Since Cushing was a lawyer, this should not surprise anyone. Nor should Cushing's Newberyport statement that "men, nations, races, may, must, will perish . . . " be surprising, because it is true, as every serious historian will attest; immortality is left to the gods, and Cushing was not one of them. Likewise it is no news that George Catlin and Henry Thoreau opposed westward expansion (despite the famous quotation from Thoreau to the effect that "westward I go free") though Thomas R. Hietala appears to think it is.

Samuel J. Watson's piece on the role of professional army officers such as John E. Wool, Zachary Taylor, and Winfield Scott in preventing filibusters into Canada in the pre-Mexican War period is contradicted by Robert E. May in his concluding essay, "Manifest Destiny's Filibusters." Nonetheless, Watson's discussion of Whig political views and the disciplined restraint of the professional military with regard to expansion helps put to rest the assumption that the military always start the wars. It is a valuable lesson.

By far the best essay in this collection is Sam W. Haynes's "Anglo-phobia and the Annexation of Texas: The Quest for National Security." He recognizes the threat that Britain, then the most powerful nation on earth, presented to an already fragmented United States. Many feared, and rightly so, that if Britain somehow gained control of Texas, it could control the world's cotton market and in so doing threaten the mills of the North as well as the planters of the South; and by playing off one against the other, it could disrupt the fragile Union. The cause of antislavery was the lever that could bring about this disruption, which it did later anyway. British control of Texas and California could also have threatened United States western expansion, which many policymakers regarded as a safety valve for northern worker discontent. As this reviewer wrote long ago in When the Eagle Screamed: The Romantic Horizon in American Diplomacy, Great Britain's machinations in regard to Texas, its war fleet off California, its efforts to control Hawaii as well as the China trade, its attempts to thwart American efforts at an Isthmian Canal via the Clayton Bulwer Treaty of 1850, and its fleet patrolling the Nicaraguan coast amounted to a policy now familiar to Americans who understand the Truman Doctrine of "containment." Haynes's essay, however, has two faults. By using the word "Anglophobia" he implies that Americans were irrational in their fears, and by failing to note the danger of the British Balkanization of North America—an imperial policy Great Britain pursued elsewhere on the globe, especially in the Middle East and the Balkans—he does not go far enough in analyzing the implications of Britain's potential threat to the United States at a critical time in its history. This line of inquiry needs
more study by American historians, but Haynes has shown the faint outlines that need to be filled in.

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Paul W. Gates's career as an historian opened with his first published article in 1931, when he was thirty, and apparently closed with his most recent book in 1991, when he was ninety. He became the acknowledged dean of historians of the United States public domain and in addition directed many students who became accomplished historians themselves. Among them are Allan and Margaret Bogue, who have rendered an important service by bringing together nine of Gates's essays in this collection. They also provide a biographical sketch, a list of Gates's books and essays, and a five-page "Memoir" by Gates himself on his work and his collaboration with his wife, Lillian Cowdell Gates. Gates's corpus is one of the most important in American historical scholarship in this century, and this book is both deserved and needed.

At first glance, one wonders why the editors did not include what they rightly call "probably the most influential article that [Gates] ever wrote," the 1936 American Historical Review essay called "The Homestead Act in an Incongruous Land System," or a segment from his monumental book, History of Public Land Law Development (1968). But the Bogues instead include Gates's own revisions and second thoughts of 1963 on the Homestead Act essay, which is even more worth reading, and they may have decided that the 1968 book is too massive to yield a representative abstract. They also include Gates's 1942 critique of speculators, who frustrated the frontier-egalitarian ideals he so favored; a 1957 essay on the sharp class divisions that existed on settlement frontiers and that the Turnerian tradition glossed over; and excerpts from The Wisconsin Pine Lands of Cornell University (1943) and Fifty Million Acres (1954), on how settlers took over Indian reserves in eastern Kansas.

One essay (now sounding quite Anglocentric) from Gates's extensive writings on California land disposal, so different from the Midwest's, appears here. In another Gates offers an analysis of the shift from Jeffersonian individualism to government regulation in land policy, and there is an outspoken article of 1985 in which Gates declared that "the West's greatest opponent is not colonialism . . .