



American Progress by John Gast, 1872

“And that claim is by the right of our manifest destiny to overspread and to possess the whole of the continent which Providence has given us for the development of the great experiment of liberty and federated self-government entrusted to us.”

- John L. O’Sullivan

The woman in the painting above represents America’s **manifest destiny** to overspread the entire continent, moving from the Ohio River Valley west across the Mississippi River and the Great Plains, over the Rocky Mountains, and on to the Pacific Ocean.

Questions

1. Why in the heck is she flying? What tone does this create?
2. What two items is she holding in her hand and why is each important?
3. Besides the items carried by the lady, what items of progress are being brought to the West via our overspreading of the continent?
4. Describe the appearance of the Native Americans? Are they pleased? Scared?
5. Why is the shading important in the painting? (Areas of light and dark....)