

## Answers Chapter Fourteen War and Peace

1. the Colt revolver
2. opportunity (land, freedom)
3. too far from coast; Comanches lived there
4. John Meusebach
5. many of them died along the way
6. as an aggressive act/ as an act of war
7. United States Senator from Texas
8. James K. Polk
9. they seemed “lawless” to him/ they were killing Mexicans
10. they gathered information, chased guerrillas, and formed “shock” troops
11. *los diablos Tejanos* (the Texas devils)
12. to march inland, capture the capital, and force the government to surrender
13. President Polk
14. because it resulted in the acquisition of the states of Texas, California, and the region in between those states, a very large amount of territory.

### **Discussion/Essay:**

1. This answer will be mainly an opinion. However, the one thing that can be said for sure is that Meusebach dealt with the Comanches differently than others had done. For the purposes of the treaty, the two peoples were considered as equals. Earlier attempts by white men focused on keeping the red man separated from the white, but Meusebach did no such thing. He assumed that the two groups would be living in proximity, mutually respecting one another.
2. The Texas Rangers were volunteers, part of the American tradition of the militia (such as the “Minutemen”). Their purpose was to protect settlers from harm, mainly from the

Indians, and also from Mexicans when they invaded sporadically during the Republic days. They were well-trained horsemen, often well-educated, who became truly effective with the invention of the Colt revolver.

The Texas Rangers were not “lawless” within the context of their own society. Jack Hays was mild-mannered and a respected “gentleman,” for example. But in the kill-or-be-killed situation on the Texas frontier, where putting Comanches in jail was not an option -- indeed, for practical purposes the Comanches were another *nation* -- the Texas Rangers became brutal by necessity. They were living in a state of *war*.

Some students may argue that the Texas Rangers became *too* brutal and too motivated by revenge, and these are valid considerations. The rule of law consists in doing what is right despite personal feelings or expediency, and surely fault could be found. But overall, they were men who were fighting the “bad guys,” and their spirit was nothing like the lawless spirit of the Moderators and Regulators, for example.

3. This is another opinion question. For a student taking the position that the U.S. could have won the war, there is certainly the possibility that it might have taken longer or cost more lives, but still have been won. However, the Rangers were involved at various critical points. For example, what would have happened at Monterrey without the Rangers in the vanguard of Worth’s column? Or, what would have happened to General Taylor if he had not been informed of Santa Anna’s location, strength, and movements? The issue of supplies for Scott’s men was getting critical as he attacked Mexico City, and Samuel Walker gave his life protecting the American flank. Even the fearsomeness of the Texas Rangers in the minds of the Mexicans may have had a psychological effect when it came time to talk peace, who knows? Since “Polk’s war” did not have universal support back in the U.S., it is doubtful that the war could have been sustained for a lengthy period of time. A longer, costlier war may not have been politically possible.

4. If the students have forgotten their American History, they might look up the term in Webster’s or a history book. Manifest Destiny is the doctrine that territorial expansion was the obvious “destiny” of the United States. Monroe had stated earlier that North America was closed to European colonization (he was not talking about immigration to an already-established nation). The practical motivation to expand to the Pacific was not just “greediness.” Until the U.S. obtained the lower half of the Oregon territory and the whole southwest from Mexico, there was a real possibility that some European power might form a new colony in those regions, a rival to the United States. In his time, Monroe could not really enforce his “doctrine.” But when the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed, the borders of the U.S. were more secure. There would be no “Canedy” in the West, as Andrew Jackson had feared.

5. Another part of “Manifest Destiny” involves the belief that American civilization was superior to anything else in the hemisphere. That attitude sounds arrogant, but it was probably correct, on both moral and practical grounds. If there was any “superiority” to American culture, it was largely because of the direct influence of the Scriptures on the people. This should be a humbling consideration, because it means that Americans themselves have never been “better” than other people. Houston saw “Manifest Destiny”

as part of the purposes of God. He called the ways of Providence “inscrutable,” that is, Houston was awed before the unfolding of events, not ascribing them to an innate superiority in the Anglo-Saxon race but instead to God, who had His own secret reasons for things. However, it is very possible that the glorification of the Anglo-Saxon race and the “Manifest Destiny” of the U.S. could have confirmed racism and pride in the hearts of those who already felt that way. Students may differ somewhat in their interpretation of Houston’s speech; however, it may be helpful to remind them that these statements need to be taken in context of other statements, such as Houston’s speech about the Mexican War, in which he generously takes the side of the Mexican people.