Journal of American Studies of Turkey
17 (2003) : 79-92

The Frontier Myth in Modern American Politics

Ole O. Moen

The Quest for Identity

The United States of America is a unique nation, a fact that no president fails to observe frequently in his speeches. This so-called American *exceptionalism* has many roots and manifestations, but one very important aspect of this uniqueness is the special brand of nationalism that glues this nation together, a kind of super-nationalism which is based not on common generic or cultural roots, but on a set of agreed-on values, a theoretical construct serving as a national adhesive constituting a broad national consensus. Consequently, there is a great need for and reliance on uniting symbols and metaphors as well as myths and legends to confirm and bolster these national values. And, as a natural corollary, there has always been—although at times latent—a fundamental fear of fragmentation in the nation.

Myth is one of the most abused terms in the English language. In daily parlance it often means a misconception—a misrepresentation of reality—in short a falsehood. Among anthropologists—who often base their work on studies of so-called "primitive cultures"—it means a way for people to explain their own past and make sense of their present position in the world. In this paper I will use a commonsensical definition of the word myth; that is, a term or concept used by people to understand their own world and justify their own actions. In a national context it means the kind of beliefs that people like to hold regarding their national experience and which help them perceive the international role of their country in a positive light. In practice, it means a lot of traditional baggage which is unquestionably and uncritically accepted as a truthful heritage and, although not necessarily verifiable as an objective truth—and actually sometimes even blatantly at variance with an objective record of the past—nonetheless is psychologically and subjectively true.

Because of the youthful state of the American nation, Americans have a great need of self-affirmation and reassurance. Like an insecure teenager who needs to be told at all times how fantastic he or she is, this youthful nation

is in constant need of praise for its performance as a member nation of the world community. And in the same way adolescents may cover up their insecurity by loud and swaggering behavior, so the United States at times resorts to a similar kind of overcompensation, which tends to annoy other nations.

Since the American notion of rebirth—of starting over again with a clean slate—virtually forbade the celebration of a non-American past, which was sinful baggage to be left behind in the Old World, Americans have gone in search of their roots outside America mainly in a roundabout fashion—often even furtively and with a strong sense of guilt—at least until the 1960s and 1970s, when the search for roots became an acceptable leisure activity. Nonetheless, the quest for identity driven by the question "who am I?" has been—along with the "loss of innocence"—the national theme par excellence in American literature, revealing this basic insecurity about one's identity.

Similarly, historians and social scientists have also been preoccupied with the question of national identity. The post-World War II years, especially the Consensus Era of the 1950s, was characterized by this search for unifying traditions which could explain the uniqueness of this Nation under God. Historian Henry Steele Commager wrote of *The American Mind* (1950), whereas sociologists David Riesman and his co-workers published *The Lonely Crowd: Individualism in American Life* (1953). David Potter saw American uniqueness as a result of affluence, in his *People of Plenty* (1954). Whereas Riesman detected a change in the national psyche—from inner-directedness to other-directedness, which was an American stamp on modern man—Potter in fact adapted to the postwar world Frederick Jackson Turner's message from the previous fin de siècle, both celebrating the frontier roots of individualism and unlimited resources. So both books mined the major repository of Americanness, Turner's *frontier thesis*, for mythic content.

The Frontier Thesis

When historian Frederick Jackson Turner launched his *frontier hypothesis* at the Columbian World Exposition in 1893, he not only changed the course of American historiography for the next generation, but in some respects he altered the self-image of the American nation forever. First, he affixed names and labels to notions that had been floating around for a long

time and, equally important, he defined the American national character; in short, he established firmly in the national psyche the idea of American exceptionalism. In the concluding page of his essay, Turner delineated the characteristic traits of the American mind as shaped by frontier conditions:

> The result is that to the frontier the American intellect owes its striking characteristics. That coarseness and strength combined with acuteness and inquisitiveness; that practical, inventive turn of mind, quick to find expedients; that masterful grasp of material things, lacking in the artistic but powerful to effect great ends; that restless, nervous energy; that dominant individualism, working for good and for evil, and withal that buoyancy and exuberance that come with freedom—these are the traits of the frontier, or traits called out elsewhere because of the existence of the frontier. (38)

Although Turner was careful to underline in his essay that he did not reject Herbert Baxter Adams' "Teutonic germ" theory of the origins of American democracy, but thought there had been an overemphasis on the European legacy, this caveat was largely overlooked as his theory was popularized and gained an enthusiastic acceptance by the American people in general. The redeeming effect of the American environment was celebrated as the main explanation of the uniqueness of the American national character: "The frontier is the line of most rapid and effective Americanization. [...] In the crucible of the frontier the immigrants were Americanized, liberated, and fused into a mixed race, English in neither nationality nor characteristics" (Turner 3-4, 23). Similarly, the fact that Turner's essay was a post-mortem statement on the closed frontier—and thus a pessimistic note for a future without the benevolent influence of the open frontier—was lost on the greater audience.[1] In fact, people generally tended to perceive the frontier as a uniquely American phenomenon that had put its stamp on the nation for all times.

And this is perhaps the most important effect of the frontier thesis: Turner said what people wanted to hear and believe about themselves, and therefore his message took on a mythic dimension removed from reality and

---

[1] "And now, four centuries from the discovery of America, at the end of a hundred years of life under the Constitution, the frontier has gone, and with its going has closed the first period of American history" (Turner 38).

was thus able to persist long after historians had dismissed his views by providing evidence to the contrary regarding even the major tenets of his thesis.[2] Turner had tapped the primordial veins of American folklore to forge a cogent and persuasive message that was fit to be eagerly embraced by all classes of people. His theory fit perfectly into the American Dream and squared well with the hopeful aspirations of a young and expanding nation.

A Sense of Mission

The frontier thesis also absorbed and expanded the Puritan ideas of predestination and the sense of mission—of being a "Beacon to the World" and a "City upon a Hill" in the imagery of Governor John Winthrop—which were later driving forces in the expansion across the continent under the slogan "manifest destiny."[3] The idea of a chosen people was easily coupled with the notion of a benevolent landscape which amounted to a virtual cornucopia, for Turner as well as for John Louis Sullivan, the coiner of the historic phrase of Manifest Destiny. Naturally, the popularized version of the frontier thesis was welcome material for politicians and was consequently eagerly embraced by many practitioners in that field.

The idea of the "white man's burden" was also gaining popularity in the United States at the time, providing moral justification for the notion of a Manifest Destiny expanded to cover the Pacific Rim, to speak in a modern idiom.[4] The frontier thesis was easily adapted to these new circumstances, and the resulting combination of ideas came to serve as solid underpinnings for various adventures in the Caribbean and Latin America. The Monroe

---

[2] After Turner's death in 1931—and the obligatory period of respectful mourning required by academic decorum—critics went after many of his sweeping generalizations, often disproving them beyond doubt. See, for example, Ray Allen Billington (5-9).

[3] The Puritan idea of spreading the gospel to the unregenerate was aptly articulated by the first Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, John Winthrop, in his "A Model of Christian Charity" (195-199). The expression "Manifest Destiny" was first used by John Louis Sullivan in his article, "Annexation."

[4] The English writer Rudyard Kipling coined the phrase "The White Man's Burden" at the height of the British Empire, expressing a condescending attitude on the part of the Master Race toward the "lesser breeds," but American expansionists were not very far behind in this respect.

Doctrine (1823) had articulated the claim that the Americas were an American sphere of interest (embracing, in fact, the entire Western hemisphere), an idea which was solidified three-quarters of a century later by the Roosevelt Corollary (1904). A somewhat more benign expression of the same mindset was Woodrow Wilson's European crusade "to make the world safe for democracy" (American brand, one should perhaps add).

Implicit in the idea of American exceptionalism is the notion of superiority, based mainly on the notions of American innocence and moral superiority in relation to the Old World, but also the white man's racist sense of biological superiority in relation to other peoples. By definition, so to speak, American institutions were also superior to those of the Old World. In the same way that the Puritan had left the corrupt, sick, and decadent Old World behind—wiping the slate clean and starting over again as an "American Adam [in] the New World Garden," to borrow historian David W. Noble's description—the American governmental system represented a radical departure from and a fundamental improvement on European traditions.[5] The combination of republicanism and free enterprise laid the groundwork for the "American way of life," which was maintained by a "perennial rebirth" on the frontier, according to Turner (*Frontier* 2), a tradition which had started with the Puritans' "Errand into the Wilderness", in the words of Perry Miller.

Foreign Policy Implications

One political implication of this mental position is that it reflects a basically parochial attitude, a focus on one's own situation and an aversion to things unknown, which implies a tendency to perceive things unfamiliar, as if by necessity, as inferior. It was this mental stance that Senator William C. Fulbright was to warn against time and again, and particularly in his 1966 series of lectures at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International

---

[5] Historian David Noble of the University of Minnesota has written extensively on American Exceptionalism and the impact of the frontier philosophy. Among his books are *Historians against History: the Frontier Thesis and the National Covenant in American Historical Writing since 1830; The Eternal Adam and the New World Garden: The Central Myth in the American Novel since 1830; and Death of a Nation: American Culture at the End of Exceptionalism*. Seymour Martin Lipset has also written perceptively on American exceptionalism—in a comparative perspective, by including also aspects of Canadian and Japanese culture in his analysis—in *American Exceptionalism: A Double-Edged Sword.*

Studies during the most traumatic of all American foreign martial ventures, the Vietnam War. He called it *The Arrogance of Power*.[6] He had then initiated public hearings to establish to what extent the Vietnam involvement served national interests.

Senator Fulbright's observation signaled the end of a "Pax Americana" period which had lasted for two decades after the detonation of the first nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Fulbright had painfully learned his lesson. The myth of a crusade to bring democracy to a country which was oppressed by Communist guerilla forces could not be sustained after bombing of peaceful villages was adopted as a major strategy of this campaign. The tragedies of My Lai in March 1968 and the bombing of Cambodia in April 1970 later brought a definite halt to the myth-making in this connection, and Richard Nixon's promise to bring "Peace with Honor" seemed increasingly hollow and callous.

In the immediate post-World War II years, however, American innocence and idealism had seemed to prevail, although the fate of Hiroshima and Nagasaki took its toll. The mounting Communist threat served to blunt both international and internal criticism of American hubris and self-complacency. Again the nation embarked on a crusade against tyranny, seemingly driven by ideal motives. FDR revived Woodrow Wilson's idealistic ambition under the auspices of the United Nations, now wishing to make World War II "the war to end all wars." However, neo-isolationist trends were strong in the Midwest, and President Truman (and his advisors) had to resort to myth-making and some arm-twisting to persuade recalcitrant members of Congress to support his internationalist agenda.[7]

Stating, in his famous 1893 essay, that "America is another name for opportunity," Turner had pointed to the area of free land as the main source of American uniqueness, the egalitarian nature of American society. However, since his essay was triggered by the disappearance of this defining

---

[6] The three lectures—entitled "The Higher Patriotism," "The Revolution Abroad," and "The Arrogance of Power," respectively—were published the following year under the latter title, *The Arrogance of Power*.

[7] Reportedly, the reformed ex-isolationist Arthur H. Vandenberg (R-Mich.) agreed to support the Marshall Plan, a consent which was critical for its passage, after Dean Acheson had given a dramatic account of the Soviet threat: "Like apples in a barrel infected by one rotten one, the corruption of Greece would infect Iran and all to the east" (Acheson 293).

characteristic, Turner had to go in search for another agent to replace the geographical frontier as the main source of Americanness, and he landed on the state university in combination with the urban-industrial frontier as the new laboratories of egalitarian democracy.[8]

By the time Harry Truman assumed the supreme office of the land, technology had indeed become the defining characteristic of American society, opening up new avenues for American expansion. The Marshall Plan was a key to opening new doors of opportunities to American industry, which now was in the process of transforming from wartime production and adapting to a society on a peacetime footing. To match the enormous capacity and output potential of a modern industry which had been driven at top gear for years, new markets were needed. European demands for all kinds of commodities—from foods and all sorts of consumer goods to household implements and gadgets—provided such an opportunity. Furthermore, the building Cold-War tensions created an equally strong demand for hardware: steel, aluminum, and machinery as well as the full range of military material. The establishment of industrial and stable economies was mandatory in this situation, and the Marshall Plan was vital in all respects, also in enhancing European purchasing power and thus easing the pressure off a strained financial sector in war-torn allied countries.

Although the wish to secure markets for American industries struggling to adapt to a peace-time economy no doubt was a central motivation behind the Marshall Plan, the President's announcement of the Truman Doctrine—the political-military corollary to the Marshall Plan—was delivered from the moral high ground and coached in idealistic terms:

> One of the primary objectives of the foreign policy of the United States is the creation of conditions in which we and other nations will be able to work out a way of life free from coercion. This was a fundamental issue in the war with Germany and Japan. Our victory was won over countries which sought to impose their will, and their way of life, upon other nations.
>
> To ensure the peaceful development of nations, free from coercion, the United States has taken a leading

[8] "Pioneer Ideals and the State University" (269-289) and "The West an American Ideals" (290-310) in Turner, *The Frontier in American History*.

> part in establishing the United Nations, [sic] The United Nations is designed to make possible lasting freedom and independence for all members. We shall not realize our objectives, however, unless we are willing to help free peoples to maintain their free institutions and their national integrity against aggressive movements that seek to impose upon them totalitarian regimes. This is no more than a frank recognition that totalitarian regimes imposed on free peoples, by direct or indirect aggression, undermines the foundations of international peace and hence the security of the United States. ("President H. S. Truman's Address")

According to a popular American saying, "nothing succeeds like success," and Americans truly had something to show for themselves after the war. With considerable greater justification than their claim of having won World War I a generation earlier, they could point to their war effort as pivotal in the Allies' campaign to defeat the Axis powers as well as the Japanese war machine. The myth of American exceptionalism and the frontier myth of limitless growth had served as a heavy ideological ballast in the struggle against the totalitarian enemies of World War II, a crusade against the powers of evil. With a new enemy emerging, this perception of a sinister and ruthless enemy was easily transferred to world Communism. Both the Truman Doctrine and NSC 68 (1950)—which was to serve as ideological underpinnings of the containment policy throughout the 1950s—were based on this moral perception of a collectivist enemy who was callously calculating and morally depraved.

The USA and the World Community

While operating under the auspices of the United Nations—and being instrumental in pushing ideal, humanitarian projects such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights through the General Assembly (1948)—the United States was nonetheless advancing its own agenda. In the immediate postwar years it undermined the efforts by the UNO to establish an International Trade Organization, offering instead its own institution based on American principles and, in fact, modeled on American domestic legislation, GATT, a system of General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade

(1947). A general attitude of using the UN as a modus operandi when possible and disregarding it when not practicable seemed to take hold, a position which the USA was to take ever more frequently towards the end of the dwindling century, and certainly not less in the opening years of the new millennium.

Whereas Harry Truman had drawn amply on the frontier myth of plenty and love of individual freedom, John F. Kennedy used these myths with greater charm and far better results, both in domestic and foreign affairs. The phrase New Frontier was the motto chosen for his administration, and he promised both to lift people out of poverty—stating that "when the tide rises, all boats are lifted," thus drawing on the myth of plenty—and to put a man on the moon, thereby opening up a truly new territory, the spatial frontier. He emphasized the future-orientation of the frontier legacy, the idea of unilinear progress into a future of limitless opportunities.

Pointedly sending warnings to America's adversaries, he applied the myth of progress to the Third World (leaning on Walt Rostow's concept of a "take-off into self-sustained growth"[9]) and established the Peace Corps as an expression of American unselfish, altruistic humanitarianism. He also launched the Alliance for Progress as a kind of Marshall Plan for Latin America, drawing on Turner's concept of the frontier "barn-raising spirit" (Turner 343). During the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, Kennedy defeated his antagonist, Nikita Khrushchev, in a classical "stare down" duel. Hardly in any other operation did the Kennedy administration employ such a broad range of myths to put itself in the best possible light as in this particular incident. Having, in recent years, gained access to classified information files from both sides of the negotiating table, historians have revealed a more complex picture of these events than was presented to the media during the *Thirteen Days* and the aftermath of the crisis.[10]

To most Americans, President Kennedy's behavior was a clean-cut case of diplomatic hardball—brinkmanship it would have been in the lingo of John Foster Dulles—a prime example of the frontier tradition of "standing tall," which he had foreshadowed in his Inaugural Address as a willingness

---

[9] See Walt Whitman Rostow's *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*, and *The Economics of Take-Off into Self-Sustained Growth.*

[10] Kennedy, Robert F. *Thirteen Days: A Memoir of the Cuban Missile Crisis.* Intro. by Robert S. McNamara and Harold Macmillan.

"pay any price, bear any burden [...]" ("Inaugural Address"). Similarly, Kennedy drew on the frontier tradition in the summer of 1963 when he stood at the ultimate frontier of the Cold war, declaring "Ich bin ein Berliner" (336). "Standing tall" against evil and destructive forces was a salient feature of the western marshal, a popular hero who had been celebrated for decades by Hollywood.

And, certainly, no other personification of the frontier tradition in the modern public realm comes even close to the performance of Ronald W. Reagan, himself a professional projector of heroic frontiersmen on the silver screen. Moving his inaugural ceremony in 1981 to the west front of the capitol building, he was able to look due west as he proclaimed in his "Morning in America" message (rather than riding off into the sunset). This move was no doubt undertaken to mark the move of the political center of the country from East to West (detractors might say from Madison Avenue to Sunset Boulevard), the very year that the imaginary center of gravity of the American population made a symbolic jump across the Father of Waters, lodging itself decisively on the west side of the Mississippi.[11]

American Exceptionalism Rejuvenated

Within minutes of opening his first presidential address to the nation, Reagan referred to American exceptionalism: "We are a nation that has a government—not the other way around. And this makes us special among the nations of the Earth." And then he added: "It is time for us to realize that we are too great a nation to limit ourselves to small dreams." Repeating almost verbatim this observation in his 1984 State of the Union Message, he declared with great pathos: "America is back, standing tall." Shaking a proverbial fist at the "handwringers and doubting Thomases," he asserted: "We can develop America's next frontier." A year later, in his second inaugural, he elaborated further: "[T]here are no limits to growth and human progress when men and women are free to follow their dreams."

This was a statement in keeping with the popular interpretation of Turner's frontier thesis, but oddly at variance with the bimonthly scientific reports of the World Watch Institute, mapping the deposits of nonreplenishable resources in the world—and with the cautious line of

[11] According to the Bureau of the Census, the exact point in the 1980 census was located a quarter mile west of De Soto, Jefferson Co., Mo. *(World Almanac 371)*.

action of the Carter Administration, which adhered to the recommendations of the Club of Rome.[12] But then Americans have always seemed to prefer make-believe to stark reality, and Reagan was the provider of a whole array of rosy scenarios which the voters liked. Frontier optimism has always been a defining trait of the American national character, in keeping with Turner's dictum. In the words of historian William Appleman Williams, frontier opportunities meant "an infinity of second chances," which may have imprinted on the national psyche a notion of limitless opportunities and as a corollary, a basic carelessness about resources.[13]

Literary scholar Harold Simonson argues that the permanent availability of a gateway of escape explains the absence of great literary tragedy down to the end of the 19th century. In order for a tragic situation to arise, says Simonson, one must be faced with an absolute obstacle, demanding a choice. Because of the presence of the frontier, Americans were able to evade such a compelling situation, having the alternative of not choosing, but running away, "lighting out for the Territory" in the manner of Mark Twain's Huck Finn. Symptomatically, Ronald Reagan's speech for the Goldwater campaign in 1964—which "made" him as a politician—was appropriately titled "A Time for Choosing," which in fact meant the choice of returning to a distant past of rugged individualism and boundless opportunities, a never-never land yonder, in fact a choice of escape.

It is this unwillingness to make an unpleasant choice that is the basic theme and bottom line of Gunnar Myrdal's monumental study of racial relations in the United States, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy*. What he pointed to as the tragic dilemma of American life was the gap between ideals and reality, between preaching and practicing.

In nearly all his speeches before Congress, Ronald Reagan made mention of a "new beginning," a folksy periphrasis of Turner's "perennial rebirth" theme.[14] George W. Bush was "reborn" at an age of 38 after having led a rather irresponsible life up to that point, and voters seemed to see this as an asset rather than a handicap in the 2000 election campaign. The notion of rebirth—of wiping the slate clean—is still a central concept in American life.

---

[12] *World Watch: A Bimonthly Magazine of the Worldwatch Institute* (Washington, D.C.).

[13] For this aspect of the frontier heritage, see Gene Marine.

[14] Of course, all beginnings are new, but Reagan was in line with popular advertising here: "new and improved."

In his post-9/11 rhetoric he has leaned heavily on his western background, promising to bring Bin Laden to justice, "dead or alive." Also, he entertains the Old West perception of a polar world of "good guys" and "baddies" and declares equally simplistically: "Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists." And in the same way that Reagan dubbed the Soviet Union the "Evil Empire," President Bush has labeled Iran, Iraq, and North Korea the "Axis of Evil." The heritage of moralism—and penchant for psychological rationalization—derives from the Puritan past, but also from the legacy of the frontier, where lamp-post justice has been justified in equally simplistic terms.

A New World Disorder?

In the post-World War II years, the Soviet Union served as a check on excessive American self-righteous hubris. Persistent Soviet references in the United Nations to American hypocrisy regarding race relations contributed in no minor way to the desegregation of the South. The credibility of American rhetoric in relation to Third World countries was at stake. With the Communist threat gone, there is no such check on American national megalomania.

The failure to create a realistic self-image and the lack of real self-insight, which unfortunately seems to be, is a salient feature of American culture—frequently expressed in questions such as "Why do they hate us so?" and Presidential responses like "because we love freedom"—make the rest of the world wary in these days of battling terrorism. Any attempt at providing earnest criticism of American ways is easily dismissed as "Blame America First." The choice between the rose-colored world of myths and a more complex and harsher reality obviously remains an American dilemma as simplistic make-believe still seems to be preferred to fact.

This situation leaves the rest of the world—which is virtually at the mercy of the whims and caprice of the only superpower left—shivering in its pants, in a manner of speaking, because moderation and sober self-evaluation have never been dominant aspects of a myth-ridden American society. This is all the more so because that very superpower still appears to be—despite its impressive technological sophistication—a fundamentally and disconcertingly immature nation.

Works Cited

Acheson, Dean Gooderham. *Present at the Creation: My Years at the State Department*. New York: Signet-New American Library, 1970.

Billington, Ray Allen. *The American Frontier Thesis: An Attack and a Defense*. AHA Pamphlet. Richmond, VA: W. Byrd P, 1971.

Commager, Henry Steele. *The American Mind: An Interpretation American Thought and Character since the 1880s*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1950.

Fulbright, William C. *The Arrogance of Power*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1967.

Kennedy, John F. *Thirteen Days: A Memoir of the Cuban Missile Crisis*. New York: Norton, 1969.

———. "Inaugural Address." *American Studies: A Source Book*. Ed. David Nye. Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1989. 206.

———. "Ich bin ein Berliner." *Great Speeches for Criticism and Analysis*. Eds. Lloyd Rohler and Roger Cook. 2nd ed. Greenwood: Alistair P, 1993. 336.

Lipset, Seymour Martin. *American Exceptionalism: A Double Edged Sword*. New York: Norton, 1996.

Marine, Gene. *America the Raped: The Engineering Mentality and the Devastation of a Continent*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1969.

Miller, Perry. *Errand into the Wilderness*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap of Harvard UP, 1956.

Myrdal, Gunnar. *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and the Modern Democracy*. 2 vols. 3rd ed. New York: Harper and Row, 1944.

Noble, David. *Historians against History: The Frontier Thesis and the National Covenant in American Historical Writing since 1830*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1965.

———. *The Eternal Adam and the New World Garden: The Central Myth in the American Novel since 1830*. New York: Brazillier, 1968.

———. *Death of a Nation: American Culture at the End of Exceptionalism*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2002.

Potter, David, M. *People of Plenty: Economic Abundance and the American Character*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 1954.

"President Harry S. Truman's Address before a Joint Session of Congress, March 12, 1947." *The Avalon Project: Truman Doctrine*. Yale Law School. 2 July 2004 <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/trudoc.htm>.

Reagan, Ronald. "First Inaugural Address (20 Jan. 1981)." *Project Bartleby*. 2004 <http://www.bartleby.com/124/pres61/html>.

———. "1984 State of the Union Address." <http://www.indiana.edu/>.

Riesman, David, et. al. *The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character*. New York: Doubleday-Anchor, 1954.

Rostow, Walt Whitman. *The Economics of Take-Off into Self-Sustained Growth*. London: Macmillan, 1963.

———. *The Stages of American Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1960.

Simonson, Harold. *The Closed Frontier: Studies in American Literary Tragedy*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970.

Sullivan, John Louis. "Annexation." *The United States Magazine and Democratic Review*. 17.85 (1845).

Turner, Frederick Jackson. *The Frontier in American History*. 1920. Tucson: U of Arizona P, 1986.

Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, 1884. Harmondsworth: Puffin, 1986.

Winthrop, John. "A Model of Christian Charity." *The Puritans: A Sourcebook of Their Writings*. Ed. Perry Miller. vol 1. New York: Harper and Row, 1963. 195-199.

The World Almanac and Book of Facts 2001. Mahwah, N.J.: World Almanac Books, 2001.

World Watch: A Bimonthly Magazine of the Worldwatch Institute (Washington DC).