Manifest Destiny and the Diminishing of a Nation:
Displacement of the Catawba

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ABSTRACT

Jacksonian Democrats used a Southern-born ideology that embraced racism, religious ideals, and economics to justify Indian removal. Known as Manifest Destiny, this movement led by seventh United States President Andrew Jackson and the passage of his Indian Removal Act necessitated the removal of nearly all Native American tribes in order to colonize the entire southeastern United States during the 1830s. Although most other tribes affected by Manifest Destiny share a similar story, the Catawba took a different course, but still met a similar fate. Uniquely, the Catawba legally fell under the jurisdiction of a state instead of the federal government, which resulted in the Catawba never being successfully removed from South Carolina to land west of the Mississippi River. Despite a close connection with the state of South Carolina, economic interests within a racial hierarchical system contributed to the attempted removal of the Catawba. By illustrating South Carolina’s custodianship over the Catawba, this thesis shows why the Catawba’s removal story differs from that of other Native American tribes.