

A rustic wooden sign with the word 'WELCOME' in white, block letters is mounted on a teal, distressed wooden background. The sign is made of a single piece of weathered wood with rough, uneven edges. It is held in place by two small, light-colored twine knots on its top edge. Above the sign, a thin, light-colored wooden stick is bent into a triangular shape, with a small dark knot at its apex. To the right of the sign, a vibrant red rose with green leaves is placed, partially overlapping the sign's edge. The teal background consists of vertical wooden planks with a distressed, peeling paint finish, showing some darker wood underneath. The overall aesthetic is rustic and charming.

WELCOME

# American Culture 1

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# Discussion

## Overview of the United States

- ▶ Location:.....
  - .
- ▶ Numbers of States:.....
- ▶ Current president:.....
- ▶ Capital:.....
  - .

# Overview of The United States

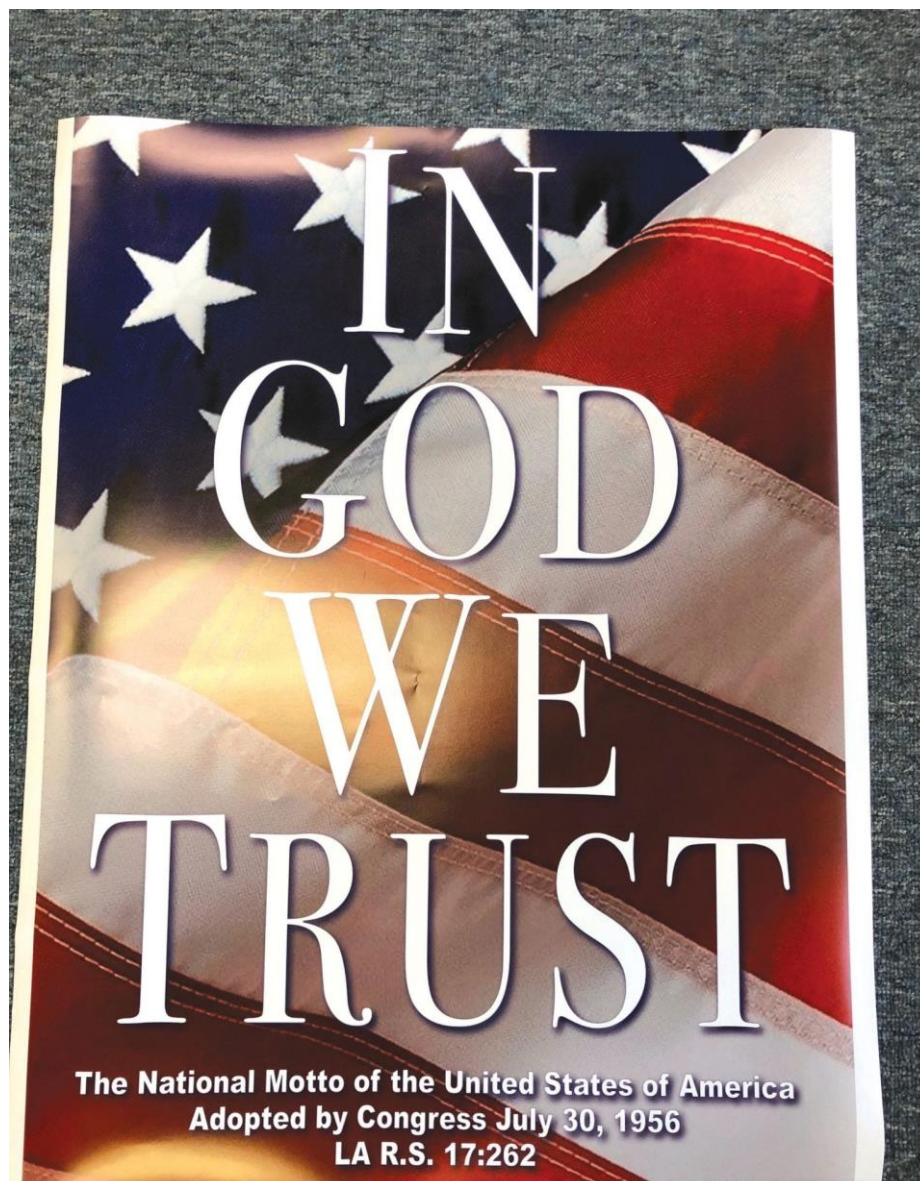
- ▶ Location: USA is located in the northern part of America continent/ North America
- ▶ States: 50
- ▶ Capital: Washington D.C (District of Columbia)



Current President: Joe Biden



# National motto



# National flag



## A nation of immigrants

- ▶ From Asia (China, Japan, Vietnam, Cambodia), Africa, Hungary, Cuba,...
- ▶ In 1910: 14.8% of the US population was foreign born
- ▶ In 1921: limited immigration
- ▶ In 1965: immigration laws (immigration policy) changed
- ▶ In 1990s: 90% of all immigrants were coming from Latin America, the Caribbean and Asia
- ▶ 3 states have the largest number of immigrants: California: 27%, New York: 21%, New Jersey: 21%
- ▶ In 2010 census, there were more Asian immigrants than Hispanic immigrants



## Melting pot or Salad bowl

- ▶ In 1908 Zangwill wrote a play and used the term Melting pot to describe the US
  - ▶ Melting pot: the new immigrants brought different languages and cultures to the US, but gradually most of them assimilated to the dominant American culture.
  - ▶ Salad bowl: there is a mixture of culture from The dominant American culture and new culture from immigrants
- ➔ Immigrants change American culture and are changed by it

# Melting Pot or Salad Bowl

- ▶ Large variety of ethnic groups (race, nationality, religion)
- ▶ These groups have been assimilated - to greater or lesser extent (melting pot - salad bowl)
- ▶ Since 1776 many groups have been assimilated, but many also remain separate (some of these are bicultural - American but with distinct language/culture)

# Melting Pot or Salad Bowl

- ▶ Many settlers arrived in the US before it was the US (especially Hispanics) and want to maintain their traditions and language (Spanish)
- ▶ Most white Europeans have been completely assimilated into “American culture” exceptions are American Jews - who have tended to remain separate.
- ▶ Possibly because of historical reasons, or maybe just ethnic pride

# The Establishment of the Dominant Culture

- ▶ Most of the early settlers were from England. There were also a large number of African Americans.
- ✓ ~3,200,000 White
- ✓ ~760,000 African Americans
- ✓ ~1,000,000 Native Americans



# The Establishment of the Dominant Culture

- ▶ The white population had more people, money, and power - so defined the dominant culture - White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASPs).
- ▶ European groups intermarried and mingled with little thought of any difference
- ▶ Assimilation of minority white groups occurred without great difficulty

# The Establishment of the Dominant Culture

- ▶ Dominant culture was therefore:
  - ✓ English speaking
  - ✓ Western European
  - ✓ Protestant
  - ✓ Middle class
- ▶ Immigrants with similar characteristics were welcomed - had the same basic values

# The Assimilation of Non-Protestant and Non-Western Europeans

- ▶ Groups that were more like the dominant group were more readily accepted
- ▶ Groups that were very different were often seen as a threat to American values and way of life.
- ▶ Many Immigrants from the southern and Eastern Europe arrived during late 19th century
  - ✓ Usually poor
  - ✓ Didn't speak English
  - ✓ Catholic or Jewish

# The Assimilation of Non-Protestant and Non-Western Europeans

- ▶ Many Americans feared these new Americans would change America in undesirable ways
- ▶ Americans therefore gave English instruction and citizenship classes to teach American beliefs
- ▶ Many immigrants felt that this was not much help.
- ▶ What they really wanted were jobs, food, houses.



# The Assimilation of Non-Protestant and Non-Western Europeans

- ▶ “Political Bosses” were more helpful to immigrants - in exchange for their votes.
- ▶ However, many bosses were seen as corrupt, and destroying American values
- ▶ Immigrants were not self-reliant, and there was no competition for political office
- ▶ Some see the bosses as a necessary evil - who helped to assimilate large numbers of immigrants.

# The Assimilation of Non-Protestant and Non-Western Europeans

- ▶ As immigrants improved their standard of living, they came to accept most of the values of the larger American culture and were in turn accepted by it.
- ▶ Therefore white ethnic groups tend to feel more American and less of their ethnic background than other groups.

# The African-American Experience

- ▶ Non-white ethnic groups have not been so easily assimilated.
- ▶ African Americans have had the greatest difficulty
- ▶ Brought to America against their will - sold as slaves
- ▶ Other groups came voluntarily

# The African-American Experience

- ▶ Slavery was a complete contradiction to American values of Freedom and Equality of Opportunity.
- ▶ It divided the US into the North (anti slavery) and the South (pro slavery - basis of economy)
- ▶ Some Northern whites were against slavery for ethical reasons
- ▶ Most Northern whites were against slavery because they feared they could not compete with unpaid slave labor.



# The African-American Experience

- ▶ Abraham Lincoln was against slavery.
- ▶ When he became President the Southern states left the Union to form their own country based on slavery.
- ▶ This led to a Civil War (1861 - 1865).
- ▶ The Northern States won and slavery was abolished.

# The African-American Experience

- ▶ Although slavery was abolished, attitudes toward African Americans were slow to change, especially in the South.
- ▶ Not allowed to vote
- ▶ Segregated from whites (separate schools)
- ▶ Inferior education
- ▶ Poverty cycle
- ▶ Racial prejudice

# The Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s

- ▶ In 1954 the Supreme Court declared that racially segregated education was unconstitutional
- ▶ Black leaders were encouraged to seek an end to all segregation.
- ▶ Martin Luther King Jr. - wanted greater assimilation of black people
- ▶ Malcolm X - wanted separation of blacks from white culture
- ▶ Black people have gained freedom from segregation and the right to vote

# The Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s

- ▶ The civil rights movement helped to assimilate blacks into larger American culture.
- ▶ Affirmative action -
- ▶ Requires employers to actively seek black workers
- ▶ Requires universities to recruit black students
- ▶ Has improved blacks situation in the US - Mayors of major cities, Supreme court, politicians



# A Universal Nation

- ▶ In the 1920's the US reduced the numbers of immigrants allowed into America.
- ▶ Despite the worries of the dominant culture - immigrants did not radically change American values, but enriched the cultural diversity of the nation

## A Universal Nation

- ▶ In 1965 changes were made to immigration laws that allowed more immigrants into the US, and removed bias toward European immigrants.
- ▶ Most immigrants today are from Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean.
- ▶ There are also large numbers of illegal immigrants.
- ▶ Some people see this as beneficial - America may become the first Universal Nation - large numbers of people from different cultures living under one government

Thank  
You

