

A rustic wooden sign with the word 'WELCOME' in large, white, block letters is mounted on a teal-painted wooden plank background. The sign is made of weathered wood with a rough, splintered edge. A thin wooden stick is attached to the top of the sign, forming a triangular shape. A vibrant red rose with green leaves is tucked behind the sign on the right side. The teal background shows signs of wear, with some paint chipping and small holes in the wood.

WELCOME

American Culture 2

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Chapter 4: The Frontier Heritage



Get started

Frontier (n)

1)What is “frontier”?


2)What American movies about the Old West have you seen?

Heritage (n)

3)What are the characteristics of American movies heroes?

4)Why do so many Americans own guns?

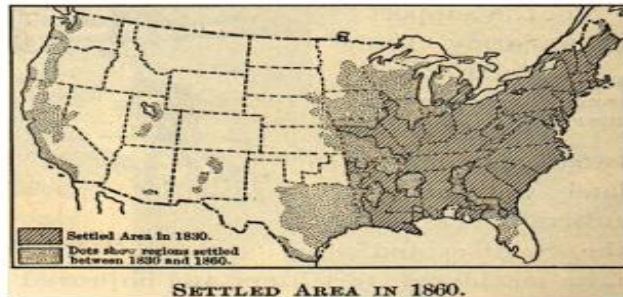


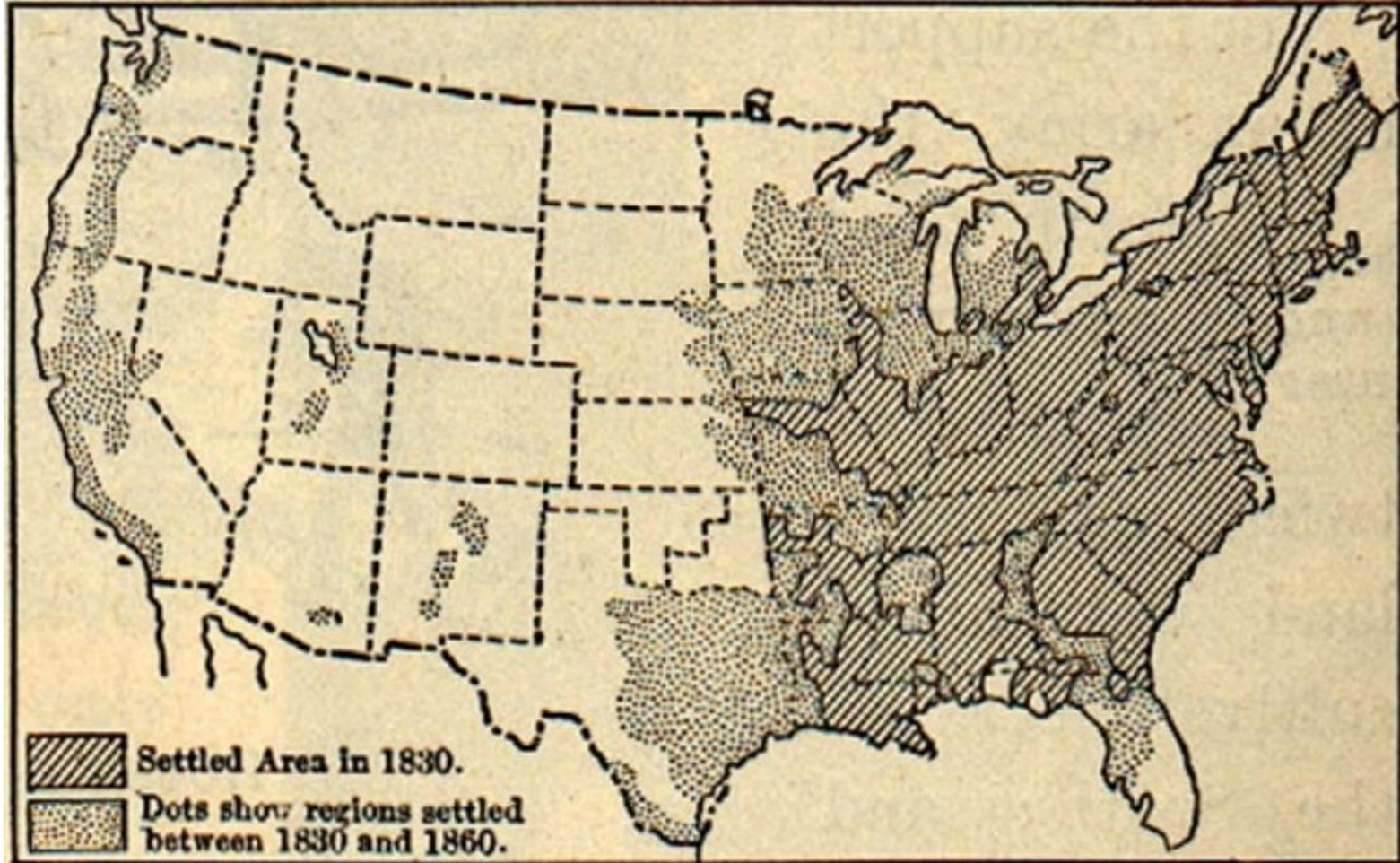
- Frontier (n) UK/'frʌn.tɪər/ /frʌn'tɪər/ US /frʌn'tɪr/ 
- A border between two countries
- The Western America



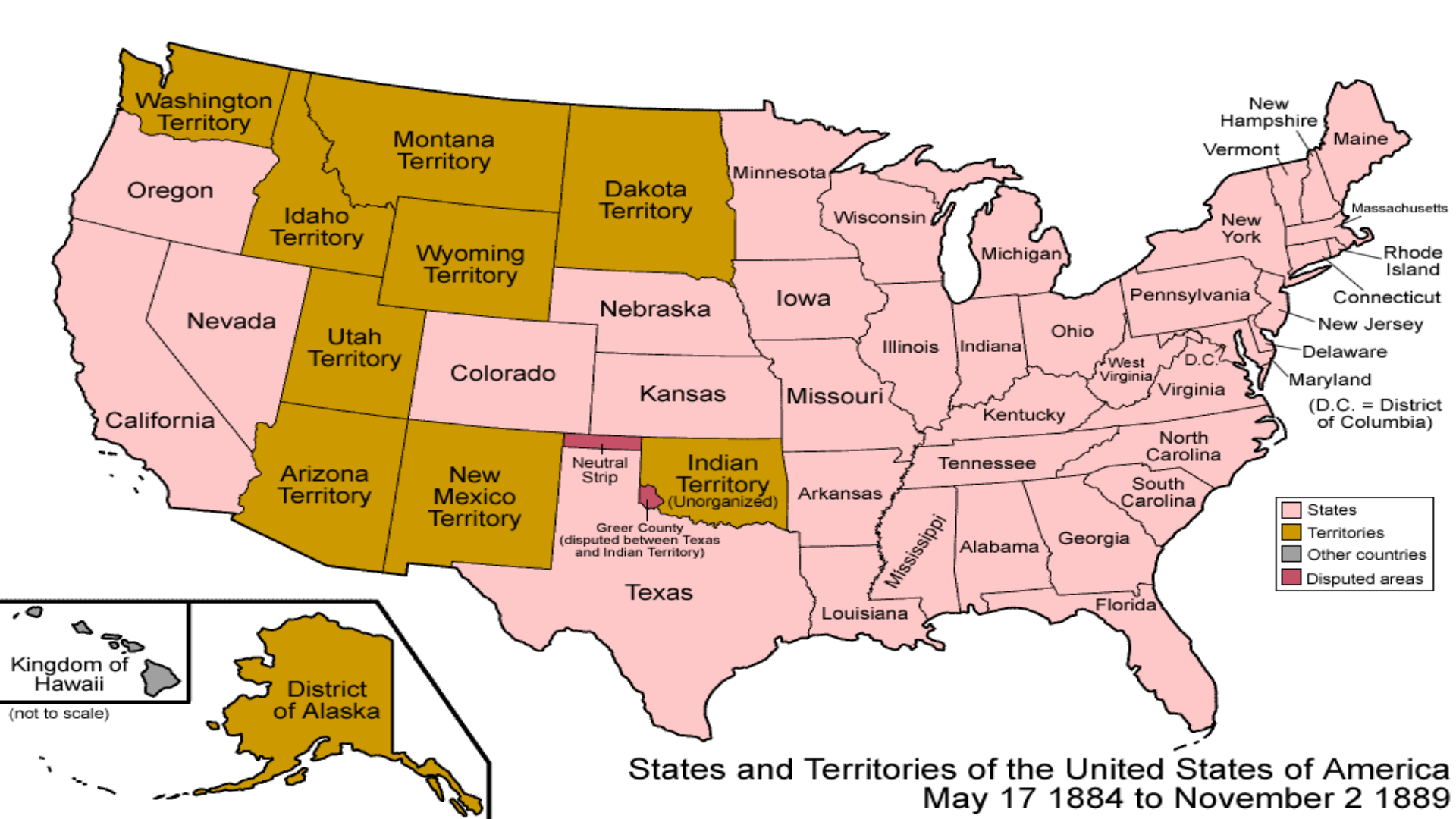
What is frontier?

- a line that separated east and west (civilization from wilderness)
- throughout America history , the line shifted further and further west.
- unexplored and undeveloped land
- wild and free
- began in the 1600s and ended about 1890.





SETTLED AREA IN 1860.





Manifest Destiny

- a phrase coined in 1845, is the idea that the United States is destined—by God, expand its dominion and spread democracy and capitalism across the entire North American continent.



The Impact of the American Frontier

- The effects of the 'frontier' are still present today.
- The frontier was very important in shaping American values
Many people associate the image of the frontier as a symbol of being a true American (especially used by some Presidents)

The Impact of the American Frontier

- The popular image of the frontier was of cowboys (heroes) fighting Indians (villains)
- In truth, the Indians (Native Americans) were mistreated (killed, abused, displaced)
- Today, there is more awareness of what really happened during the settlement of the frontier

The Impact of the American Frontier

- The “frontier” existed from the 1600s until ~1890 as settlers spread from east to west across the American continent
- On the frontier life was generally harsh (the wild west)
- The settlers believed it was their “manifest destiny” to control all of the land
- Displaced native Americans were placed into reservations

The Impact of the American Frontier

- Many Americans are still inspired by the frontier culture
- This was responsible for many of today's American values
 - ✓ *Hard work* – cutting down forests, building towns and cities
 - ✓ *Competition* – gold rush, land rush Life on the frontier was seen as an example of these values in their purest form

The Impact of the American Frontier

- Individualism, Self-Reliance and equality of opportunity were all important attributes for people on the frontier
- The value of “Individual freedom” also developed at this time, probably because there was no “establishment” to control what people could do
- Many people in western states still value individual freedom very highly.

Self-reliance the Rugged Individualist

- denied many of society's comforts and conveniences
- encouraged frontiersman to be self-reliant:
 - constructed their own houses.
 - hunted for food.
 - tended their own gardens.
 - made their own clothing, household item.

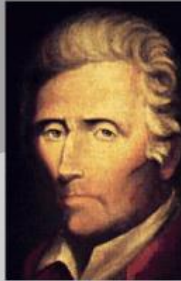




Types of heroic rugged individualists

Man against the wilderness (before Civil war 1860s)

- was able to master the harsh challenges of the wilderness
- admired as a survivor and conqueror



All you need for happiness is a good gun, a good horse, and a good wife.
Daniel Boone

Man against man (lasted from the 1860s until the 1890s)

- fought for control of the remaining lands
- known as the **Wild West**
- a fighter and a defender of good against evil



Jesses James

Self-Reliance and the Rugged Individualist

- Wild west heroes are typically lawmen and gunfighters of the time e.g. Jesse James, Wyatt Earp
- They had a bigger influence on American ideas of heroism than earlier frontier heroes
- Wild west heroes have inspired many movies “Westerns”

Model of American hero : rugged individualism

- physically tough
- skilled with gun and weapons
- need no help from others
- has no strong ties to women and children
- strong enough to protect himself

- The Wild West hero had more impact on the idea of heroism
- inspired numerous Western movies



American Macho

- Wild West hero has helped shape the American idea of Macho or male strength
- demonstrated their strength through physical violence
- used in many settings : soldier , tough detectives and policemen fighting crime.
- dominated American entertainment, movies , TV and video games

- been criticized :
 - overlook the importance of self-reliance and cooperation
 - base on masculine figure, overlook the importance of pioneer women
 - emphasis on violence



**THE
GOOD** **THE
BAD** **AND THE
UGLY**



Impact of these hero on lives

- Young people become desensitized to violence and killing
- teenagers get guns easily
- inner city gang members carry guns





Breaktime



Use of guns

- Americans have the right to bear-arms which is guaranteed in the Constitution
- 200 million guns in the US today
- at least one gun in more than half of US households
- people believe owning guns is the best way to protect their families.

In 1994:

- the Brady Bill banned the sale of many assault weapons
- new crime bill was passed to stop violence

However , effort to repeal the ban was launched.

Inventiveness and the Can-Do spirit

Self-reliance encouraged a spirit of inventiveness because frontiersmen always face new problems that need new solutions

other countries were impressed by the pioneer man's ability to invent :

- farm tools
- clothing, soap and other items

spirit of inventiveness later become a national character trait

it led to a **can-do** spirit that every problem has a solution

=> sense of optimism

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Equality of Opportunity

There were a tendency to treat other equally

were fond of saying:

what's above the ground is more important is
more important than what's beneath the ground

offered new beginning and source of hope for who
failed in business, love or politics

The gap between the rich and the poor
was not great

The American frontier may not be the key to American development , but it is certainly the main factor

Strengthen the ideas of individual freedom ,self reliance , and equality of opportunity

>> **national values**