

The USA

Osher course, February 2021

J. N. Hooker



Yosemite National Park



Yellowstone National Park



Rocky Mountain National Park



Great Smoky Mountains National Park



Grand Teton National Park



Arches National Park



Everglades National Park



Glacier National Park



Grand Canyon National Park

Frontiers and Immigrants

- The USA has been shaped by two overarching conditions:
 - The frontier
 - Inculcated individualism, rugged independence, focus on the future, wastefulness.
 - “Multiculturalism”
 - A nation of immigrants.
 - System designed to assimilate immigrants
 - But resistance from many who arrived earlier.

A Multiethnic Society

- Highly diverse
 - U.S. residents from every country in the world (2010 census).



A Multiethnic Society

- Immigration history
 - Prehistoric
 - Native peoples
 - 1500s - 1700s
 - Spanish, Dutch
 - British, Scots-Irish
 - Africans (as slaves)



A Multiethnic Society

- Immigration history
 - 1800s
 - Germans
 - Southern and eastern Europeans (as industrial employees)
 - Chinese (as laborers)
 - Since 1900
 - Mexicans, Asians
 - Everyone else



A Multiethnic Society

- Ethnic makeup (2019)
 - “White” non-Latino 60%
 - Latino 19%
 - African-American 13%
 - Asian-American 6%
 - Native American 1%
 - Other 1%



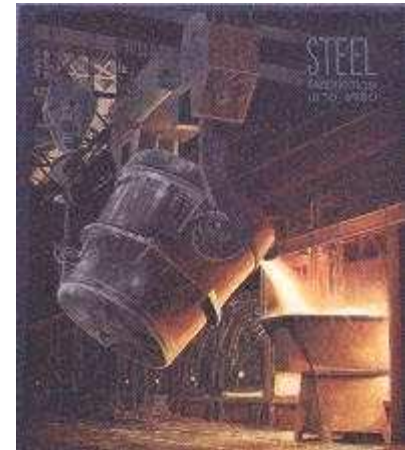
Dominant Culture

- Despite diversity of immigrants, dominant culture has been northern European.
 - English/German dominant culture built the corporate-based U.S. economic machine.
 - Scots-Irish subculture heavily influenced self-reliance, anti-government.
- Mainly Christian
 - 42% Protestant, 21% Catholic
 - 9% other faiths, 28% unaffiliated.
 - By far the most religious Western nation.

Relationship-based	Rule-based
High context	Low context
High power distance	Low power distance
Shame based	Guilt based
Humor as amusement	Humor as jokes
Collectivist	Individualist
Polychronic	Monochronic
Masculine	Feminine
Uncertainty avoiding	Uncertainty tolerant

Models for Living Together

- Melting pot?
 - Monocultural: Everyone assimilates to dominant northern European culture.
- Salad bowl?
 - Multicultural: Different subcultures exist side by side.



The Solution

- Modified melting pot.
 - But not cheese fondue.
 - More like Mulligan stew.



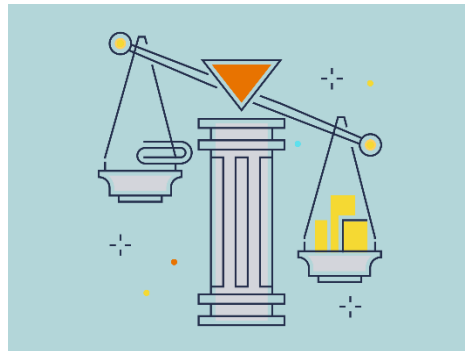
Dominant Culture

- Strongly rule-based
 - **Social cohesion** based on a **common rulebook.**
 - ...not a common ethnic background.
 - Rules are the “broth” that holds the stew together.
 - Ethnic groups provide the “flavors” of the other ingredient



Strains on Social Cohesion

- European majority is becoming a minority.
 - Tipping point is 2043
- Growing economic inequality.
 - Top 10% owns 64% of wealth (2019).
 - Bottom half owns 6% of wealth.



Two Key Immigrant Groups

- Germans
 - Shaped U.S. rationalistic corporate structure
 - Masculine, hierarchical, efficient.
- Scots (mainly “Scots-Irish”)
 - Individualistic, competitive, masculine, evangelical

Both important in early development of Pittsburgh



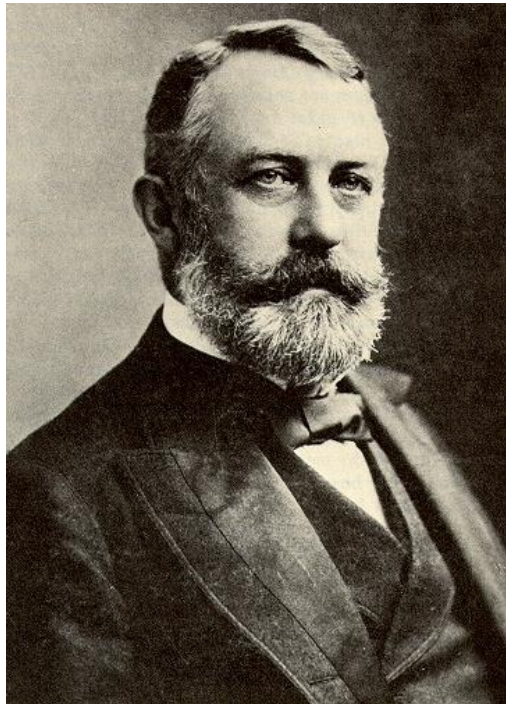
Scots and CMU

- Andrew Carnegie – Scottish
- Andrew Mellon – Scots-Irish



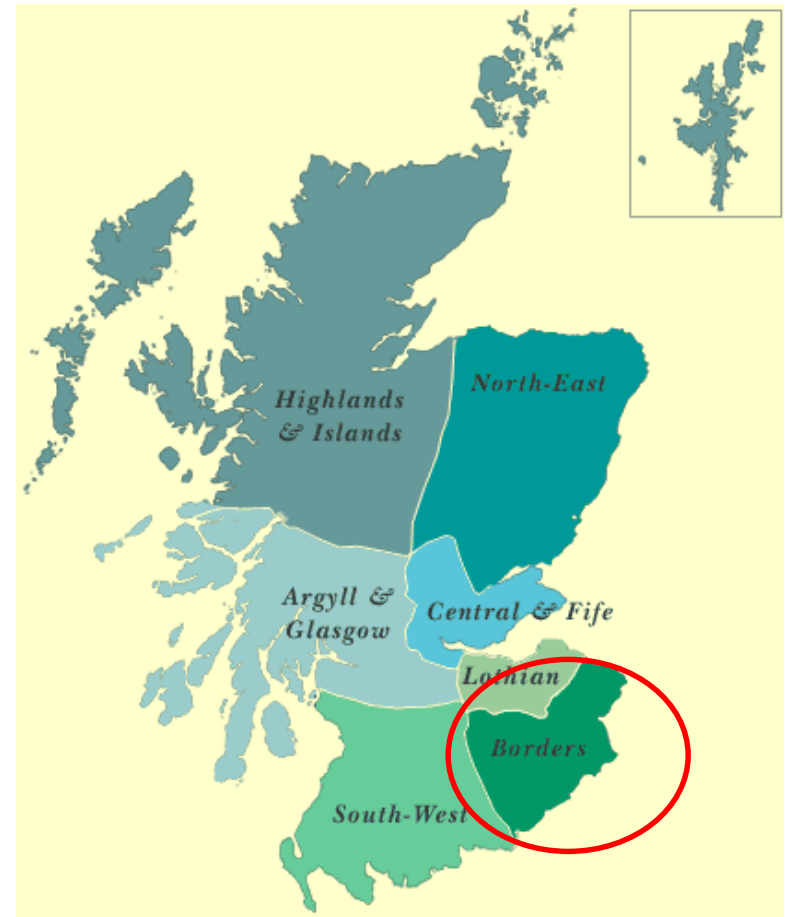
Germans and Pittsburgh

- Henry Clay Frick – German
- Henry J. Heinz – German



An Important Subculture

- Scots-Irish immigrants had influence far beyond their numbers.
 - Originally “border Scots.”
 - Centuries of warfare with England.



An Important Subculture

- Fiercely independent, but loyal to the clan in times of war.
 - Bruce, Douglas, Ferguson, Kerr, MacDonald, MacGregory, Montgomery, Scott, etc.
 - Clan members were generally not blood relatives.
 - Clan was ruled by a Laird (warlord).



“Carnegie Clan tartan”
(not really)

An Important Subculture

- Frugal, quasi-nomadic lifestyle.
 - Relocated frequently to avoid attack.
 - Lived in semi-permanent *cabines*.
 - These later became the log cabins of the American frontier.
 - Still later, mobile homes & RVs of today.



An Important Subculture

- **Staunchly Presbyterian**
 - Attracted to strict Calvinist values and decentralized government of Presbyterian church.
 - Reflected in conservative Protestant movements of the U.S. today.
 - Ironically, the Presbyterian church is now liberal.
 - Conservative Southern Baptist churches (historically liberal) now reflect the Scots-Irish tradition.



An Important Subculture

- Migrated to Ulster (Northern Ireland).
 - Beginning with the Ulster Plantation, established in 1609 by King James of England.
 - Became known as “Ulster Scots.”
 - Later called “Scots-Irish” in the U.S.



An Important Subculture



Andrew Mellon
Founder, ALCOA
U.S. Treasury Secretary

Co-founder (with brother
Richard B. Mellon) of
Mellon Institute, named for
father Thomas Mellon,
founder of Mellon Bank



William Larimer
Mellon,
Grandson of
Thomas Mellon

Founder,
Tepper School



Ancestral home of Mellon family
County Tyrone, Northern Ireland

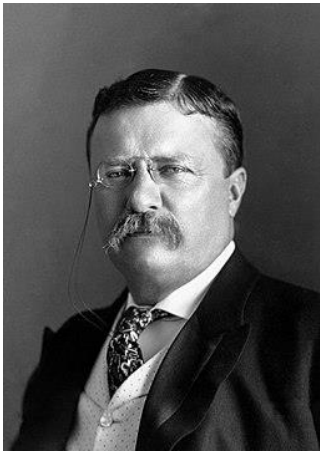
An Important Subculture

- Emigrated to the North American colonies.
 - Beginning about 1717.
 - Initially settled in the Quaker colony of Pennsylvania, which tolerated their Presbyterian faith.
 - Rejected by many colonies as “uncivilized.”
 - Squatted on native lands.
 - “Paxton boys” committed atrocities.



An Important Subculture

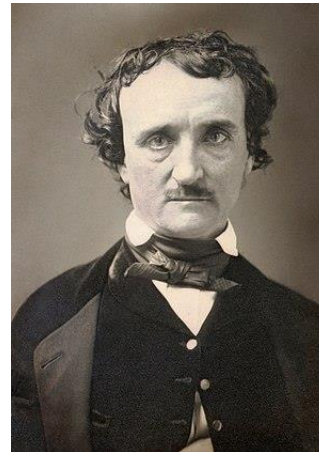
- At the same time, represented among U.S. intellectual leaders
 - Even while many consider themselves anti-intellectual



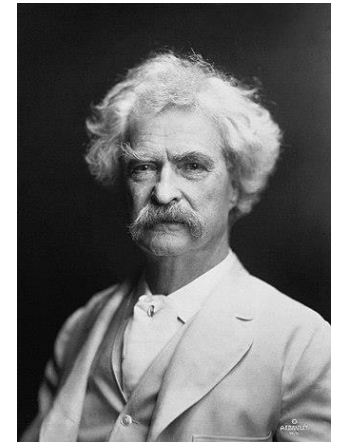
Theodore Roosevelt
Learned, multilingual
Scots-Irish on mother's side



Woodrow Wilson
President,
Princeton University



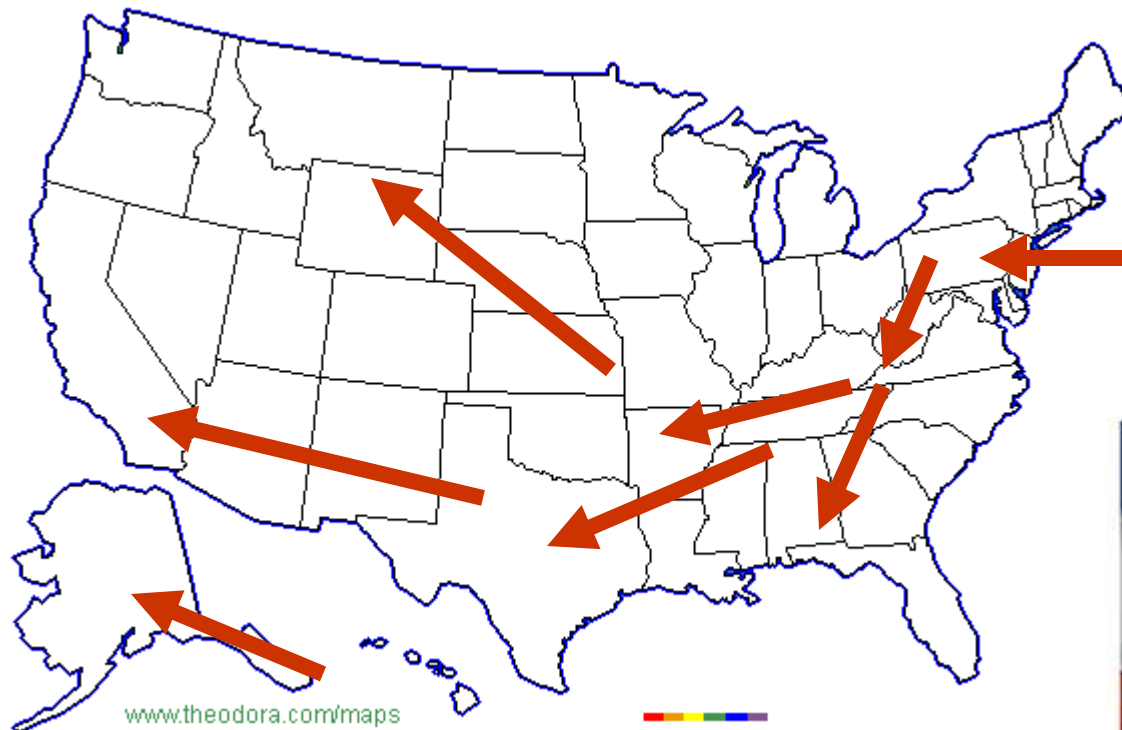
Edgar Allen Poe
Literary pioneer
Family: County Cavan



Mark Twain
Family from
County Antrim

An Important Subculture

- Generally on the frontier of European settlement.



An Important Subculture

- Scots-Irish culture was well adapted to frontier life.
 - Fiercely independent, freedom-loving, self-sufficient.
 - Accustomed to relocation.
 - Masculine, warlike culture.
 - Fought British, native people.
- Became the dominant frontier culture, even of people without Scots-Irish heritage.
 - Now a **subculture**, not an **ethnic group**

David
Crockett



An Important Subculture

- Survives in many forms.
 - Geographically
 - Hill culture of Appalachians, Arkansas (e.g., Bill Clinton).
 - White Southern subculture.
 - Rural, suburban areas (dislike of cities).
 - Cultural symbols
 - Pickup truck.
 - Hunting and fishing.
 - Guns.
 - Country music

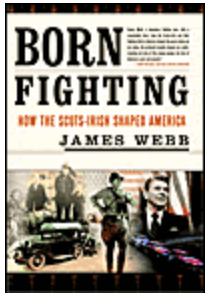


Jason Aldean
at Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo

An Important Subculture

– Politically

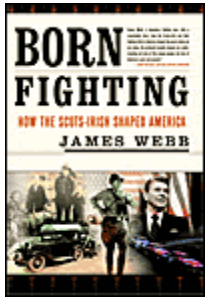
- Populist movements, swing voters.
- Conservative social and religious values.
- Pro-military, volunteers for armed forces.
- Donald Trump supporters.
- Trump is Scottish on mother's side and German on father's side.



James Webb illustrates tendency to switch sides politically. He has Scots-Irish heritage and wrote one of the few existing books on Scots-Irish culture.



An Important Subculture



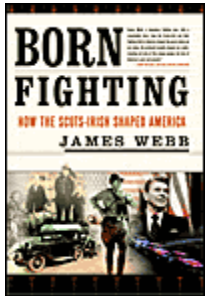
In his book, Webb asked his father
(living in the mountains of western Virginia):

“What is your most important
accomplishment in life”

His father’s answer?



An Important Subculture



In his book, Webb asked his father
(living in the mountains of western Virginia):

“What is your most important
accomplishment in life”

His father’s answer?

“I ain’t never kissed nobody’s ass.”



Wal-Mart

- A study in Scots-Irish business culture.
 - World's largest private employer.



Wal-Mart



– Sam Walton grew up in Scots-Irish subculture.

- Born in Oklahoma and started his business in Arkansas.
 - Scots-Irish strongholds.
- Lived a frugal lifestyle.
 - While richest man in the world.
 - Got \$5 haircuts, no tip.
- Drove a pickup truck.
- Loved to hunt.
 - Very fond of his hunting dog, Ol' Roy.



Wal-Mart

- Wal-Mart started as a chain of thrift stores.
 - Emphasized Scots-Irish preference for frugality.
 - Walton's business plan was simple: offer the lowest prices.



Walton's first store in
Bentonville, Arkansas

Wal-Mart

– Frugal operations

- Executives, including Walton, flew economy class.
- Minimal wages, benefits.

– Ruthlessly competitive.

- Systematically drove competition out of business.



Warren Buffett

- From Scots-Irish culture of Omaha, Nebraska.
 - World's 4th richest individual (no. 1 in 2008).
 - World's most successful investor.
 - Assets \approx \$86 billion
 - After giving much away.



Warren Buffett

– Known for his
Scottish frugality.

- Has lived in the same modest house since 1958.
- No yachts, luxury cars.
- Lives on base salary of \$100K per year from his company Berkshire Hathaway.
- Eats \$4 McDonald's breakfast, McDonalds hamburgers, & drinks cherry Coke.



Warren Buffett

- Scots-Irish egalitarianism.
 - Plans to give away 99% of his wealth.
 - Rejected by Harvard Business School.
 - Famous for Warren Buffet rule
 - No rich person should pay a smaller tax rate than his/her secretary.
 - Never adopted by Congress.



Racial and Ethnic Conflict

- An international perspective.
- Lesson:
 - **Most conflict** occurs between groups that are **racially identical** and **culturally very similar**.



Racial and Ethnic Conflict

- Ethic conflict results from **historical memory**.
 - Resentment for past wrongs.
 - We **associate** this memory with (slight) ethnic difference.

Racial and Ethnic Conflict

- Historical memory can be **long**.
 - **Example:** 2004 bombing of Madrid train stations, killing 192 and injuring 2000.
 - **Origin:** Ferdinand and Isabella's expulsion of Muslims and Jews in 1492.



Some Ethnic Conflicts

- Balkan & Mediterranean conflicts
 - Legacy of **Ottoman conquests**, incidentally Muslim vs. Christian
 - Serbs vs. Albanians in Kosovo
 - Macedonia vs. Bulgarian subpopulation
 - Serbs, Croats, Bosnians
 - Greeks vs. Turks in Cyprus

Some Ethnic Conflicts

- Europe
 - Protestants vs. Catholics in Northern Ireland
 - Legacy of **Ulster Plantation**
 - Resentment of Muslim minorities
 - Legacy of **Ottoman invasion of Europe**
 - France vs. North African immigrants
 - Legacy of **French colonialism**
 - Ukrainians vs. Russians in Ukraine
 - Legacy of 1920 **Soviet invasion** of Ukraine

Some Ethnic Conflicts

- Central & South Asia
 - Russians vs. Chechnyans
 - Legacy of Peter the Great's conquests in **Caucasian War**
 - Hindus vs. Muslims in India
 - Legacy of **Mughul Empire**, 16th c.
 - India vs. Pakistan
 - Legacy of **ethnic cleansing** that followed 1947 partition
 - Sinhalese vs. Tamils in Sri Lanka
 - Legacy of **British colonialism** in Ceylon and its aftermath

Some Ethnic Conflicts

- Africa
 - Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda
 - Legacy of racist **German colonial rule**
 - Blacks vs. whites vs. “coloreds” in South Africa
 - Legacy of Dutch & British **colonial rule**, 1950s **apartheid**

Some Ethnic Conflicts

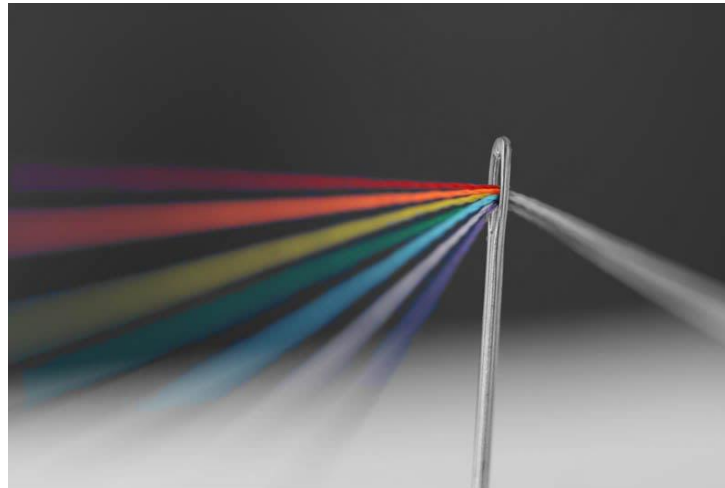
- East Asia
 - Indonesia (Muslim) vs. East Timor (Roman Catholic)
 - Legacy of **Portuguese colonial rule** of East Timor
 - “Mindinao Christians” vs. Muslims in Philippines.
 - Legacy of Spanish **colonial suppression** of Muslims
 - Muslims vs. Han Chinese in Xinjiang province.
 - **Suppression of Uighurs now creating ethnic conflict!**

Some Ethnic Conflicts

- Middle East
 - Turkey vs. Kurdish minority
 - Legacy of **suppression of** Kurdish culture in 1930s
 - Armenians vs. Turks
 - Legacy of **Armenian genocide** during First World War.
 - Sunni vs. Shia in Islam
 - Legacy of multiple historical conflicts.

Conclusions

- The common thread is **historical memory**.
 - Extremely slight cultural differences can be **associated** with historical animosity.

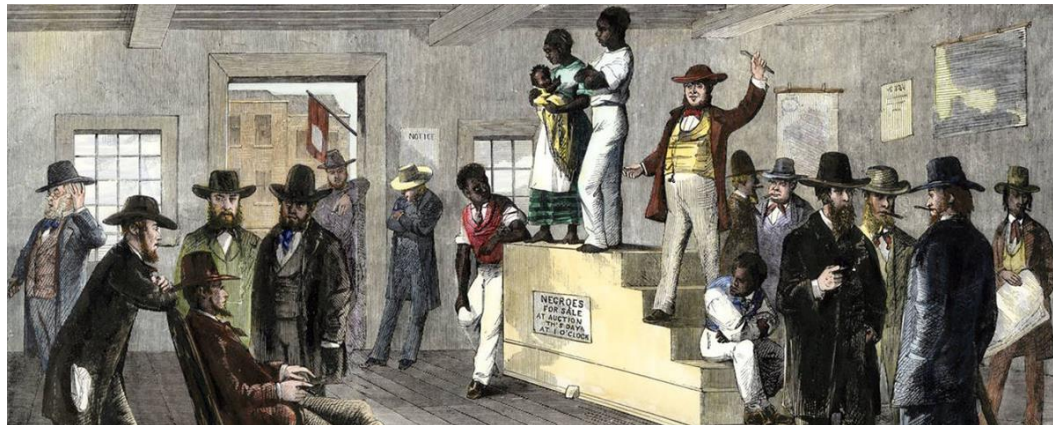


Conclusions

- Race and major cultural difference are **not** causes of most ethnic conflict.
 - Most conflict is between peoples of the **same race** and **very similar** cultures.
 - We **can't remove** differences so slight.
 - We must address the **historical factors**.

Conclusions

- The key historical event in the US...
 - **Slavery.**
 - In this case, associated with **race.**
 - But it could be any large or slight difference.
- Also other types of ethnic oppression.



What to Do?

- **Don't start it.**
 - **Don't trigger** ethnic hatred.
 - **Don't oppress** other peoples.
 - **Avoid “ethnic cleansing.”**
- **Don't revive it**
 - ...with further oppression.

