



The land

American landscape, American character

“People will miss that it once meant something to be Southern or Midwestern. It doesn’t mean much now, except for the climate. The question, ‘Where are you from?’ doesn’t lead to anything odd or interesting. They live somewhere near a Gap store, and what else do you need to know?”

Garrison Keillor, writer

Probably most people around the world feel that their own nation is the best place to live, even despite tragedies such as wars, famines, or epidemics occurring in the peoples’ lifetimes. Probably most people around the world also feel that their own country is special somehow – somehow unlike all the other nations of the world.

This is true of most Americans, too. However, most Americans also feel that the United States is even more

exceptional than every other nation in the world. There are several reasons. The United States was founded relatively recently, so many of the documents and artifacts from the founders of the nation are still in existence. Moreover, unlike in many other nations, some Americans can trace their ancestry back to the founding of the nation; their family members from just a few generations before took part in it.

Further, the United States as such began just at the time in history when technology was beginning to develop rapidly. Americans constructed cities, factories, transportation routes, and the seat of government on vast expanses of land that just a few years before had been swamps, forests, and grasslands.

In addition, unlike in older societies packed closely together for generations, where social classes or tribes created the major diversities, in the United States, immigrants arriving from many different