

3.2 Religion in the USA Puritan legacy

- What is the role of religion in US politics?
- How does religion influence what is taught in schools?

1

THE PURITANS & THEIR LEGACY

- early settlers: religious freedom in a new country
- intolerance towards those who did not share their beliefs
- separation of church and state: written into the Constitution
- protestant work ethic
- belief in an equal society
- personal wealth = God's blessing

2

RELIGION & POLITICS

- according to the Constitution, church and state should be separate
- christian Right → powerful political lobby
- support for politicians, particularly Republicans, who promote traditional values
- lobbying for bans on contraception, abortion, stem cell research

3

INFLUENCE ON EDUCATION

- fundamentalist belief that evolution should not be taught as scientific fact
- equal weight should be given to Creationism and intelligent design
- **sex education**: "abstinence only"
- **downside**: young people are ignorant about sexual health
- **banned books**: attempt to prevent children and young people from reading books by a diverse range of authors

IMPORTANT VOCABULARY

abortion	Abtreibung
contraception	Verhütung
euthanasia	Sterbehilfe
legacy	Vermächtnis
to persecute	verfolgen