ABSTRACT
Toponyms are the names of a special kind; they both denominate the object and contain historical and social facts of the community development. They also reflect the natural conditions of a particular place, peculiarities of language of the local people etc.

Formation of toponyms is influenced by external factors and in this case they reflect the picture of the world of a particular ethnic group which, in its turn, includes its (the ethnic group’s) values, mentality, image thinking.

Toponymy of the United States includes all these characteristics in full and is represented by a very diverse picture. Both the names of the states and their nicknames are the U.S. toponyms. Compared to the semantics of the official names, semantics of the nicknames is transparent. The nicknames are motivated, close to the modern lexicon and, most likely, are represented by the everyday colloquial names and also carry a lot of additional information.

The modern native speakers often do not know what a particular name meant in the past, because the semantics of common nouns, from which they had been formed, exists for a relatively short period. The official state names contain the root of different languages – not just English, but also French, Spanish, language of the Indians etc. Therefore, they reflect the ancient phenomenon that disappeared (or nearly extinct) from among common nouns. On the contrary, nicknames of the American states are transparent and consist of modern, highly diverse appellatives of the English language and that is their main peculiarity.