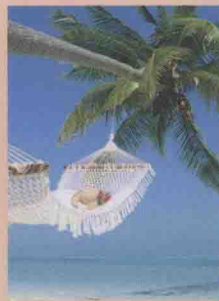
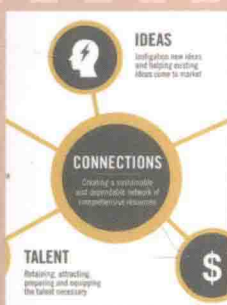


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英语国家文化

Exploring American and British Culture

陈 静 主编



科学出版社

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Exploring American and British Culture

主 编 陈 静
编 委 陈 炜 肖衡碧 吴志春
栗 萍 葛静萍
(按姓氏笔画排序)



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联系电话: 010-64019007/电子邮箱: changchune@mail.sciencep.com

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总序

随着经济全球化的飞速发展、信息技术的广泛应用和网络社会的日益兴起，知识经济不断得到拓展和深化，使得高等教育国际化成为势不可挡的世界潮流。作为一所国际化特色鲜明的教学研究型大学和华南地区国际化人才培养及外国语言文化、对外经济贸易、国际战略研究的重要基地，广东外语外贸大学（以下简称广外）一直以培养国际化人才为目标，即秉承培养全球化高素质公民的使命，着力推进专业教学与外语教学的深度融合，培养具有国际视野和创新意识、能直接参与国际合作与竞争的国际化人才。在广外现有的八大学科门类（即文学、经济学、管理学、法学、工学、理学、教育学、艺术）中，全日制在校本科生两万余人，其中，非英语类专业学生占四分之三，约15 000名。大学英语作为我校非英语专业学生的必修课，其教学贯穿一、二、三年级的六个学期，修读学生人数最多，影响面最大。

为了加强大学英语的教学与研究，广外自2001年以来一直致力于大学英语教学改革与创新，遵照“分级教学、分类指导”的大学英语教学指导原则，努力构建“国际化、校本化、个性化、立体化、人性化”的大学英语教学体系，凸显“分层次教学、专业英语教学、网络自主学习、教师专业发展、课外延伸学习”的广外教学特色。经过层层申报和严格评审，2011年3月，我校顺利成为教育部第三批大学英语教学改革的示范点；同年6月，我校的大学英语系列课程被评为“广东省精品课程”。

作为大学英语教学实施、改革和创新的重要环节，教材的作用不容低估。因此，教材建设，尤其是特色课程的教材建设一直是我校大学英语教学改革的重要内容之一。在新时代大学英语教学改革中，有一套适合国际化人才培养的特色课程系列教材是非常必要的。根据教育部颁布的《大学英语课程教学要求》，针对培养具有跨文化交际能力的国际型英语人才的需要，我校组织长期从事一线教学的中、外籍教师，早在2006年就相继编写、出版了一些大学英语特色教材，供我校一年级和二年级学生使用。经过在长期教学实践中的不断修改、丰富和完善，并结合兄弟院校使用的反馈意见，我们对现有的教材进行了认真修订和改版，使之成为一套更加科学、系统、前沿、实用的大学英语特色课系列教材。该系列教材包括影视英语、新闻英语、文学文化三大版块，共6本，各版块相互衔接、合理分布，旨在从不同侧面和不同角度出发培养学生在跨文化交际中的英语语言实际运用能力。教材的编写从教学实际和学习规律出发，设计循序渐进、灵活多样的教学活动和练习形式，以达到外语课程教学的最大成效。

众所周知,英语教学中,文化与语言密不可分。在长期的教学中我们发现,学生乐于了解西方文化,渴望能够用英语流畅、准确地就身边的社会文化现象与外国人进行交流。然而,语言产出能力的欠缺和文化层面知识的不足,常常导致学习者交流困难,甚至产生误解。本系列教材的特色之处恰是能够帮助师生在英语课堂上通过视、听、说、读等方面的训练,模拟、复制、创造文化语境,从而有效提高学生跨文化交际的英语实际应用能力。教材内容取材于原汁原味的英语新闻、电影和文学文化作品等,保证语料真实、语言地道、内容有趣,既增强学生的学习兴趣,又拓展学生的国际视野;既涵盖当代大学生关注的社会热点和热门话题,又辐射西方文化、社会礼仪和风土人情的各个领域,从整体结构到局部细节都精益求精,将知识的传授、能力的训练、方法的指导、习惯的培养、文化的意识相结合,构建起一个较为系统的整体培养体系。

我们真诚希望,通过这套特色课系列教材的使用,能够进一步推进我校的大学英语教学朝着“国际化、校本化、个性化、人性化、立体化”的方向发展;使我们“分层次教学、专业英语教学、网络自主学习、教师专业发展、课外延伸学习”的广外大学英语教学特色结出丰硕的成果;使我们的“教育部大学英语教学改革示范点”真正起到全国示范的作用;使我们的“大学英语系列省级精品课程”建设在广东省独树一帜,成为品牌。同时,我们也希望,此系列教材的出版,能为全国兄弟院校开展大学英语特色教学提供一些有益的启示,为他们在教材的使用上提供一种选择。

借此机会,再次感谢科学出版社领导和同仁,尤其是胡升华主任和阎莉编辑慧眼识珠,在我们修订、完善此系列教材的过程中给予专业指导、真诚帮助和大力支持。广外英语教育学院前任院长霍海洪教授生前也曾出谋划策,给予了悉心指导和大力支持,让我们以此系列教材的出版告慰他的在天之灵。

是为总序。

总主编 董金伟

2013年10月

前言

美国教育家温斯顿·布伦姆伯格曾说过：“采取只知语言而不懂文化的教法，是培养语言流利的大傻瓜的最好办法。”语言与文化自古以来就是不可分割、相互渗透的。人类用语言创造了文化，文化反过来又促进人类社会的发展。而《英语国家文化》是根据国家教育部《大学英语课程教学要求》中“大学英语课程不仅是一门语言基础知识课程，也是拓宽知识、了解世界文化的素质教育课程”的规定，为大学非英语专业本科二、三年级学生编写的英语国家文化类教材。

基于已出版的同类书，本书尝试在以下方面有所突破：①本书的主题编排分为上下两部分。第一部分是希腊神话和宗教故事，目的是让读者在阅读西方经典故事的同时，了解西方文化的源头，理解西方文化的精髓。第二部分则是以政治、教育、大众传媒、家庭等为主题主要介绍英美国家社会，目的是让读者从不同侧面了解当代英语国家的社会形态及文化特点。②本书内容丰富，除了介绍英美国家概况的文章外，还选编了对各种文化现象或问题表达观点和意见的文章。其目的是引导读者不仅了解英语国家的风土、人文知识，而且了解各种文化现象后面隐藏着的文化实质。此外我们还特意选编了同一主题下不同作者的文章，尤其是意见相左的文章，希望能借此帮助读者开拓阅读视野、丰富文化体验，并激发读者在比较中进行批判性思考。③本书在每章的第三部分选用了英美著名作家的相关文学作品，以短篇小说、诗歌为主，旨在对各个文化侧面有更形象细致的展现，并激发读者进行更深入积极的理解和思考。④考虑到读者的中国文化背景，本书在每章的第四部分还选用了中外作家阐述相应中国文化的作品。希望通过中西文化思想的对比，加深读者对两种不同文化的理解，并引导读者尝试从西方文化的视角对本土文化进行批判性思考。⑤本书每篇文章都附有由浅入深的练习。问题设计分为课前课后两个部分，课前练习主要用于启发读者对相关文化现象或问题进行思考，从而引入对文章的深入阅读；课后练习旨在帮助读者理解文章的内容和主题，培养读者独立分析思考问题的能力。练习的设计既便于教师教学也方便学生自学。

本书包括介绍单元和八个主题单元。它们分别是：Introduction; Greek Mythology; Religious Life; Government and Politics; Schools and Education; Mass Media; Marriage and Parenting; Leisure Time; Business Culture。每个主题单元包括四个部分：Part I: Facts and Statistics; Part II: Ideas and Opinions; Part III: Stories and Tales; Part IV: East and West。

本书适合英语或非英语专业大学本科二年级及以上学生使用，也可作为对英语国家文化感兴趣的爱好者阅读和自学的教材。

本书由广东外语外贸大学英语教育学院的部分教师编写而成。全书由陈静主编和统稿，参加本书编写的人员有：陈静，介绍和宗教单元；肖衡碧，希腊神话单元；陈炜，政治单元；吴志春，教育单元；栗萍，大众传媒和商业文化单元；葛静萍，家庭和休闲单元。外教 Bob Lee 和 Mary Lee 为全书做了校对。本书的编写得到了广东外语外贸大学英语教育学院董金伟教授的大力支持和热心帮助，科学出版社编辑阎莉、常春娥精心设计编排，在此一并致谢。

编 者

2014年6月于广州白云山下

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Introduction

I. *What Is Culture?*

► Preview

What is the culture of a country? If someone asked you to describe your country's culture, which of the following words would you mention?

art dance holidays beliefs food houses cities geography literature climate
government music customs history

What Is Culture?

By Deepa Kartha

Without culture, and the relative freedom it implies, society, even when perfect, is but a jungle. This is why any authentic creation is a gift to the future

—Albert Camus

Culture is an integral part of every society. It is a learned pattern of behavior and ways in which a person lives his or her life. Culture is essential for the existence of a society, because it binds people together. In the explicit sense of the term, culture constitutes the music, food, arts and literature of a society. However, these are only the products of culture followed by the society and cannot be defined as culture.

According to English Anthropologist Edward B Taylor, culture is *“that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.”*

Culture is something that a person learns from his family and surroundings, and is not ingrained in him from birth. It does not have any biological connection because even if a person is brought up in a culture different from that in which he was born, he imbibes the culture of the society where he grows up. It is also not a hidden fact that some people feel the need to follow the beliefs and traditions of their own culture, even though they might be not subscribing to certain ideologies within.

Culture is a complex tool which every individual has to learn to survive in a society. It is the means through which people interact with others in the society. It acts in a subconscious way and whatever we see and perceive, seems to be normal and natural. Sometimes, other societies and people seem to be a little odd because they have a different culture from ours. We must remember that every society has a distinct culture that forms the backbone of the society. Culture does not remain stagnant, on the other hand it is evolving constantly and is in fact somewhat influenced by the other cultures and societies.



Every society has a different culture, where people share a specific language, traditions, behaviors, perceptions and beliefs. Culture gives them an identity which makes them unique and different from people of other cultures. When people of different cultures migrate and settle in another society, the culture of that society becomes the dominant culture and those of the immigrants form the subculture of the community. Usually, people who settle in other nations imbibe the new culture, while at the same time strive to preserve their own.

Although every society has a specific culture, there are certain elements of culture that are universal. They are known as cultural universals, in which there are certain behavioral traits and patterns that are shared by all cultures around the world. For instance, classifying relations based on blood relations and marriage, differentiating between good and bad, having some form of art, use of jewelry, classifying people according to gender and age, etc., are common in all cultures of the world.

Some people believe that humans are the only living beings who have a culture. But, there is a group of people who believe in the existence of culture even in animals. It is said that animals have certain social rules which they teach their young ones as a medium for survival.

Culture is necessary to establish an order and discipline in the society. It is not only a means of communication between people, but also creates a feeling of belonging and togetherness among people in the society.

In review

1. What is culture according to the author?
2. Where do people learn their culture?
3. What are the functions of culture?
4. Do you agree with the quotation by Edward T. Hall in the following? Do people really not understand their own culture? What aspects of a country's culture are the hardest to understand?

Culture hides much more than it reveals, and strangely enough what it hides, it hides most effectively from its own participants. Years of study have convinced me that the real job is not to understand foreign culture but to understand our own.

— Edward T. Hall

II. Culture Analogies

Preview

How would you complete the sentence “Culture is like a _____”? If you are asked to draw a model for culture on a sheet of paper, what would you draw? What comes to mind? What's your reason?

Culture Analogies

By Brooks Peterson

I will never suggest that there is only one right analogy to use or one right way to think about culture. I encourage people I work with to come up with their own models, metaphors, or analogies for describing it. What analogy would you use? Stop and think about it. How would you complete the sentence “Culture is like a _____”? If I asked you to draw a model for culture on a sheet of paper,

what would you draw? Consider it a minute before you read on. What comes to mind?

When I ask people in my classes or workshops to draw an analogy to describe culture, they come up with a lot of creative answers. I have seen culture described and drawn as a rose, a hot dog, a spiderweb, a pizza, a toilet, clouds, a wheat field, a bathtub, a circus, a dog (complete with fleas), and so on. Other common analogy that Americans seem to like (and they're more appealing than a toilet) represent culture as a melting pot, salad bowl, tapestry, or mosaic.



A tree is another way to describe culture. For me, it's a good analogy because practically everyone from everywhere knows what a tree is. A tree has parts you see immediately, such as branches and leaves. But a tree also has more interesting aspects the closer and deeper you go: birds' nests, fruit, bark, trunk, rings inside the wood, termites—and the life-giving roots underground.



A tree probably makes a more workable analogy than pizza. Trees are formed over many years by the constant, slow impact of their environment (wind, rain, sunlight, nutrients) just as people are slowly formed (by family, diet, environment, education). Trees change from year to year (dropping their leaves, losing branches, and growing new ones), but they remain essentially the same tree over time. Cultures and individuals may also adopt ever-changing popular trends, but somehow they remain essentially the same over time. All trees need sunlight, air, and water just as all humans have basic needs such as food, shelter, and clothing, and other needs such as various relationships, a sense of work or personal purpose, and so forth. Yet a pine tree will always be different from a maple tree just

as a Russian will always be different from an Argentinean. There are certainly other insights we could have about culture by using the tree analogy.

Even though I've never seen one up close, I most often like to describe culture as an iceberg. While everybody knows what a tree is, people from some places may not know what an iceberg is. Still, I find it to be a useful analogy because of one important element: an iceberg has a part you see and a part you don't. This analogy is commonly used among cross-culturalists, and I like to use it with businesspeople because they can visualize what can happen if they ignore the much larger part of the iceberg that lies underwater—their business efforts may indeed crash and sink.



An important first distinction to make when examining any culture, therefore, is between the part you see ("tip-of-the-iceberg" or "above-the-waterline" culture) and the part you don't ("bottom-of-the-iceberg" or "under-the-water" culture).

Most businesspeople are eager to study the tip of the iceberg. This is understandable because it's the first thing people are aware of encountering when going to another culture. (Note: I didn't say it's

the first thing people encounter, I said it's the first thing people *are aware of encountering*! As people learn more about the cultures they deal with, they may realize with the clarity of hindsight ways in which they were running into the bottom of the iceberg!) When you take an interest in another place, whether it's because you're going there or interacting with someone from there, the first questions that naturally pop into mind are along the lines of "What does it look like there?" or "Is it crowded?" or "What's the food like over there?" Our curiosity and attention are understandably first drawn to

"Tip-of-the-iceberg" culture is anything you can perceive with your five senses:

- Language
- Architecture
- Food
- Population
- Music
- Clothing
- Art and literature
- Pace of life
- Emotional display
- Gestures
- Leisure activities
- Eye contact
- Sports

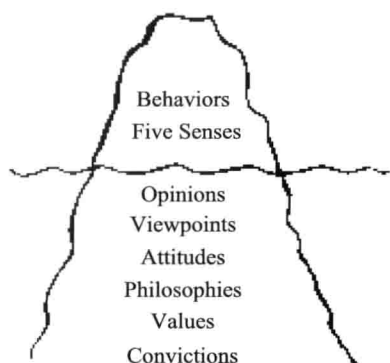
certain aspects of the respective cultures we deal with, such as French cuisine, the Egyptian pyramids, sumo wrestling, Chinese painting, Jamaican music, Chinese opera costumes, and so forth. These things can be fun (or delicious!) to learn about.

They can also be amusing, shocking, or perspective building. Usually the most off-putting things about other cultures are what we see at the tip of the iceberg: I was shocked, and amused, to see an elderly Asian man in the Hong Kong airport loudly clear his throat and, with a "graaaak" and a "patooey," eject a hearty glob of spit onto the nice new blue-gray airport carpeting. People from nearly everywhere are stunned at how fat many Americans are and surprised at how loudly they speak.

The fact that Brazilians routinely run red lights at night, even when right next to a police car, certainly is different from what a German might be used to. Americans are disgusted when the French smoke nonstop in enclosed public places, and the French cannot understand why Americans allow themselves to be controlled by smoking laws and low speed limits. South Americans are puzzled when everyone is herded out of American bars as the 1:00 AM closing time approaches, and many people around the world view American drinking-age laws as silly.

The tip of the iceberg can be interesting, but just as approximately 80 percent of an iceberg's mass is underwater, perhaps 80 percent of the important aspects of culture are also contained in the invisible and usually unconscious characteristics of culture.

Bottom-of-the-iceberg cultural concepts are extremely important for businesspeople to know. So let's take a closer look at the part of the iceberg that is under the water and why it's important.



The under-the-water part of the iceberg represents what we can't perceive with the five senses (you just can't see or smell "time"; you can't taste "harmony"). The deeper you go toward the bottom of the iceberg, the more important the items are. For example, we may be able to change an opinion over the course of a five-minute conversation, but a value or conviction is far more entrenched, far longer lasting.

We could add more to this section of the iceberg, too: beliefs, assumptions, thoughts, hunches, and so forth.

I advise businesspeople to look for the cultural traits both at the tip of the iceberg *and* below the waterline. There are two main reasons for this.

First, the bottom of the iceberg is the foundation for what you see at the top. If you understand the underlying causes of why people behave the way they do, you are a little more likely to be able to anticipate how they may act or react in a variety of situations. For example, someone from a country where people prefer stronger leadership systems and more direction from superiors might (but is not guaranteed to) react better to clearer direction and closer supervision. Conversely, someone from a culture tending toward less structured leadership systems or a more relaxed supervisory style might want to be left alone to complete an assignment as he or she sees fit and not be micromanaged throughout a project. When someone does act or react a certain way, you are much more likely to be able to make sense of what is going on as it happens if you understand the “bottom of the iceberg” well. Neither of the two parts of the iceberg may be ignored; sadly, otherwise savvy professionals often ignore the underwater part of the iceberg.

The second reason for the importance of the lower four-fifths of the iceberg is that these principles apply to all cultures on earth. When you study and try to memorize a long list of facts and figures (and tip-of-the-iceberg information) about Italy, you can’t apply this information on your business trip to Germany. However, you will be surprised at how many of the general principles you learn while studying the bottom of the “Italian iceberg” can be applied in some way to the German iceberg, or to the Saudi iceberg, even though these cultures are drastically different.

In review

1. What analogies do people use to describe culture? Do you think they are reasonable?
2. Why does the author use a tree to describe culture?
3. What aspects of culture can be perceived as the “tip-of-the-iceberg” and what aspects can be perceived as “under-the-water”?
4. Why is it important for us to understand the culture traits of both the “tip-of-the-iceberg” and the “under-the-water”?
5. Do you agree with the author’s idea that culture is like an iceberg? Can you use some examples in your life to explain the visible and invisible iceberg of culture?

III. *The Values Americans Live By*

Preview

1. High-context culture and the contrasting low-context culture are terms presented by the anthropologist Edward T. Hall in his 1976 book *Beyond Culture*. It refers to a culture’s tendency to use high-context messages over low-context messages in routine communication. This choice of speaking styles translates into a culture that will cater to in-groups, an in-group being a group that has similar experiences and expectations, from which inferences are drawn. In a higher-context culture, many things are left unsaid, letting the culture explain. Words and word choice become very important in higher-context communication, since a few words can communicate a complex message very effectively to an in-group (but less effectively outside that group), while in a low-context culture, the communicator needs to be much more explicit and the value of a single word is less important. Read the following situations and decide which ones are low context and which are

high context.

- _____ (1) People have a hard time saying no.
 - _____ (2) Paying attention to the status of the communicator is as important as the message itself.
 - _____ (3) The message is more important than the status of who communicated it.
 - _____ (4) Business is conducted only after enough time is taken for talking about family, health, important politics, etc.
 - _____ (5) People get down to business right away and often omit any “small” talk.
 - _____ (6) It is alright to say “I disagree” to your professor in class.
 - _____ (7) Use of intermediaries or go-betweens is common.
 - _____ (8) “I don’t understand” is often used to voice disagreement.
 - _____ (9) If you want something, it’s best to come out and ask for it.
 - _____ (10) Hinting at something is an effective way of getting what you want.
2. When you see the word “American”, what images appear in your mind?
3. What do you think Americans value most? Do you think American culture is a low context culture or a high one? What about the Chinese culture?

The Values Americans Live By

By L. Robert Kohls

Most Americans would have a difficult time telling you, specifically, what the values are that Americans live by. They have never given the matter much thought.

Even if Americans had considered this question, they would probably, in the end, decide not to answer in terms of a definitive list of values. The reason for this decision is itself one very American value—their belief that every individual is so unique that the same list of values could never be applied to all, or even most, of their fellow citizens.

Although Americans may think of themselves as being more varied and unpredictable than they actually are, it is significant that they think they are. Americans tend to think they have been only slightly influenced by family, church or schools. In the end, each believes, “I personally chose which values I want to live my own life by.”

Despite this self-evaluation, a foreign anthropologist could observe Americans and produce a list of common values that would fit most Americans. The list of typically American values would stand in sharp contrast to the values commonly held by the people of many other countries.

We, the staff of the Washington International Center, have been introducing thousands of international visitors to life in the United States for more than a third of a century. This has caused us to try to look at Americans through the eyes of our visitors. We feel confident that the values listed here describe most (but not all) Americans.

Furthermore, we can say that if the foreign visitor really understood how deeply ingrained these 13 values are in Americans, he or she would then be able to understand 95% of American actions—action that might otherwise appear strange or unbelievable when evaluated from the perspective of the foreigner’s own society and its values.

The different behaviors of a people or a culture make sense only when seen through the basic beliefs, assumptions and values of that particular group. When you encounter an action, or hear a statement in the United States that surprises you, try to see it as an expression of one or more of the

values listed here. For example, when you ask Americans for directions to get to a particular address in their own city, they may explain, in great detail, how you can get there on your own, but may never even consider walking two city blocks with you to lead you to the place. Some foreign visitors have interpreted this sort of action as showing Americans' "unfriendliness." We would suggest, instead, that the self-help concept (value number 6 on our list), is so strong in Americans that they firmly believe that no adult would ever want, even temporarily, to be dependent on another. Also, their future orientation (value 8) makes Americans think it is better to prepare you to find other addresses on your own in the future.

Before proceeding to the list itself, we should also point out that Americans see all of these values as very positive ones. They are not aware, for example, that the people in many Third World countries view change (value 2) as negative or threatening. In fact, all 13 of these American values are judged by many of the world's citizens as negative and undesirable. Therefore, it is not enough simply to familiarize yourself with these values. You must also, so far as possible, consider them without the negative or derogatory connotation that they might have for you, based on your own experience and cultural identity.

It is important to state emphatically that our purpose in providing you with this list of the most important American values is not to convert you, the foreign visitor, to our values. We couldn't achieve that goal even if we wanted to, and we don't want to. We simply want to help you understand the Americans with whom you will be relating—from their own value system rather than from yours.

1. PERSONAL CONTROL OVER THE ENVIRONMENT

Americans no longer believe in the power of Fate, and they have come to look at people who do as being backward, primitive, or hopelessly naïve. To be called "fatalistic" is one of the worst criticisms one can receive in the American context; to an American, it means one is superstitious and lazy, unwilling to take any initiative in bringing about improvement.

In the United States, people consider it normal and right that Man should control Nature, rather than the other way around. More specifically, people believe every single individual should have control over whatever in the environment might potentially affect him or her. The problems of one's life are not seen as having resulted from bad luck as much as having come from one's laziness in pursuing a better life. Furthermore, it is considered normal that anyone should look out for his or her own self-interests first and foremost.

Most Americans find it impossible to accept that there are some things that lie beyond the power of humans to achieve. And Americans have literally gone to the moon, because they refused to accept earthly limitations.

Americans seem to be challenged, even compelled, to do, by one means or another (and often at great cost) what seven-eighths of the world is certain cannot be done.

2. CHANGE

In the American mind, change is seen as an indisputably good condition. Change is strongly linked to development, improvement, progress, and growth. Many older, more traditional cultures consider change as a disruptive, destructive force, to be avoided if at all possible. Instead of change, such societies value stability, continuity, tradition, and a rich and ancient heritage—none of which are valued very much in the United States.

These first two values—the belief that we can do anything and the belief that any change is good—together with an American belief in the virtue of hard work and the belief that each individual has a responsibility to do the best he or she can do have helped Americans achieve some great accomplishments. So whether these beliefs are true is really irrelevant; what is important is that Americans have considered them to be true and have acted as if they were, thus, in effect, causing them to happen.

3. TIME AND ITS CONTROL

Time is, for the average American, of utmost importance. To the foreign visitor, Americans seem to be more concerned with getting things accomplished on time (according to a predetermined schedule) than they are with developing deep interpersonal relations. Schedules, for the American, are meant to be planned and then followed in the smallest detail.

It may seem to you that most Americans are completely controlled by the little machines they wear on their wrists, cutting their discussions off abruptly to make it to their next appointment on time.

Americans' language is filled with references to time, giving a clear indication of how much it is valued. Time is something to be "on," to be "kept," "filled," "saved," "used," "spent," "wasted," "lost," "gained," "planned," "given," "made the most of," even "killed."

The international visitor soon learns that it is considered very rude to be late—even by 10 minutes—for an appointment in the United States. (Whenever it is absolutely impossible to be on time, you should phone ahead and tell the person you have been unavoidably detained and will be a half hour—or whatever—late.)

Time is so valued in America, because by considering time to be important one can clearly accomplish more than if one "wastes" time and does not keep busy. This philosophy has proven its worth. It has enabled Americans to be extremely productive, and productivity itself is highly valued in the United States. Many American proverbs stress the value in guarding our time, using it wisely, setting and working toward specific goals, and even expending our time and energy today so that the fruits of our labor may be enjoyed at a later time. (This latter concept is called "delayed gratification.")

4. EQUALITY/EGALITARIANISM

Equality is, for Americans, one of their most cherished values. This concept is so important for Americans that they have even given it a religious basis. They say all people have been "created equal." Most Americans believe that God views all humans alike without regard to intelligence, physical condition or economic status. In secular terms this belief is translated into the assertion that all people have an equal opportunity to succeed in life. Americans differ in opinion about how to make this ideal into a reality. Yet virtually all agree that equality is an important civic and social goal.

The equality concept often makes Americans seem strange to foreign visitors. Seven-eighths of the world feels quite differently. To them, rank and status and authority are seen as much more desirable considerations—even if they personally happen to find themselves near the bottom of the social order. Class and authority seem to give people in those other societies a sense of security and certainty. People outside the United States consider it reassuring to know, from birth, who they are and where they fit into the complex system called "society".

Many highly-placed foreign visitors to the United States are insulted by the way they are treated by service personnel (such as waiters in restaurants, clerks in stores, taxi drivers, etc.). Americans