

The Society and Culture of Major English-speaking Countries

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美国・加拿大



# 英语国家社会与文化

(下册)

The Society and Culture of Major English-speaking Countries

中国电力出版社 www.sidf.com.cn

#### 图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

英语国家社会与文化(下册)/刘晓蕖主编.一北京:中国电力出版社,2005.8(高等学校英语专业教材·人文素质教育系列)

ISBN7-5083-2945-7

I. 英··· II. 刘··· III. 英语一阅读教学一高等学校一教材 IV. H319.4

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2004) 第 102851 号

# 英语国家社会与文化(下册)

主编: 刘晓蕖

策划编辑:李 艳 张 敏 责任编辑:游 媛 赵筱妹 出版发行:中国电力出版社

社 址:北京市西城区三里河路6号(100044)

网 址: http://www.sjdf.com.cn

印 刷:北京地矿印刷厂

开本尺寸: 170×230

印 张: 25

字 数: 480 千字

版 次: 2005年9月第1版 2005年9月第1次1印刷

书 号: ISBN7-5083-2945-7

定 价: 34.80元

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如有印装质量问题,出版社负责调换。联系电话: 010-62193493

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# 前 言

《英语国家社会与文化》共两册,上册介绍英国、澳大利亚、新西兰,下册介绍美国、加拿大,供英语专业本科学生作为阅读教科书使用。

本册为美国、加拿大部分。

书中详尽地介绍了上述两个国家的国土和人口、历史、经济、文化、 教育和社会福利、政府和政治制度等基本情况,每章开头有简要的中文概述,结尾对文中涉及的重要背景知识作了较详细的注释。

全书语言标准规范,风格清新流畅,信息来源翔实,知识准确可靠。 读者在提高英语阅读水平的同时,也可以了解到美国和加拿大两个国家的 概况,这对英语专业学生来说十分有益和必要。

现代社会的发展日新月异,每个国家的情况都在不断发生变化,让读者了解处于现代社会中的美国和加拿大两个国家的概况,是作者的基本目的。本书力求信息的准确和更新,尽管如此,疏漏之处在所难免,诚望广大读者批评指正。

编 者 2004年6月

# **Contents**

# Part One

# The United States of America

Chapter 1	Land and People	.2
Chapter 2	History (1600~1900)	31
Chapter 3	History (1900~1945)	53
Chapter 4	History (1945~2003)	78
Chapter 5	Economy	98
Chapter 6	Government and Politics	)6
Chapter 7	Judicial System	27
Chapter 8	Religion	37
Chapter 9	Social Welfare12	47
Chapter 10	Mass Media16	50
	Education	
	Literature, Architecture and Music	
	Social Customs and Behavior20	
Chapter 14	Holidays and Festivals2	17
Part Two		
Canada		
Chapter 1	Land and People2	38
Chapter 1 Chapter 2	Land and People	
Chapter 2	Land and People	55
Chapter 2 Chapter 3	History22	55 71
Chapter 2	History	55 71 94
Chapter 2 Chapter 3 Chapter 4	History	55 71 94 13
Chapter 2 Chapter 3 Chapter 4 Chapter 5	History	55 71 94 13 22
Chapter 2 Chapter 3 Chapter 4 Chapter 5 Chapter 6	History	55 71 94 13 22 30
Chapter 2 Chapter 3 Chapter 4 Chapter 5 Chapter 6 Chapter 7	History	55 71 94 13 22 30 46
Chapter 2 Chapter 3 Chapter 4 Chapter 5 Chapter 6 Chapter 7 Chapter 8 Chapter 9	History	55 71 94 13 22 30 46
Chapter 2 Chapter 3 Chapter 4 Chapter 5 Chapter 6 Chapter 7 Chapter 8 Chapter 9 附录 1	History       2:         Economy       2:         Government and Politics       2:         Policemen and Justice       3         Religion       3         Social Welfare & Health Care       3         Education       3         Culture       3	55 71 94 13 22 30 46 60 883
Chapter 2 Chapter 3 Chapter 4 Chapter 5 Chapter 6 Chapter 7 Chapter 8 Chapter 9 附录 1 附录 2	History       2         Economy       2         Government and Politics       2         Policemen and Justice       3         Religion       3         Social Welfare & Health Care       3         Education       3         Culture       3         3       3         3       3         3       3         3       3         3       3         3       3         3       3         3       3         3       3         3       3         3       3         3       3         3       3         3       3         3       3         3       3         4       3         5       3         6       3         7       3         8       3         9       3         9       3         9       3         9       3         10       3         10       3         10       3         10	55 71 94 13 22 30 46 60 883

# Part One

The United States of America





# **Land and People**

# 国土和人口

美利坚合众国(the United States of America)是美国的正式国名,国家成立于1776年。它由50个州组成,其国名也可缩写为 the US 或 the USA,the United States或 America 是美利坚合众国的简称。美国国土的主要部分位于北美洲中部,北与加拿大毗邻,南与墨西哥接壤,东临大西洋,西濒太平洋,全国总面积为9372614平方公里。美国最新的两个州——夏威夷和阿拉斯加不在美国本土。

美国幅员辽阔,地形复杂,有曲折漫长的海岸,开阔的平原,起伏的丘陵,逶迤的山脉,无际的草原,以及贫瘠的大沙漠。美国大部分地区属于北温带和亚热带,大陆以外的两块领土,阿拉斯加属于寒冷气候区,夏威夷属于热带气候区。

美国水源丰富,河流种类多种多样,风格各异。最长的河流是密苏里河(4367公里),密西西比河位居第二(3780公里),却最为有名,被美洲印第安人称为"众水之父"。其他河流还有俄亥俄河、科罗拉多河、哥伦比亚河及格兰德河。美国的主要湖泊有东北部的五大湖。五大湖位于美国东北部和加拿大的交界处,是世界上最大的淡水湖群,总面积为245000平方公里。它由苏必利尔湖、密歇根湖、休伦湖、伊利湖和安大略湖组成。美国的大平原曾被描述为"充满不幸,大有希望"的地区,这里气候恶劣,雨量难以预测。雄伟的落基山脉南起墨西哥,直抵北极圈,长约3220公里。加利福尼亚州沙漠区以"死亡谷"最为著名,"死亡谷"大部分位于海平面以下,"恶水"(Badwater)附近在海平面以下86米,是西半球的最低点。

美国主要城市及人文景观有:首都华盛顿;全国最大城市,金融、商业、文化中心组约;著名商贸城市芝加哥;西海岸城市洛杉矶和旧金山;历史名城费城;还有波士顿、西雅图、亚特兰大等。电影制造中心好莱坞;赌城拉斯维加斯;儿童天堂迪斯尼乐园等。

美国是世界上第三人口大国,仅次于中国和印度。根据 2000 年的统计,美国人口数约为 281 421 906, 2003 年美国的人口密度为每平方公里 30 人。美国有"大熔炉"之称,其国民来自世界各地。第一批移民来自英格兰,之后欧洲各国的移民不断涌入美国。欧洲移民到美国,有的是为了逃避本国的政治压迫和宗教迫害,有的是为了逃离贫困,还有的是为了在美国这块土地上寻求成功的机遇,实现自己的

人生梦想。非裔美国人是美国最大的少数民族,他们的祖先是在 16 世纪被强迫从非洲作为奴隶贩卖到美国的。讲西班牙语的美国人是少数民族中的第二大群体,主要来自墨西哥、波多黎各和古巴。排在第三位的少数民族是亚裔美国人,主要来自中国、日本、菲律宾、朝鲜、越南等国家。少数民族群体中最小的就是原本就生活在这里的印第安人,他们的祖先来自亚洲,是这里最早的居民。在过去的几十年里,美国在提高少数民族的平等和机会方面取得了明显的进步,但仍然存在着一定的问题,少数民族要获得同白人完全平等的权利,还有很长的路要走。

#### I. Location and Size

The United States of America is also called America, the States, and the US. The main landmass of the United States lies in central North America, with Canada to the north, Mexico to the south, the Atlantic Ocean to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west. Including the states of Alaska and Hawaii<sup>2</sup>, the United States covers an area of 9,372,614 square kilometers. The two newest states, Alaska and Hawaii, are separated from the continental United States: Alaska borders on northwestern Canada, and Hawaii lies in the central Pacific.



It stretches 2,572 kilometers from north to south, 4,500 kilometers from east to west. A flight from New York to San Francisco takes five and a half hours. The

plane takes off from an Atlantic coast airport and soon flies over the gentle slopes of the Appalachian Mountains<sup>3</sup>. Then, for hundreds of kilometers it crosses the fertile fields of the farm belt of the Great Middle West. To the north, on clear days, passengers may see the five Great Lakes located between the United States and Canada. Continuing into the West, the plane flies over vast prairies and rough cattle-grazing country. Soon the snow-topped Rocky Mountains<sup>4</sup> appear in the distance. After crossing these high ranges, the plane can almost glide down into the rich valleys of California and, finally, to a landing not far from the beaches of the Pacific Ocean.

Pacific Ocean.

According to the 2000 census, the United States was a nation of 281,421,906 people, making the United States the third most populous country in the world, after China and India. Nearly 5 percent of the earth's inhabitants live in the United States. Historically, this nation has attracted vast numbers of immigrants from around the globe. Yet the United States remains less densely populated than other large countries or other industrialized nations — in 2003 there were 30 persons per sq km.

#### II. Climate

All along the western coast, the temperature changes little between winter and summer. In some places, the average difference between July and January is as little as 10°C. The climate along the northern part of this coast is similar to that of England. But in the north central part of the country, summer and winter are worlds apart. There the average difference between July and January is 36°C and more violent extremes are common. The coldest days of a typical January may be -40°C, and the hottest July day may be 45°C. This is the sort of climate that is also found in oceans. In the eastern part of the United States, the difference between summer and winter is also very distinct but not nearly so extreme. Near the southwestern corner of the country, the climate is mild and springlike in winter, but in summer the temperature may reach equatorial intensity. In Alaska, almost continuous daylight in summer makes the short growing season an intensity of the continuous daylight in summer

The variations in temperature within the United States have had a marked effect on the country's economy and living standards. There is a long crop-growing season along the southeast. In several small strips and pockets to the west where crops grow well during a large part of the year. In some of the cooler climates or in climates which combine coolness and humidity, animals and produce such as apples, wheat and corn thrive, thus giving the United States a large range of agricultural products.

#### III. Rivers and Lakes

#### 1. Missouri River<sup>5</sup>

The 4,367 km Missouri River is the longest river, in the United States. It originates in the mountains of northern Montana and is a major tributary of the Mississippi. Its drainage basin encompasses most of the northern Great Plains region. Along with the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, the Missouri served as a major water highway, carrying settlers into the interior regions as the frontier expanded westward. However, larger vessels could not use the Missouri because of shifting currents and sandbars.

In 1944 the US government established the Pick-Sloan Plan to improve the Missouri River. The plan addressed the different needs of the two parts of the drainage basin. The Pick-Sloan Plan called for regional land management, the construction of reservoirs and irrigation projects, improvement of river navigation, and flood control infrastructure along the Missouri River valley. During the 1950s and 1960s, as part of the Pick-Sloan Plan, the channel of the Missouri was improved to accommodate high volumes of modern river traffic.

# 2. Mississippi River<sup>6</sup>

The Mississippi is one of the world's great continental rivers, like the Amazon<sup>7</sup> in South America, the Congo<sup>8</sup> in Africa, the Volga<sup>9</sup> in Europe, or the Ganges<sup>10</sup>, and Yangtze in Asia. It has been called the "father of waters"<sup>11</sup>, and flows 3,780 km from its source at Lake Itasca, Minnesota, to its mouth at the Gulf of Mexico. While the Mississippi ranks as the second longest river in the United States after the Missouri River, it carries a greater volume of water than any other American river. In addition to the Great Lakes system, the Mississippi drainage complex is one of the two largest natural inland waterway systems on the continent. The Mississippi River and its network of tributaries, which includes the Ohio, Missouri, Tennessee, Arkansas, Red, and Illinois rivers, drains most of the central United States.

#### 3. Other Rivers

Like the Mississippi, all the rivers east of the Rockies finally reach the Atlantic; all the waters to the west of the Rockies finally arrive at the Pacific. For this reason the crests of the Rocky Mountains are known as the Continental Divide<sup>12</sup>.

The two great rivers of the Pacific side are the Colorado in the south, and the Columbia, which rises in Canada and drains the north. In the dry western country, both rivers, very different in character, are vital sources of life. The Columbia, wild

in prehistoric times, cutting and shaping the land, now flows with quiet dignity. But the Colorado is still a river of enormous fury — wild, restless and angry. It races and plunges, cutting deeply into the desert rocks. But even the furious Colorado has been dammed and put to work. All the farms and cities of the southwestern corner of the country depend on its waters.

The Rio Grande<sup>13</sup>, about 3,200 kilometers long, is the foremost river of the Southwest. It forms a natural boundary between Mexico and the United States, which together have built irrigation and flood control projects of mutual benefit.

# 4. Great Lakes 14

The most important lakes in the United States are the Great Lakes, the greatest wonder of Middle America. They are Lake Superior, Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. Ontario, the only Canadian province that fringes them, sprawls along their northern coasts, and eight states — New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota — crowd their lower shores.

This is the largest group of lakes in the world and the biggest body of fresh water, covering 24,600 sq km in surface, draining an area of 751,000 sq km and flowing to the sea at a rate of 6,799 cu m per second — more than the Seine<sup>15</sup>, Thames<sup>16</sup> and Danube<sup>17</sup> combined.

Lake Ontario is the smallest of the Great Lakes — 309 km long, east to west — but it is deep, with a maximum sounding of 244 m. Compared with the other lakes, Ontario is more elusive. The Niagara Falls<sup>18</sup> with its sheer thunderous drop has been an elusive barrier between this and other lakes, and the St. Lawrence<sup>19</sup> sluicing out its eastern end draws Ontario's attention seaward. Its mood is sedate. Here are no vulgar echoes:

Lake Erie is the fourth largest of the Great Lakes. Linked with Lake Ontario via the Well and Ship Canal<sup>20</sup>, it forms part of the St. Lawrence Seaway system, but closes to navigation during winter. Though Superior is the worst storm lake, with waves reported as high as 10.7 m, Erie is the one that is talked about: a killer of small draft. It has a reputation for treacherous flash storms. The shallowest of the lakes, it can be pale as glass, and as smooth. Then a few hours later it can be insensately churning under a fugitive sky. Its shores are low-lying, and its beaches narrow, and except for the dense line of cities between Buffalo and Toledo<sup>21</sup> on the south shore where industry is highly developed, it is succulently pastoral.

Lake Huron is the second largest of the lakes, 330 km long north to south. Its deepest sounding is 221 m, and its shores are sparsely populated. Except for Bay

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City<sup>22</sup>, Michigan, Ontario and some other cities, it is still wild country. You can smell north here; the wind has the resinous taste of pine, and stings having blown a long way across cold water.

Next is Lake Superior. It is 560 km long, the largest freshwater lake in the world. It is also the deepest of the Lakes, its bottom lying several hundred feet below sea level, and it holds more than half the water of the entire Great Lakes. There is a graceful stillness on Lake Superior. The rounded humped mountains along the shores look like burial mounds of the gods.

Lake Michigan, the third largest of the Great Lakes, is the only one of the lakes that is entirely within the United States. It is linked with Lake Huron via the Straits of Mackinac<sup>23</sup> and the city of Chicago is on its south bank. It is the main route of the Oceangoing ships. Its chores are green and tangled in the north and white with dunes to the east.

#### IV. Great Plains

The Great Plains extend from northwestern Canada through parts of the Northwest Territories, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. In the United States the plains continue south through sections of Montana, North and South Dakota, Minnesota, Wyoming, Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Texas. The region is bordered on the east by the Canadian Shield and the Central Lowland of the United States and on the west by the Rocky Mountains. The plains feature productive grain and livestock farms and extensive petroleum and coal deposits. The area of the Great Plains is 3.2 million sq km, including 1.8 million sq km in Canada and 1.4 million sq km in the United States.

Most of the Great Plains region has a semiarid climate, in which the temperature range is extreme and rainfall is sparse and unpredictable. Nowhere is the rainfall more unpredictable or the climate more violent. For two or three years, there may be enough rain. Then there is a year when no rain falls. It is very hot from July to September, but in the winter snow covers houses and barns.

The Great Plains region has many natural resources. Fertile black and dark brown soils support grain agriculture, and the grassland provides a natural range where cattle can graze. Coal, natural gas, oil, potash, and sulfur are found within the sedimentary basins of the plains. About 10 million Americans live in the Great Plains. The largest metropolitan areas on the plains are Denver, Colorado (2,109,282 in 2000), San Antonio, Texas (1,592,383), and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (1,083,346).

#### V. Mountains and Deserts

### 1. Rocky Mountains

The majestic Rocky Mountains or Rockies extend from central New Mexico to northeastern British Columbia, a distance of about 3,220 km. The Rockies are bordered on the east by the Great Plains and on the west by the Great Basin and the Rocky Mountain Trench, a valley running from northwestern Montana to northern British Columbia. Like the Alps<sup>24</sup>, they are high, sharp and rugged.

The Rockies may be divided into four principal sections — Southern, Central, Northern, and Canadian. The Southern Rockies, which include the system's broadest and highest regions, extend from central New Mexico, through Colorado, to the Great Divide, or Wyoming Basin, in southern Wyoming. The Central Rockies are in northeastern Utah, western Wyoming, eastern Idaho, and southern Montana. The Northern Rockies are in northern Idaho, western Montana, and northeastern Washington. The Canadian Rockies, located in southwestern Alberta and eastern British Columbia, are composed of a relatively narrow belt of mountain ranges that terminates at the Liard River lowland in northeastern British Columbia.

The Rocky Mountains are a geologically complex system with jagged peaks as well as almost flat-topped elevations. The Rockies were formed mainly by <u>crustal uplifts</u> in comparatively recent times, The Rockies are sparsely populated for the most part and contain few cities. The principal economic resources of the mountains are minerals,

# 2. California's Desert

People have long shared a fascination with the desert and its vast spaces, <u>austere</u> scenery, and sometimes brutal heat. Southern California's desert is the fringe of the North American Desert, a 1.29million sq km territory stretching east into Arizona and New Mexico, northeast into Nevada and Utah, and south into Mexico. The California portion claims desert parks, shabby towns around Death Valley<sup>25</sup>, unlikely resorts such as Palm Springs, and dozens of ordinary highway settlements serving as pit stops for those speeding to points beyond.

The desert divides roughly into two major regions with different climatic zones. The Sonoran, or Low Desert<sup>26</sup>, occupies southeastern California from the Mexican border north to Needles<sup>27</sup> and west to the Borrego Desert<sup>28</sup>; the Mojave, or High Desert<sup>29</sup> spans the southcentral part of the state, bounded by the Sonoran Desert to the south, San Bernardino<sup>30</sup> and the San Joaquin Valley<sup>31</sup> to the west, the Sierra Nevada<sup>32</sup> to the north, and Death Valley to the east.

The differences between the Low and High Desert stem essentially from the elevation and are reflected in the climate. The Low Desert is flat, dry, and barren. By contrast, the High Desert consists of foothills and plains nestled within mountain ranges approaching 1,524 m. Consequently, it is cooler (by about 10 degrees) and wetter. Though few resorts have developed, Joshua Tree National Monument remains a popular destination for campers. Barstow is the central city of the High Desert as well as a rest station on the way to Las Vegas or the Sierras.

Death Valley is an arid desert region in southeastern California. It was given its name by one of 18 survivors of a party of 30 attempting in 1849 to find a shortcut to the California goldfields. Much of the valley is below sea level, and near Badwater<sup>33</sup>, at 86 m below sea level, is the lowest point in the western/hemisphere.

The valley is from 6 to 26 km wide and about 225 km long and is almost entirely enclosed by mountain ranges, volcanic in origin, bare and brilliantly colored. The summer temperatures in Death Valley, one of the hottest regions known, exceed 52°C and rarely fall below 21°C. The National Weather Service recorded 57°C in 1913, the highest temperature ever recorded in the United States. Average rainfall in a normal year is 50 mm. Sandstorms and dust whirlwinds of several hours' duration are common.

Gold has been found in Death Valley, and silver, copper, and lead have been taken in paying quantities. The famous borax deposits of Death Valley were first mined in the 1880s.

#### VI. Natural Resources

Agricultural output in the United States has been among the highest in the world. Rich fishing grounds and coastal habitats provide abundant seafood. Major mineral resources — including iron ore, lead, and copper, as well as energy resources such as coal, crude oil, and natural gas — are abundant in the United States.

As a country of continental proportions, the United States has within its borders substantial mineral deposits. America leads the world in the production of phosphate, an important ingredient in fertilizers, and ranks second in gold, silver, copper, lead, natural gas, and coal. Petroleum production is third in the world, after Russia and Saudi Arabia.

Mining contributes 1.5% of annual GDP and employs 0.5% of all US workers. The nation's three chief mineral products are fuels. In order of value, they are natural gas, petroleum, and coal. In 1996 the United States produced 23% of the world's natural gas, 21% of its coal, and 13% of its crude oil.

The United States contains huge fields of natural gas and oil. These fields are

scattered across the country, with concentrations in the mid-continent fields of Texas and Oklahoma, the Gulf Coast region of Texas and Louisiana, and the North Slope of Alaska. Texas and Louisiana account for almost 60% of the country's natural gas production. Today, oil and natural gas are pumped to the surface, and then sent by pipeline to refineries located in all parts of the nation. Offshore deposits account for 13% of total production. Coal production, important for industry and for the generation of electric power, comes primarily from Wyoming (29% of US production in 1997), West Virginia (18%), and Kentucky (16%).

Important metals mined in the United States include gold, copper, iron ore, zinc, magnesium, lead, and silver. Iron ore is found mainly in Minnesota, and to a lesser degree in northern Michigan. The ore consists of low-grade taconite; US deposits of high-grade ores, such as hematite, magnetite, and limonite, have been consumed. Leading industrial minerals include materials used in construction — mainly clays, lime, salt, phosphate rock, boron, and potassium salts. The United States also produces a large percentage of the world's output for a number of important minerals. In 1997 the United States produced 42% of the world's molybdenum, 34% of its phosphate rock, 22% of its elemental sulfur, 17% of its copper, and 16% of its lead. Major deposits of many of these minerals are found in the western states.

#### VII. Major Cities and Important Places

# 1. Washington, D. C.

Capital city of the United States. The city of Washington has the same boundaries as the District of Columbia, a federal territory established in 1790 as the site of the new nation's permanent capital. Located at the confluence of the Potomac<sup>34</sup> and Anacostia<sup>35</sup> rivers, it is bordered by Maryland and Virginia. It has a population of 570,898 (2002). The climate is hot and humid in the summer and cold and damp in the winter. Washington, D.C. has a total land area of 159 sq km, and the Washington metropolitan region — which in addition to Washington, D.C., contains 24 counties in the surrounding states of Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia — has a total area of 17,920 sq km. Designated to serve as the permanent seat of the federal government beginning in 1800, the District of Columbia was named for Christopher Columbus. Named after the first US president, George Washington, the city has served since 1800 as the seat of federal government. In 1871 the cities of Washington and Georgetown were consolidated with Washington County to become Washington, D.C., making the city, the county, and the federal district one and the same. The city is the heart of a dynamic metropolitan region. During the 20th century, its

metropolitan area grew rapidly as the responsibilities of national government increased, both at home and throughout the world.

# 2. New York City

The largest city in the United States, the home of the United Nations, and the centre of global finance, communications, and business. New York City is unusual among cities because of its high residential density, its extraordinarily diverse population, its hundreds of tall office and apartment buildings, its thriving central business district, its extensive public transportation system, and its more than 400 distinct neighbourhoods. The city's concert houses, museums, galleries, and theatres constitute an ensemble of cultural richness rivalled by few cities. Its population is more than 8 million now. On September 11, 2001, the World Trade Centre twin towers, located in Manhattan, were attacked and collapsed. New York City is about the same latitude as Naples<sup>36</sup>, Italy. Although the Dutch founded the city in 1624 and called it Fort Amsterdam and then New Amsterdam, the English captured the settlement in 1664 and renamed it New York, after the Duke of York, who later became James II of England. Unlike most American cities, which make up only a part of a particular county, New York City is made up of five separate counties, which are called boroughs<sup>37</sup>. Originally the city included only the borough of Manhattan<sup>38</sup>, located on an island between the Hudson and East rivers. In 1898 a number of surrounding communities were incorporated into the city as the boroughs of Queens<sup>39</sup>, Brooklyn<sup>40</sup>, the Bronx<sup>41</sup> and Staten Island<sup>42</sup>. The Bronx is the only borough on the mainland of the United States. Manhattan and Staten Island are surrounded by water, while Queens and Brooklyn are part of Long Island.

The world-renowned Central Park<sup>43</sup> in New York City provides a welcome break from urban life. It features wide paths for walkers and runners as well as trees, gardens, and picnic areas. Horse-drawn carriages are popular with both tourists and New Yorkers.

New York is the city that never sleeps. The Broadway shows are larger than life, the art exhibitions open your eyes to beauty and possibility, the orchestral concerts and ballets can move you to tears, and the shopping opportunities are amazing. Broadway, as its name implies is a big, wide avenue that runs the entire length of Manhattan Island in New York City. It passes through the middle of the Theater district concentrated around Times Square and has lent its name to those spectacular musical productions known as the Broadway play. There are actually three types of Theatrical productions in New York City: Broadway plays, Off-Broadway plays and Off-off-Broadway Plays. Broadway Plays are always