

英语读物

人间真情

美国社会文化丛书

之五

主编 潘能

西安交通大学出版社



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王延雪 贺莉

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·西安·



内容提要

本书是“美国社会文化丛书”之一。全书共选 50 篇各种题材的原文,其中保留了原“当今美国热门话题”丛书中《黑白分歧》中部分精彩的篇章。本书的主题环绕人间真情,反映了美国的社会风尚、文化习俗以及人民生活中的真情实意,文章内容生动、语言规范。阅读本书既可进一步了解美国社会与美国文化,扩大知识面,又可以学习英语,提高阅读能力。

本书适用于大学本科和研究生或具有中等以上英语水平的读者。

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“美国社会文化丛书”总序

90年代我们出版社曾多次和几位老编者漫话如何提高学生学习英语的能力,大家一致认为要学好一门外语除了语言因素外,还有许多非语言因素,其中非常重要的一点就是文化因素。读书时如果只是按语法把词汇意义串联起来,而不了解文化背景是行不通的。现在越来越多的学习者已经意识到了这一点,但要切实培养这种跨文化意识却不是一件容易的事。我们的漫话最终导出了一条思路——编一套既能增强英语阅读和理解能力又能了解异国文化的读物,以期助学生一臂之力。这就是1996年前后出版的“当今美国热门话题丛书”的由来。令人鼓舞的是丛书一经发行,读者争相购买,在短短的2年中连续重印,达7万册(各分册数)之多,超出了预期的社会效益。在与读者的交往中,我们深深体会到改革开放以后,人们有着强烈的求知欲,特别是年青的一代,他们不但

want to know more about the world,而且希望能 learn more through the foreign language they are studying。不言而喻,我们的目的达到了,带给我们的是几分成功的喜悦。

喜悦之余就是冷静的思考。思考“丛书”的缺憾和不足,思考“丛书”的意义是否都为读者领悟,思考选材是否典型地反映了美国文化的特点,思考注释点和理解题是否编写适当……。逐渐地,我们感觉到心底起伏着一种不安。首先不安的是“热门话题”这一总命题。

纵观世界历史,任何时候、任何国家和社会总有正面的和负面的现象,这些现象在某一时间范围内可能成为热门话题,但只会是短暂的。我们的“丛书”既然着眼于介绍美国文化就必须尽可能多的让读者了解人民,包括各地的风土人情、百姓的生活习俗、人们的喜怒哀乐、社会的正义和邪恶等等。借用美国前总统里根访华时在复旦大学对学生作的一次演讲中的一段话“... But meeting you and talking to you has only made me want to know more. And I sense that you feel the same way about Americans. You, too, wish to know more.”这里“wish to know more”应该就是指上述的各个方面。因此,这套丛书的确切命题应该是“美国社会文化丛书”。

基于这样的想法,我们立即组织编者修订这套丛书,与其说是修订倒不如说是更新,因为每本书都以更多的新篇章取代了原来的内容,同时也保留了原书部分不忍割爱的精彩篇章。当然每本书均有各自的侧重,但组合起来均围

绕总的主题。

语言是文化的载体,要领悟文化的内涵必须掌握语言。对于读惯了教科书的学生来说,阅读英文报刊、杂志会有困难,但如果在阅读过程中能刻意将文化与词汇、文化与语法、文化与语用、民族文化与语言评价等融入阅读,那么语言素质定会有很大的提高。这本来就是这套丛书的一个重要目的。

最后衷心希望新老读者能从这套新书中获得更多新的收益并对我们提出宝贵的批评和意见。

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编辑部

2000 年 11 月

前言

“人间真情”是“美国社会文化”丛书之五。这套丛书的前身于1996年出版,当时定名为“当今美国热门话题”。历时4年,再版5次,单册印数都在5万册之上。这一方面说明广大读者对本书的支持;另一方面说明英语爱好者越来越多,渴望求知的人越来越多。为帮助英语爱好者提高阅读能力,更多地了解美国,编者愿再作一点绵薄的贡献。

“当今美国热门话题”其实并不够确切,更以“美国社会与文化”之名更贴近丛书的内容,因为美国的社会与文化多层次,多方面。诚然,吸毒、暴力、家庭分裂是美国的三大社会问题;但是母爱、友谊、真情却冲开了人们感情的心扉。本书中展示的人间真情的文章并不止一篇,如“没有更伟大的爱”、“从不分离”、“佐治亚的恶梦”、“再婚家庭,二度天伦”、“波蕾·

克劳丝绑架案”、“婚后生活中的谎言与真情”等都分别描绘了人世间的真情实意,让读者步入一片感情的天地。

本书保留了原“当今美国热门话题”的《黑白分歧》中部分精彩的文章,增加了 20 余篇新的内容,希望能给本书增光添彩。在新增的篇章中,研究生王延雪和贺莉参加了编写。

潘 能

于 2000 年 3 月

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1

Animal Magnetism

动物的魅力

心理迷失的青少年,通过与动物之间的相互关心,相互照顾,得到了康复,开始步入正常的人生轨道。Green Chimney 确实为他们献出了一片爱心。



The Baby barn owl, all of 3 weeks old and with just a few clumps of white down sprouting from its scrawny, pink body, is squawking loudly, demanding to be fed. Four boys — Elvin and Olie, Alexander and Raynard — crowd together to watch, wide-eyed with fascination. “Just touch the food to his beak,” says Paul Kupchok, 45, farm director at Green Chimneys juvenile rehabilitation center in Brewster, N. Y. “The bird will do the rest.” As Raynard, 13, cups the as yet unnamed owl in his hands, Ollie says, “Oh, look, he’s opening his eyes.”

Someday, when the owl is ready to take care of itself in the wild, the residents of Green Chimneys Children’s Services will hold a little ceremony, wish him good luck and set him free. And someday, helped by the animals they have helped at Green Chimneys, Elvin and his friends will be able to leave too.

“If a child helps heal a disabled animal and sees that it can survive,” says Dr. Samuel Ross, 65, founder and executive director of the 150-acre farm campus 60 miles north of New York City, “then he gets the feeling he can survive too. They both get a second chance.”

The kids who live at Green Chimneys, which is home to 102 emotionally disturbed young people between the ages of 6 and 21, need all the second chances they can get. Although Green Chimneys doesn’t take totally antisocial children, most have been referred by psychiatric hospitals, and 99 percent come from families living in poverty. Many have been physically or sexually abused, and some have been in trouble with the law. “If you pick up the daily newspaper,” says Ross,

“you’ll see where our children come from.”

At Green Chimneys, treating injured or orphaned wildlife as well as seeing to the daily needs of farm animals is the key to the kids’ rehabilitation. The campus is home to 350 animals ranging from shaggy Scotch Highland cows to Cotswold sheep, Nigerian dwarf goats and garden-variety rabbits and chickens. There are baby deer whose mothers were killed by cars, and there are 20 horses, one of which turned out to be blind after it was accepted. One of the farm’s most honored residents is Mr. Postman, a bald eagle injured in the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill 5^{1/2} years ago. Most of the animals come from rarebreed conserving groups and local residents who had to get rid of their pets. “The kids can relate to the fact that these animals are unwanted or abused — that they need help,” says Kupchok.

The animals seem to relate too. “The farm animals are handled so much,” says Ross, “that when the child goes into the barn, they run up to be touched. That is exciting to the child.” It is also therapeutic. “There is a carryover to human relationships,” says Ross. “Once a child who has probably been poorly nurtured himself can nurture an animal, it is easier for him to relate to peers and then to adults. Trust is established, and the child risks the human connection. The goodness of the child is unleashed.”

For Ollie, last seen gazing in wonder at the baby owl, a former racehorse named Saucey may hold the key to rehabilitation. Ollie, 13, came to Green Chimneys in 1991. After his mother lost her apartment when he was 9, Ollie went to live with an aunt in Harlem. “I was doing bad things at school,” he

says, “like beating up kids and disrespecting staff. I used to think everyone was against me.” His behavior landed him in the psychiatric center in New York City’s Bellevue Hospital. Finally he was referred to Green Chimneys. There, says Ira Staubaum, Ollie’s social worker, his behavior has improved. “His mood still changes swiftly if things don’t go his way, but since he’s been here the outbursts have come less frequently.”

And Ollie is bonding with Saucey. “He likes to be petted,” he says. “I brush him and I ride him.” All kids at Green Chimneys ride horses once a week to learn balance and sharpen their concentration. “Horseback riding keeps them so focused they don’t have to worry about a mother on drugs or a father in jail,” says Kupchok, who came to Green Chimneys in 1986 after a varied career ranging from special education teacher to racehorse breeder.

Green Chimneys wasn’t always devoted to healing the lives of traumatized children. It was opened by Ross in 1948 as a private boarding school for the very young children of divorced parents, celebrities and others whose lives tended to take them away from their home. Eventually the school began taking in older, often more troubled children. In 1974 it became a social-service facility and is now 90 percent funded by New York State, with the remainder coming from private donations.

Roos has devoted himself entirely to Green Chimneys. In fact, says Myra, his wife of 40 years, “I married him — and it.” Ross and Myra, 64, a former elementary school teacher who is now Green Chimneys’ director of admissions, live in a caretaker’s cottage on the premises near the house in which

they reared three kids of their own — Donald, 36, now a convention director at Bally's in Las Vegas; Lisa, 34, the quality-control director at Green Chimneys; and David, a doctor who died eight years ago of Hodgkin's lymphoma. "The children pulled us through," says Ross of the Green Chimneys kids.

Over the years more than 5,000 children, the vast majority of them boys, have passed through Green Chimneys, and some still return. Ross has become used to answering the door and "getting squeezed by enormous-looking monsters called young adults" — alumni who have come back to thank him. In the meantime there are the current residents — 94 boys and eight girls. Elvin, 12, in Green Chimneys a year, is the youngest of four children. He knows his father, a mechanic, only from photographs, and he tried to kill himself after a favorite uncle died. At Green Chimneys, Elvin, like the other kids, is in individual and group therapy as well as in family sessions with his mother, Gloria, 35, a former office worker. And, of course, there are the animals. Elvin is especially close to Spirit, a huge Newfoundland who is his dorm's mascot. "When Elvin is on a home visit," says Gloria, "that's all he talks about — 'I wonder how Spirit is doing.'" Although Elving is still easily frustrated and has a hard time accepting direction, he is making slow progress. Recently, in an unguarded moment, he mumbled that he might want to be a vet when he grows up, "so I can take care of animals."

Back in the classroom, Raynard has gently placed the baby owl on a table. There is a collective "Oooh" as it tumbles onto its side, and then sigh of relief as the tiny raptor rights itself. Someday-it will take flight.