

• 跨文化交际英语课程系列



# The Society and Culture of Major English-Speaking Countries: An Introduction

## 英语国家社会与文化

王恩铭 主编

上海外语教育出版社

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**The Society and Culture  
of Major English-Speaking Countries:  
An Introduction**

**英语国家社会与文化**

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## 出版说明

《大学英语教学指南》将大学英语课程性质定位为“高等学校人文教育的一部分,兼有工具和人文双重性质。”其工具性体现在进一步提高学生英语听、说、读、写、译的能力以及通过学习与专业或未来工作有关的学术英语或职业英语,获得在学术或职业领域进行交流的能力。就其人文性而言,语言是文化的载体,同时也是文化的组成部分。学生学习和掌握英语这一交流工具,除了学习先进的科学技术之外,还要了解国外的社会历史与文化,增进对不同文化的理解、对中外文化异同的意识。人文性的核心是以人为本,弘扬人的价值,注重人的综合素质培养和全面发展。

依据《大学英语教学指南》,外教社策划推出了“跨文化交际英语课程系列”,力图充分挖掘大学英语课程丰富的人文内涵,满足各高校开设跨文化交际英语课程的需要。

“跨文化交际英语课程系列”包括跨文化交际技巧、英美文化、文学、中国文化等多个品种,还包括将跨文化交际元素融入通用英语体系的《跨文化交际英语·阅读教程》和《跨文化交际英语·口语教程》,品类丰富、涵盖面广,旨在帮助学生了解中外不同的世界观、价值观、思维方式及社会组织的差异,培养学生的文化与跨文化意识,提高学生社会语言能力和跨文化交际能力。

本系列教材以外教社已出版的多种文化类教材为基础,吸纳专家学者的建议和最新研究成果,还通过邀请更多海内外英语教学专家参与编写、和国外出版社合作出版等方式,扩大本系列教材的选题规模,以满足各专业大学学生的学习需求。本系列教材充分考虑我国目前的大学英语教学现状、师资条件、实际需求等因素,必将进一步丰富和完善我国大学英语教学。

上海外语教育出版社

伴随着全球化进程的不断加快和中国融入世界体系的程度日益加深, 21 世纪的中国大学生不仅必须学习和掌握高新技术, 而且必须具备一定的跨文化交际能力。与来自英语国家的人交谈和沟通, 除了必须具有基本的英语语言表达能力之外, 还必须知晓和掌握这些国家的社会与文化, 包括它们的历史经历、社会制度、传统习俗、生活方式、待人接物、教育理念和价值观念等。从浅层次讲, 日常交流时, 我们只要了解一些基本表述方式, 如怎样互相问候、互相对话和互相道别等, 就可以同英语国家的人交往起来。但是, 如果要从深层次开展交流, 如交换看法和意见, 或对某个问题展开详细深入的讨论乃至争论, 我们就必须懂得英语国家人的思维方式及他们观察问题的视角和路径。这就要求我们懂得他们的生活方式 (the way of life) 和领悟支撑他们这种生活方式的思维方式 (the way of thinking)。

文化交流, 从大处着眼, 是不同文化群体之间互相学习的过程, 以增进了解、加深友谊、共建人类共同体; 从小处着眼, 是来自不同文化背景的人了解“他者”为人处世方式和生活目标的过程, 以学会共同相处、互相尊重。基于这一认识, 我们编写了这本名为《英语国家社会与文化》的教材, 为我国 21 世纪非英语专业大专院校的学生提供一个了解和掌握美国、英国、加拿大、澳大利亚和新西兰这五个主要英语国家社会与文化的“窗口”, 让他们从中既看到奠定这些国家-民族的价值理念之基础, 又看到这些国家-民族的普通民众之日常生活。前者是代表这些国家-民族特性的“思维方式”; 后者是反映这些国家-民族特点的“生活方式”。两者之结合, 构成了它们的“文化模式” (patterns of culture)。

根据这一思路, 我们在编写《英国国家社会与文化》时, 始终坚持两条宗旨。第一, 在介绍任何一个英语国家时, 我们注重突出该国的民族特性 (national character) 或曰民族身份 (national identity), 彰显该国的价值观念体系, 让本教

材使用者从宏观层面上知晓该国的“思维方式”。第二,在描述任何一个英语国家时,我们紧紧围绕该国社会和文化生活展开,通过展示该国民众的日常生活,让本教材使用者从微观层面上了解他们的“生活方式”。限于篇幅,我们在这两个层面仅“蜻蜓点水”般地做了概述和评论,没有过多展开,更没有进行深入探讨。作为一本“入门”性质的教材,本书若能激起读者兴趣,产生进一步探索的想法和意愿,就应该说是实现了其基本目的。

具体编写时,我们设计了一个基本模块:每个单元由1)学习目标(Learning Objectives);2)头脑风暴(Brainstorming);3)课文(Text);4)生词表(Glossary);5)注释与解释(Notes/Explanations);6)练习(Exercises)组成。“学习目标”突显本单元里学生应注意的要点;“头脑风暴”意在提醒学生本单元里应思考的问题;“生词表”针对课文里的主要重点词和疑难词给出了词义;“注释与解释”仅对本单元里出现的一些重要人物或事件提供简要的解释。在“练习”部分,我们设计了多种类型的习题,如旨在帮助学生巩固词汇的“填空”练习、意在测试学生理解能力的“选择题”和“对错题”以及帮助学生提高口语表述能力的“一般问题”。考虑到目前教学中日益重视的“以学生为中心”的教学模式,我们在“练习”部分还安排了一个“批判性思维”项目,由“复习问题”和“小组讨论问题”组成。前者可以课堂上做,也可以课下学生合作完成;后者建议学生在老师指导下进行。除了“小组讨论问题”之外,其他习题都提供参考答案。

参加本教材编写的五个团队人员,长期以来一直从事英语国家社会与文化教学和研究工作,既拥有相当的知识积累,又具有丰富的教学经验。很大程度上讲,这本教材是在他们理性思考和教学实践相结合的基础上孕育而成的,其中包含着他们对英语国家社会与文化新的认识和理解,也包括他们对该课程教学内容的反思和再思考。基于每个参编者的学术兴趣及其特长,我



们做了如下分工：王恩铭负责“美国”部分、王卓“英国”部分、陈慧麟“加拿大”部分、杨佩桦“澳大利亚”部分、吴敏“新西兰”部分。全书最后由王恩铭负责统稿。

尽管我们这一团队在英语国家社会与文化，尤其是英美文化方面，已经编写和出版了数本教程，但每次完成一本书稿，我们心里都会有些许不安和担忧，唯恐其中瑕疵太多。这次，我们也是怀着对学术研究的敬畏之心，历经一年半时间编写，最终将这本教程呈现给读者。若教程中存在错误信息或欠妥之处，我真诚地欢迎和恳切地希望本教程使用者多提宝贵意见和建议，帮助我们不断提升和完善它的质量，使其在提高学生们的跨文化交际能力中发挥更好、更强、更有效的作用。

王恩铭

上海外国语大学

英语学院

2017年5月

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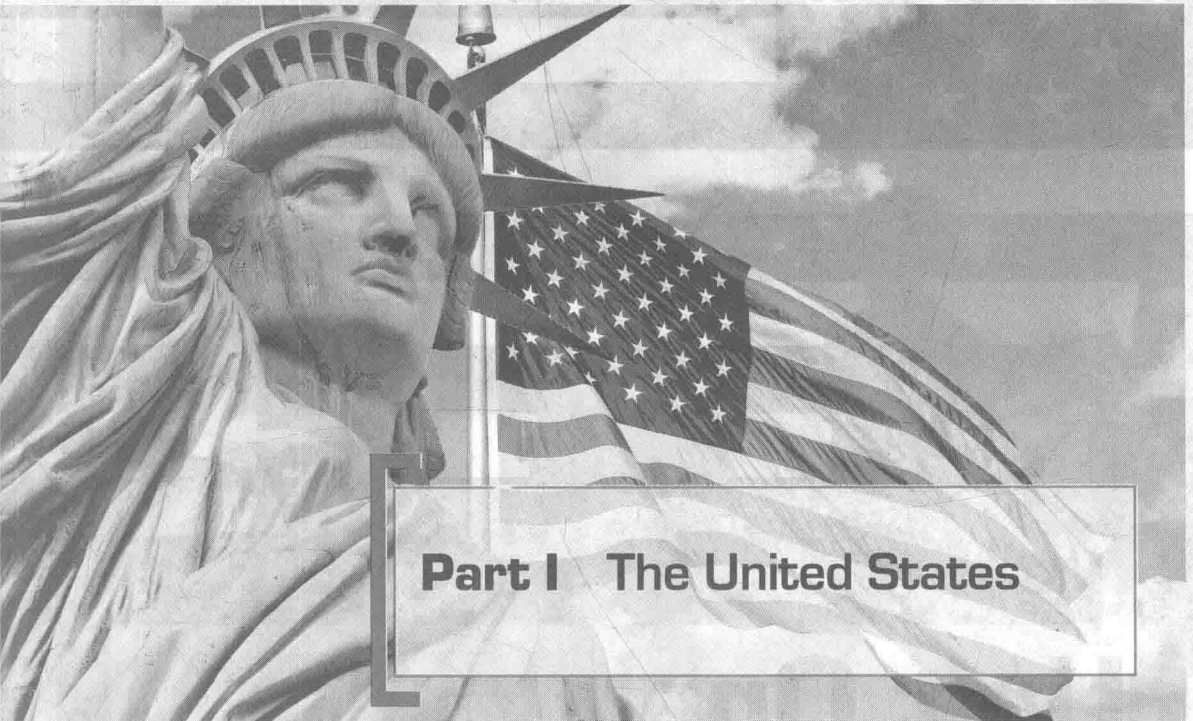
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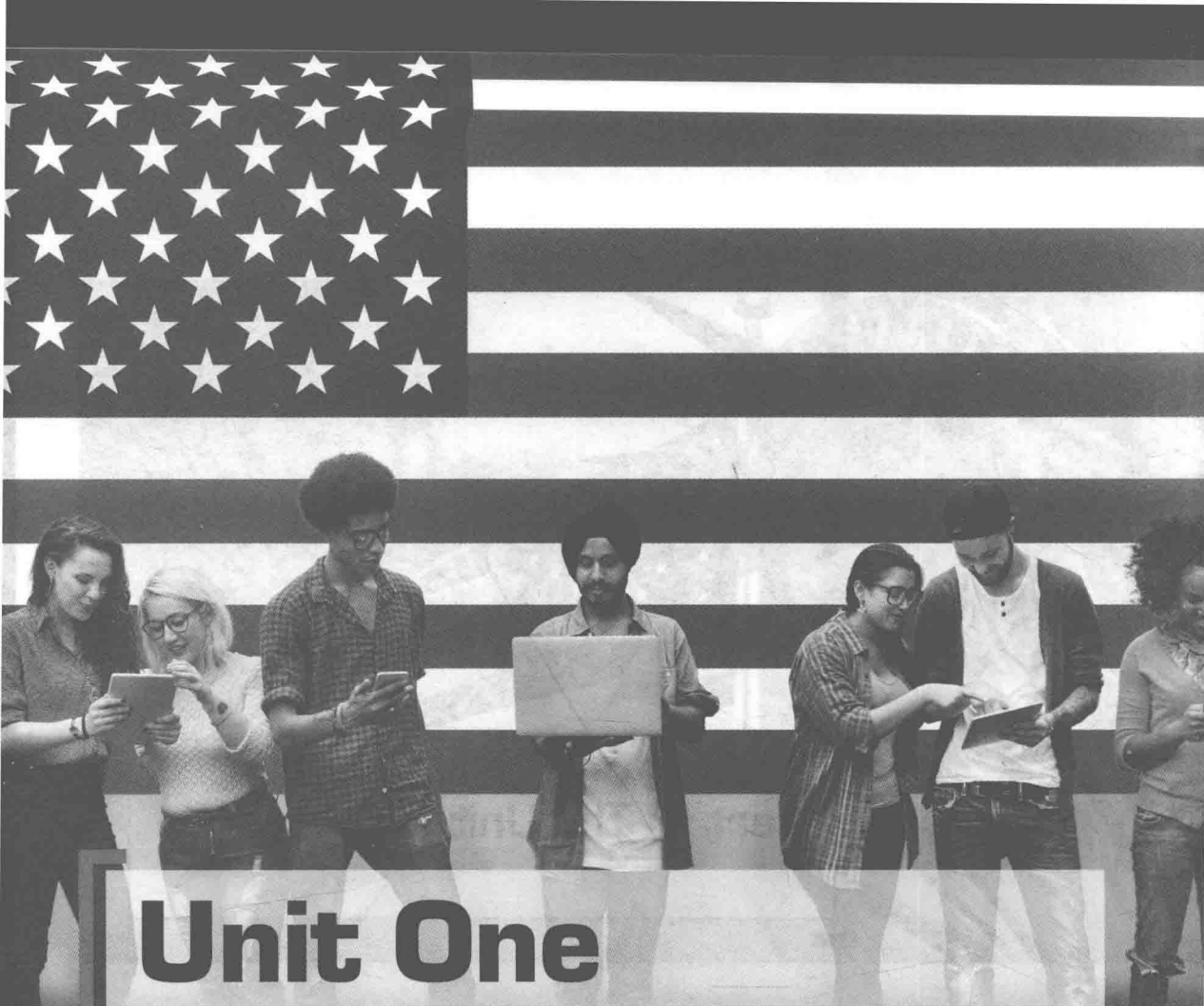


## Part I The United States

### The Nation and the People

#### Learning Objectives

- 1. To identify the major geographic features of the United States.
- 2. To describe the general features of the racial and ethnic diversity of the United States.
- 3. To identify the major immigration waves in US history.
- 4. To understand the key components of the American Dream.
- 5. To understand the cultural character of the American people.



# Unit One

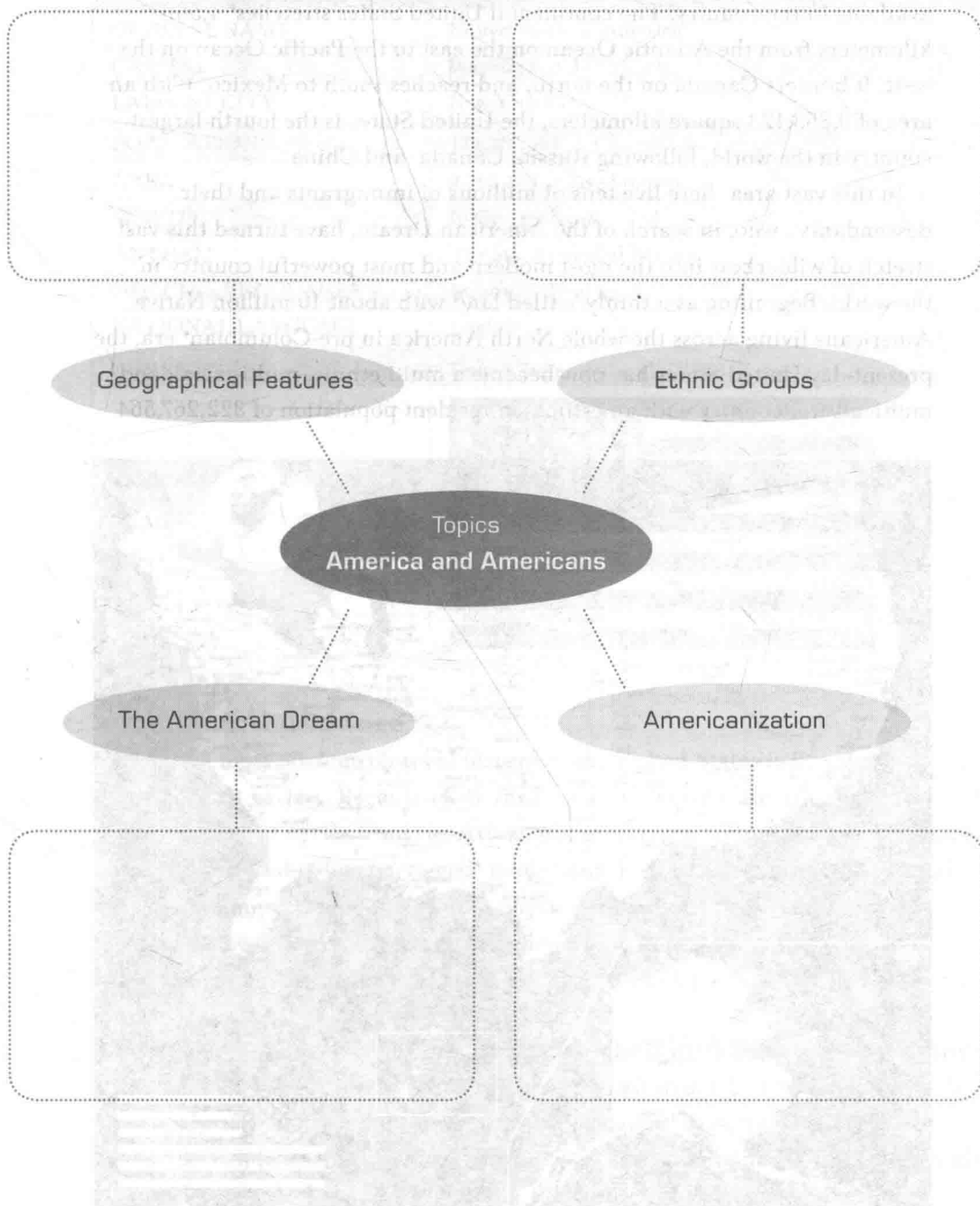
## The Nation and the People

### Learning Objectives

- ☐ To be informed of the geographical features of the United States
- ☐ To have a general idea of the racial and ethnic diversity of the United States
- ☐ To learn about the major immigration waves in US history
- ☐ To understand the key components of the American Dream
- ☐ To make sense of the national character of the American people

# Brainstorming

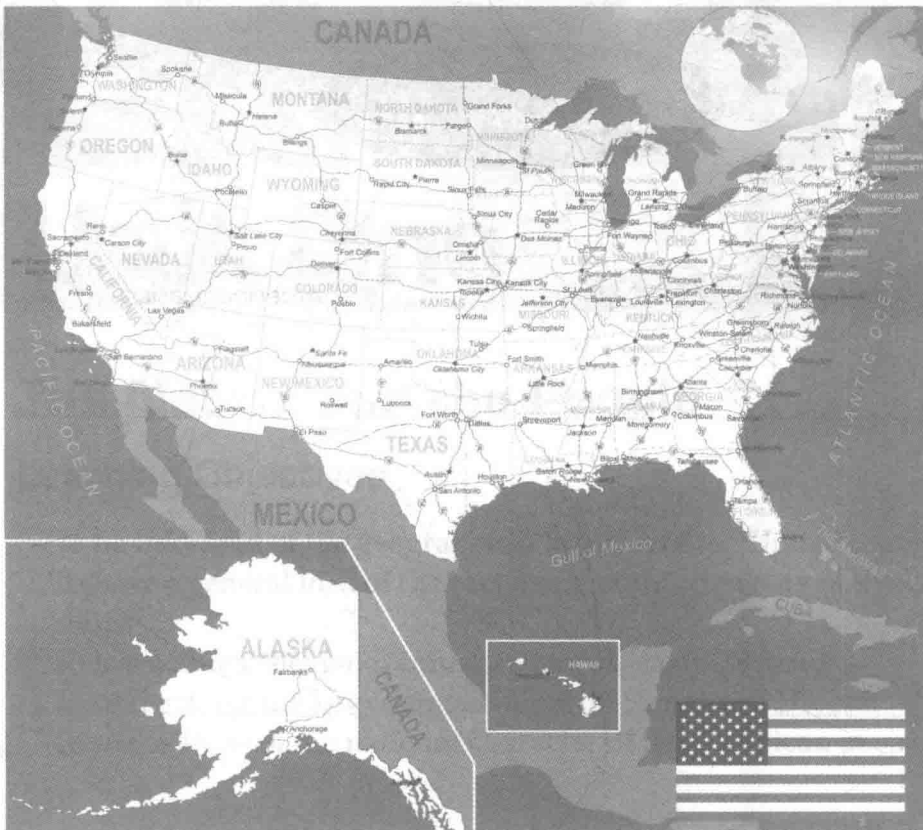
How much do you know about America and Americans?



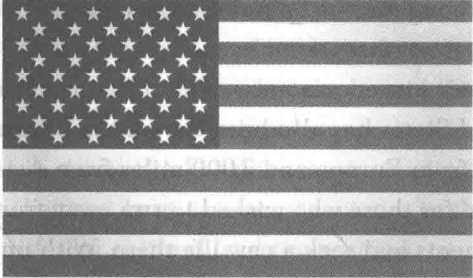
## Text

The United States is a vast land with almost every kind of climate available in the country. The continental United States stretches\* 4,500 kilometers from the Atlantic Ocean on the east to the Pacific Ocean on the west. It borders Canada on the north, and reaches south to Mexico. With an area of 9,363,123 square kilometers, the United States is the fourth largest country in the world, following Russia, Canada, and China.

In this vast area there live tens of millions of immigrants and their descendants\*, who, in search of the American Dream, have turned this vast stretch of wilderness into the most modern and most powerful country in the world. Beginning as a thinly settled land with about 10 million Native Americans living across the whole North America in pre-Columbian\* era, the present-day United States has now become a multi-ethnic, multi-racial, and multicultural country with an estimated resident population of 322,267,564



as of December 2, 2015, making it the third most populous country in the world.

Facts about the United States of America (USA)	
OFFICIAL NAME	United States of America
CAPITAL	Washington, D.C.
LARGEST CITY	New York City
POPULATION	322,267,564
AREA	9,363,123 square kilometers
MOTTO	In God we trust
ANTHEM	The Star-Spangled Banner
OFFICIAL LANGUAGES	None at federal level
NATIONAL LANGUAGE	English
CURRENCY	United States dollar (\$) (USD)
FLAG	

## A Land of Abundance

The most obvious physical feature of the United States is its vast size and great variety. Because of its vastness and diversity, American natural environment varies from the Arctic\* to the tropical, from rainforest to desert, and from vast plains to rugged\* mountains. Indeed, the present-day United States comprehends\* most of the physical conditions known to human beings: heat and cold, swamp\* and dry waste land, mountain ranges and endless plains, empty spaces and big cities, and above all, the world's largest river system.

Another advantage of American geography is its richness. When the early colonists came to the New World, they were all struck by the abundant\* supply of its natural resources. The New England seas, for example, were thick with fish, and a wealth of forest was found along the Atlantic coast and on the Appalachians\*. Beyond that, the trans-Appalachians had a super-

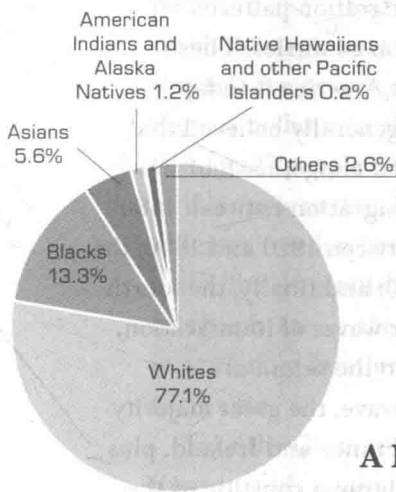


Famous sunrise at Mesa Arch in Canyonlands National Park, Utah, USA

abundance of coal, oil, iron, copper, and lead, and above all, of fertile and productive soils. The Far West abounded with precious metals as well as forested ranges\*. So abundant were America's natural resources that they were thought to be boundless, capable of lasting for many, many years to come, if not forever.

Besides its enormous wealth of natural resources, the position of the United States has also been thought to be one of its chief assets\*. Over 2,000 miles from Europe and 7,000 miles from Asia, it initially offered itself as a haven\* for those who wished to run away from conflicts of these two troubled continents and seek a new life there. With improvements in transportation and communication, the United States received fresh value for its position, turning itself into a cross-roads between East and West. This change has given the United States a great range of opportunities, for instead of being gulfs\* of separation, the Atlantic and the Pacific have become the lifelines of a new world in which Americans have made their country the focus of the world connections.

While America's resources are plentiful, it does not mean that they would automatically yield beneficial results. Barriers of distance and relief\* and certain difficulties in the climate have all had to be overcome before the rich rewards could be won. Throughout American history, there has been a strong element of challenge in each part of America in the exploitation of natural resources. New England fisheries, for example, are set in a storm-swept sea, and Virginia and the Carolinas have their "dismal swamps" to put up with. Once the interior is reached, new hazards are there to be dealt with. Before the arrival of science and technology, the killing of crops by severe winter frosts was quite common, and when spring came and snow melted,



dangerous floods often rolled down the rivers and brought widespread ruin.

In short, based on the above descriptions of America's natural environment, it can be safely argued that every bit of America's natural resources has been brought into use through strenuous\* efforts. Without such diligent and persistent efforts, America's natural resources would not have been so fully exploited, nor would they have been put to such great use in the development of the United States.

## A Nation of Immigrants

The United States has often been called "a nation of immigrants". There are basically two good reasons for this. Firstly, the country was settled, built, and developed by generations of immigrants and their children. Secondly, even today, the United States continues to take in more immigrants than any other country in the world. For this reason, America is among the most heterogeneous\* societies in the world. Many different cultural traditions, ethnic customs, national origins, racial groups and religious beliefs make up what we call "Americans". According to the US Census Bureau in 2015, 77.1% of the US citizens claim themselves to be Whites, 13.3% Blacks, 5.6% Asians, 1.2% American Indians and Alaska Natives, 0.2% Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, and 2.6% two or more races. It should be noted that a separate listing for Hispanics is not included here because the US Census Bureau considers Hispanics to mean persons of Spanish/Hispanic/Latino origin living in the US, who may be of any racial or ethnic group (white, black, Asian, etc.). It is estimated about 17.6% of the total US population is Hispanic. Excluding Hispanics or Latinos, White population will be reduced to 61.6%.

### Timeline of the Four Waves of Immigration

#### First Wave:

colonial immigration between 1680 and 1770

#### Second Wave:

the "old" immigrants between 1820 and 1890

#### Third Wave:

the "new" immigrants from 1890 to 1930

#### Fourth Wave:

from 1965 to the present

Immigrants came to the US from different



countries and at a different time, but over time immigration patterns have changed with regard to the origin of emigration countries. These changing patterns do affect, and have affected, what America is today and how Americans view the rest of the world. It is generally believed that throughout American experience there have occurred altogether four waves of immigration, namely, the first wave: colonial immigration between 1680 and 1770; the second wave: the "old" immigrants between 1820 and 1890; the third wave: the "new" immigrants from 1890 to 1930; and finally, the fourth wave: from 1965 to the present. In each of these four waves of immigration, there were some visible characteristics with regard to the origin of emigration countries. For instance, during the first wave, the great majority of immigrants came from Great Britain, Germany, France and Ireland, plus involuntary blacks from Africa. This group of immigrants constituted the founders of the United States.

The so-called "old" immigrants in the second wave largely referred to northwestern European immigrants, such as Germans, Irish, Britons and Scandinavians, plus French Canadians, Swiss, and Dutch. Since they basically came from the same countries as the first-wave immigrants, they were called "old" immigrants. By contrast, immigrants during the third wave mostly hailed from southeastern rather than northwestern Europe, and hence they were nicknamed "new" immigrants. This group of immigrants included primarily Italians, Jews, Poles, Hungarians, Russians, Czechs, and Greeks, marking a significant change in the origin of immigrants. However, with the passage of the Immigration Act of 1965, the largest share of immigrants since 1965 has come from Latin America and Asia, making the United States ever more heterogeneous in its racial, ethnic and religious composition. As a result of all these changes in the origin of emigration countries during the third and fourth waves of immigration, the so-called Anglo-Saxon heritage of America has been undergoing a major transformation. Indeed, with the nation growing increasingly multi-ethnic, multi-racial and multi-religious, America, more than ever before, has become truly "a nation of immigrants".

## **In Search of the American Dream**

Why did people from around the world emigrate to the US? And, why do they still go there? A good way to approach these two questions is to look at the "push" and "pull" factors. By "push", it means the forces that "push"

people to leave their own countries. They include, but not limited to, wars, revolutions, periods of starvation, persecutions, or religious intolerance. In short, it can be any number of disasters which lead people to believe that there is no hope to stay where they are. By contrast, “pull” refers to the forces that “pull” people out of their own motherland and to the country they adopt as their new nation. Such forces include, among other things\*, political and religious freedom, economic opportunity, access to quality education, and a better life. In a nutshell\*, the “pull” factor can probably find its expression in\* the phrase — the American Dream. Only when the two factors combine to work does immigration take place, because they are the two sides of the same coin.

Take the Chinese immigrants of the mid-19th century for example. At that time, in addition to local wars and natural disasters, land was scarce and opportunities scanty\* in China. On the other hand, America seemed to offer abundant opportunities for personal improvement and economic betterment, let alone its attractive “Gold Rush!”. Thus, “pushed” by the miserable life back at home and “pulled” by the opportunity America offered, tens of thousands of Chinese went to the United States in search of a better life. Similarly, between 1846 and 1851, more than a million Irish emigrated to America in order to escape starvation and disease in Ireland in the 1870s, and a wave of refugees\* left the political turmoil\* of Eastern and Southern Europe to seek freedom and a future in America. At other times when the “pull” forces weakened, as during the Great Depression or World War II, for example, a smaller number of immigrants went to the United States.

What then is the American Dream? While different people have different interpretations about it, the term “dream” can be defined as the hopes and ideals of a people, suggesting a sense of new possibility and fresh aspirations. It could mean a decent job with good pay; it could also mean ownership of a car and a house. More importantly, it can mean freedom of speech, freedom of assembly\*, and freedom of religion. All of such dreams imply a sense of optimism. To be sure, other countries may have their own success stories\* and own dreams as well. What makes the American Dream unique is the coming together in one place of so many separate dreams: the search for liberty, the discovery of one’s own potential, the betterment of one’s life, and the exploration of new possibilities for happiness.

Of course, not all immigrants and their descendants realize their dreams. Indeed, quite oftentimes, dreams turn into mere illusions\* or even