

<<美国研究读本>>

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内容概要

《美国研究读本》题材广泛，全书共分26个专题，涵盖了美国的政治、经济、社会、文化等方面。所选材料既注意反映八十年代以来的现实，又兼顾历史，使读者能用一种历史的、发展的观点看美国。

所选文章权威性较强，文字规范地道，难易总体适中。

每一单元的中文简介均起到画龙点睛的作用。

这是一本不可多得的了解美国的英语教材，适合高校英语专业本科及研究生使用，也适合具有大学英语水平的其他读者自学之用。

读了此书，你会对美国有更深、更实际的了解。

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作者简介

梅仁毅 1935年出生于广东中山，现任北京外国语大学教授、美国研究中心主任。

1982-1983年作为富布赖特学者在美国耶鲁大学从事美国外交史研究。

长期从事美国外交史、中美关系史教学。

作品有：译著《论语》、《寂夏》；教材《国际金融阅读与翻译》、《英语国家概况》美国部

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Today, for example, there are over 2.2 million Native Americans. This group has suffered enormous injustices. Shortly after the European settlers arrived on this continent, they found it expedient to clear out the indigenous groups whose nations stood in the way of territorial conquest and colonial expansion. The firm belief of whites in their own racial and cultural superiority (a belief without any real foundation) provided a ready rationale for their vicious treatment of the native peoples. Native Americans were subjected to a continuing series of attacks: the takeover of ancestral lands, racially inspired killings, confinement on white-controlled reservations, bureaucratic manipulation by governmental agencies, and so on. Now, after generations of white domination, Native Americans are among the poorest and most oppressed minority groups in the United States. Their traditional patterns of living have been largely destroyed, and their life chances are almost completely subject to the whims of white-controlled institutions. They were, and are victims of racism. Leaders

Members of each party in each house meet to choose their leaders, the Speaker of the House is chosen by the majority party members and presides over the House. Typically someone who has served in the House a long time, the Speaker is usually a skilled parliamentarian and an ideological moderate. The institutional task of the Speaker is to see that legislation moves through the House. His (all speakers have been men so far) partisan task is to secure the passage of measures preferred by his party. No other member of Congress possesses the visibility and authority of the Speaker of the House. Part of the Speaker's prestige comes from the office's formal recognition in the Constitution, which states that the House "shall choose their Speaker". Although the Constitution does not require the Speaker to be a House member, all of them have been. The Speaker is also second in line behind the vice president to succeed to the presidency. And, as the "elect of the elected", the Speaker stands near the president as a national figure. The party leadership in the House also includes a majority leader, a minority leader, and majority and minority whips. The majority leader is second in command to the Speaker, and the minority leader is, as the name suggests, the leader of the minority party. The key job of majority leaders, defined by tradition, is to be principal floor defender and spokesman for the party. They also help to plan the daily, weekly, and annual legislative agendas; consult with members to gauge sentiment for or against legislation; confer with the president about administration proposals, particularly when the president is of the same party: urge colleagues to support or defeat measures; and, in general, work diligently to advance the purposes and programs of the majority party. Minority leaders are well placed to shape their party's strategy for dealing with the majority. They can help formulate alternatives to majority-sponsored legislation, oppose outright the majority party and its leadership, or use parliamentary rules and procedures to concessions from the majority or thwart its will. Whips originated in the British House of Commons, where they were named after the "whipper in", the rider who keeps the hounds together in a fox hunt. This aptly describes the whips' role in Congress. Party whips try to maintain contact with party members, see which way members are leaning on votes, and attempt to gain their support.

In the House, whips frequently stand by the chambers doors and signal their arriving colleagues to vote yea (thumbs up) or nay (thumbs down). They also prepare weekly "whip notices" advising members of the upcoming floor agenda.

1. Marbury v. Madison

The election of 1800 saw John Adams' Federalist party lose control of the Presidency and both Houses of Congress to the Jeffersonian. In those days the new President did not take office until the following March 4 so Adams and the "lame duck" Federalist party still held power for several months after the election. In an attempt to hold onto power, the lame duck Congress passed a law creating forty-two new federal judgeships. President Adams quickly nominated Federalists to these judgeships, and the Senate quickly confirmed the nomination. The outgoing Secretary of State, John Marshall, failed to see that all of the commissions were delivered to the new judges before he left office on March 4. When President Jefferson took office he ordered his Secretary of State, James Madison, not to deliver the commissions because of the blatant way the Federalists tried to "pack" the federal judiciary. William Marbury, nominated to be a justice of the peace in the city of Washington, was one of those who did not receive his commission. After several unsuccessful attempts to secure the commission, Marbury brought suit against Madison. Section 13 of the Judiciary Act of 1789 authorized

the Supreme Court to issue a writ of mandamus to persons holding office under the authority of the United States. A writ of mandamus is a court order commanding an official to do something that is required by law and over which the official has no discretion. Marbury brought this original action before the Supreme Court under Section 13. The case was highly controversial and highly partisan in nature. The Federalists had blatantly packed the federal judiciary with its members. Jefferson withheld the commissions for partisan reasons. The stage was set for a historic decision. The Constitutional issues are as following: (1) whether Marbury has a legal right to the commission? (2) whether the laws of the United States provide Marbury with a legal remedy? (3) Whether the remedy of a writ of mandamus was issued by the Supreme Court? Chief Justice John Marshall delivers the opinion of the Court. Marshall answers the first question by analyzing the appointment process. Marshall concludes that Marbury, having been nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate in accordance with the constitution, does have a right to the commission he demands. The U.S. economy is in an unprecedented good condition. For example, U.S. unemployment fell in September, 2000 to 3.9 percent—matching a 30-year low—and businesses added more workers than expected, the Labor Department reported, suggesting the nine-year-old economic expansion is still generating jobs. As a matter of fact, it is undergoing a fundamental transformation at the dawn of the new millennium. Some of the most obvious outward signs of change are in fact among the root causes of it: revolutionary technological advances, including powerful personal computers, high-speed telecommunications, and the Internet. The market environment facilitated, by these and other developments in the last decade and a half has been variously labeled the "information economy", "network economy", "digital economy", "knowledge economy", and the "risk society". Together, the whole package is often simply referred to as the "New Economy". The New Economy is a metal casting firm in Pittsburgh that uses computer-aided manufacturing technology to cut costs, save energy, and reduce waste. It is a farmer in Nebraska who sows genetically altered seeds and drives a tractor with a global satellite positioning system. It is an insurance company in Iowa that uses software to flatten managerial hierarchies and gives its workers broader responsibilities and autonomy. It is textile firm in Georgia that uses the Internet to take orders from customers around the world. It is also as much about new organizational models as it is about new technologies. The New Economy is the Miller brewery in Trenton, Ohio, which produces 50 percent more beer per worker than the company's next-most-productive facility, in part because a lean, 13-member crew has been trained to work in teams to handle the overnight shift with no oversight.

媒体关注与评论

前言 20世纪80年代以来,世界发生了巨大的变化,美国国内也有不小的变化:冷战的结束,美国成了惟一的超级大国,全球化的发展,知识经济的主导,美国经济持续增长及最近的衰退,新保守主义的抬头,社会福利政策的争论等等都需要我们去了解与研究,许多中国读者也迫切想了解美国的今天。

我们在有关课程的教学中也深感需要补充新的材料以适应新的发展,这就是我们编写此书的动因。

此书有以下几个特点: 1. 题材广泛,材料较新。

本书所选文章涉及美国政治、社会生活的方方面面。

全书共分政治、经济、社会、文化教育4个部分,26个专题。

在选材上,除个别文章外,我们主要选自80年代(特别是90年代)美国出版的教材、专著,也包括了少量从因特网下载的文章。

我们一方面注意给读者提供90年代的信息,一方面又不追求实时性,而是注意所论述的内容有较长的时效,因此在总统举这一单元中就没有涉及2000年总统选举的特点、选举团暴露出来的弊端、最高法院的裁决等。提到2000年选举,也只是为了说明选举过程、金钱的作用。

另外,此书没有把史地、人口等变化不大的内容包括在内,这些方面仍可参考邓炎昌教授主编的《现代美国社会与文化》一书。

2.历史与现实的结合。

对许多问题,我们认为不仅应该了解其现状,也应该了解其过去,以形成一种发展的观点。

我们在编撰时,尽可能使读者对一个专题有一个历史的了解,知道事物的发展过程。

3.本书大部分文章的作者都是美国政治学、经济学、历史学、外交学、社会学、教育学、人类学、哲学等方面的专家、学者,他们提供的信息与分析,比较权威、可靠。

当然,正因为他们都是美国学者他们有的观点也必然会与中国的观点不同,这是我们应该在使用此书时必须注意的。

我们认为基本保留原作者的观点与论述,有助于提高读者的分析、判断能力,也有助于我们了解美国作者是如何看待这些问题的。

需要点明之处,我们也在简介中已加以指出。

4.文字规范、地道。

我们在选材时,也注意了文字的难易程度,尽量做到文字地道易懂,使读者在阅读内容的同时,在语言上也有收获。

为了帮助读者阅读,我们对某些专有名词提供了英语注释对人名、机构名则给了中文译名。

对于一般性难词或语言上的难点,我们未作注释,因为读者可以借助词典独立解决。

5.每一单元前面有一个汉语简介,起导读作用。

我们尽量在简介中提供一些所选文章没有涉及但又必须知道的事实,同时指出中国读者在阅读时应注意或应思考的问题。

每一单元之后附有英文思考题,便于读者复习一下本单元的主要之点。

在思考题之后,列有参考书目,便于有兴趣的读者进一步学习之用。

所列之书,基本上在国内可以借读到。

6.本书是集体研究的成果。

北京外国语大学研究中心的师生共25人参加了编撰工作。

本中心的富布赖特教授Bill Lyons也专门为此书写了一篇文章。

没有这么多人的努力,本书是难以完成的。

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