

大学英語教材

Robert H. Walker

# AMERICAN SOCIETY

The Revised and Enlarged Edition

[アメリカ社会文化史]

斎藤眞  
山本博



南雲堂

☎03-3268-2311

*AMERICAN SOCIETY*  
The Revised and Enlarged Edition

Copyright © 1995 by Robert H. Walker

No part of this book may be reproduced or translated in  
any form or by any means without permission in writing  
from the publisher.

**TO: Yoshinori MAEDA and John W. HALL and the many others who have worked with the U.S.-Japan Conference on Cultural and Educational Interchange and with the Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission for the improvement of understanding between the two countries.**

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My thanks to Professor Makoto Saito for introducing this work and making it generally possible. It has been my good fortune to work with Professor Saito in a number of settings and to recognize in him a person of singular achievements in the development of American studies in Japan.

My thanks to Professor Hiroshi Yamamoto whose knowledge of the United States produced the illustrative annotations; to NAN'UN-DO for careful and accurate preparation of the manuscript.

May I also thank those many scholars whose information and insights I have used without being able to refer to them specifically. The more one struggles to make brief statements of general validity, the more one must stand on the shoulders of others. If there is anything original in this work it will be in the way these views have been assembled.

Robert H. Walker

---

## 新 版 は し が き

---

本書が最初に刊行されたのは1980年、それから10余年がたった。その間アメリカ社会内外の状況は激変したといってよい。外に、冷戦が終結し、いわゆる「二つの世界」は解体したが、一つの世界が成立したわけではなかった。逆に、世界各地で地方的な民族紛争が起り、世界は多元化しつつある。他方、アメリカ社会内部でも、民族、宗教、文化を通じ多元化が進み、多文化主義(multiculturalism)が支配的となってきた。筆者も1993年晩秋、久しぶりにボストンを訪れ、植民地時代より続く古都の面影を懐かしむと共に、地下鉄にスペイン語の掲示があり、何語かは定かではないがアジア系の言葉が交わされるのを耳にし、アメリカ社会の変化の一端に触れる思いがした。

そうしたアメリカ社会内外の変化をふまえて、本書の著者ウォーカー教授は、つとに本書の新版を思い立たれ、私や出版社に申し込まれ、各章に筆を入れると共に、新たに1章を書き下ろし、写真も追加された。私どもの不手際から、せっかくの著者の意気込みにもかかわらず、新版の刊行がおくれ、著者にはご迷惑をお掛けしてしまった。なお、巻末の年表、参考文献も改訂したことは言うまでもない。

ところで、世界状況の変化は、日米関係の変化をももたらした。冷戦を前提に日米が結ばれ、日本はひたすら経済発展を志向してきたが、もはやそうした時代は過去のものとなった。日米関係は、経済面で競争、摩擦、対立を経験しつつあるが、それはまた文化、心理の面でも摩擦を生み、多くのアメリカ人は日本を信頼せず、日本人の間ではアメリカ嫌いが増えている。しかし、これは、日米関係が先進国アメリカと途上国日本との保護・依存の関係であった時代が終り、対等の国家の間の関係としての日米関係が始まる過渡期に当然生じる傾向といってよい。日米関係は、競争や摩擦を含みつつ、基本的には相互依存の関係であり、また両国の利益のためだけでなく、広く世界の平和、地球の環境といったグローバルな問題のためにも、日米の協力が必要とされている。

こうした時、アメリカについて断片的な理解、経験だけではなく、アメリカ文化、社会を全体的に捉え、その中で個々の経験、現象を理解することがますます必要となっている。著者のウォーカー教授はアメリカの大学におけるアメリカ文明論の教授であり、また日本を何回も訪れ、日本の大学で教えた経験も豊富な学者である。そうした学識と経験とに基づいて、本書は生み出された。一人でも多くの日本の若い人々が、本書を通じ、英語を学びつつ、またアメリカ社会の全体像を身に付けられるよう望む次第である。

上に触れたボストンでのアメリカ学会で同教授とお会いし、ホテルの窓からボストンの町並みを眺めながら、久しぶりに語り合った朝を、昨日のこつのように思い起こしつつ、このはしがきを記す。

1995年2月

斎藤 眞

---

## はしがき

---

本書は、大学教養過程での英語授業のための教科書でありつつ、同時にアメリカの文化、ことにその社会や思想について学習できる教科書として編集され、書き下されたものである。アメリカ人用に刊行されていたものを、日本の大学教科書として編集したのではなく、最初から日本の大学生のために企画され、書き下されたものであることを強調しておきたい。そのためには、原著者が日本の大学のことも知っている必要があり、また編者や注釈者と常に密接な連絡をとれる必要があった。幸い旧知の Robert Walker 教授に企画を話したところ積極的に引き受けてくれ、注釈についてはこれまた旧知の山本博助教授が幸い Walker 教授のところで Fulbright 交流計画の研究員として、一年近く研究される機会もあり、積極的に引き受けて下さった。ここに、三人の共同作業（私の役割は一番軽い）として、本書の刊行が企てられた次第である。

日本においては、アメリカについての情報は、新聞、雑誌、テレビ等を通して、また小説を含む夥しい翻訳書などを通して、豊かに、というよりは過多にといつてよいほど流れている。しかし、それらの断片的な情報を整理し理解する枠組みは意外に乏しい。その結果、一部の細かい知識に基づいて全体像がつくられやすい。その点、総合的にアメリカ社会を捉え、しかも英語の教科書として、何もアメリカ研究などと関係のない一般の学生諸君が読めるようなアメリカ社会論が欲しかった。この教科書が、英語の読解力の育成のために役立つだけでなく、学生諸君が将来、会社員、家庭の主婦、技師、小学校の教師、その仕事は何であれ、新聞などを通してアメリカ社会についての情報に接した時、その情報の意味を解く鍵の役割を果たすことができれば幸いである。

読者の利用の便のため、本書の構成を一応簡単に説明しておきたい。

第1章は文字通り Introduction で、本書全体の構成とアメリカ人の抱く基本的な概念のいくつかを紹介している。たとえば文化的劣等感と道徳的優越感、技術への愛着、過程を重んじる傾向などである。第2章以下は、年代とテーマとがいろいろと、いわば螺旋状にアメリカ社会の発展が描かれる。第2章では、ヨーロッパから持ちこまれた文化が、荒野で生存してゆかなければならないというアメリカ的環境の中でいかに変わってゆくかが論じられ、第3章では、アメリカ人としての自意識の形成が描かれ、第4章ではこの広い大陸に過少な人口が発展してゆくためには技術が尊重されなければならない所以が説明され、そして第5章では、この技術が工業化を生み、その工業化が近代都市文化を生んだことが論じられる。農村のアメリカ社会は都市社会へと変容する。第6章では第一次大戦後、アメリ

カは外交的、経済的、文化的に発展し、いわばアメリカの時代を迎えた状況が説明される。しかし、第7章では1960年代後半から、アメリカ社会は進歩、発展、成長という考え方自体に疑問を持つようになり、新しい思想が模索されつつあることが指摘される。

以上のような構成で原文を書き下してくれた Robert H. Walker, Jr. 教授は、現在首都ワシントンにある George Washington University のアメリカ文明論の教授であるが、総合的アメリカ研究の草分けともいべきペンシルヴェニア大学で1955年にアメリカ文明の分野で Ph. D. をとられている。同教授と日本との関係は長く深い。海軍勤務時代、静岡に教育専門官として勤務したことがあり、その頃現在の Grace 夫人と知り合われたときいている。1964年には京都アメリカ研究セミナーのアメリカ文学講師として来日され、日本に多くの友人、知己をもっておられる。1975年以降は日米文化教育会議 (CULCON) のアメリカ研究小委員会のアメリカ側委員長として、また日米友好基金 (Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission) の理事として、日本のアメリカ研究促進のために尽力しており、たびたび訪日されている。アメリカ文明論の専門家で、しかも日本を知っている方として、本書のような企画にはもっとも適任者であろう。

注釈の労をとって下さった山本博助教授は、弘前大学教養部で日本で珍しい「アメリカ学」という名の科目を担当されており、前述のごとく1978-9年にはアメリカで在外研究をされていた。なお校正及び注釈には、弘前大学教養部嶋田裕司講師が協力してくれたことを、感謝をもって付記したい。

前にふれたように、この教科書は最初から日本の大学生用に書かれたものであり、草稿も山本助教授と私とで一頁一頁検討し、議論して、長さ、表現などの面で Walker 教授にいろいろ修正を求め、時にイタリー旅行中の Walker 教授に問い合わせるなどの手続きをふんでつくられたものである。本書と同じ趣旨で刊行されている *A Brief History of the American People, 1607-1977* と共に、その姉妹篇として利用頂ければ幸いである。

巻末に、本書を読んでさらにアメリカ社会について勉強されたい方のために、邦語で利用できる参考文献のリストをつくってみた。また、アメリカ史の流れを一瞥できるように簡単な年表をつけておいた。

1979年師走

斎藤 真

[追記] 本書も第1刷以来4年を経たが、その間、本文、注釈、年表、参考文献について誤植を訂正すると共に、若干の修正、追加を行ってきた。

1984年1月



---

## CONTENTS

---

	はしがき .....	v
Chapter	①: INTRODUCTION: DISTINCTIVE TRAITS .....	1
	②: COLONIAL AMERICA .....	15
	③: NATIONALISM DEFINED .....	27
	④: THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY .....	37
	⑤: URBANIZATION .....	49
	⑥: THE AMERICAN ERA .....	63
	⑦: WORLD WAR II AND AFTER .....	75
	⑧: AMERICAN SOCIETY TODAY .....	89
	NOTES (注釈) .....	99
	アメリカ史略年表 .....	134
	参考文献 .....	135

## Chapter I:

# INTRODUCTION: DISTINCTIVE TRAITS



This 1884 allegorical lithograph depicts social values (free elections, justice, education) supporting commerce, agriculture and industry: all under the protection of the Constitution and the Declaration.

The method and arrangement of this essay respond to a number of questions. What have been the most important ideas and conditions in shaping American life and thought? How do the ideas and events relate to one another? How can American social and intellectual history be simplified into a small number of eras? What unifies each era? 5

The answers lie in the seven chapters which follow. Each chapter deals with at least one of the important aspects of American society. Often the ideas treated in a single chapter will have importance for the entire span of American history.

Each chapter starts by defining the concept that unifies it. These ideas 10 are connected, by example, to the lives of the people. Examples are taken from such social institutions as the family and the school. Connections are also made with art and literature, with philosophy and religion, with politics and economics, and sometimes with diplomatic and military events. If an idea is truly pervasive, it will show itself in many ways. 15 Although this brief essay cannot cover them all, the text and the footnotes offer a range of clues for connecting this work with studies in political and literary history, sociology, and the history of ideas.

Chapter II (1607-1800) pays attention to the fact that American civilization was mainly imported from Europe. Europe, in the seventeenth 20 century, was a mixture of some very advanced ideas and some that were quite primitive. Compared with Japan's continuing relation to the Asian mainland, America's borrowings from Europe took place during a relatively short period. The most important of the large ideas were the religious worldviews represented by the New England Puritans and the 25 contrasting ideas of the Age of Reason which shaped the minds of the Revolutionary leaders. This chapter also contains some illustrations of a general principle. Most American ideas came from Europe. Very few survived as they were. Some were rejected. Most were kept in a modified form. The fact that the Colonists were much concerned with basic survival 30

influenced the use they made of European ideas and devices.

Modern Japan emerged from the Meiji era. The national character had been defining itself for centuries before this “modernization” took place. In the case of the United States there was an impulse to create an “instant”  
5 national character. Although Americans and Europeans shared common roots, the newly independent nation strove to set itself apart from Europe. Chapter III (1775-1860) shows how this spirit of nationalism made use of a philosophy borrowed from Europe to justify an individualistic society committed to growth and diversity. Important outlines were set for a  
10 continuing process of social change.

America began early to take advantage of technology in order to make up for the lack of manpower. The industrial revolution had important origins in Great Britain. Sharing a common language, America could attract many British artisans and advance technology as a way of bringing  
15 under control the vast and virtually unsettled continent. The use of technology is the subject of Chapter IV (1830-1900). Chapter V (1885-1915) centers on one principal product of the industrial revolution, the modern city. This industrial necessity produced some of the most profound social changes in American life. They are here exemplified.

20 Chapter VI (1915-1965) deals with a span of years during which America was fulfilling most of its grand promises. It filled its continental boundaries. It rose from an uncertain world force to an eminent power. During these same years, however, America heard some highly critical questions directed at its political, economic, and intellectual assumptions.  
25 Chapter VII (1965-1980) describes these questions as they appeared again after the interruption of depression and war. It depicts an era unified mainly through its protests. Such a stage in the history of the nation is nothing new, however, and the skeleton of an altered value system may be seen to emerge from the critical inventory of the 1960s and '70s.

30 Chapter VIII deals with the uncertain present, the 1980s and early '90s.

The most notable change during these years was the end of the Cold War and emergence of a new foreign policy featuring peacekeeping and humanitarian aid. Moral standards were invoked in dealing with global problems, in judging political candidates (as in the “moral majority”) and in establishing a new discipline called bioethics. The frontiers of technology continued to re-shape American homes and workplaces with the added burden of restoring a livable environment. A new immigration composed of Hispanics and Asians complicated the pursuit of social democracy.

These chapters represent a compromise between a “logical” and a “chronological” discussion of American life and thought. It will be helpful at the outset, therefore, to review some of the main tenets of the American experience. Not all of them will receive sufficient stress in short chapters which must mention many things. Some of these traits explain achievements; some explain problems; most of them are two-sided.

It will be helpful to recall that Americans have, at least until very recently, tended to see themselves against the backdrop of Europe. “Brother Jonathan,” as the American was first called, was a kind of poor relative. Compared with the European, Jonathan was simple-minded. He lacked manners and culture. When Jonathan became the “Yankee” he was endowed with some shrewdness and determination. He might be canny enough to trade with the Europeans and even fight against them in his backwoods way. But he would never be at home in the drawing rooms of Europe.

Americans often enjoyed this portrait of themselves. Benjamin Franklin, as learned as any of his European contemporaries, deliberately wore a coonskin cap while in Paris. (He never did this in Philadelphia.) A hundred years later the novelist Henry James was still contrasting the devious, cultured European against the direct, simple, honest Bostonian. At the end of World War I it was feared that the American president,

Woodrow Wilson, though a trained political scientist, would be misled at the treaty table by European leaders who were assumed to be naturally superior at intrigue.

Except for the native Americans, citizens of the United States know they came to North America from somewhere else. They tend to know where they came from and when. They tend to take pride both in being American and in having roots in Africa, Asia, or Europe. They tend to feel culturally inferior to their homeland, having cut themselves off from that much longer tradition. But Americans also equate their places of origin with oppression, corruption and poverty. In migrating to the United States they have associated themselves with a world that is somehow larger and more open. It is a land of opportunity and of moral superiority. There are of course exceptions to this portrait. Nonetheless, it will help to understand American behavior if one bears in mind that there is this strong and two-sided feeling toward the rest of the world and particularly toward Europe. Whether the facts support this attitude or not (and they often do not), Americans have been prone to think of themselves as culturally inferior and morally superior.

This attitude helps explain many things. It extends from the apparent lack of foreign policy to the automatic vogue in America of German orchestras, Italian singers, and British lectures. It extends from the Puritan notion of America as a holy example for all Christendom, to the insistence by President Carter that America assume the burden of defending "human rights" throughout the world.

There were many ways in which Americans considered themselves different from Europeans. One was in the idea that they were living on a frontier. Americans were in touch with Europe and imported ideas and implements. At the same time, they were in touch with the wilderness. The famous historian, Frederick Jackson Turner, argued that the special character of Americans came entirely from this situation. The items

imported from abroad were constantly tested. Most of them were modified in important ways and became distinctively American. It is not necessary to agree with all the details in Turner's thesis. It is hard to disagree with the general argument that America can be understood as an imported civilization which chose its institutions and values by testing 5 them against the conditions of the New World. It must be remembered that some frontiers were bodies of water and some were cities. Some were "frontiers of opportunity and abundance," as another historian (David Potter) was to say.

The imported civilization has a history approaching five hundred years. 10 For most of this time, Americans have been living in a setting of low population density. Today in Alaska and in many parts of the American West one can still feel very much like a frontiersman at the last outpost of civilization. This feeling doubtless contributed to some other traits. Independence and self-reliance are often cited as examples. Yet conditions 15 of isolation also produce the need for cooperation when it comes to harvesting crops, raising buildings, rounding up stray livestock, and dealing with natural disasters. Remoteness and isolation also caused despair. Distance from authority bred a tradition of violent solutions to arguments and justice taken into private hands. Not all frontier tendencies 20 are praiseworthy.

When frontier Americans put imported tools and concepts to the test, that test was the test of usefulness. Americans were said to be the great utilitarians. They cared not for complex theory, they simply wanted something to work. For centuries America produced very few scientific 25 theorists compared with the large number of inventors who had improved the utility of everything from the plow to the pistol. Pragmatism is surely a strong American trait, both as a formal philosophy and as a popular habit of mind. It has some advantages in its direct approach to problems, but it bears with it a disrespect for theory which is often short-sighted. 30

Pragmatism also implied a contradiction with another American trait: belief in a fundamental moral law. An example can be taken from the industrial revolution. Mill owners invested large amounts of capital in heavy equipment. In order to pay for this investment, the machines would  
5 need to run efficiently. Since machines did not need rest and food, the answer was to run them constantly. The human needs of the people who tended these machines were ignored in favor of profit.

Chattel slavery in the South had also been defended as pragmatic. Planters argued that only workers from Africa could tolerate the  
10 conditions of labor necessary to produce cotton and other plantation crops. When attacked for this pragmatic defense, planters pointed out that Northern owners of mines and mills had created a kind of “wage slavery” which placed human needs second to efficient manufacture. To some extent the slavery question and the labor movement both represented a  
15 struggle between pragmatic and moral considerations.

A more recent case in point was the argument over the war in Viet Nam. The government claimed that military action was a pragmatic response to treaty obligations and to the threat of communism. Others argued that war was immoral. In arguments over slavery, labor conditions,  
20 and war, practical concerns were by no means the only concerns. Nor do pragmatic arguments always prevail if they are in conflict with the fundamental moral law.

Pragmatism is also part of another cluster of traits that began with the idea of America as the land of opportunity. In the classic American folk  
25 tale, an immigrant arrives from abroad poor and alone. With hard work and imagination he or she eventually becomes wealthy and influential. This folk hero has thus illustrated the virtue of self-help. He has achieved a success that is measured in material terms. But the power of this “success myth” has also been enforced, at various times, both by religion  
30 and by science.



The Calvinists believed that God sometimes showed his favor by granting material success. They did not actually equate wealth with godliness, but they thought that a prosperous person showed more signs of grace than did a failure. Andrew Carnegie, a much later example of the success myth, said, "God gave me my money." Many Americans would have agreed that Carnegie owed more to God than to society. In the late nineteenth century it was also felt that the findings of Charles Darwin helped explain why material success should be respected. If a primary law of nature was the struggle for survival, then the successful person was clearly favored by nature as well as divine law. Thus any social action that interfered with free competition was held in violation of God's word and the process of natural selection.

This emphasis on material success produced one of the great conflicts in American history. On the other side was a longstanding belief that each member of society must care for the well-being of the group. This idea was rooted in the Puritans' Holy Commonwealth as well as in the logic of democracy. Christian dogma also preaches the virtues of poverty over the virtues of worldly wealth. Even Darwinists came to argue that evolution meant the progress of society as a whole rather than the elimination of the poor by the rich. Progressivism and the New Deal were, from this point of view, a triumph for the ideals of social democracy over the ideals of free enterprise. Although the extreme positions in this argument have been muted since the days of the "robber barons" and the radical socialists, the conflict endures. More than any single factor it still distinguishes the political right from the political left. Individual enterprise has produced some of the nation's most notable material achievements. The moderation of economic differences has produced some of the nation's most notable social achievements.

A condition that has affected all American traits is that of diversity. The diversity of life and attitudes in the Colonies was a major problem for

those who wished to create enough unity of purpose for rebellion and for nationhood. The differences that led to the Civil War were not simply those of economic self-interest but were also due to deep divergence in cultural values. Yet that great poet of the Civil War, Walt Whitman, was  
5 but one of many Americans who preached that the strength of the nation was in the wide variety of races and nations represented in its population. Immigration policy for America's first hundred years tended to increase this diversity. Differences in race, religion, sex, region, and national origin have had much to do with the individual and collective American  
10 experience. So have the attitudes toward these differences.

The pressures of the last hundred years have been toward a more unified nation, tied more closely together by mass communications, and increasingly affected by the actions of the federal government in Washington, D. C. Along with the growing number of experiences shared  
15 by all Americans—from network television through income tax—there has been a growing concern that all recognizable groups have equal access to the benefits of American life. One price of diversity has been a series of crusades on behalf of blacks and native Americans, Jews and Roman Catholics, people from the urban slums or from regions of rural poverty,  
20 old people, people with Spanish surnames, women, homosexuals. To be sure, many of these diverse groups can be found in all populations. In America, the tradition of treating diversity as a social problem has produced a strong habit of social action.

Some Americans have been impatient with the process of equalization.  
25 Some have been impatient because these crusades have not provided true social equity. Some have been impatient because they feel that a history of disadvantage should not argue for a “reverse discrimination” which gives special consideration to members of minority groups. The legislatures and courts of the United States have been struggling with this problem for  
30 decades. The struggle is not over. Meanwhile, Americans enjoy an

unusual amount of variety which adds interest to aspects of the culture ranging from cuisine to sport, from music to religion. This diversity has surely helped counter the pressures toward conformity noted as early as the 1830s by Alexis de Tocqueville. A recent revival of interest in local and family history allows for the hope that the nation will be able to balance a respect for diversity with a need for unified national purpose. 5

The unification of the United States owes just as much to technology as it does to ideology. America's love affair with technology is undoubtedly one of that nation's best known traits. Technology helped tame nature. It provided employment and material abundance. It enabled America to catch up with Europe economically and to win its military engagements. Technology not only made it possible for America to fulfill its "manifest destiny" as a continental nation, but it was crucial in providing a standard of living that became the envy of the world. It is easy to see why Americans worshiped for so long at the altar of technology, looking for innovations and asking the masters of invention to solve any problems they had created. 15

The American worship of technology gave substance to the picture of America as the land of gadgets. Technology created material achievements and encouraged the measurement of achievement in terms of quantity. But the products of technology were so widely shared that Americans tended to pride themselves on these conveniences and to discount their critics as being envious. 20

Only recently has technology been severely taken to task. Lonely voices from the past have gathered increasing strength in a new outcry against those processes that produced America's legendary abundance. Technology is wasteful, complains the rising generation. It destroys the balance of nature and deprives man of his essential setting. Technology creates unemployment as well as employment. It brings high-speed transportation, but it also brings pollution. It produces energy from the 25 30

atom but threatens life through radiation. Most of American history needs to be understood as a romance with science and technology. Only recently has the other side become prominent.

The exception to this statement lies in the American attitude toward the rise of the city. If the modern city can be seen as a product of industrial technology, then the resistance to urbanization offers one continuing example of America's doubts about machine-made environment. American cities grew without restraint and—all too often—without planning. Although the cities have always housed frontiers of opportunity as well as ornaments of culture, they have never proved attractive to most Americans. In spite of the many charms of urban life, Americans have tended to reject their impersonality and sense of social distance. Cities provided the great ghettos for the poor migrants from Europe and from the farms. Cities provided the classic examples of corruption and misrule. Cities revealed a constant contrast between extremes of wealth and poverty.

As soon as they could afford it, city workers moved from the center of the city to neighborhoods where they could have their own homes with small gardens. Middle class Americans moved to the suburbs and made them look as rural as possible. Upper class Americans lived high above the city streets in penthouses or moved even farther from the urban center into large estates. Decent urban housing was torn down for commercial use or converted to overcrowded tenements. With people leaving as soon as they could afford to, urban neighborhoods lost their character. During the daytime the inner city bustled with workers. After midnight it was abandoned to the very rich and the very poor.

Thomas Jefferson was noted for his bias in favor of an America of yeoman farmers and artisans. Cities aroused his suspicions. For reasons that are hard to understand, Jefferson was quite prophetic in his mistrust of cities. The evidence of sociology and literature, of politics and

architecture, all shows this bias against urban life which resulted in a massive failure of intelligent planning for the urban age. One of the mysterious contradictions in the American character is in the love of technology contrasted with the dislike of the modern city as a social setting. 5

The most famous American trait is the love of technology. The least understood American trait is the acceptance of "process." Process is explained by the philosophy called romanticism which, in its American version, was known as "transcendentalism." According to this worldview, the universe is incomplete. God stands for the process of fulfillment. 10 Nature is constantly multiplying. The law of life is growth and change. Since nothing in nature is fixed, then man is foolish to set fixed standards. Man must grow and change along with nature. The *process* of change is continuous.

This concept entered America in its early years. It was easier to accept 15 such an idea in a young and growing country than in one where the institutions were well established and enjoyed long histories. Although most Americans had no notion of the philosophical origins of this idea, they did commit themselves to a number of processes. They began the process of settling the wilderness. They began the process of educating the electorate. They began industrializing, they began democratizing. 20 In all of these areas of activity there were landmarks. There were ways to measure progress. But in none of these areas were there fixed goals. Reformers worked toward free and compulsory education through grade six. When this goal was near at hand, they raised their sights. Labor leaders struck for 25 a 10-hour day. When they succeeded, they began working for a shorter workweek.

The idea of process is one of the most frustrating things about American life. It allows no day of triumph. Only a William Lloyd Garrison could see emancipation as the end of the slavery problem. Most 30

of his colleagues knew that the struggle had only begun. The process of obtaining equal rights for black Americans was to be a long and continuing process. So with other areas. Where does process mean fulfillment? With a three-day workweek? With four cars in every garage?

5 On the other hand, the commitment to this concept has enabled Americans to avoid many potential fights. If a problem can be said to be in the process of solution, most Americans will be satisfied. Are Americans too materialistic? Then the nation is in the process of a cultural revolution. Is the national wealth unfairly shared? Then the nation is in the

10 process of achieving economic democracy. The commitment to process has its virtues and its shortcomings. It is impossible to say which side prevails. It is also impossible to understand American life and thought without an awareness of this trait.