

Examining Our Sense of Identity and Who We Are

Dharma Journal: The certainty of self

Published on October 25, 2009 by Michael J. Formica, MS, MA, EdM in Enlightened Living

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Who are you? No...really...have you ever really considered that question? In the small of the night, when you are sitting naked in the dark, what is it that defines you? In these uncertain times, it is an imperative consideration because, when things are seemingly out of control and the center has been lost, when we find ourselves having to give up the people and things that we love for a time or forever, there is a place within ourselves to which we must return. What is that place for you?

We all have a center, a place that grounds us. When we lose sight of that center, we can find ourselves adrift, which oftentimes can only serve to magnify our general sense of uncertainty and, by association, fear and anxiety. Returning to our personal source -- whether that source is physical, mental, emotional, spiritual or social - is key to maintaining our sense of groundedness in the face of that uncertainty. The challenge is often not in recognizing the source, but in recognizing that we have lost it or, worse yet, consciously or unconsciously given it up.

The only house that you ever truly own is the one in which you live and, even then, it's something of a rental. That house has two arms and two legs, amongst other things, and, in that it is the vessel for the "I-that-is-me", it is our singular point of reference for being in the world.

We get drawn off of this because we get pulled into the world and that world, as well as our attachment to it, can regrettably become the basis for the manner in which we ultimately define ourselves. This can be a great a source of pain and consternation; not for any airy-fairy metaphysical notions about clinging and suffering, but for the simpler reason that, in defining ourselves by virtue of things impermanent, we become lost to ourselves and lose our point of reference for our being in the world. The suicide rate has been climbing steadily since the advent of the economic crisis for a reason - no personal point of reference, no tangible sense of self-definition can equal no way out.

The things of the world are often referred to in the wisdom teachings as "red dust". This is a reference to a particular kind of sand found in Asia and the surrounds that is very fine and clings to everything, covering it. It is very difficult to remove. These self-same things of the world - this red dust -- can take us out of our house. They blind us, cling to us and, thus, can become the deluded point of reference for our self-definition. When the rain comes, the dust washes off and we are left with nothing, naked and cold - the bride stripped bare.

By holding firm to our sense of identity, and remaining conscious of the source of that identity, we can better weather the storms of uncertainty and chaos with which we may be confronted. From this

vantage, the crisis becomes a problem to be solved or, in the best of all possible worlds, an opportunity to be exploited.

So, how do we reveal this core identity to ourselves? How do we establish a firm sense of what defines us? We ask a simple question - "What is important to me - what is it that feeds me?" That is not such a simple question to answer because, while the "what" tends to be easy, the "why" tends to be a bit more elusive - and that is where we get to self-definition.

To personalize it, I like films with spiritual and religious overtones - "Stigmata", "Constantine", "The Matrix", etc. I like films that are romantic - "Message in a Bottle", "The Lake House", "The White Countess", etc. I like films that involve battle quests - "The Lord of the Rings Trilogy", "300", "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon", etc. Give me a film that has all three elements - "Kingdom of Heaven", "Gladiator", "Braveheart" and I'm all set. So, what?

Not what - why. I am a spiritual person, who is a martial artist and a die-hard romantic. If you've been reading this blog regularly, that's not new information. What it reflects, however, is a personal template for understanding what it is that makes me tick and what the necessary elements are for me to remain on center. Those elements are spiritual practice, Yoga and martial arts and the relationships with which I surround myself - specifically, my primary love relationship. When any or all of those things are not nurtured or cultivated, I am neither nurtured, nor self-nurturing, and can lose myself in the chaos of my own anxiety and sense of disconnect. I get pulled off my center. How does this exercise work for you?

This object lesson in mind, if we take the time to look at what is attractive to us on the outside we can often reveal to ourselves what is important - and even necessary --on the inside. That is something that we can both trust in the moment and also take with us anywhere. It is the thing that allows us to see the red dust of the world as nothing more than a distraction from what is truly important to us. And, again, in the best of all possible worlds, it is what may allow us to see a 40% declination in our net worth, or the loss of a job, or a spouse, or even a home as an opportunity to reinvent ourselves and begin again, rather than be lost in our apparent and illusory loss.

Stay clear. Stay on center. Keep your eye on the prize, because, in the end, you are the only prize that matters.

The Multiple Parts of the Self

Leading Yourself to the Stage of Growth

Published on March 17, 2011 by Gerald Young, Ph.D. in Rejoining Joy



Gerald Young, Ph.D.

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Dan felt he did not know himself. "Who am I? What is important to me? I cannot figure that out." He asked questions like these, and moved from one opinion about his core self to another, to the exasperation of his parents. Salem felt the same way, but she related her angst to her feminine identity and culture. "I'm trying to strike out on a different path, but family tell me what to do. They are too old country for me."

Many young people are trying to establish their roles, responsibilities, and sense of self. However, they need to accept that in all these areas changes are inevitable. Self-identity is never set as a tablet in stone, but keeps growing in one way or another. Moreover, the self consists of many parts, although this might not be apparent to us. We are used to thinking of the self as a single whole that defines us. For example, we might say that we have this particular characteristic or that specific passion.

Our sense of personhood is continually in transformation and seeking new areas of growth or parts. Even when our self seems to be stable, psychological energy is being expended to keep it in its present state. A stable self needs to ward off negative interferences or new ideas and aspirations that could affect it. It could be easier psychologically to entertain change than to reject it outright.

Indeed, often we strike out in new directions that might be the most challenging of tasks. Moreover, after they are completed we might start out on another. That is, even though we might think that we especially seek stability, often, after getting to a stable plateau, we seek new tasks or we encounter new problems that shake our stability and move us to growth. In these cases, the self can branch out and find new areas of growth and different parts.

Of course, it might be quite difficult to confront even the smallest of tasks in the day if we are depressed, too worried, angry at life, or fearful to the point of panic and being frozen in our actions. We might have suffered greatly and cannot take the step of feeling the suffering of others. Our core self might seem overwhelmingly negative to us, with little hope on the horizon. In these cases, the self has little room to grow.

Or, we might withdraw from a task or problem, feeling that we cannot handle it, or lack resources to help us with it. We might come to believe that we cannot cope or cannot do well. We might develop a psychology of failure, or a fear of change as part of our self-concept. In these cases, the self might even become more negative, constrict, or lose parts.

When our sense of self is limited by ideas of the self that corner us in spaces with little room for positive change, how can we take back the self from these limitations, even when we have created them ourselves? Part of the answer to this daunting question is to understand that the self is not one thing but a complex of multiple definitions and parts and to seek to have them grow and diversify into new areas.

How does this concept of multiple part selves apply to you? Even though you might think that your self is a unity, and is stable and cannot change, your self might be chafing for change and growth. Your self is psychologically complex, and it could be reaching out in new directions without you being aware of it. Or, you might take a very open decision to seek out new directions in self-growth and explore new avenues in the self.

Each of your parts has developed out of your past experiences, strengths, and vulnerabilities. Some of the parts of your self might be more prominent, for example, in the way that you present yourself to other people or in how you define yourself in moments of self-reflection.

Other parts of your self might be hidden or masked and rarely become evident. One example is that you might behave in one way most of the time when you are with other people but you might behave differently when you are with a best friend.

Parts of your self that are masked or hidden are still in your core self. You need to see them as waiting for you to give them more space or time in your core self, and to have them grow so that they are more evident to you and to others.

Think of the self as having potential parts in waiting for you to activate and have grow. Parts of your self might consist of dreams or wishes that guide you at times, but are only just glimmers in the making. Or, they might be only hopes, but they still could be very powerful motivations in your psychology. These types of part selves are the ones you should try to grow, because they can lead the way for the others, and might help you eliminate or control the parts that are problematic to you. Growth can be actively undertaken; you do not have to wait for others to start changing your sense of self.

Also, there might be quite negative parts of your self that should be better controlled or eliminated. However, you might not know how to do this, or you might even sabotage all efforts to do this. Some negative parts of the self or negative habits do not go away by wishful thinking. They require much psychological work. For example, you might present as extremely virtuous and moral to others, but drink to excess occasionally, and then be rude or act even worse.

This illustrates that your self parts might be in competition or conflict amongst themselves. They might have not learned to share the stage and find balance. No matter what happens, you remain the leader of the growth of your self, and can find new ways, paths, and joys. Dim the lights of the stage so that you can start the next scene in the growth of your self and its parts.

P.O.W.E.R. Learning: Becoming a Successful Student

CHAPTER

1



Learning Outcomes

By the time you finish this
chapter you will be able to

- » **LO1.1** Explain the benefits of a college education.
- » **LO1.2** Identify the basic principles of the P.O.W.E.R. Plan.
- » **LO1.3** Discuss how expert students use P.O.W.E.R. Learning to achieve college success.

The day has started off with a bang. Literally. As Jessie Trevant struggles sleepily to turn off her clock radio's continual buzzing at 8:35 a.m., she knocks it off the desk next to her bed. The loud bang as it hits the floor not only wakes her fully but also rouses her roommate, who grumbles resentfully.

Struggling out of bed, Jessie reflects on the day ahead. It's one of her most intense class days—four different classes, scattered across the campus. She also must put in several hours of work in the college bookstore, where she has a 15-hour-a-week job, and she knows she'd better get started on her history paper, due next week.

And then there's that biology test that she must take this morning.

After a quick shower, Jessie joins the flood of students making their way to classes. She glances at her biology textbook and feels a wave of anxiety flood over her: Will I do well enough? How will I manage to hold down a job and have enough time to study? Will I make friends here? Will it ever feel like home? Will I make my family proud? . . . And underlying them all is a single challenge: Will I be successful in college?



Looking Ahead

Whether academic pursuits are a struggle or come easily to you . . . whether you live on campus or commute . . . whether you are fresh out of high school or are returning to school many years after high school graduation—college is a challenge. Every one of us has concerns about our capabilities and motivation, and new situations—like starting college—make us wonder how well we'll succeed.

That's where this book comes in. It is designed to help you learn the most effective ways to approach the challenges you encounter, not just in college, but outside the classroom, too. It will teach you practical strategies, hints, and tips that can lead you to success, all centered around an approach to achieving college success: P.O.W.E.R. Learning.

This book is designed to be useful in a way that is different from other college texts. It presents information in a hands-on format. It's meant to be used—not just read. Write on it, underline words and sentences, use a highlighter, circle key points, and complete the questionnaires right in the book. The more exercises you do, the more you'll get from the book. Remember, this is a book to help you with your coursework throughout college, so it's a good idea to invest your time here and now. If the learning techniques you master here become second nature, the payoff will be enormous.

» LO 1.1 Why Go to College?

Congratulations. You're in college.

But *why*? Although it seems as if it should be easy to answer why you're continuing your education, for most students it's not so simple. The reasons that people go to college vary from the practical ("I want to get a good job"), to the lofty ("I want to learn about people and the world"), to the unreflective ("Why not?—I don't have anything better to do"). Consider your own reasons for attending college as you complete **Try It 1**.

Surveys of first-year college students show that almost three-quarters say they want to learn about things that interest them, get training for a specific career, land a better job, and make more money (see **Figure 1.1**). And, in fact, it's not wrong to expect that a college education will help people find better jobs. On average, college graduates earn about 75 percent more than high school graduates over their working lifetime. That difference adds up: Over the course of their working lifetimes, college graduates earn close to a million dollars more than those with only a high school degree. Furthermore, as jobs become increasingly complex and technologically sophisticated, college will become more and more of a necessity.

Try It!

POWER

1

Why Am I Going to College?

Place a 1, 2, and 3 by the three most important reasons that you have for attending college:

- ☐ I want to get a good job when I graduate.
- ☐ My parents want me to go.
- ☐ I couldn't find a job.
- ☐ I want to get away from home.
- ☐ I want to get a better job.
- ☐ I want to gain a general education and appreciation of ideas.
- ☐ I want to improve my reading and study skills.
- ☐ I want to become a more cultured person.
- ☐ I want to make more money.
- ☐ I want to learn more about things that interest me.
- ☐ A mentor or role model encouraged me to go.
- ☐ I want to prove to others that I can succeed.

Now consider the following:

- What do your answers tell you about yourself?
- What reasons besides these did you think about when you were applying to college?
- How do you think your reasons compare with those of other first-year students who are starting college with you?

To Try It online, go to www.mhhe.com/power.

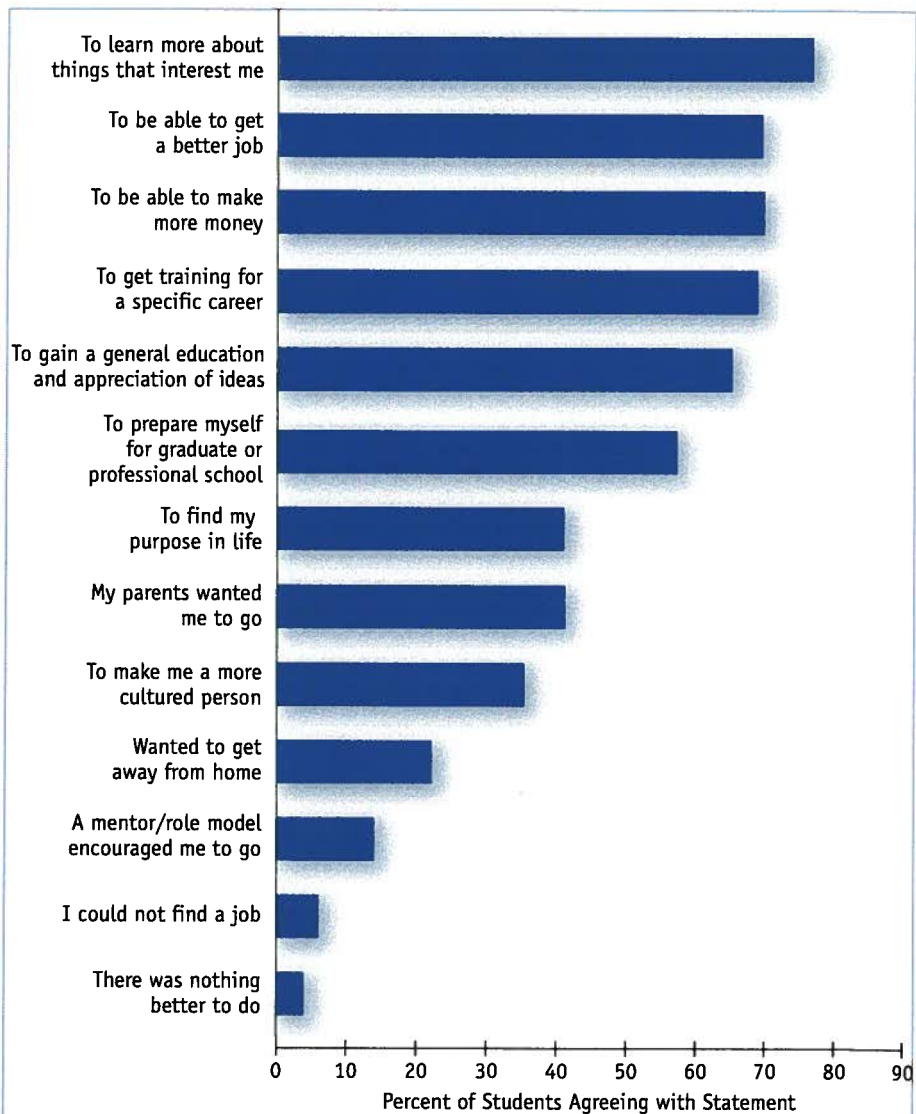
But the value of college extends far beyond dollars and cents. Consider these added reasons for pursuing a college education:

- ▶ **You'll learn to think critically and communicate better.** Here's what one student said about his college experience after he graduated: "It's not about what you major in or which classes you take. . . . It's really about learning to think and to communicate. Wherever you end up, you'll need to be able to analyze and solve problems—to figure out what needs to be done and do it."²
Education improves your ability to understand the world—to understand it as it now is, and to prepare to understand it as it will be.
- ▶ **You'll be able to better deal with advances in knowledge and technology that are changing the world.** Genetic engineering . . . drugs to reduce forgetfulness . . . computers that respond to our voices. . . . No one knows what the future will hold, but you can prepare for it through a college education. Education can provide you with intellectual tools that you can apply regardless of the specific situation in which you find yourself.
- ▶ **You'll learn to adapt to new situations.** College is a different world from high school. It presents new experiences and new challenges. Your adjustment to college culture will prepare you for future encounters with new situations.
- ▶ **You'll be better prepared to live in a world of diversity.** The racial and ethnic composition of the United States is changing rapidly. Whatever your ethnicity, chances are you'll be working and living with people whose backgrounds, lifestyles, and ways of thinking may be entirely different from your own.

figure 1.1

Choosing College

These are the most frequently cited reasons that first-year college students gave for why they enrolled in college when asked in a national survey.¹



Community service

Making contributions to the society and community in which you live

“Education is not the filling of a pail,
but the lighting of a fire.”

—William Butler Yeats

Service learning

Courses that allow a student to engage in community service activities while getting course credit for the experience

You won't be prepared for the future unless you understand others and their cultural backgrounds—as well as how your own cultural background affects you.

- ▶ **You'll learn to lead a life of community service.** In its broadest sense, **community service** involves making contributions to the society and community in which you live. College provides you with the opportunity to become involved in community service activities, in some cases even getting course credit for it—a process called **service learning**. College also allows you to develop the skills involved in acting toward others with *civility* and respectful, courteous behavior.
- ▶ **You'll make learning a lifelong habit.** Higher education isn't the end of your education. Education will build upon your natural curiosity about the world, and it will make you aware that learning is a rewarding and never-ending journey.
- ▶ **You'll understand the meaning of your own contributions to the world.** No matter who you are, you are poised to make your own contributions to society and the world. Higher education provides you with a window to the

Journal Reflections

My School Experiences

Throughout this book, you will be given opportunities to write out your thoughts. These opportunities—called Journal Reflections—offer a chance to think critically about the chapter topics and record your personal reactions to them. As you create your reflections, be honest, to yourself and to your instructor.

Completing these Journal Reflections provides a variety of benefits. Not only will you be able to mull over your past and present academic experiences, you'll begin to see patterns in the kind of difficulties—and successes!—you encounter. You'll be able to apply solutions that worked in one situation to others. And one added benefit: You'll get practice in writing.

If you save these entries and return to them later, you may be surprised at the changes they record over the course of the term. You can either write them out and keep an actual journal, or create your journal electronically at the P.O.W.E.R. Learning Web site at www.mhhe.com/power.

1. Think of one of the successful experiences you've had during your previous years in school. What was it?
2. What made the experience successful? What did you learn from your success?
3. Think of an experience you had in school that you could have handled more successfully, and briefly describe it. Why did it occur?
4. What could you have done differently to make it successful? What did you learn from it?
5. Based on these experiences of academic success and failure, what general lessons did you learn that could help you be a more successful student in the future?



past, present, and future, and it allows you to understand the significance of your own contributions. Your college education provides you with a compass to discover who you are, where you've been, and where you're going.

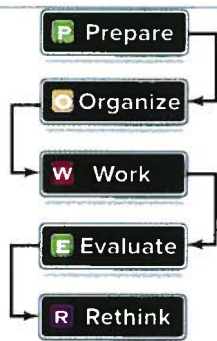
In short, there are numerous benefits for attending college. To help you attain these benefits, it's time to introduce you to a process that will help you achieve success, both in college and in life beyond: P.O.W.E.R. Learning.

» LO 1.2 P.O.W.E.R. Learning: The Five Key Steps to Achieving Success

P.O.W.E.R. Learning itself is merely an acronym—a word formed from the first letters of a series of steps—that will help you take in, process, and make use of the information you'll acquire in college. It will help you to achieve your goals, both while you are in college and later after you graduate.

P.O.W.E.R. Learning

A system designed to help people achieve their goals, based on five steps: Prepare, Organize, Work, Evaluate, and Rethink.



P.O.W.E.R. Plan

Long-term goals

Aims relating to major accomplishments that take some time to achieve

Short-term goals

Relatively limited steps toward the accomplishment of long-term goals

Prepare, Organize, Work, Evaluate, and Rethink. That's it. It's a simple framework but an effective one. Using the systematic framework that P.O.W.E.R. Learning provides (and which is illustrated in the P.O.W.E.R. Plan diagram) will increase your chances of success at any task, from writing a college paper to purchasing the weekly groceries.

Keep this in mind: P.O.W.E.R. Learning isn't a product that you can simply pull down off the bookshelf and use without thinking. P.O.W.E.R. Learning is a process, and you are the only one who can make it succeed. Without your personal investment in the process, P.O.W.E.R. Learning consists of just words on paper.

Relax, though. You already know each of the elements of P.O.W.E.R. Learning, and you may discover that you are already putting this process, or parts of it, to work for you. You've graduated from high school and been accepted into college. You may have also held down a job, had a first date, and registered to vote. Each of these accomplishments required that you use strategies of P.O.W.E.R. Learning. What you'll be doing throughout this book is becoming more aware of these strategies and how they can be used to help you in situations you will encounter in college and beyond.

Prepare

Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu said that travelers taking a long journey must begin with a single step.

But before they even take that first step, travelers need to know several things: what their destination is, how they're going to get there, how they'll know when they reach the destination, and what they'll do if they have trouble along the way. In the same way, you need to know where you're headed as you embark on the intellectual journeys involved in college. Whether it be a major, long-term task, such as college attendance, or a more limited activity, such as getting ready to complete a paper due in the near future, you'll need to prepare for the journey.

Setting Goals

Before we seek to accomplish any task, all of us do some form of planning. The trouble is that most of the time such planning is done without conscious thinking, as if we are on autopilot. However, the key to success is to make sure that planning is systematic.

The best way to plan systematically is to use goal-setting strategies. In many cases, goals are clear and direct. It's obvious that our goal in washing dishes is to have the dishes end up clean. We know that our goal at the gas station is to fill the car's tank with gas. We go to the post office to buy stamps and mail letters.

Other goals are not so clear-cut. In fact, often the more important the task—such as going to college—the more complicated may be our goals.

What's the best way to set appropriate goals? Here are some guidelines:

- **Set both long-term and short-term goals.** **Long-term goals** are aims relating to major accomplishments that take some time to achieve. **Short-term goals** are relatively limited steps you would take on the road to accomplishing your long-term goals. For example, one of the primary reasons you're in college is to achieve the long-term goal of getting a degree. But in order to reach that goal, you have to accomplish a series of short-term goals, such as completing a set of required courses, taking a series of elective courses, and choosing a major. Even these short-term goals can be broken down into shorter-term goals. In order to complete a required course, for instance, you have to accomplish short-term goals, such as completing a paper, taking several tests, and so on. For practice in setting long- and short-term goals, complete **Try It 2**.

What Are Your Goals?

Before you begin any journey, you need to know where you are going. To plan your academic journey—and your later career—you first need to set goals. *Short-term goals* are relatively limited objectives that bring you closer to your ultimate goal. *Long-term goals* are aims relating to major accomplishments that take more time to achieve.

In this *Try It!*, think about your short- and long-term academic goals for a few minutes, and then list them. Because short-term goals are based on what you want to accomplish in the long term, first identify your long-term goals. Then list the short-term goals that will help you reach your long-term goals. An example is provided for each kind of goal:

Long-Term Goal #1 Get a college degree

Related Short-Term Goals:

- Complete four courses with a grade of B or above each term
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Long-Term Goal #2: _____

Related Short-Term Goals:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Long-Term Goal #3: _____

Related Short-Term Goals:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Long-Term Goal #4: _____

Related Short-Term Goals:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Long-Term Goal #5: _____

Related Short-Term Goals:

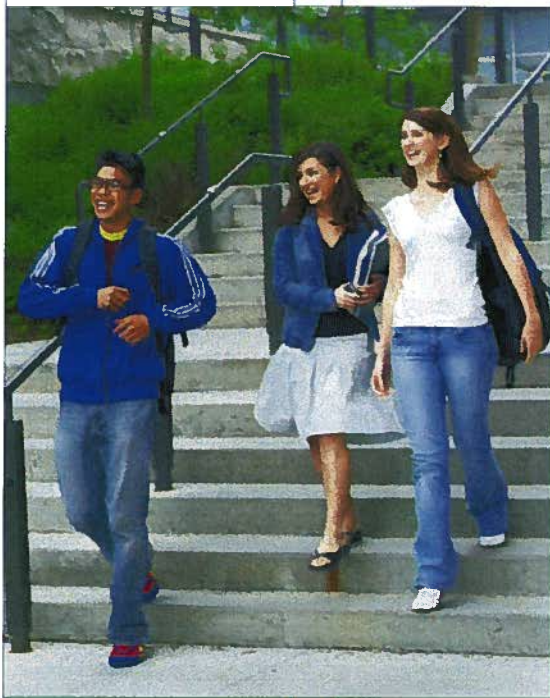
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

After you complete the chart, consider how easy or difficult it was to identify your long-term goals. How many of your long-term goals relate to college, and how many to your future career? Do any of your short-term goals relate to more than one long-term goal?

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“Goal setting, as far as I can see it, is simply a state of mind, a way of thinking about things. A goal setter makes sure he accomplishes what he needs to accomplish.”

Greg Gottesman, Stanford University³



College is not an end point, but part of a lifelong journey.

► **Recognize that who you are determines your goals.** Goal setting starts with knowing yourself. As you'll see when we focus on understanding yourself and your values—those qualities that you hold most desirable—in Chapter 3, it is self-knowledge that tells you what is and is not important to you. This understanding of yourself will help you keep your goals in focus and your motivation up when things get tough.

► **Make goals realistic and attainable.** Someone once said, “A goal without a plan is but a dream.” We'd all like to win gold medals at the Olympics or star in rock videos or write best-selling novels. Few of us are likely to achieve such goals.

Be honest with yourself. There is nothing wrong with having big dreams. But it is important to be realistically aware of all that it takes to achieve them. If our long-term goals are unrealistic and we don't achieve them, the big danger is that we may wrongly reason that we are inept and lack ability and use this as an excuse for giving up. If goals are realistic, we can develop a plan to attain them, spurring us on to attain more.

► **State goals in terms of behavior that can be measured against current accomplishments.** Goals should represent some measurable change from a current set of circumstances. We want our behavior to change in some way that can usually be expressed in terms of numbers—to show an increase (“raise my grade point average 10 percent”) or a decrease (“reduce wasted time by two hours each week”) or to be maintained (“keep in touch with my out-of-town friends by writing four e-mail messages each month”), developed (“participate in one workshop on critical thinking”), or restricted (“reduce my phone expenses 10 percent by speaking less on the telephone”).

► **Goals should involve behavior over which you have control.** We all want world peace and an end to poverty. Few of us have the resources or capabilities to bring either about. On the other hand, it is realistic to want to work in small ways to help others, such as by becoming a Big Brother or Big Sister or by volunteering at a local food bank.

► **Take ownership of your goals.** Make sure that the goals you choose are your goals, and not the goals of your parents, teachers, brothers and sisters, or friends. If you're attending college only because others have told you to, and you have no commitment of your own, you'll find it

hard to maintain the enthusiasm—not to mention the hard work—required to succeed.

► **Identify how your short-term goals fit with your long-term goals.** Your goals should not be independent of one another. Instead, they should fit together into a larger dream of who you want to be. Every once in a while step back and consider how what you're doing today relates to the kind of person that you would ultimately like to be.

To get more practice in using these goal-setting principles, consider the goals that underlie taking a particular college class in which you are currently enrolled.

Course Goals

Think about one of the classes that you are taking this term. List your goals for the class in the first column below:

Goals for Class

**Goals in Order
of Importance**

The goals you've listed most likely range from the specific ("passing the class with a good grade") to the more general and vague ("becoming educated in the subject matter of the class").

Now, rank order them to determine which are the most important to you. Note that some of these goals may be short-term goals ("get a decent grade") and some represent longer-term goals ("complete all college requirements"). In addition, your goals may be specific ("get an A in the course") or relatively vague ("do well in the class").

Now consider the following:

- What is the difference between those goals that are most important to you and least important to you?
- Are your goals mostly short-term or long-term?
- How specific are your goals?
- What implications might your different goals have for your future success in the course?



WORKING IN A GROUP:

Compare your goals for the course with those of other students and consider the similarities and differences.

To Try It online, go to www.mhhe.com/power.

You probably have several goals for each course you are taking this term. Completing Try It 3 on page 00 will give you a chance to evaluate them.

Organize

By determining where you want to go and expressing your goals in terms that can be measured, you have already made a lot of progress. But there's another step you must take on the road to success.

The second step in P.O.W.E.R. Learning is to organize the tools you'll need to accomplish your goals. Building upon the goal-setting work you've undertaken in the preparation stage, it's time to determine the best way to accomplish the goals you've identified.

How do you do this? Suppose you've decided to build a set of bookshelves for one room in your house. Let's say that you've already determined the kind of bookshelves you like and figured out the basic characteristics of the ones you will build (the preparation step in P.O.W.E.R. Learning). The next stage involves gathering the necessary tools, buying the wood and other building materials, sorting the construction supplies, and preparing the room for the shelving project—all aspects of organizing for the task.

Similarly, your academic success will hinge to a large degree on the thoroughness of your organization for each academic task that you face. In fact, one of the biggest mistakes that students make in college is plunging into an academic project—studying for a test, writing a paper, completing an in-class assignment—without being organized.

The Two Kinds of Organization: Physical and Mental

On a basic level is *physical organization* involving the mechanical aspects of task completion. For instance, you need to ask yourself if you have the appropriate tools, such as pens, paper, and a calculator. If you're using a computer, do you have access to a printer? Do you have a way to back up your files? Do you have the books and other materials you'll need to complete the assignment? Will the campus bookstore be open if you need anything else? Will the library be open when you need it? Do you have a comfortable place to work?

Mental organization is even more critical. Mental organization is accomplished by considering and reviewing the academic skills that you'll need to successfully complete the task at hand. You are an academic general in command of considerable forces; you will need to make sure your forces—the basic skills you have at your command—are at their peak of readiness.

For example, if you're working on a math assignment, you'll want to consider the basic math skills that you'll need and brush up on them. Just actively thinking about this will help you organize mentally. Similarly, you'd want to mentally review your understanding of the causes of the American Civil War before beginning an assignment on the Reconstruction period that followed the war.

Why does producing mental organization matter? The answer is because it provides a context for when you actually begin to work. Organizing paves the way for better subsequent learning of new material.

Too often students are in a hurry to meet a deadline and figure they better just dive in and get it done. Organizing can actually *save* you time, because you're less likely to be anxious and end up losing your way as you work to complete your task.

Much of this book is devoted to strategies for determining—*before* you begin work on a task—how to develop the mental tools for completing an assignment. However, as you'll see, all of these strategies share a common theme: that success comes not from a trial-and-error approach but from following a systematic plan for achievement. Of course, this does not mean that there will be no surprises along the way, nor that simple luck is never a factor in great accomplishments. But it does mean that we often can make our own luck through careful preparation and organization.

W Work

You're ready. The preliminaries are out of the way. You've prepared and you've organized. Now it's time to get started actually doing the work.

Looking at the Big Picture

It's natural to view a college course as a series of small tasks—classes to attend, a certain number of pages to read each week, a few papers due during the term, three quizzes and a final exam to study for, and so on.

But such a perspective may lead you to miss what the course, as a whole, is all about. Using the P.O.W.E.R. Learning framework can help you take the long view of a course, considering how the class helps you achieve your long- and short-term goals (the *Prepare* step) and what you'll need to do to maximize your success in it (the *Organize* step). By preparing and organizing even before you step foot in the classroom for the first time, you'll be able to consider what it is that you want to get out of the course and how it fits into your education as a whole.

In some ways work is the easy part, because—if you conscientiously carried out the preparation and organization stages—you should know exactly where you're headed and what you need to do to get there.

It's not quite so easy, of course. How effectively you'll get down to the business at hand depends on many factors. Some may be out of your control. There may be a power outage that closes down the library or a massive traffic jam that delays your getting to campus. But most factors are—or should be—under your control. Instead of getting down to work, you may find yourself thinking up “useful” things to do—like finally hanging that poster that's been rolled up in a corner for three months—or simply sitting captive in front of the TV. This kind of obstacle to work relates to motivation.

Finding the Motivation to Work

“If only I could get more motivated, I'd do so much better with my” (insert *schoolwork, diet, exercising*, or the like—you fill in the blank).

All of us have said something like this at one time or another. We use the concept of **motivation**—or its lack—to explain why we just don't work hard at a task. But when we do that, we're fooling ourselves. We all have some motivation, that inner power and psychological energy that directs and fuels our behavior. Without any motivation, we'd never get out of bed in the morning.

We've all seen evidence of how strong our motivation can be. Perhaps you're an avid runner and you love to jog in the morning and compete in weekend races. Or maybe your love of music helped you learn to play the guitar, making practicing for hours a pleasure rather than a chore. Or perhaps you're a single mother, juggling work, school, and family, and you get up early every morning to make breakfast for your kids before they go off to school.

All of us are motivated. The key to success in and out of the classroom is to tap into, harness, and direct that motivation.

If we assume that we already have all the motivation we need, P.O.W.E.R. Learning becomes a matter of turning the skills we already possess into a habit. It becomes a matter of redirecting our psychological energies toward the work we wish to accomplish.

In a sense, everything you'll encounter in this book will help you improve your use of the motivation that you already have. But there's a key concept that underlies the control of motivation—viewing success as a consequence of effort:

Effort produces success.

Motivation

The inner power and psychological energy that directs and fuels behavior

"The function of the university is not simply to teach bread-winning, or to furnish teachers for the public schools or to be a center of polite society; it is, above all, to be the organ of that fine adjustment between real life and the growing knowledge of life, an adjustment which forms the secret of civilization."

W.E.B. DuBois, author,
The Souls of Black Folk, 1903

Suppose, for example, you've gotten a good grade on your midterm. The instructor beams at you as she hands back your test. How do you feel?

You will undoubtedly be pleased, of course. But at the same time you might think to yourself, "Better not get a swollen head about it. It was just luck. If she'd asked other questions I would have been in trouble." Or perhaps you explain your success by thinking, "Pretty easy test."

If you often think this way—and you can find out if you do by completing **Try It 4**—you're cheating yourself. Using this kind of reasoning when you succeed, instead of patting yourself on the back and thinking with satisfaction, "All my hard work really paid off," is sure to undermine your future success.

A great deal of psychological research has shown that thinking you have no control over what happens to you sends a powerful and damaging message to your self-esteem—that you are powerless to change things. Just think of how different it feels to say to yourself, "Wow, I worked at it and did it," as compared with, "I lucked out" or "It was so easy that anybody could have done well."

In the same way, we can delude ourselves when we try to explain our failures. People who see themselves as the victims of circumstance may tell themselves, "I'm just not smart enough" when they don't do well on an academic task. Or they might say, "Those other students don't have to work five hours a day."

The way in which we view the causes of success and failure is, in fact, directly related to our success. Students who generally see effort and hard work as the reason behind their performance usually do better in college. It's not hard to see why: When they are working on an assignment, they feel that the greater the effort they put forth, the greater their chances of success. So they work harder. They believe that they have control over their success, and if they fail, they believe they can do better in the future.

Here are some tips for keeping your motivation alive, so you can work with your full energy behind you:

- ▶ **Take responsibility for your failures—and successes.** When you do poorly on a test, don't blame the teacher, the textbook, or a job that kept you from studying. Analyze the situation, and see how you could have changed what you did to be more successful in the future. At the same time, when you're successful, think of the things you did to bring about that success.
- ▶ **Think positively.** Assume that the strengths that you have will allow you to succeed and that, if you have difficulty, you can figure out what to do.
- ▶ **Accept that you can't control everything.** Seek to understand which things can be changed and which cannot. You might be able to get an extension on a paper due date, but you are probably not going to be excused from a college-wide requirement.

To further explore the causes of academic success, consider the questions in **Try It 5**, and then discuss them with your classmates.

E Evaluate

"Great, I'm done with the work. Now I can move on."

It's natural to feel relief when you've finished the work necessary to fulfill the basic requirements of an assignment. After all, if you've written the five



Who's in Charge?

To get a sense of your ideas of why things happen to you, check the statement from each of the pairs below that best describes your views.⁴

- ☐ 1a. In the long run, people get the respect they deserve in this world.
- ☐ 1b. Unfortunately, an individual's worth often passes unrecognized no matter how hard he or she tries.
- ☐ 2a. The idea that teachers are unfair to students is nonsense.
- ☐ 2b. Most students don't realize the extent to which their exam results are influenced by accidental happenings.
- ☐ 3a. I have often found that what is going to happen will happen.
- ☐ 3b. Trusting fate has never turned out as well for me as making a decision to take a definite course of action.
- ☐ 4a. In the case of the well-prepared student, there is rarely if ever such a thing as an unfair exam.
- ☐ 4b. Many times exam questions tend to be so unrelated to course work that studying is really useless.
- ☐ 5a. Becoming a success is a matter of hard work; luck has little or nothing to do with it.
- ☐ 5b. Getting a good job depends mainly on being in the right place at the right time.
- ☐ 6a. It is not always wise to plan too far ahead because many things turn out to be a matter of good or bad fortune anyhow.
- ☐ 6b. When I make plans, I am almost certain that I can make them work.
- ☐ 7a. In my case, getting what I want has little or nothing to do with luck.
- ☐ 7b. Many times I might just as well decide what to do by flipping a coin.
- ☐ 8a. Many times I feel that I have little influence over the things that happen to me.
- ☐ 8b. It is impossible for me to believe that chance or luck plays an important role in my life.
- ☐ 9a. What happens to me is my own doing.
- ☐ 9b. Sometimes I feel that I don't have enough control over the direction my life is taking.
- ☐ 10a. Sometimes I can't understand how teachers arrive at the marks they give.
- ☐ 10b. There is a direct connection between how hard a person studies and the grades he or she gets.

Scoring: Give yourself one point for each of the following answers and then add up your score:

1. a. 2. a. 3. b. 4. a. 5. a. 6. b. 7. a. 8. b. 9. a. 10. b.

Your total score can range from 0 to 10. The higher your score, the more you believe that you have a strong influence over what happens to you and are in control of your life and your own behavior. The lower your score, the more you believe that your life is outside of your control and what happens to you is caused by luck or fate.

If you score below 5 on this questionnaire, consider how rethinking your views of the causes of behavior might lead to greater success. In addition, consider how your values might influence your success.

To Try It online, go to www.mhhe.com/power.

double-spaced pages required for an assignment, why shouldn't you heave a sigh of relief and just hand your paper in to the instructor?

The answer is that if you stop at this point, you'll almost be guaranteed a mediocre grade. Did Shakespeare dash off the first draft of *Hamlet* and, without another glance, send it off to the Globe Theater for production? Do professional athletes just put in the bare minimum of practice to get ready for a big game? Think of one of your favorite songs. Do you think the composer wrote it in one sitting and then performed it in a concert?



5

Examining the Causes of Success and Failure

Complete this Try It while working in a group. First, consider the following situations:

1. Although he studied for a few hours the night before the test, Jack gets a D on a midterm. When he finds out his grade, he is disgusted and says to himself, "I'll probably never do any better in this course. I'd better just blow it off for the rest of the term and put my energies into my other classes."
2. Anne gets an A- on her history exam. She is happy, but when her instructor tells the class that they did well as a group and that the average grade was B+, she decides that she did well only because the test was so easy.
3. Chen gets a C on his first math quiz. Because he didn't do as well as he expected, he vows to perform better the next time. He doubles the amount of time he studies for the next quiz, but still his grade is only slightly higher. Distressed, he considers dropping the class because he thinks that he'll never be successful in math.

Now consider the following questions about each of the situations:

1. What did each student conclude was the main cause of his or her performance?
2. What effect does this conclusion seem to have on the student?
3. Taking an outsider's point of view, what would you think was probably the main cause of the student's performance?
4. What advice would you give each student?

Now consider these broader questions:

1. What are the most important reasons why some students are more academically successful in college than others?
2. How much does ability determine success? How much does luck determine success? How much do circumstances determine success?
3. If someone performs poorly on an exam, what are the possible reasons for his or her performance? If someone performs well on an exam, what are the possible reasons for his or her performance? Is it harder to find reasons for good compared with poor performance? Why?

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Evaluation

An assessment of the match between a product or activity and the goals it was intended to meet

In every case, the answer is no. Even the greatest creation does not emerge in perfect form, immediately meeting all the goals of its producer. Consequently, the fourth step in the P.O.W.E.R. process is **evaluation**, which consists of determining how well the work we have produced matches our goals for it. Let's consider some steps to follow in evaluating what you've accomplished:

- ▶ **Take a moment to congratulate yourself and feel some satisfaction.** Whether it's been studying for a test, writing a paper, preparing a review sheet, or reading an assignment, you've done something important. You've moved from ground zero to a spot that's closer to your goal.
- ▶ **Compare what you've accomplished with the goals you're seeking to achieve.** Think back to the goals, both short-term and long-term, that you're seeking to achieve. How closely does what you've done match what you're aiming to do? For instance, if your short-term goal is to complete a statistics problem set with no errors, you'll need to check over the paper carefully to make sure you've made no mistakes.
- ▶ **Have an out-of-body experience: Evaluate your accomplishments as if you were a respected teacher from your past.** If you've written a paper, reread it from the perspective of that teacher. If you've completed a worksheet, think about what comments you'd write across the top if you were that teacher.

- **Evaluate what you've done as if you were your current instructor.** Now exchange bodies and minds again. This time, consider what you're doing from the perspective of the instructor who gave you the assignment. How would he or she react to what you've done? Have you followed the assignment to the letter? Is there anything you've missed?
- **Be fair to yourself.** The guidelines for evaluation will help you to determine just how much further work is necessary and, even more important, what work is necessary. Don't go too far, though: It's as counterproductive to be too hard on yourself as it is to be too easy. Stick to a middle ground, always keeping your final goal in mind.
- **Based on your evaluation, revise your work.** If you're honest with yourself, it's unlikely that your first work will satisfy you. So go back to *Work* and revise what you've done. But don't think of it as a step back: Revisions you make as a consequence of your evaluation bring you closer to your final goal. This is a case where going back moves you forward.

R Rethink

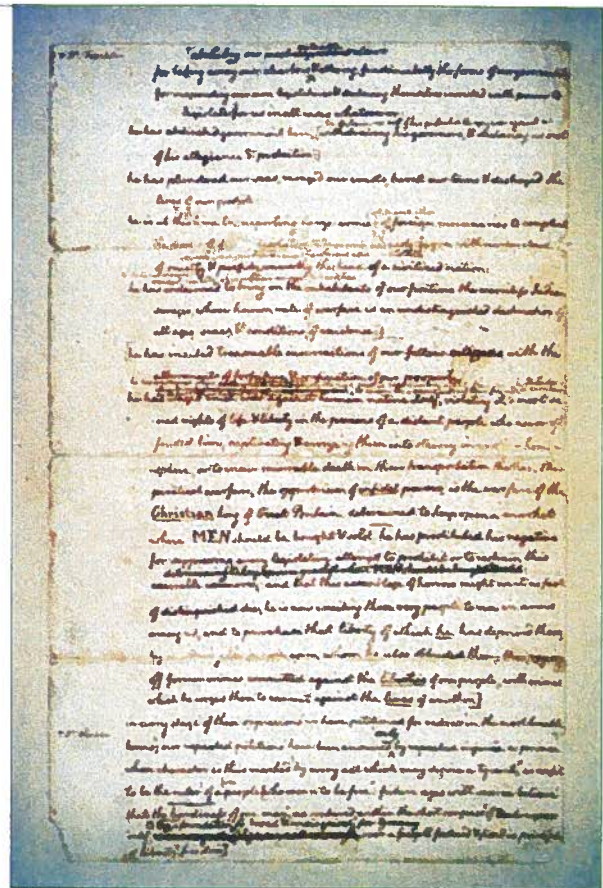
They thought they had it perfect. But they were wrong.

In fact, it was a \$1.5 billion mistake—a blunder on a grand scale. The finely ground mirror of the Hubble space telescope, designed to provide an unprecedented glimpse into the vast reaches of the universe, was not so finely ground after all.

Despite an elaborate system of evaluation designed to catch any flaws, there was a tiny blemish in the mirror that was not detected until the telescope had been launched into space and started to send back blurry photographs. By then, it seemed too late to fix the mirror.

Or was it? NASA engineers rethought the problem for months, devising, and then discarding, one potential fix after another. Finally, after bringing a fresh eye to the situation, they formulated a daring solution that involved sending a team of astronauts into space. Once there, a space-walking Mr. Goodwrench would install several new mirrors in the telescope, which could refocus the light and compensate for the original flawed mirror.

Although the engineers could not be certain that the \$629 million plan would work, it seemed like a good solution, at least on paper. It was not until the first photos were beamed back to Earth, though, that NASA knew their solution was A-OK. These photos were spectacular.



Even the Declaration of Independence underwent revisions before the final version was signed.



The daring mission to repair the Hubble space telescope was the culmination of months of rethinking how to fix the flaw in the telescope. It worked: A new time-lapse movie of images taken by the telescope showed the seasonal changes on Uranus, as well as other celestial wonders.

Critical thinking

A process involving reanalysis, questioning, and challenge of underlying assumptions

It took months of reconsideration before NASA scientists could figure out what went wrong and devise a solution to the problem they faced. Their approach exemplifies—on a grand scale—the final step in P.O.W.E.R. Learning: rethinking.

To *rethink* what you've accomplished earlier means bringing a fresh—and clear—eye to what you've done. It involves using **critical thinking**, thinking that involves reanalyzing, questioning, and challenging our underlying assumptions. While evaluation means considering how well what we have done matches our initial goals, rethinking means reconsidering not only the outcome of our efforts but also reconsidering our goals and the ideas and the process we've used to reach them. Critically rethinking what you've done involves analyzing and synthesizing ideas and seeing the connections between different concepts.

Rethinking involves considering whether our initial goals are practical and realistic or if they require modification. It also entails asking yourself what you would do differently if you could do it over again.

We'll be considering critical thinking throughout this book, examining specific strategies in every chapter. For the moment, the following steps provide a general framework for using critical thinking to rethink what you've accomplished:

- ▶ **Reanalyze, reviewing how you've accomplished the task.** Consider the approach and strategies you've used. What seemed to work best? Do they suggest any alternatives that might work better the next time?
- ▶ **Question the outcome.** Take a “big picture” look at what you have accomplished. Are you pleased and satisfied? Is there something you've somehow missed?
- ▶ **Identify your underlying assumptions, then challenge them.** Consider the assumptions you made in initially approaching the task. Are these underlying assumptions reasonable? If you had used different assumptions, would the result have been similar or different?
- ▶ **Consider alternatives rejected earlier.** You've likely discarded possible strategies and approaches prior to completing your task. Now's the time to think about those approaches once more and determine if they might have been more appropriate than the road you've followed.
- ▶ **What would you do differently if you had the opportunity to try things again?** It's not too late to change course.
- ▶ **Finally, reconsider your initial goals.** Are they achievable and realistic? Do your goals, and the strategies you used to attain them, need to be modified? Critically rethinking the objectives and goals that underlie your efforts is often the most effective route to success.

Completing the Process

The rethinking step of P.O.W.E.R. Learning is meant to help you understand your process of work and to improve the final product if necessary. But mostly it is meant to help you grow, to become better at whatever it is you've been doing. Like a painter looking at his or her finished work, you may see a spot here or there to touch up, but don't destroy the canvas. Perfectionism can be as paralyzing as laziness. Keep in mind these key points:

- ▶ **Know that there's always another day.** Your future success does not depend on any single assignment, paper, or test. Don't fall victim to self-defeating thoughts such as “If I don't do well, I'll never graduate” or “Everything is riding on this one assignment.” Nonsense. There is almost always an opportunity to recover from a failure.

Career Connections

[illegible]

- ## » LO 1.3 Are You Ready for College Success?

But college isn't high school.⁵

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High school teachers monitored your class attendance and graded all homework; in college, professors may not take attendance and may not look at every bit of homework—although they expect you to be in class and do all homework. And while you may be used to frequent tests in high school, in college you may have only a few exams, covering large chunks of material.

In high school, your time was mostly structured by others; in college, you have to manage it yourself. In a broader sense, in high school, you were told what your responsibilities were, while in college you're viewed as an adult who needs to figure out on your own what your responsibilities are.

In addition to differences in the style of instruction between high school and college, you're different, too. Whether you finished high school a few months ago or you deferred college and are returning after a lapse of many years, you are not the same person you were in high school. College offers a fresh start, with instructors who have no predetermined expectations about who you are.

But in order to get that fresh start, you need to have a clear sense of your own strengths and weaknesses. Accurately knowing who you are, and your own competencies, can help you focus on those strategies presented in future chapters that will be most beneficial to you. To get a more objective sense of your own strong and weak points, complete **Try It 6**.

Ultimately, to become an accomplished student, you must be open to change in yourself and to embrace success. The techniques for doing this are in this book, but only you can implement them. The road to success may not be simple or direct (see the *Speaking of Success* interview with C'Ardiss Gardner later in the chapter for a glimpse of one student's real-life journey), but there are few goals that are more important than attaining a college education.

Try It!

POWER

6

Creating a P.O.W.E.R. Profile

Are you the student you aspire to be?

Before you can even think about answering that question, you need to know the kind of student you are—right now, at this very moment. Only by frankly facing your current strengths and weaknesses as fully as possible will you be able to know in what direction you should be heading.

To help you get a better understanding of who you are as a student, Try It 6 will take you through the steps of constructing your own **P.O.W.E.R. Profile**. The P.O.W.E.R. Profile is a way for you to take stock of where you stand in relation to the major topics that we'll be discussing in *P.O.W.E.R. Learning*—the characteristics that are most important for college success.

The P.O.W.E.R. Profile outlines key aspects of who you are. The Profile is just one of many possible profiles that could be drawn to describe you. For instance, you have a personality profile, a buying profile, a dating profile, a technology profile, and a variety of others. There is no "ideal" P.O.W.E.R. Profile; there are no right or wrong answers involved in creating one. Instead, as shown in the example in **Figure 1.2**, the P.O.W.E.R. Profile is a look at someone in relation to the 14 dimensions involved with student success (and, not so coincidentally, the key dimensions covered in each of the Chapters in *P.O.W.E.R. Learning*).

The best way to maximize the usefulness of your P.O.W.E.R. Profile is to create one now, before you've gone beyond the first chapter of this book. Then, by completing a P.O.W.E.R. Profile at the end of the term, you can judge how much your profile has changed and in what directions. If you take to heart what you learn in your class and work carefully through the Try Its in the book and exercises, your profile will undoubtedly change in a positive direction. In the meantime, the P.O.W.E.R. Profile will give you an objective idea of where you stand right now on each of these dimensions.

To get started with your P.O.W.E.R. Profile, read each statement and judge how well it describes you, using these numbered descriptions:

1 = Doesn't describe me at all

3 = Describes me fairly well

2 = Describes me only slightly

4 = Describes me very well

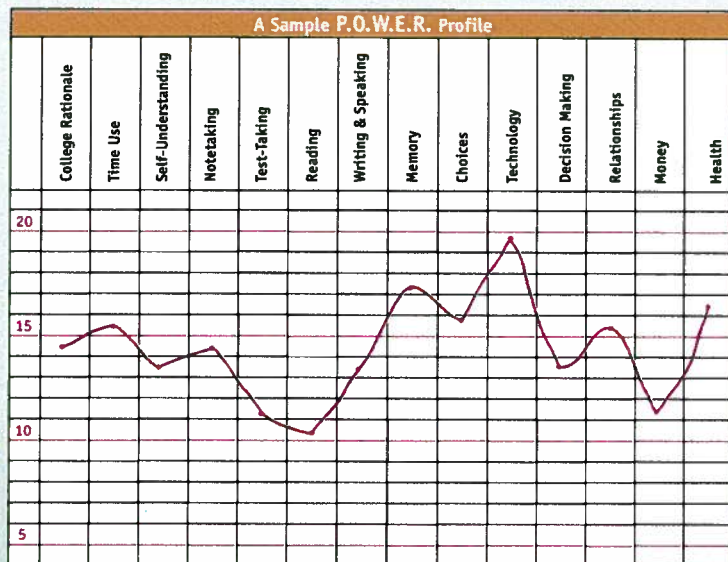


figure 1.2
Sample P.O.W.E.R. Profile

(continued)

Creating a P.O.W.E.R. Profile (concluded)

Place your response on the line next to each of the questions. Take your time, answer the questions thoughtfully and, above all, truthfully. There are no right or wrong answers. Remember that the profile is not a test; it is for your own enlightenment only.

Dimension 1: College Rationale	
a. I understand why attending college is important to me. b. I have a clear short-term and long-term goals. c. My course selections are related to my goals. d. I know how to organize myself and get my work done. e. I accept that success or failure is in my own hands.	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ College Rationale Total _____
Dimension 2: Time Use	
a. I know how to manage my time effectively. b. I understand how to set priorities for my time. c. I know how to say no to time wasters. d. I understand how to avoid procrastination. e. I consider myself to be a good time organizer.	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ Time Use Total _____
Dimension 3: Self-Understanding	
a. I understand how I learn most effectively. b. I know how learning styles can affect academic success. c. I have a clear self-concept and understand who I am. d. I have a good sense of self-esteem. e. I know how to use a personal mission statement to guide important decisions.	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ Self-Understanding Total _____
Dimension 4: Notetaking	
a. I take good notes during class lectures and discussions. b. My notes capture the speaker's main points. c. I know how to use active listening to focus in class. d. I can take good notes on what I read for my courses. e. I review my notes soon after I have written them.	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ Notetaking Total _____
Dimension 5: Test-Taking	
a. I generally go to tests well prepared and reasonably calm. b. I understand how to tackle different kinds of test questions. c. I know how to control anxiety before and during testing. d. I usually leave time at the end of a test to check my work. e. I know how to use test results to improve my future test-taking.	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ Test-Taking Total _____
Dimension 6: Reading	
a. I know my personal reading style and understand how it affects my reading. b. I understand how to use advance organizers in my reading. c. I know my attention span and understand how to stay focused. d. I know how to check for understanding while I read. e. I understand the importance of rereading and rethinking.	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ Reading Total _____

Dimension 7: Writing & Speaking	
a. I know how to use the writing process to start and maintain the flow of my writing. b. I understand the importance of considering my audience in writing. c. I know how to outline, write a first draft, and revise my writing. d. I have strategies to overcome my fear of speaking in public. e. I have a good system for impromptu, unprepared oral presentations.	 Writing & Speaking Total
Dimension 8: Memory	
a. I know my preferred memory style and use it to help me study. b. I know about rehearsal and overlearning and use them in my studies. c. I know how to link new information to information that I already possess. d. I am familiar with several memorization techniques. e. I know how to consolidate my memories to improve test performance.	 Memory Total
Dimension 9: Choices	
a. I understand the options and choices available to me at my college. b. I know where I stand in terms of completing my course requirements. c. I know exactly what to do if there's a problem with my course selections or records. d. I am satisfied that my course choices are moving me in the right direction. e. I am confident that I will choose a major that makes sense in terms of my life goals.	 Choices Total
Dimension 10: Technology	
a. I understand how to use computer applications effectively for my college work. b. I know how to use the Internet for communication, staying up to date, and research. c. I understand distance learning and know whether or not it's right for me. d. I know how to use library resources and the World Wide Web to gather information. e. I know how to evaluate the accuracy and reliability of information I have found.	 Technology Total
Dimension 11: Decision Making	
a. I use a structured process for making important decisions. b. I know how to identify my goals and generate alternatives. c. I am good at assessing alternatives and making decisions I am happy with. d. I use an array of strategies for solving problems. e. I understand the most common obstacles to effective critical thinking.	 Decision Making Total
Dimension 12: Relationships	
a. I understand the importance of diversity on campus and in the broader society. b. I have good relationships with people of many different backgrounds. c. I understand cultural competence and consider myself culturally competent. d. I know what it takes to build good relationships. e. I know how to handle conflict in my relationships.	 Relationships Total
Dimension 13: Money	
a. I know my short- and long-term financial goals. b. I understand where my money comes from and where it goes. c. I know how to prepare a realistic budget and stick to it. d. I am realistic about the advantages and disadvantages of credit cards. e. I know where to go if I need financial aid for college.	 Money Total

(continued)

Creating a P.O.W.E.R. Profile (concluded)

Dimension 14: Health

- I understand stress and know how to cope with it.
- I understand the importance of a good diet, exercise, and rest.
- I have strategies for avoiding the abuse of alcohol and other drugs.
- I am responsible about my sexuality and know how to stay sexually healthy.
- I know where to go to get help with all aspects of my health.

Health Total _____

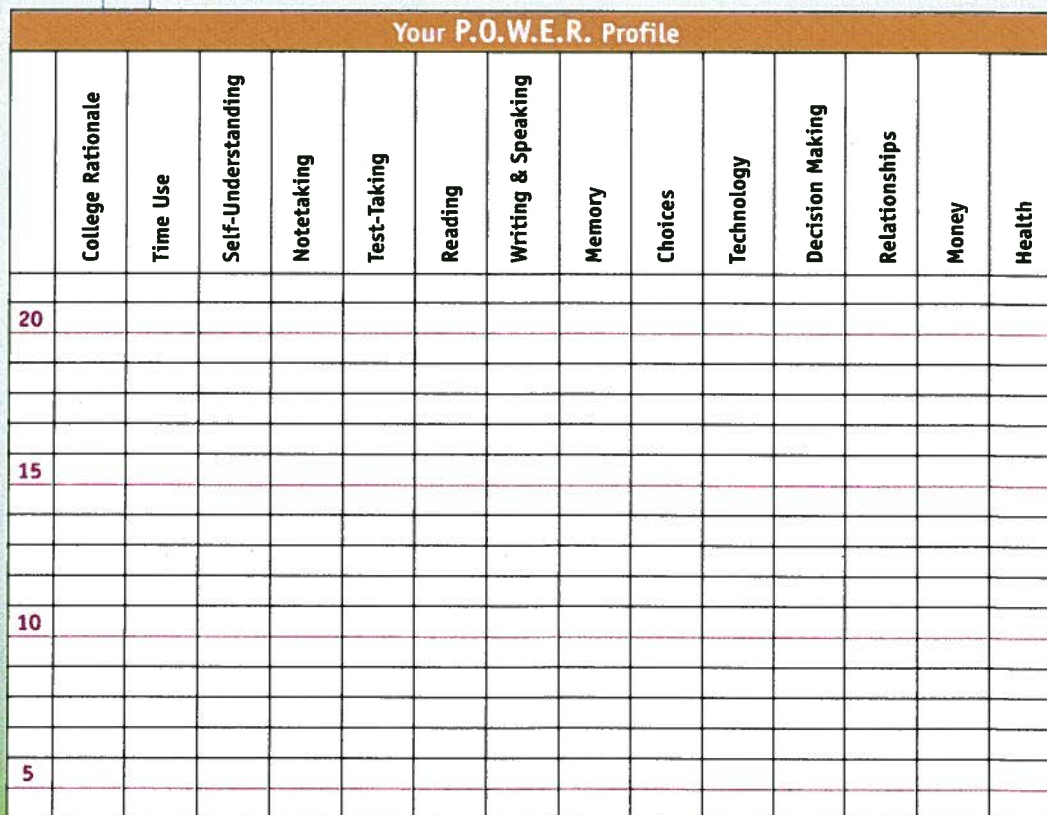
Now you're ready to construct your P.O.W.E.R. Profile. Add up the numbers on each line to derive a total for each dimension. This total will range from a low of 5 to a high of 20. Finally, place a dot in each appropriate box on the chart in **Figure 1.3** corresponding to your score, and connect the dots to form your P.O.W.E.R. Profile.

There—it's done. But it's really just a start. Your P.O.W.E.R. Profile is an objective way to mark the beginning of your journey through college. Its shape will continue to change and evolve the more years of school you have under your belt.

After taking some time to study your P.O.W.E.R. Profile and to maximize its usefulness, consider the following:

- Does your profile seem like an accurate reflection of your strengths and weaknesses as a student? Were there any surprises?
- To be a successful student, what do you think the "ideal" profile would look like?
- Most important, how can you use the results of the P.O.W.E.R. Profile to help you in the future? What are the most important areas for improvement? What strategies might you use to bring about those improvements?

figure 1.3
P.O.W.E.R. Profile



Speaking of Success

FPO

FPO

NAME: C'Ardiss Gardner
SCHOOL: South Seattle Community College
HOME: Seattle, Washington

When C'Ardiss Gardner began college, she was already familiar with challenge. She became a mother at age 16 and chose to finish high school while working two jobs to support her infant.

Despite the challenges, Gardner not only finished her high school requirements early but also had enough credits to start at the local community college. When she started at South Seattle Community College, not only was she taking classes, but she was working two part-time jobs. But eventually, she was forced to delay her college plans to take a third job to support herself. For three years she juggled work and child rearing.

But Gardner also had plans. She got married and re-enrolled at South Seattle. After graduating with her associate's degree, she was accepted to four-year colleges around the country. She decided to move her family to the East Coast to attend Yale University. Gardner graduated from Yale with a B.A. in African-American Studies. She and her family returned to Seattle, where she now is raising three children, working as the registrar of a prep school, and

studying for a master's degree in education at Seattle University.

"Attending school as an African-American student with a small child was very challenging. I did not come from a community that supported or encouraged kids like me to go to college," said Gardner.

"Even something as simple as writing was enough to set me apart from the other students, who had spent years learning how to write at a college level. I had to learn those things, and it was very difficult," she noted. "One of the most important things I learned was to access as many resources as I could to help learn skills I was lacking. Professors offered help by reading my drafts before I turned essays or papers in. By accepting help, I was able to improve my writing skills and improve my grades."

The skills Gardner developed while at South Seattle Community College laid the groundwork for her future academic success and became the foundation upon which she has been able to build the rest of her life. Not only has she been able to continue her education, but she plans to use her skills to help pave the way for other students to access education.

Looking Back

What are the benefits of a college education?

- ▶ The reason first-year college students most often cite for attending college is to get a better job, and college graduates do earn more on average than nongraduates.
- ▶ College also provides many other benefits. These include becoming well-educated, learning to think critically and communicate effectively, understanding the interconnections between different areas of knowledge and our place in history and the world, practicing community service, and understanding diversity.

What are the basic principles of P.O.W.E.R. Learning?

- ▶ P.O.W.E.R. Learning is a systematic approach people can easily learn, using abilities they already possess, to acquire successful habits for learning and achieving personal goals.
- ▶ P.O.W.E.R. Learning involves **p**reparation, **o**rganization, **w**ork, **e**valuation, and **r**ethinking.

How do expert students use P.O.W.E.R. Learning?

- ▶ To *prepare*, learners set both long-term and short-term goals, making sure that their goals are realistic, measurable, and under their control—and will lead to their final destination.
- ▶ They *organize* the tools they will need to accomplish those goals.
- ▶ They get down to *work* on the task at hand. Using their goals as motivation, expert learners also understand that success depends on effort.
- ▶ They *evaluate* the work they've done, considering what they have accomplished in comparison with the goals they set for themselves during the preparation stage.
- ▶ Finally, they *rethink*, reflecting on the process they've used, taking a fresh look at what they have done, and critically rethinking their goals.

[KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS]

Community service (p. 00)
Service learning (p. 00)
P.O.W.E.R. Learning (p. 00)
Long-term goals (p. 00)

Short-term goals (p. 00)
Motivation (p. 00)
Evaluation (p. 00)
Critical thinking (p. 00)

[RESOURCES]

ON CAMPUS

Every college provides a significant number of resources to help its students succeed and thrive, ranging from the activities coordination office to a multicultural center to writing labs. You can check them out on your college's Web site or catalog or phone directory.

For example, here's a list of some typical campus resources, many of which we'll be discussing in future chapters:

- Activities/Clubs Office
- Adult and re-entry center
- Advising Center
- Alumni Office
- Art gallery
- Bookstore
- Career Center
- Chaplain/religious services
- Child Care Center
- Cinema/theater
- Computing center/ computer labs
- Continuing education
- Disability Center (learning or physical disabilities)
- Financial aid
- Fitness center/ gymnasium
- Health Center
- Honors program
- Housing Center
- Information Center
- Intramural sports
- Language lab
- Learning Center
- Lost and found
- Math lab
- Multicultural Center
- Museum
- Online education (distance learning) office
- Off-campus housing and services
- Ombudsman/conflict resolution
- Photography lab
- Police/campus security
- Post office
- Printing center
- Registration Office
- Residential Life Office
- School newspaper
- Student Government Office
- Student Affairs Office
- Study abroad/ exchange programs
- Testing Center
- Volunteer services
- Work-Study Center
- Writing lab

If you are commuting to school, your first "official" encounters on campus are likely to be with representatives of the college's Student Affairs Office or its equivalent. The Student Affairs Office has the goal of maintaining the quality of student life and ensuring that students receive the help they need. Student Affairs personnel often are in charge of student orientation programs that help new students familiarize themselves with their new institution.

If you are living on campus, your first encounter may be with representatives of the residence halls, often called the Residential Life Office. Their job is to help you settle in and orient you to campus. Your residence hall also probably has student residential advisors living on every floor; they can give you an insider's view of college life.

Whatever college representatives you deal with during your first days of college, remember that their job is to help you. Don't be shy about asking questions about what you may expect, how to find things, and what you should be doing.

Above all, if you are experiencing any difficulties, be certain to make use of your college's resources. Starting college is one of the biggest transitions that you'll ever experience in life, and it's a time when you should make use of whatever support your college offers.

IN PRINT

Navigating Your Freshman Year (Students Helping Students Series) (Prentice Hall, 2005), offers a wealth of information on college life from a student's vantage point.

For a variety of views of what it takes to be a successful college student, read *How to Survive Your Freshman Year: By Hundreds of College Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors Who Did*, 3rd edition, published by Hundreds of Heads Books (2008).

Finally, to learn more about who your first-year classmates are across the United States, take a look at John Pryor and colleagues' *The American Freshman: National Norms for Fall 2008* (Higher Education Research Institute, 2009). The book provides a comprehensive look at the attitudes and opinions of first-year college students, based on the results of a national survey.

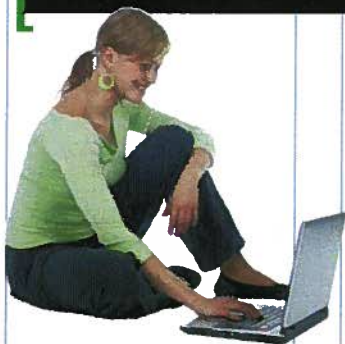
ON THE WEB

The following sites on the Web provide the opportunity to extend your learning about the material in this chapter. Although the Web addresses were accurate at the time the

book was printed, check the P.O.W.E.R. Learning Web site [www.mhhe.com/power] for any changes that may have occurred.

- ▶ The University of Buffalo (<http://ub-counseling.buffalo.edu/adjusting.shtml>) Counseling Services offers a site on adjusting to campus life that includes links to relationships, health, and study skills.
- ▶ The U.S. Department of Education offers *Preparing Your Child for College: A Resource Guide for Parents* (www.ed.gov/pubs/Prepare/index.html). Though geared toward parents' concerns, the publication offers answers to a host of valuable questions such as "Why attend college?" and "What kinds of jobs are available to college graduates?"
- ▶ The Learn More Resource Center (www.learnmoreindiana.org) provides information on a variety of useful topics regarding adjustment to college life, including comments by students on their experiences. It covers such topics as where to live, how to select classes, how to study and learn, and much more.

TAKING IT TO THE NET



1 Find out what percent of the population of the United States has received an undergraduate degree, using search engines such as Google to find U.S. census information. (If you're unfamiliar with search engines on the Web, see Chapter 10 for suggestions that will get you started.) The Census Bureau site provides information about the level of education achieved by people over 25 years of age. How many men have received a bachelor's degree? How many women?

2 Consider the reasons for going to college. The U.S. Department of Education's "Think College" site (www.ed.gov/students/prep/college/thinkcollege/edlite-index.html) offers various rationales for continuing your education beyond high school. Were you aware of them prior to your enrollment in college?

The Case of . . .

Clueless in Seattle

It was during the second week of classes that the questioning started. Until then, Roger hadn't thought much about his decision to attend a large state college in a Seattle suburb. It had seemed like a good idea, and he was excited when he was accepted, but he couldn't really pinpoint why he was there.

And that was becoming a problem. As he was walking to class, he began to think about all that had happened to him in the last few weeks. First-year orientation . . . meeting his roommate, and trying to deal with his odd neatness . . . enrolling for classes . . . finding his way around campus . . . meeting an overwhelming number of new people, and trying to figure out where he fit in. Everyone else seemed to know what they were doing. Why didn't he?

It was overwhelming. He wanted to call his parents and tell them to come pick him up. He needed to sit on the porch where it was familiar and comfortable and not overwhelming and try to figure out what he should do. Nothing seemed to make sense. He began to question his decision to attend college. What was he going to do with his life? The question made him feel even more overwhelmed. Did he really need a college degree? With his computer skills, he could probably get a job right away. Hadn't his father's friend told him that he had a job waiting for him whenever he wanted it? At least then he'd be making money.

"Why bother," he thought to himself. "What an expense, and what a hassle. For what?" He realized, to his surprise, he had no real clue as to why he was in college.

1. What arguments could you provide Roger as to the value of a college education?
2. Do you think that Roger's doubts are common? Do people often attend college without thinking about it very much?
3. What might you suggest that Roger do to help deal with his doubts about the value of college?
4. Why might a student's doubts about the value of college be especially strong during the beginning weeks of college?
5. Do you share any of Roger's concerns about the value of a college education? Do you have additional ones? Did you think carefully about the reasons for attending college before you enrolled?

1 Immigration as a Pattern in American Culture

William H. A. Williams

The idea of the United States as a nation of immigrants is a long-standing cliché. All of us born in this country are descended from people who were born somewhere else – across the Atlantic or the Pacific or below the Rio Grande. Only those called “Indians” are native to the place, and even their far distant ancestors migrated from Asia across the Aleutian land bridge. Yet, as John Higham once pointed out, on one level this “mythic” concept of a nation of immigrants claims too much. If we define immigrants, in Higham’s words, as those “who chose America,” then we should exclude from that term the Dutch and English settlers who colonized what they regarded as empty wilderness, African slaves forcibly transported here, and the Native Americans and Spanish settlers incorporated as conquered peoples (1968, 92). If, however, we consider not *categories* of people but the *effects* of the physical, social, and cultural series of acts involved in abandoning home and homeland, crossing the ocean, and settling in a new place amid strangers, then we might conclude that the *impact of immigration is the quintessential American experience, establishing a pattern that is replicated in almost every aspect of American life.*

Wherever we look we find the imprint of immigration, our primal cultural experience. The essentials of that experience involve physical separation – the uprooting from one’s home, family, and past; the encounter with strangers and strangeness; the adaptation to change, of one’s sense of self as well as of location; and the tensions between unity and diversity.

Consider the most obvious example of the ongoing influence of immigration: the restless character of American life with its accompanying high degree of physical mobility. As J. Hector St. John de

Crèvecoeur (himself an eighteenth-century French immigrant) noted, European immigrants quickly adjusted their sense of scale to American size and opportunity; "... two hundred miles formerly appeared a very great distance, it is now but a trifle ..." (1957, 54). Things have changed little since Crèvecoeur's day. Whether one or ten generations removed from our immigrant ancestors, we, as a people, have always tended to move about at a remarkable rate, repeating the immigrant's original uprooting, as we move from farm to city, from city to suburb, East to West, criss-crossing back and forth across the continent. Concerning what he once called our "motion sickness," George W. Pierson claimed that "Ours has been the great spatial carelessness. We've been the footloose folk – and the scars of the experience show on our land. It has even warped our national character" (1968, 107).

Even those groups which at first seemed isolated from the immigrant momentum eventually picked up the pattern, often responding to the similar types of economic and social pressures that prompted European immigration. From the late colonial period until the end of the nineteenth century, African Americans, first as slaves and then as tenant farmers and sharecroppers, lived primarily in the rural South. However, with the cut-off of European immigration after World War I, African Americans became the principal newcomers to the city, gradually turning themselves into an urban people.¹ Similarly, Appalachians, who were once one of the most rooted groups in our population, have left their mountain homes in increasing numbers, pushing the boundaries of Appalachia into lowland cities, such as Cincinnati (Pickard 1991, 123).

Whatever it is that sets us moving, many of us, like immigrants, experience at some level the sense of loss of the old and familiar and the sometimes disturbing encounter with the new and different. Varying kinds of "culture shock" still await even those of us who have been born here, as we move from one part of America to another. A Pennsylvanian of German descent, leaving the green hills of his state for the desert vastness of Phoenix, Arizona, will encounter more alien surroundings, social as well as natural, than did his eighteenth-century ancestors when they exchanged the hills of Hesse or the Palatinate for the Valley of the Lehigh. Even when we do not move out of town, we change houses, leaving behind one neighborhood for another. The "ancestral home" is as rare a concept in America as is the family coat of arms.²

Today, jet planes, interstate highways, and telephones minimize the sense of uprooting for immigrants and internal migrants alike,

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whether from Accra in Ghana or Fox Hollow in Kentucky. Modern transportation and communication blur distances, perhaps even differences, between the old home and the new. The process of leave-taking no longer need be abrupt and traumatic. Visits, phone calls, video and cassette tapes, even E-Mail allow us to keep in touch across thousands of miles. As a result, today's immigrants may be neither fully here nor there, neither "back home" nor "at home" in their new locations. Even as it minimizes the uprooting, technology may make putting down roots even more difficult.

Ever on the move, we Americans frequently find ourselves in the midst of strangers, a prospect that so appalled the first generations of nineteenth-century immigrants that they huddled together in their ghettos, building ethnic enclaves of Irish, Germans, Jews, and Italians. When even these proved too porous to outsiders, immigrants formed social clubs made up of friends and neighbors who came from the *same* glens, counties, and cities in the Old Country. Ironically, this in-gathering of ethnic groups against the sea of strangers surrounding them helped to instill the pattern of migration within the second and third generations. The American-born children, anxious to become "American" in speech, dress, and habits, found the crowded ethnic enclaves suffocating and their families too inward looking and confining – too Old World. Just as the parents had left their families behind in Europe or Asia for a new life in America, so their American children repeated the process. Their journeys were often shorter, from the city to suburbs, but were undertaken for much the same reasons the parents had left Europe: to establish their own lives away from the confines of the past.

And so the process continues as a kind of "generational immigration," resulting in the weakening or, sometimes, even the sun- dering of family ties, as grown children leave their home town, state, or region. A glance at the folklore of many peoples reminds us that this phenomenon, taken for granted by Americans, has not always been the norm of human experience. In many of the Old World folk tales, children do not leave the family as a matter of course but only when banished from home by a wicked step-parent or forced by poverty to seek their fortunes elsewhere. That they survive and succeed only through great courage, wit, and, frequently, the aid of magic suggests how unnatural the physical separation of families has seemed to many cultures.

Within the context of the family, even divorce can be seen as one more reiteration of the immigration experience working its way

through the culture. Instead of bidding farewell to the limitations of one's home land, we now say good-by, sometimes with less trauma and inconvenience, to the limitations of a marriage. Some of us continue the process, migrating from one connubial arrangement to another, ever in search of the promised land of the heart.

It is in this continual search for the new life, the good life, that we can sense how deeply the underlying force of the immigrant experience has imprinted itself into the structure of our culture, molding the American sense of individualism. It is not merely a matter of believing that we all have a right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Unbounded by history, family, and even our own experiences, we are supposedly free to be "ourselves," providing we first *find* "ourselves" – thus, our need to be always on the move, immigrating physically, socially, culturally, sexually, and/or spiritually in search of new shores of selfhood.

This state of mind, so American in its contours, did not originate here. The seeds of the "actualized self," as Abraham Maslow christened it, were first sown back in the Old World by men and women who wanted something better and who thought they had to leave home to find it in America. "What attachment," asked Crèvecoeur, "can a poor European emigrant have for a country where he had nothing?" (1957, 39). Thus, the act of emigration was a rejection of the *ancien regime*, more profound, in its way, than that of the revolutionaries who stayed home and went to the barricades. Since the French Revolution, the Old World has sought to remake man by first remaking society. In America, we get right to work on the individual. We close the door on the old self, throw away the key, and embark on our journey in search of the "green light, the orgiastic future" that lured F. Scott Fitzgerald's Great Gatsby. And if some of us end up like Jay Gatsby, dying enroute, the same fate sometimes overtook our immigrant ancestors.

A society and culture based on an internalized, repeated pattern of immigration will never be complete, any more than a self which can always be remade will ever be fully finished, except in death. Alexis de Tocqueville's comment on the average American of Andrew Jackson's day still rings true: "Death at length overtakes him, but it is before he is weary of his bootless chase of that complete felicity which forever escapes him" (1945, 145). Our unfinished society, the proper domain for our unfinished selves, is itself the inevitable product of the very act of immigration. In leaving the European hamlet, the African kraal, or Asian village, the immigrant left behind not merely friends and relations. He/she

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left structure, discipline, form, and context. What was not dictated by the state was set by tradition: what to eat, how to dress, whom to marry, how to earn a living, what to think, even the name and face of God. Although the immigrants willingly left much of the baggage of tradition behind, they did try to bring some of their Old World culture with them. No matter. Plants and animals, pests and people may be sometimes successfully transplanted from one place to another. Forms, customs, and mentalities, however, rarely flourish unaltered in alien ground, especially, as in the New World, where the cultural soil is cultivated to produce freedom from, not adherence to, tradition.

Even when groups came to America for the expressed purpose of establishing their European-conceived institutions and social structures, they found that the New World could be unexpectedly inhospitable to even the most radical designs of the Old. Free to make concrete their Old World dreams, immigrants and their children were also free to abandon them for other, very different dreams.

The example of the New England Puritans is paradigmatic. The in-gathering of the Saints in their transplanted English villages began to dissipate even during the first generation as farmers first moved their barns to the fields outside the village and then moved their houses out to the barns beyond the immediate and never-tiring gaze of the congregation (Lockridge 1970, 83). On the theological side, in the seemingly limitless atmosphere of America, the doctrine of predestination, which had appeared so dynamic and revolutionary back in Europe, came to appear gloomy and eventually undemocratic. It seemed more American for the individual to choose salvation than to have God, like an Old World despot, decide such matters Himself. In America, the Old Lights eternally give way to New Lights; congregations fragment; new sects and denominations appear, even new religions establish themselves, only to produce in turn their own set of "come-outers."

As individuals migrate, physically and culturally, from their immigrant beachheads, the institutions they or their parents bring with them, or invent in America, also change, some evolving in unexpected ways. The path from Puritanism to Congregationalism to Unitarianism may be an extreme case in point. Yet even those institutions which do not fragment, or stray too far beyond their original concepts, can accumulate a great deal of unanticipated internal diversity. The Roman Catholic Church has shown a remarkable ability to maintain its structure and cohesion while

absorbing vast numbers of people representing many ethnic groups. Yet, today the Church enjoys a greater amount of internal debate on important issues than do some Protestant denominations.³ These "American" qualities set it dramatically apart from large sections of the Church in other countries.

It was once fashionable among American historians to attribute the ever-changing nature of our institutions to factors indigenous to the New World: the abundance of "empty" land and the unstructured nature of the frontier. Such factors are certainly important. Yet given a culture whose primal, endlessly repeated founding act has been the immigrant's physical rejection of the past for an unrealized, even indefinable future, what else but constant change and diversity could define it? Even if all of the immigrants to America had been only English Puritans or Irish Catholics or German Lutherans or Russian Jews, the basic character of American life probably would have been much the same as it is today.

Admittedly, it is hard to imagine an America settled exclusively by blond, blue-eyed Swedes recapitulating the degree of diversity which immigrants from almost every place on earth have produced here. We are one of the most diverse nations (as opposed to empires) in history – a great historical joke on immigrants and American-born alike. Almost no one comes to America for the joy of interacting with other races and other faiths. Nor do many native-born Americans rise in the morning praying that they may hear yet one more accent, see yet one more strange face. This is the paradox of both immigration and internal migration: one leaves home to promote one's self interest (less often, the interests of one's group) and, sooner or later, comes face to face with multiples of the "Other." The cream of this jest is that if the immigrant were not a minority before coming here, he might suddenly find such status bestowed upon him on arrival.

Diversity – pluralism, multiculturalism, whatever we call it – is the unanticipated, unplanned bonus of American immigration. However, we have been slow to appreciate this gift and to incorporate our appreciation of it into our culture. Discrimination, both in the sense of recognizing difference and of treating those who are different unequally, became a common feature of American life early in our history – not that discrimination or prejudice are peculiarly American phenomena, as a glance at today's headlines will demonstrate. And while the tensions and conflicts arising from competition among groups certainly lie at the center of our culture, other countries are even more fixated upon "the Other." Consider

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Northern Ireland or Israel or South Africa or Bosnia. Unique to America is the amazing variety of people and the number of factors involved in our diversity. We Americans constantly adjust and readjust the boundaries between "us" and an ever evolving sea of "thems."

E pluribus unum is a simple concept when applied to a box of marbles. It becomes more problematic when applied to a diverse population that must somehow function as a society and share something of a common culture. At the beginning of this century the apparent resolution to the tensions between homogeneity and heterogeneity lay in conformity, encouraged or enforced, to a white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, middle-class America as defined by the male members of the "dominant" group. Diversity was at best a bewildering variety of paths that, nevertheless, were supposed to converge at the common caldron of Americanism. However, the famous "melting pot" was expected to produce only a white broth; it was never intended for peoples for color.⁴

The "liberal" culture that began to take shape during the 1930s sought to replace unity through conformity with an assumed unity of purpose. Accordingly, ethnic pluralism was to be tolerated for two reasons. First, regardless of their apparent differences, all Americans supposedly shared the same socioeconomic goals: jobs, homes, education for the kids, etc. They would, then, work together to realize their mutually held dreams. Then, as economic differences between Americans narrowed, so would the cultural differences which divided them because (and here the liberals were a bit circumspect) the bases for these differences – religion and Old World customs – were not *that* important. Jews, for example, could enter the social and economic mainstream of the American life because, as they did so, they would leave behind the more extreme manifestations of their Jewishness. Broad-brimmed black hats, beards, and pasachs were fine for the Hassidim – religious exotics who, like their Christian counterpart, the Amish, had a right to remain on the social fringe if they wished. But surely, those choosing to enter the mainstream would voluntarily give up extremes of dress, behavior, and belief. Many liberals were probably never aware of the extent to which they assumed that WASPdom dethroned would reappear as a culture of choice among a broadened middle class of diverse ethnic backgrounds. And again, non-whites were not high on this agenda.

In the 1950s, African Americans, descendants of our most prominent *involuntary* immigrant population, insisted that liberal practice,

as well as theory, break down the walls of racism. Yet, a decade later, as Blacks strove to enter the mainstream, they passed an outflow of middle-class white kids embarked on a cultural migration to an uncharted land of absolute freedom, a kind of America of the imagination. Almost religiously hirsute, and much more bizarrely dressed than their immigrant grandparents when they landed here at the turn of the century, the hippies and yuppies of the 1960s helped extend the debate about diversity beyond questions of ethnic equality and economic opportunity. Feminists then took up the debate, and by the end of the 1970s the concept of diversity was beginning to include respect for cultural difference. Today, our ideas of multiculturalism have broadened to include issues of gender, sexual preference, lifestyle, physical and mental disability, even philosophy and morals, as well as race.

While we debate whether or not to celebrate the fact that Heather has two mommies, the whole process of diversification continues. New immigrants, legal and illegal, arrive from Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East, as well as from Europe. According to the 1990 census, one in twelve Americans is foreign born (Roberts 1993, 64). And the convection current of the American-born continues, circulating from East to West, North to South, and back again. We denounce yet again the tyranny of the past, leave the old worlds of family, faith, habit, or convention for the liberating promise of the future. As a result, America continues to be new and unfamiliar, even to those of us whose families have been here for generations. Responding to continual change and defending ourselves against it, we go on generating new organizations, new therapies, new lifestyles, new religions, as, inevitably, new minorities appear to assert new rights.

Today we try out new metaphors to help us grasp the nature of our continually evolving society. With the idea of the melting pot overturned, we speak of America as a "tossed salad" or a "smorgasbord," metaphors at once inclusive (everyone can be in the salad or on the table) and exclusive (the borscht is here, the tamales there, and don't dribble sour cream on the collard greens). As we near the end of this century, we search for the sources that will unite us while honoring diversity. How to spin unity out of diversity has been the primary dilemma of our immigrant nation and will remain so. Our task may be lightened somewhat if we can keep in mind that it is the ongoing effort to find unity, while respecting differences, that defines us as a people. As Werner Sollors suggests in *Beyond Ethnicity*, "Americanness" is achieved "at the point of

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which inevitably seems to revitalize the culture at the same time"
(1986, 7).

In arguing for the centrality of immigration to the American
experience, I am not suggesting that the whole of American history
and culture can be explained solely in terms of immigration. There
is a point at which the forces suggested in this essay so interact with
other basic patterns of our culture that the imprint of immigration
blurs and may seem lost amid a welter of other factors. Never-
theless, in our leave taking and our arriving; in our loss and our
discovery; in our rejection of the past and our embrace of the
future; in our surrender of the familiar and our confrontation
with the new – in our bewildered efforts to see in the mirror of
our endless diversity the unifying effects of sharing this strange
national experience – in all of this we can discern the patterns of
immigration deep within our culture, deep within ourselves.

Notes

- 1 Movements of African Americans within the South and the North still tend
to be toward the cities. However, the recent movement of Blacks *back* into
the South has been toward nonmetropolitan areas (Fosler 1990, 72–3).
- 2 According to Sam Roberts, "Since 1960, nine in ten American households
packed up for another home." In the years following World War II, one fifth
of Americans moved annually. This percentage has been slowly declining. In
1990, one sixth of the nation changed houses (1993, 136–7).
- 3 In his 1977 book on American Catholicism, Andrew Greeley predicted that
diversity of opinion within the church, especially on the issue of contra-
ception, might result in the "emergence of many different styles of affilia-
tion" within the Catholic community (150).
- 4 See John Higham's essay, "Ethnic Pluralism in American Thought" (1984).

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My Name



SANDRA CISNEROS

Sandra Cisneros, the only daughter in a large Mexican American family, writes stories and poems that reflect her own experience with conflicting cultures and languages. She addresses such issues as poverty, cultural suppression, self-identity, and gender roles in her poetry and fiction. This reading selection is taken from *The House on Mango Street*, a collection of related narrative sketches about a Mexican American family struggling to adjust to life in an English-speaking culture. Loosely based on the life of the author, this selection tells of a young girl's reaction to her name, Esperanza, which means "hope."

BEFORE YOU READ

THINK about your given name, the one you "go by." Is it a family name? Or were you named after a famous person? Do you know why your parents chose to name you as they did? Do you have a nickname? If so, what is its origin?

EXAMINE the words *esperanza* and *hope*, both of which have been used as female names. Although both words mean the same thing, they look and sound very different. The Spanish word *esperanza* is much longer and more musical; the English word *hope* is not only shorter but almost curt sounding.

WRITE in your journal the name you would have chosen for yourself and tell why you would have chosen this name.

AS YOU READ

Think about the importance we attach to names and why.



In English my name means hope. In Spanish it means too many letters. It means sadness, it means waiting. It is like the number nine. A muddy color. It is the Mexican records my father plays on Sunday mornings when he is shaving, songs like sobbing.

It was my great-grandmother's name and now it is mine. She was a horse 2
woman too, born like me in the Chinese year of the horse—which is supposed
to be bad luck if you're born female—but I think this is a Chinese lie because
the Chinese, like the Mexicans, don't like their women strong.

My great-grandmother. I would've liked to have known her, a wild horse of a 3
woman, so wild she wouldn't marry until my great-grandfather threw a sack
over her head and carried her off. Just like that, as if she were a fancy chande-
lier. That's the way he did it.

And the story goes she never forgave him. She looked out the window all her 4
life, the way so many women sit their sadness on an elbow. I wonder if she
made the best with what she got or was she sorry because she couldn't be all
the things she wanted to be. Esperanza. I have inherited her name, but I don't
want to inherit her place by the window.

At school they say my name funny as if the syllables were made out of tin 5
and hurt the roof of your mouth. But in Spanish my name is made out of a
softer something like silver, not quite as thick as sister's name Magdalena which
is uglier than mine. Magdalena who at least can come home and become
Nenny. But I am always Esperanza.

I would like to baptize myself under a new name, a name more like the real 6
me, the one nobody sees. Esperanza as Lisandra or Maritza or Zeze the X. Yes.
Something like Zeze the X will do.



AFTER YOU READ

- THINK about the young girl's reaction to her name. Why does she want another name? Does a person's name make a difference in the way you perceive that person? Does your own name affect how you feel about yourself? Do the names of others affect how you react to them? Why does exchanging names seem important when you first meet someone? Could you feel that you really knew someone whose name you did not know?
- EXAMINE the name *Zeze the X*, which Esperanza chose for herself. Why do you think she liked this name?
- WRITE about your own name—where it came from, whether you like it, how you think others perceive it, and what other name you might choose for yourself if you were free to do so.

The Name Is Mine



ANNA QUINDLEN

Anna Quindlen formerly served as deputy metropolitan editor for the *New York Times* but is now a columnist for *Newsweek*. She is best known as a columnist but is increasingly recognized as a successful novelist. One of her novels, *One True Thing*, was made into a movie starring Meryl Streep and William Hurt. In the following essay Quindlen tells the story of her name and how that name has helped to shape her various identities.

BEFORE YOU READ

THINK about the custom of married females adopting the surnames of their husbands. What problems or advantages are associated with this custom?

EXAMINE the preceding essay, "My Name," by Sandra Cisneros. Even though the purpose, content, and tone of the selections by Cisneros and Quindlen differ significantly, both authors clearly believe that names play an important role in a person's sense of identity.

WRITE in your journal an entry stating your opinion on the issue of married women keeping their own names rather than taking their husbands' surnames.

AS YOU READ

Annotate this essay by using several different types of annotations. For information about how to annotate an essay, go to Lesson One, "Annotating a Text," on the *Interactions* website at <http://college.hmco.com/devenglish>.*

*The *Interactions* website includes (1) Writing/Reading Lessons and (2) links to Related Websites. To access the *Interactions* website, go to <http://college.hmco.com/devenglish>. From this page select the "Student Home Page for Developmental English" and then the "Student Home Page for Developmental Writing." Next go to the "Textbook Sites for Writing" and select *Interactions*, 6/e. When you reach the *Interactions* site, you can access either the Writing/Reading Lessons or Links to Related Websites.



I am on the telephone to the emergency room of the local hospital. My elder son is getting stitches in his palm, and I have called to make myself feel better, because I am at home, waiting, and my husband is there, holding him. I am 34 years old, and I am crying like a child, making a slippery mess of my face. "Mrs. Krovatin?" says the nurse, and for the first time in my life I answer "Yes."

This is a story about a name. The name is mine. I was given it at birth, and I have never changed it, although I married. I could come up with lots of reasons why. It was a political decision, a simple statement that I was somebody and not an adjunct of anybody, especially a husband. As a friend of mine told her horrified mother, "He didn't adopt me, he married me."

It was a professional and a personal decision, too. I grew up with an ugly dog of a name, one I came to love because I thought it was weird and unlovable. Amid the Debbies and Kathys of my childhood, I had a first name only my grandmothers had and a last name that began with a strange letter. "Sorry, the letters I, O, Q, U, V, X, Y and Z are not available," the catalogues said about monogrammed key rings and cocktail napkins. Seeing my name in black on white at the top of a good story, suddenly it wasn't an ugly dog anymore.

But neither of these are honest reasons, because they assume rational consideration, and it so happens that when it came to changing my name, there was no consideration, rational or otherwise. It was mine. It belonged to me. I don't even share a checking account with my husband. Damned if I was going to be hidden beneath the umbrella of his identity.

It seemed like a simple decision. But nowadays I think the only simple decisions are whether to have grilled cheese or tuna fish for lunch. Last week, my older child wanted an explanation of why he, his dad and his brother have one name, and I have another.

My answer was long, philosophical and rambling—that is to say, unsatisfactory. What's in a name? I could have said disingenuously. But I was talking to a person who had just spent three torturous, exhilarating years learning names for things, and I wanted to communicate to him that mine meant something quite special to me, had seemed as form-fitting as my skin, and as painful to remove. Personal identity and independence, however, were not what he was looking for; he just wanted to make sure I was one of them. And I am—and then again, I am not. When I made this decision, I was part of a couple. Now, there are two me's, the me who is the individual and the me who is part of a family of four, a family of four in which, in a small way, I am left out.

A wise friend who finds herself in the same fix says she never wants to change her name, only to have a slightly different identity as a family member,

an identity for pediatricians' offices and parent-teacher conferences. She also says that the entire situation reminds her of the women's movement as a whole. We did these things as individuals, made these decisions about ourselves and what we wanted to be and do. And they were good decisions, the right decisions. But we based them on individual choice, not on group dynamics. We thought in terms of our sense of ourselves, not our relationships with others.

Some people found alternative solutions: hyphenated names, merged names, matriarchal names for the girls and patriarchal ones for the boys, one name at work and another at home. I did not like those choices; I thought they were middle grounds, and I didn't live much in the middle ground at the time. I was once slightly disdainful of women who went all the way and changed their names. But I now know too many smart, independent, terrific women who have the same last names as their husbands to be disdainful anymore. (Besides, if I made this decision as part of a feminist world view, it seems dishonest to turn around and trash other women for deciding as they did.)

I made my choice. I haven't changed my mind. I've just changed my life. Sometimes I feel like one of those worms I used to hear about in biology, the ones that, chopped in half, walked off in different directions. My name works fine for one half, not quite as well for the other. I would never give it up. Except for that one morning when I talked to the nurse at the hospital, I always answer the question "Mrs. Krovatin?" with "No, this is Mr. Krovatin's wife." It's just that I understand the down side now.



AFTER YOU READ

- ❖ **THINK** about the different perspectives Quindlen includes in her essay. She is careful to say that her decision about keeping her own name is not the only or necessarily the best answer to this complex problem. What are some of the factors that she includes in her discussion? Is her essay more or less satisfactory because she does not argue strongly for a single answer? Would you describe Quindlen as a militant feminist because she has refused to take her husband's name? Why or why not?
- ❖ **EXAMINE** the second sentence in paragraph 6 ("What's in a name?"), which is an allusion to a line in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Did you recognize the line or at least find it familiar? In Shakespeare's play, the response to the question is "A rose by any other name would smell as

sweet." Does Quindlen include this reference to Shakespeare's words because she agrees with the sentiment expressed in them? What other reasons might she have for including this allusion to Shakespeare?

WRITE a paragraph or essay in which you argue for or against the custom of women taking their husbands' names.

Or **WRITE** a comparison of the Cisneros and Quindlen essays, focusing on their attitudes toward their names.

6 From South of the Border: Hispanic Minorities in the United States

Alejandro Portes

Hispanics are those individuals whose birth or declared ancestry locates their origin in Spain or in the Latin American countries. Until recently, this rubric did not exist as a self-designation for most of the groups so labeled, being essentially a term of convenience for administrative agencies and scholarly research. Thus, the first thing of note to be said about this population is that it is not a consolidated minority but, rather, a group-in-information whose boundaries and self-definitions are in flux. The emergence of a Hispanic "minority" has depended more on the actions of government and the collective perceptions of Anglo-American society than on the initiative of the individuals so designated. The increasing attention gained by this category of people derives mainly from their rapid population growth during the past two decades, a consequence of high fertility rates among some national groups, and, more important, of accelerated immigration. The heavy concentration of this population in certain regions of the country has added to its visibility. Over 75 percent of the 14.5 million people identified by the 1980 census as Hispanics are concentrated in just four states: California, New York, Texas, and Florida; California alone absorbed almost one-third.¹

The absence of a firm collective self-identity among this population is an outcome of its great diversity, despite the apparent "commonness" of language and culture that figures so prominently in official writings. Under the same label, we find individuals whose ancestors lived in the country since at least the time of independence and others who arrived last year; substantial numbers of professionals and entrepreneurs along with humble farm laborers and unskilled factory workers; whites, blacks, mulattoes, and

mestizos; full-fledged citizens and unauthorized aliens; and finally, among the immigrants, those who came in search of employment and a better economic future and those who arrived escaping death squads and political persecution at home. Aside from divisions between the "foreign" and the native-born, no difference is more significant than that of national origin. Nationality not only stands for different geographic places of birth but serves as a code word for the very distinct histories of each major immigrant flow, which molded the patterns of entry and adaptation to American society. For this reason the literature produced by "Hispanic" scholars has tended until recently to focus on the origins and evolution of their own national groups rather than encompassing the diverse histories of all those falling under the official rubric.

Most members of the Spanish-origin population – at least 60 percent – are of Mexican origin, divided between native-born Americans and immigrants; another 14 percent come from Puerto Rico and are U.S. citizens by birth, whether they were born in the island or the mainland; the third group in size is Cubans, who represent about 5 percent and are, overwhelmingly, recent immigrants coming after the consolidation of a communist regime in their country. In addition to these major groups, there are sizable contingents of Dominicans, Colombians, Salvadorans, Guatemalans, and other Central and South Americans, with their own distinct histories, characteristics, and patterns of adaptation.²

The complexity of Hispanic ethnicity is a consequence, first of all, of these diverse national origins, which often lead to more differences than similarities among the various groups. Lumping them together is not too dissimilar from attempting to combine turn-of-the-century northern Italian, Hungarian, Serbian, and Bohemian immigrants in a unit based on their "common" origin in various patches of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. A second difficulty is that most Spanish-origin groups are not yet "settled"; they continue to expand and change in response to uninterrupted immigration and close contact with events in the home countries. This dense traffic of people, news, and events between U.S.-based immigrant communities and their not-too-remote places of origin offers a far more challenging landscape than, for example, the condition of European ethnic groups, whose boundaries are generally well defined and whose bonds with the original countries are becoming increasingly remote.³

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Migration and Settlement Patterns

Ethnic groups come into being in one of three ways: conquest, immigration, or political settlements. The third way is exceptional and is based on the agreement of spatially contiguous nationalities to cooperate in the creation of a common nation-state. Through such settlements, countries like Switzerland, Belgium, and Yugoslavia have emerged, and individual nationalities within each – especially the less numerous ones – have become ethnic minorities.⁴ U.S. history does not register a single significant instance of this pattern of “negotiated” ethnicity, and thus ethnic groups have generally emerged through the other alternatives: conquest or immigration.⁵

Spanish-origin groups are well represented under each rubric because the historical events that created today’s largest communities involved a mix of both conquest and immigration. To anticipate the argument: the migration flows that consolidated these communities reflect, almost mirrorlike, the expansion of the United States into its immediate periphery. The countries that supplied the major Spanish-origin groups in the United States today were, each in its time, targets of this expansionist pattern. U.S. intervention undermined the social and economic fabric constructed under Spanish colonial domination and reoriented it toward the new hegemonic power. This internal imbalancing of postcolonial societies, which preceded the onset of migration, has created today’s ethnic communities. In a sense, the sending populations were Americanized before their members actually became immigrants to the United States.

Mexicans

Mexico is the prime example of the creation of a Spanish-origin community through conquest and immigration. As Mexican-American scholars have frequently noted, their ancestors were already here before a war of conquest converted them into foreigners in their own land.⁶ Like native Indians, Mexicans represent a classic example of ethnic-group formation through military conquest and occupation. Things did not stop there, however, because the rapid expansion of the U.S. economy into what had been northern Mexico reclaimed labor from the portion of the country south of the Rio Grande. Growers and railroad companies sent paid

recruiters into the reduced Mexican republic to offer free rail travel and advances on wages as incentives for local workers to come north. Mexican immigration thus had its immediate origins in deliberate recruitment by North American companies, and was not a spontaneous movement.⁷ Economic penetration followed political intervention in shaping what eventually became the largest Spanish-origin minority in the United States.

At the time of the labor-recruitment waves in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the border was scarcely enforced. As original settlers of the land, Mexicans came with the territory, and the arrival of new contract laborers and the movement back and forth across the Rio Grande met with little official resistance. Hence, Mexicans were an integral part of the Southwest's population before they became immigrants and much before they became "illegal" immigrants. The latter term made its appearance after passage of the National Origins Immigration Act of 1924 and the creation of the Border Patrol (established to prevent the inflow of Asians and other elements deemed undesirable, rather than the crossing of Mexicans). In 1929, for example, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld an earlier administrative decree declaring individuals who commuted between residences in Mexico and their work in the United States to be legal immigrants.⁸ It was only in the post-Depression era and especially after World War II that crossing the border became a formally regulated event leading to the criminalization of the traditional inflow.⁹

Thus, contrary to the conventional portrait of Mexican immigration as a self-propelled movement of foreigners across a well-defined border, the process had its origins in North American geopolitical and economic interests that first restructured the neighboring nation and then proceeded to organize dependable labor outflows out of it. Such movements across the new border were a well-established routine in the Southwest before they became redefined as immigration, and then "illegal" immigration.

Puerto Ricans

Puerto Rico, a long-neglected outpost of the Spanish Empire, came into U.S. hands as an outcome of the Spanish-American War. North American influence, which had a profound effect on this mostly rural society dedicated to coffee exports and simple subsistence agriculture, began shortly after the military occupation, when U.S. capital started pouring into new sugarcane plantations and

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mill construction. The land requirements of the new industry and the political power of its promoters led to the rapid displacement of subsistence peasants. Because the labor requirements of sugar growing fall mainly during the harvest season, an increasing number of dispossessed peasants were forced into the cities, where urban unemployment, previously unknown, became an established feature of Puerto Rican society.¹⁰

In 1917 the Jones Act gave the islanders U.S. citizenship along with the obligation of serving in the armed forces. Despite the absence of legal restrictions on immigration and the new economic conditions in Puerto Rico, migration to the mainland began slowly. In 1920 Puerto Ricans in the United States were estimated at only twelve thousand, and twenty-five years later, they were still fewer than one hundred thousand.¹¹ The inflow accelerated after World War II, owing to three principal causes. The first was the continuing industrialization and urbanization of the island under U.S. auspices, especially after initiation of "Operation Bootstrap" in the late 1940s. Touted as a comprehensive solution to underdevelopment, the new policy industrialized the country and brought the majority of its population into the cities, but the capital-intensive industries did not generate enough jobs to keep up with the urban inflow and with rapid population growth. Unemployment became acute at a time when modern consumption expectations from the mainland were being diffused widely among the urban population.¹² Second, the barrier of a long and expensive sea journey disappeared with the advent of inexpensive air travel. Just as new products and fashions were pouring in from the North, the means to travel there in order to acquire them became available to the mass of the population. Third, the increasing economic reasons to leave the island and facilities for doing so were directly activated by labor recruiters, a practice that began at the turn of the century but became widespread only during and after World War II.¹³

These were years of rapid expansion in the U.S. economy, which generated a strong demand for low-wage unskilled labor. Just as Mexicans coming under the Bracero program helped meet that demand in the Southwest and Midwest, Puerto Rican contract labor filled the gap in the East. Job opportunities available to members of both migrant groups were similar, except that the Puerto Rican inflow had a stronger urban bent, which accelerated rapidly during the 1950s and 1960s. Puerto Rican men became employed in increasing numbers as unskilled factory operatives and as menial help in hotels and restaurants; Puerto Rican

women worked as domestics and were hired by the thousands as seamstresses in the garment industry.¹⁴

From their places of destination Puerto Rican migrants moved gradually west, finally meeting the outposts of the Mexican inflow. Chicago, in particular, became a major point of confluence of the two Spanish-speaking labor streams. It was in the East and primarily in New York City, however, that the largest Puerto Rican concentrations emerged. Settling in dilapidated neighborhoods left behind by older immigrants, Puerto Ricans added a new flavor to the city's ethnic mix. East Harlem became Spanish Harlem; the South Bronx, the Lower East Side of Manhattan (redubbed *Loisaida*), and other urban districts were also rapidly Hispanicized.¹⁵

The consolidation of these ethnic communities represented the end point of a process that began with the acquisition and economic colonization of Puerto Rico. Just as in Mexico, the migrations that gave rise to today's ethnic minority did not occur spontaneously but had their beginnings in political decisions and economic initiatives on the receiving side. The rise of Spanish-speaking working-class communities in the Southwest and Northeast may thus be seen as a dialectical consequence of past expansion of the United States into its immediate periphery. The process of internal restructuring after intervention was more thorough in Puerto Rico than in Mexico, given direct political control by the United States and the weakness of the prior political and economic structures, a difference that stands at the core of the diverging paths of economic adaptation followed by immigrants from the two places.

Cubans

Cuban immigration, which also had its roots in the history of relations with the United States, took a different and more dramatic form. One effect of the Cuban War of Independence in the late nineteenth century was to create sizable émigré communities on the mainland, especially in New York, Key West, and Tampa. With the economic support of these three communities, the Cuban Revolutionary party launched the last and successful war of independence against Spain.¹⁶ After three years of conflict, the United States intervened, and when the Spanish-American War ended, Cuba formally became a republic. However, the island was occupied by U.S. troops and governed by military authority from 1900 to 1902 and again in 1908–1909. The Platt Amendment, approved by the U.S. Congress as an addendum to the Cuban constitution,

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guaranteed the United States the right to intervene in Cuban internal affairs. Politically and economically, the island became a protectorate. North American capital flowed into the sugar industry and into iron and nickel mining shortly after the first occupation, although the growing of tobacco, coffee, and other agricultural exports remained in Cuban hands.¹⁷ Despite domination by North American interests, Cuba never became a recruiting ground for cheap agricultural labor, mainly because of the somewhat higher level of development of the island's economy, relative to its neighbors, and the division of the rural labor force into small commercial farmers in tobacco, fruits, and coffee, and an organized rural proletariat in the cane fields. Both factors reduced the size of the subsistence peasantry and hence the pool of readily available workers. In addition, Cuba did not share a land border with the United States, as did Mexico, and was not a full U.S. possession, as was Puerto Rico.¹⁸

The Platt Amendment was formally abolished in the 1930s, but the heavy tutelage over Cuban internal and foreign affairs continued. In 1941, for example, Cuba declared war against the Axis powers on the same day as the United States, and voted consistently on the U.S. side in all international meetings during and after World War II. The North American hegemony shaped a local bourgeoisie that was profoundly Americanized in its outlook and behavior. The Cuban upper class relied on the North for political guidance and imitated American ways of doing business and patterns of consumption. This hegemony also promoted strong feelings of anti-imperialism in other segments of the population, especially among young intellectuals, whose desire to escape U.S. tutelage grew with the years.¹⁹

These contradictory trends were to culminate in the revolution against Fulgencio Batista. All segments of the nation participated in this struggle, but their visions of the future were quite different. For the Cuban bourgeoisie, Batista represented a throwback to a primitive era, which had to be overcome in order to consolidate liberal democracy. For the young intellectuals who led the fight, however, Batista was a U.S. puppet whose defeat would mark the beginnings of a genuine struggle of national liberation.²⁰ Opposition to imperialism became a rallying cry of the triumphant revolution as it pressured the Cuban upper and middle classes into submission. Deprived of political power and suffering wave after wave of confiscations, these groups saw their only escape in moving north to secure U.S. help for reconquering the island. True to their origins

and past, the Cuban bourgeoisie relied on U.S. leadership and firmly believed that a communist regime so close to U.S. shores was an impossibility.²¹

The waves of exiles drastically transformed the character of the U.S. Cuban community. From a small group of descendants of the nineteenth-century émigrés and some occasional immigrants, Cubans became one of the most rapidly growing and most concentrated foreign minorities in the country. The political origins of this inflow gave it quite distinct characteristics compared to those initiated by labor recruitment. The first waves of Cuban refugees were strongly committed to return after the overthrow of Castro's regime, and were supported in this goal by the U.S. government.²² The commitment waned after the Bay of Pigs defeat, especially after resolution of the Missile Crisis of 1962, which committed the U.S. government to restrain exile organizations in exchange for removal of Soviet missiles from the island. An adaptation process then began, which saw subsequent refugee cohorts become progressively less oriented toward immediate return and more toward family reunification and a new life in the United States.

The Kennedy and Johnson administrations attempted to resettle the Cubans away from Miami but met stubborn resistance. Gradually, resettled refugees drifted back to Miami, making Cubans one of the most spatially concentrated immigrant groups. Proximity to the island and climate may have something to do with this behavior, but the principal reason appears to have been the framework for daily life and economic opportunity created by the earlier cohorts of exiles, which generated a context of incorporation quite different from that awaiting other Latin immigrants.²³ Consequences of these patterns will be examined below.

Despite its unique history, Cuban immigration was also influenced decisively by the earlier hegemony exercised by the United States over the island. In this case, it was not deliberate recruitment that triggered large-scale migration but a major political upheaval that confronted the classes adapted to and prospering under U.S. hegemony with groups irreconcilably opposed to it. The victory of the latter led to an exodus of formerly dominant classes in the only direction that, given past history, they could possibly take.

Nonimmigrants

More recent migrations also illustrate the same general pattern of U.S. political and economic intervention. For instance, the present

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sizable inflow from the Dominican Republic did not start until the 1960s, in the wake of direct U.S. intervention to stem a leftist military uprising. The country had been occupied by U.S. troops earlier in the century but, during the decades of the Trujillo dictatorship, it remained an isolated backwater. The assassination of Trujillo and reassertion of U.S. hegemony in the country coincided with rapid increases in out-migration, as a consequence of which Dominicans represent today the seventh-largest immigration contingent to the United States and one of the most concentrated.²⁴ Unlike Cubans, they have chosen not south Florida but the New York metropolitan area as their principal place of settlement, where in 1985, they were the single largest immigrant nationality, accounting for 17 percent of the New York-bound inflow.²⁵

The absolute and relative sizes of immigrant national cohorts drop rapidly as we leave the immediate periphery of the United States and the countries that experienced its intervention most directly. Despite its size, for example, Brazil has been a minor contributor to U.S.-bound immigration. In 1980 there were slightly more than forty thousand Brazilian-born persons in the United States, who represented only 0.3 percent of the foreign-born and less than one-tenth of 1 percent of the Brazilian population. The same is true of immigrants from Argentina, who amounted to 0.5 percent of the foreign-born, and whose weight relative to the Argentine population was less than one-third of 1 percent.²⁶ Geographical distance alone does not account for these patterns, however. For example, Costa Rica is a small country relatively close to the United States, yet in 1980 there were only 29,639 Costa Ricans in the United States. Unlike other Caribbean nations and several of its Central American neighbors, Costa Rica has been able to avoid, at least until recently, direct U.S. intervention and thus retain a measure of national autonomy. Neighboring El Salvador, however, which has experienced such intervention in its domestic life, has seen an accelerated process of out-migration, mainly to the United States.²⁷

Charles Tilly argues for the importance of networks in the process of immigration. There is little doubt that immigration is a network-mediated process and that networks account for the continuity of these flows, even when the original conditions have changed,²⁸ but questions remain as to what forces initiate the process, why it originates in certain countries and locations and not in others, and what accounts for the different compositions and patterns of incorporation of various groups. Attempts to explain specific outflows must therefore rest on the identification of broader

structural determinants. In this respect the contrasting experiences of Latin American countries offer a valuable clue because they show that contrary to much journalistic lore, the flows do not arise spontaneously out of poverty. Equally undeveloped countries and regions may have different migration histories, and sizable outflows may originate in more-developed areas rather than less-developed areas. The reason is that the beginnings of these movements are rooted in the history of prior economic and political relationships between sending and receiving countries. In particular, contemporary migration patterns tend to reflect precisely the character of past hegemonic actions by regional and global powers.

Labor Market Trends

The literature on labor-market performance and the socioeconomic condition of the major Spanish-origin groups in the United States has sought to answer three questions: Are there significant differences in the condition of these groups both in comparison with the U.S. population and among themselves? Are there significant differences in the *process* by which education, occupation, and income are achieved? If there are differences in this process, what are their principal causes?

Table 6.1 presents a summary of descriptive statistics drawn from the 1980 census. Aside from age and nativity, included as background information, the rest of the figures indicate that the socioeconomic performance of Spanish-origin minorities is generally inferior to that of the U.S. population as a whole and, by extension, of the white non-Hispanic majority. This is true of education, occupation, income, and entrepreneurship (measured by rates of self-employment), although less so of labor force participation, especially among females.

The same figures also indicate major disparities among Spanish-origin groups. In general, Puerto Ricans are in the worst socioeconomic situation, as manifested by high levels of unemployment, female-headed families, and poverty, and correspondingly low levels of education, occupation, and income. Mexicans occupy an intermediate position, although consistently below the U.S. population. Note that Mexicans are the majority of all Hispanics and have a disproportionate weight in aggregate figures that purport to describe the Spanish-origin population as a whole. Cubans are in a better situation, as are the "Other Spanish." Both groups have rates

of occupation, family income, and self-employment closer to the U.S. average. ("Other Spanish" consists of immigrant groups too small to be counted individually plus those that declared Spanish-origin ancestry without further specification. The conflation of groups make it difficult to provide a meaningful interpretation of the absolute condition of the category or the processes that have led to its creation.)

Table 6.1 [Orig. table 6.1] Selected characteristics of Spanish-origin groups, 1980

Variable	Mexicans	Puerto Ricans	Cubans	Other Spanish	Total U.S.
Number (in millions)	8.7	2.0	0.8	3.1	226.5
Median age	21.9	22.3	37.7	25.5	30.0
Percentage native born	74.0	96.9	22.1	60.5	93.8
Percentage female-headed families	16.4	35.3	14.9	20.5	14.3
Median years of school completed ^a	9.6	10.5	12.2	12.3	12.5
Percentage high school graduates ^a	37.6	40.1	55.3	57.4	66.5
Percentage with 4+ years of college ^a	4.9	5.6	16.2	12.4	16.2
Percentage in labor force ^b	64.6	54.9	66.0	64.6	62.0
Percentage females in labor force ^b	49.0	40.1	55.4	53.4	49.9
Percentage married women in labor force ^c	42.5	38.9	50.5	45.7	43.9
Percentage self-employed ^d	3.5	2.2	5.8	4.5	6.8
Percentage unemployed	9.1	11.7	6.0	8.0	6.5
Percentage professional specialty, executive, and managerial occupations:					
males	11.4	14.1	22.0	19.0	25.8
females ^d	12.6	15.5	17.9	17.2	24.7
Percentage operators and laborers:					
males	30.4	30.9	23.1	23.8	18.3
females ^d	22.0	25.5	24.2	19.9	11.7
Median family income	14,765	10,734	18,245	16,230	19,917
Median income of married couples with own children	14,855	13,428	20,334	16,708	19,630
Percentage of families with incomes of \$50,000+	1.8	1.0	5.2	3.6	5.6
Percentage of all families below poverty level	20.6	34.9	11.7	16.7	9.6

^a Persons twenty-five years of age or older.

^b Persons sixteen years of age or older.

^c Women sixteen years of age or older; husband present and own children under six years of age.

^d Employed persons sixteen years of age or older.

Sources: Bureau of the Census, *General Population Characteristics, United States Summary, 1983a*: tables 39, 48, 70; Bureau of the Census, *General Social and Economic Characteristics, United States Summary, 1983b*: tables 141, 166-71.

The existence of differences in the socioeconomic position of the Spanish-origin population, a phenomenon well known to researchers in the field, must have some cause or causes.²⁹ As framed in current research efforts, the issue is whether the condition of a specific minority is explainable entirely on the basis of its background characteristics or, rather, derives from other factors. If members of a given group attain socioeconomic positions comparable to those of native-born Americans with similar human-capital endowments, the observed differences can be imputed to the group's current average levels of education, work experience, and other significant causal variables. If, on the other hand, differences persist after statistically equalizing the minority's background, other factors must come into play. If the gap is disadvantageous, discrimination is generally assumed to play a role; if the gap is advantageous, collective characteristics of the group are explored in search of a possible explanation.

Several analyses, especially those of educational attainment, tend to support the "no-difference, no-discrimination" hypothesis. This is the conclusion reached, for example, by Hirschman and Falcón after a broad-gauged study of educational levels among "religio-ethnic" groups in the United States.³⁰ However, these authors also report that after controlling for all possible relevant predictors, the Mexican educational attainment still falls 1.4 years below the norm. Similarly, in a study of occupational attainment based on the 1976 Survey of Income and Education (SEI), Stolzenberg concludes that the causal process is essentially the same among all Spanish-origin groups and that, after standardizing individual background characteristics, no evidence of discrimination remains. However, Stolzenberg includes in the analysis a series of state dummy variables in order to control for the possible confounding of geographic location and ethnicity. What he does, of course, is to insure a priori that ethnic differences would be insignificant because of the high concentration of particular groups in certain states. Including "Florida" as a causal predictor, for example, pretty much eliminates the distinct effect of Cuban ethnicity because this group is highly concentrated in that state; the same is true for New York and the Puerto Ricans. Even with state dummies included, significant ethnic effects on occupational attainment remain in Stolzenberg's analysis of the Mexican and Cuban groups. The Mexican coefficient is negative, indicating lower occupational levels than those expected on the basis of the group's average characteristics; the Cuban effect is positive, however, indicating

Spanish-origin groups is not mysterious because, as seen above, this minority was formed largely by upper- and middle-class persons who left Cuba after the revolution. The puzzle is rather why the collective attainment of Cubans should sometimes exceed what can be expected on the basis of their average human-capital endowment. A fairly common explanation is that Cubans were welcomed in the United States as refugees from a communist regime, receiving significant government aid denied to other groups. This explanation, mentioned in passing by Jasso and Rosenzweig, and vigorously defended by Pedraza-Bailey³³ in her comparative study of Cuban and Mexican immigrants, runs against evidence from other refugee groups that have received substantial federal benefits but remain in a precarious socioeconomic condition. Southeast Asian refugees, for example, benefited from the extensive aid provisions mandated by the 1980 Refugee Act, more comprehensive and generous than those made available to Cubans during the 1960s, yet levels of unemployment, poverty, and welfare dependence among most Southeast Asian groups continue to exceed those of almost every other ethnic minority.³⁴

Although the favorable governmental reception of Cubans in the United States certainly contributed to their adaptation, it must be seen as part of their distinct mode of incorporation. This interpretation calls attention to the social and economic context in which successive immigrant cohorts are received. A sociological explanation to the above riddles can be found in the distinct modes of incorporation of the three major Spanish-origin groups. Mexican immigrants and new Mexican-American entrants into the labor force tend to come from modest socioeconomic origins and have low average levels of education. In addition, however, they enter labor markets in the Southwest and Midwest, where Mexican laborers have traditionally supplied the bulk of unskilled labor. As noted by Tilly, social networks within the ethnic community tend to direct new workers toward jobs similar to those of their coethnics, a pattern reinforced by the orientation of employers. Lacking a coherent entrepreneurial community or effective political representation, Mexican wage workers must fall back on their own individual resources, "discounted" by past history and present discrimination against their group. Because many Mexican workers are immigrants and a substantial proportion are undocumented, employers continue to view them as a valuable source of pliable low-wage labor, a "preference" that may

account for the relatively low average rates of Mexican unemployment, yet it also creates barriers for those who seek upward mobility.³⁵

Puerto Rican migrants fulfilled a similar function for industry and agriculture in the Northeast during an earlier period, but with two significant differences. First, Puerto Ricans often entered labor markets that were highly unionized, unlike those of the Southwest; second, they were U.S. citizens by birth and thus entitled to legal protection and not subject to ready deportation. These two factors combined over time to make Puerto Rican workers a less pliable, more costly, and better organized source of labor. When employers in the Northeast began gradually to shift to other immigrant groups – West Indian contract workers in agriculture, and Dominican, Colombian, and other mostly undocumented immigrants in urban industry and services – Puerto Ricans on the mainland were shunted aside in the labor market but lacked an entrepreneurial community to generate their own jobs.³⁶ During the past two decades they have migrated back to the island in record numbers, and those remaining in the Northeast have experienced levels of unemployment and poverty comparable only to those of the black population.³⁷

The Cuban pattern of adaptation is different because the first exile cohorts created an economically favorable context of reception for subsequent arrivals. The bulk of early Cuban migration, composed of displaced members of the native bourgeoisie rather than laborers, brought the capital and entrepreneurial skills with which to start new businesses; later arrivals followed a similar course, leading eventually to the consolidation of an ethnic enclave economy in south Florida.³⁸ The strong entrepreneurial orientation of the earlier Cuban cohorts is illustrated by census figures on minority-business ownership in table 6.2. In 1977, when these data were collected, black- and Mexican-owned businesses were the most numerous in absolute terms, reflecting the size of the respective populations. In per capita terms, however, Cuban-owned firms were by far the most numerous and the largest in gross receipts and number of employees. Figures in the bottom rows of table 6.2 suggest that the relative weight of Miami Cuban firms among Hispanic-owned businesses has continued to grow since 1977. By 1984 five of ten largest Hispanic-owned firms in the country and four of the ten largest banks were in Miami, at a time when the Spanish-origin population of the area represented barely 5 percent of the national total.

Table 6.2 [*orig. table 6.2*] Spanish-origin and black-owned firms in the United States

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Mexicans</i>	<i>Puerto Ricans</i>	<i>Cubans</i>	<i>All Spanish</i>	<i>Black</i>
Number of firms, 1977	116,419	13,491	30,336	219,355	231,203
Firms per 100,000 population	1,468	740	3,651	1,890	873
Average gross receipts per firm (thousands of dollars)	44.4	43.9	61.6	47.5	37.4
Firms with paid employees, 1977	22,718	1,767	5,588	41,298	39,968
Firms with employees per 100,000 population	286	97	672	356	151
Average employees per firm	4.9	3.9	6.6	5.0	4.1
Average gross receipts per firm with employees (thousands of dollars)	150.4	191.9	254.9	172.9	160.1
Ten largest Hispanic industrial firms, 1984:					
Percentage located in area of group's concentration ^a	40	10	50	100	
Estimated sales (millions of dollars)	402	273	821	2,317	
Number of employees	5,800	1,100	3,175	10,075	
Ten largest Hispanic-owned banks and savings banks, 1984:					
Percentage in area of group's concentration ^a	40	20	40	100	
Total assets (millions of dollars)	1,204	489	934	2,627	
Total deposits (millions of dollars)	1,102	434	844	2,380	

^a Southwest locations for Mexicans; New York and vicinity for Puerto Ricans; Miami metropolitan area for Cubans.

Sources: Bureau of the Census, 1977 *Survey of Minority-Owned Business Enterprises*, 1980; Hispanic Review of Business, *Annual Survey of Hispanic Business*, 1984, 1985.

This helps explain how successive cohorts of Cuban immigrants have been able to make use of past human-capital endowments and exceed their expected level of attainment. Employment in enclave firms allows new arrivals to use their occupational skills and experience without having them "discounted" by discrimination or unfamiliarity with the receiving culture, and it creates opportunities for upward mobility within existing firms or through self-employment. The bond between co-national employers and employees helps fledgling immigrant enterprises survive by taking advantage of the cheap and generally disciplined labor of the new arrivals; the latter may benefit over the long term, however, by availing themselves of mobility opportunities within the enclave that are generally absent elsewhere.

A longitudinal study of Cuban and Mexican immigrants conducted during the 1970s illustrates different patterns of adaptation, conditioned by the presence or absence of an enclave mode of incorporation. By the early 1970s the middle-class immigration from Cuba had ceased and new arrivals came from more modest socioeconomic origins, comparable to those of Mexican legal immigrants. The study interviewed samples of Cuban refugees and Mexican legal immigrants at the time of their arrival during 1973–1974, and followed both samples for six years, interviewing respondents twice during that interval.³⁹ Table 6.3 presents data from the last follow-up survey, which took place in 1979–1980. The first finding of note is the degree of concentration of Cuban respondents, 97 percent of whom remained in the Miami metropolitan area. By comparison, the Mexican sample dispersed throughout the Southwest and Midwest, with the largest concentration – 24 percent – settling in the border city of El Paso.

Table 6.3 [orig. table 6.3] The socioeconomic position of Cuban and Mexican immigrants after six years in the United States

Variable	Mexicans (N = 455)	Cubans (N = 413)
Percentage in city of principal concentration	23.7	97.2
Percentage speaking English well	27.4	23.7
Percentage home owners	40.2	40.0
Percentage self-employed	5.4	21.2
Percentage employed by other	14.6	36.3
Mexicans/Cubans		
Average monthly income ^a	\$912	\$1,057
Average monthly income of employees in large Anglo-owned firms ^a	\$1,003	\$1,016
Average monthly income in small nonenclave firms ^a	\$880	\$952
Average monthly income in enclave firms ^a	–	\$1,111
Average monthly income of the self-employed, Cubans ^a	–	\$1,495

^a 1979 dollars.

Source: A. Portes and R. Bach, *Latin Journey: Cuban and Mexican Immigrants in the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), chaps 6, 7.

Otherwise, samples were similar in their knowledge of English – low for both groups after six years – and their rates of home ownership. They differed sharply, however, in variables relating to their labor-market position. More than one-third of 1973 Cuban arrivals were employed by Cuban firms in 1979, and one-fifth had become self-employed by that time; these figures double and quadruple the respective proportions in the Mexican sample. Despite their concentration in a low-wage region of the United States, after six years the Cubans had an average monthly income significantly greater than that of Mexicans. However, a closer look at the data shows no major differences among either Mexicans or Cubans employed in large Anglo-owned firms, commonly identified as part of the “primary” labor market. Nor are there significant differences among those employed in the smaller firms identified with the “secondary” sector; Mexicans and Cubans in both samples received lower wages than primary-sector employees. The significant difference between Cuban and Mexican immigrants lies with the large proportion of the former employed in enclave firms, whose average income was actually the highest in both samples. In addition, self-employed Cuban immigrants exceeded the combined monthly incomes of both samples by approximately \$500, or one-half of the total average.

Regarding Mexicans and Puerto Ricans, there is no comparable empirical evidence to support the mode of incorporation hypothesis as an explanation of observed occupational and income differences. Few studies compare Puerto Rican patterns of attainment and those of other minorities, but the available information points to the gradual supplanting of Puerto Ricans by newer immigrant groups as sources of low-wage labor in the Northeast.⁴⁰ This evidence is congruent with the interpretation of the current situation of one group – Mexicans – as an outcome of its continued incorporation as a preferred source of low-wage labor in the Southwest and Midwest and that of the other – Puerto Ricans – as a consequence of its increasing redundancy for the same labor market in its principal area of concentration.

Political Behavior and Citizenship

Differences among Spanish-origin groups are again highlighted by their political concerns, organizations, and effectiveness. Regardless of national origin, a major gap separates the native-born, whose

interests are always tied to their situation in the United States, and immigrants, whose political allegiance and organized actions often relate to events in the country of origin. The political sociology of Hispanic-Americans can thus be conveniently summarized under two main categories: first, the goals and actions of established groups, including the native-born and naturalized citizens; and second, the political orientations, particularly the problematic shift of citizenship, among immigrants.

Ethnic politics

The political history of Mexican-Americans bears considerable resemblance to that of American blacks. Both groups endured subordination and disenfranchisement and then attempts to dilute their electoral power through such devices as literacy tests, gerrymandering, and co-optation of ethnic leaders, and both groups have had similar reactions to past discrimination. Mexican-Americans differ from black Americans, however, in one crucial respect, namely, their proximity to and strong identification with the country of origin. Attachment to Mexico and Mexican culture correlates strongly with a sense of "foreignness," even among the native-born and, hence, with lower rates of political participation.⁴¹ The reluctance to shift national allegiances appears to have presented a major obstacle in the path of effective organizing by Mexican-American leaders.

Despite these difficulties, a number of organizations have emerged that articulate the interests of one or another segment of the minority. These range from the earlier *mutualistas* and the Orden de Hijos de America to the subsequent League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and the G.I. Forum, created to defend the interests of Mexican-American World War II veterans.⁴² The 1960s marked a turning point in Mexican-American politics. Inspired in large part by the black example, a number of militant organizations emerged that attempted to redress past grievances by means other than participation in the established parties. Many radical student and youth organizations were created, and a third party, La Raza Unida, won a series of significant electoral victories in Texas. Although the more militant demands of these organizations were never met and most of them have ceased to exist, they succeeded in mobilizing the Mexican-American population and creating a cadre of politicians who could forcefully defend its interests before national leaders and institutions. Today, LULAC and the

Mexican-American Legal Defense Fund (MALDEF) are among the most powerful and active Hispanic organizations. In 1984 ten of the eleven members of the Hispanic Caucus in Congress represented districts with a heavy Mexican-American population.⁴³

Unlike Mexicans, Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens by birth and do not face the obstacle that naturalization proceedings pose to political participation. In addition, the Puerto Rican migrant population is concentrated in New York, where both the city and state have a long tradition of ethnic politics. A number of factors have conspired, however, to reduce the political weight of this population over the years; these include lack of knowledge of English, generally low levels of education and occupation, and the resistance of established political "clubs" led by Jews, Italians, and other older immigrants. The strong sojourner orientation of many migrants has also reduced their interest and attention to local politics. For many years, Puerto Rican activism on the mainland aimed at improvements in the economic and political status of the island rather than of the New York community.⁴⁴

Although concern for the welfare of Puerto Rico has not diminished, the needs of the mainland communities have gradually gained attention since World War II. During the 1960s Puerto Rican politics paralleled the course followed by Mexicans and blacks, with the appearance of militant youth organizations like the Young Lords and the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers' Organization. There were also significant advances in mainstream politics as a number of Puerto Ricans won local and state offices; like Mexicans, Puerto Ricans have voted overwhelmingly Democratic. By 1982, when the joint Black and Puerto Rican Caucus had been established, there were six Puerto Rican state legislators. During the 1970s Puerto Ricans also elected their first state senator and first congressman. At present Robert Garcia (the Bronx, 18th District) is the eleventh member of the Hispanic Caucus in the U.S. House and the sole Puerto Rican representative.

Like Mexicans, first-generation Cuban immigrants face the riddle of naturalization, and like Puerto Ricans, they tend to remain preoccupied with events in their country. Cubans, like both Mexicans and Puerto Ricans, usually speak little English on arrival, which also conspires against effective participation. Despite these obstacles, Cuban-Americans have become a potent political force in south Florida, and now hold mayoral offices in the largest cities in the area, Miami and Hialeah, and in several smaller municipalities. Cuban-Americans are influential in the local Republican party and

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have elected a substantial delegation to the state legislature. A political action group funded by exile businessmen – the Cuban-American National Foundation – has lobbied effectively in Washington for such causes as the creation of Radio Martí and the appointment of Cubans to federal offices.⁴⁶ The loyalty of Cuban-Americans to the Republican party dates from two events of the Kennedy administration: the defeat of the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961 and the Soviet-American agreement of 1962 that reined in the exiles and prevented their launching new military attacks. Cubans have blamed the Democrats for these two events, which destroyed chances for a victorious return to the island. As hopes for return became dimmer and the refugee community turned inward, Cubans naturalized in record number and lined up solidly behind the Republican party, which has become an increasingly serious contender in Florida politics.⁴⁷ The trend culminated in the election of the Spanish-origin Republican mayor of Tampa as the new governor in 1986.

There are recent indications, however, that the monolithic conservatism of the Cuban vote may be more apparent than real. It is true that Cubans overwhelmingly supported Ronald Reagan and other Republican candidates for national office in 1980 and 1984, and that they continue to oppose any foreign policy initiative perceived as "soft" on communism. Nevertheless, the vote in local elections has become more progressive and guided by local concerns and issues. During a recent mayoral election in Miami, for example, the Republican candidate finished a distant last. The final race was between two Cuban-Americans, a conservative banker supported by the Latin and Anglo business communities and a more progressive, Harvard-trained lawyer. The latter won handily, primarily because of a heavy Cuban grass-roots vote. Similarly, indications are that Cuban representatives in the state legislature are more likely than their Republican colleagues to be concerned with populist issues, especially those involving ethnic minorities.

An important topic for future research is the apparent convergence of the political organizations representing major Spanish-origin groups. Although, as noted earlier, there is little similarity in the historical origins or present socioeconomic situation of these groups, political leaders see a basic community of interests on such issues as the defense of bilingualism and a common cultural image. If the term *Hispanic* means anything of substance at present, it is at the political level. An indication of this trend is the emergence of the National Association of Latin Elected Officials (NALEO), a

Table 6.4 [orig. table 6.4] U.S. citizenship acquisition for selected countries and regions, 1970-80

	Naturalized 1971-80	Percentage of total	Cohort of 1970 ^b	Naturalized during next decade	Percentage of cohort	Peak year during decade ^c
Cuba	178,374	12	16,334	7,621	47	8th (2,444)
Mexico	68,152	5	44,469	1,475	3	9th (404)
Central and South America	40,843	3	31,316	6,161	20	9th (1,480)
Canada	130,380	9	13,804	856	6	8th (182)
Western Europe	371,683	25	92,433	17,965	19	7th (5,103)
Asia	473,754	32	92,816	44,554	48	7th (15,129)
Totals ^a	1,464,772		373,326	94,532	25	7th (27,681)

^a All countries; column figures do not add up to row total because of exclusion of other world regions (Africa, Eastern Europe, and Oceania).
^b Number of immigrants admitted for legal permanent residence.
^c Year of most numerous naturalizations during the decade after legal entry; actual number naturalized in parentheses.

Source: Immigration and Naturalization Service, *Annual Reports*, various years.

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strong organization consisting of Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Cuban congressmen, state legislators, and mayors.⁴⁸ So far, this organization has managed to function smoothly and effectively, despite major differences among its disparate constituents.

Citizenship

The first step for effective political participation by any foreign group is citizenship acquisition. Table 6.4 presents data showing the different rates of naturalization among the foreign-born in recent years. During the 1970s, naturalized Mexican immigrants represented only 6 percent of the total, even though they were the most numerous of all nationalities and represented close to 20 percent of all legal admissions during the preceding decade. By contrast, the much smaller number of Cuban immigrants contributed 12 percent of all naturalizations, exceeding the figure for Canada despite the much larger number of eligible Canadian immigrants. The rest of Latin America contributed only 3 percent, owing to the relatively small size of the cohorts of legal immigrants from the region before the 1970s.

The remaining columns of the table present data for the 1970 immigrant cohort that is representative of trends during recent years. The highest rates of naturalization are for Asian immigrants – mostly Chinese, Indians, South Koreans, and Filipinos – and Cubans. Citizenship acquisition among these groups represented close to one-half of the 1970 immigrant cohorts from the respective source countries. Intermediate rates – close to one-fifth of the 1970 immigrant cohort – are found among western Europeans and Central and South Americans. The lowest rates, less than 7 percent, are for immigrants from the two countries contiguous to the United States: Mexico and Canada. Mexican immigrants are also the slowest to naturalize, as indicated by their peak year of naturalizations during the decade – the ninth, two full years behind the norm for all countries.⁴⁹

The analytical literature on determinants of these differences contains two separate strands: first, studies that attempt to explain variation among nationalities, and second, those that focus on proximate causes within a particular group. A pioneer contribution to the first or comparative literature is the study by sociologist W. Bernard, who identified literacy, educational attainment, and occupational prestige as major causes of differences in the rates of naturalization between “old” and “new” European immigrants,

^a All countries; column figures do not add up to row total because of exclusion of other world regions (Africa, Eastern Europe, and Oceania).

^b Number of immigrants admitted for legal permanent residence.

^c Year of most numerous naturalizations during the decade after legal entry; actual number naturalized in parentheses.

Source: Immigration and Naturalization Service, *Annual Reports*, various years.

as defined in his time. Subsequent studies have generally supported Bernard's hypothesis.⁵⁰

In addition, more recent quantitative studies have identified other variables, such as the political origin of migration and the geographical proximity of the country of origin. Refugees from communist-controlled countries naturalize in greater numbers, all things being equal, than other immigrants. Those from nearby countries, especially nations that share land borders with the United States, tend to resist citizenship change more than others. Both results seem to reflect the operation of a general factor, which may be labeled the potential "reversibility" of migration: immigrants for whom it is more difficult to return because of political conditions back home or the high cost and difficulty of the journey tend to naturalize at higher rates than those for whom return is a simple bus ride away.⁵¹

Studies of the proximate determinants of citizenship have generally focused on minorities with the lowest propensities to naturalize. Mexican immigrants are notorious in this respect, their collective behavior having given rise to a huge gap between the pool of potentially eligible citizens (and voters) and its actual size. Accordingly, several recent studies have sought to identify the principal determinants of both predispositions and behaviors with respect to U.S. citizenship within Mexican immigrant communities. This research includes both quantitative analyses and ethnographic observations.⁵² Studies that focus on objective variables have identified such characteristics as length of U.S. residence, level of education, knowledge of English, age, marital status, citizenship of spouse, and place of residence as potentially significant. In general, the decision to naturalize appears to derive from a complex of determinants, including individual needs and motivations and facilitational factors. Mexican immigrants whose stake in the United States is limited to low-wage jobs have little motivation to obtain citizenship. Those, on the other hand, who have acquired property, whose spouses or children are U.S. citizens, and who begin to feel barriers to upward mobility because of their legal status have much greater incentives to begin the process.⁵³

Motivation is not enough, however, because citizenship acquisition is not easy. It requires knowledge of English and some knowledge of civics to pass the naturalization test, which favors the better-educated immigrants and those who have lived in the country longer and know more about it. Finally, there is the question of external facilitation. The most significant factors in this respect are

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social networks and the conduct of official agencies in charge of the process. Networks, as noted earlier, play a variable role in this process because networks consisting solely of Mexican kin and friends tend to be unsupportive of the naturalization process and those that include U.S.-born or naturalized relatives and friends facilitate it.⁵⁴ The key governmental agency involved in the process, the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), has a decidedly ambiguous approach toward Mexican applicants. Indeed, ethnographic research has identified "fear of the INS" as a significant deterrent to naturalization among Mexican immigrants, and North, in *The Long Gray Welcome*, an in-depth study of the agency's naturalization procedures, describes the numerous obstacles – from heavy backlogs to arbitrary examiners – often thrown in the way of poor and poorly educated immigrants.⁵⁵ Confronted with such barriers, the appropriate question may not be why so few Mexicans naturalize but why so many succeed in doing so.

Conclusion

The history of the major Spanish-origin communities above the Rio Grande reveals a turning point with the expansion and intervention of a rising national power during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and provides context for today's efforts to reach economic and political parity within American society. The success of these efforts depends on the material and educational resources of the different immigrant groups and on the social contexts that receive them. Workers coming to perform low-wage labor in agriculture and industry have faced the greatest obstacles because they lack the resources to move up quickly in the U.S. economy and have been subject to much discrimination. In addition, immigrant workers who see their journeys as temporary maintain strong expectations of return, which adds to their sense of "foreignness" and discourages active participation in mainstream American life.⁵⁶

The contrasting history of the Cuban community is not likely to be repeated any time soon because the circumstances of its origin and initial reception in the United States are unique. Except for professionals migrating legally from several South American countries, whose patterns of adaptation tend to be fairly smooth, the most likely trend for future years is the continuation of manual labor immigration from Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and

other countries of the Caribbean Basin. One reason for this trend is the resilience of networks of migration over time: migrant flows tend to become self-sustaining through the actions of kin and friends across space. A second reason is the continuing demand for immigrant labor by domestic employers. In the West, demand for Mexican workers remains strong both in agriculture and in industry. In the East, a similar demand exists for Colombians, Dominicans, West Indians, and other Caribbean nationalities.⁵⁷

An exception to this trend is the situation of Puerto Ricans. For reasons discussed above, the condition of "preferred" low-wage labor shifted gradually from this minority to other Caribbean immigrant groups. As a result, the cities of the Northeast face the paradox of unemployment levels among their Puerto Rican communities twice as large as those of native whites, along with the influx of thousands of undocumented immigrants who face little trouble in finding employment. The situation of urban Puerto Ricans thus approaches the bleak one of inner-city blacks, except for the possibility of return migration to the island. Thousands have made use in recent years of this "reverse" escape valve away from the grim conditions of the mainland. In general, the diversity of Spanish-origin communities and the complexity of migration and settlement patterns is likely to continue. Although it is too soon to anticipate the outcome, the growing size of many of these groups, their concentration, and their increasing political and economic presence guarantee them a not insignificant role in American society.

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What You Do Is What You Are



NICKIE McWHIRTER

Nickie McWhirter is a reporter and columnist for the *Detroit News* and the *Detroit Free Press*. This essay, first published in the *Detroit Free Press*, argues that "Americans . . . tend to define and judge everybody in terms of the work they do, especially work performed for pay." McWhirter further argues that defining a person by how that person "earns his or her rent money" is not always accurate or fair.

BEFORE YOU READ

- **THINK** about someone you know who holds a prestigious job but whom you do not respect. Think also about someone you know who holds a menial job but whom you do respect. If you were describing these two people to someone, would you identify them by their job titles or in some other way?
- **EXAMINE** the first sentence of this essay. Do you agree with McWhirter that the practice of defining people in terms of the work they do is prevalent among Americans? If you agree, why do you think this is true? If not, how might you refute this assertion?
- **WRITE** a journal entry in which you explore the idea that young people choose a profession on the basis of how it will define them rather than on the basis of their qualifications for or interest in that profession.

AS YOU READ

Underline and number in the margin each of McWhirter's assertions about the effects of defining someone on the basis of how that person earns a living.



Americans, unlike people almost everywhere else in the world, tend to define and judge everybody in terms of the work they do, especially work performed for pay. Charlie is a doctor; Sam is a carpenter; Mary Ellen is a copywriter at a small ad agency. It is as if by defining how a person earns his or her rent money, we validate or reject that person's existence. Through the work and job

title, we evaluate the worth of the life attached. Larry is a laid-off auto worker; Tony is a retired teacher; Sally is a former showgirl and blackjack dealer from Vegas. It is as if by learning that a person currently earns no money at a job—and maybe hasn't earned any money at a job for years—we assign that person to limbo, at least for the present. We define such non-employed persons in terms of their past job history.

This seems peculiar to me. People aren't cast in bronze because of the jobs they hold or once held. A retired teacher, for example, may spend a lot of volunteer time working with handicapped children or raising money for the Loyal Order of Hibernating Hibiscus. That apparently doesn't count. Who's Tony? A retired teacher. A laid-off auto worker may pump gas at his cousin's gas station or sell encyclopedias on weekends. But who's Larry? Until and unless he begins to work steadily again, he's a laid-off auto worker. This is the same as saying he's nothing now, but he used to be something: an auto worker.

There is a whole category of other people who are "just" something. To be "just" anything is the worst. It is not to be recognized by society as having much value at all, not now and probably not in the past either. To be "just" anything is to be totally discounted, at least for the present. There are lots of people who are "just" something. "Just" a housewife immediately and painfully comes to mind. We still hear it all the time. Sometimes women who have kept a house and reared six children refer to themselves as "just" a housewife. "Just" a bum, "just" a kid, "just" a drunk, bag lady, old man, student, punk are some others. You can probably add to the list. The "just" category contains present non-earners, people who have no past job history highly valued by society and people whose present jobs are on the low-end of pay and prestige scales. A person can be "just" a cab driver, for example, or "just" a janitor. No one is ever "just" a vice-president, however.

We're supposed to be a classless society, but we are not. We don't recognize a titled nobility. We refuse to acknowledge dynastic privilege. But we certainly separate the valued from the valueless, and it has a lot to do with jobs and the importance or prestige we attach to them.

It is no use arguing whether any of this is correct or proper. Rationally it is silly. That's our system, however, and we should not only keep it in mind but we should teach our children how it works. It is perfectly swell to want to grow up to be a cowboy or a nurse. Kids should know, however, that quite apart from earnings potential, the cattle breeder is much more respected than the hired hand. The doctor gets a lot more respect and privilege than the nurse.

I think some anthropologist ought to study our uncataloged system of awarding respect and deference to each other based on jobs we hold. Where does a vice-president-product planning fit in? Is that better than vice-president-sales in the public consciousness, or unconsciousness? Writers earn diddly dot, but I suspect they are held in higher esteem than wealthy rock musicians—that is, if everybody older than 40 gets to vote.

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How do we decide which jobs have great value and, therefore, the job-
holders are wonderful people? Why is someone who builds shopping centers
called an entrepreneur while someone who builds freeways is called a contrac-
tor? I have no answers to any of this, but we might think about the phenome-
non the next time we are tempted to fawn over some stranger because we find
out he happens to be a judge, or the next time we catch ourselves discounting
the personal worth of the garbage collector.



AFTER YOU READ

- **THINK** about the American work ethic—the high value we traditionally place on work. Do you see a relationship between this work ethic and the practice of defining people on the basis of what they do to earn a living? What other causes can you identify for what McWhirter believes is a typically American practice?
- **EXAMINE** McWhirter's assertion (in paragraph 4) that "We're supposed to be a classless society, but we are not." Do you agree or disagree with this assertion? Do you think McWhirter supports this assertion adequately in this essay? Why or why not?
- **WRITE** an essay in which you agree or disagree with one of McWhirter's assertions. You may want to consult Lesson Five, "Responding to a Text," on the *Interactions* website. (See the note on page 19 for directions.)