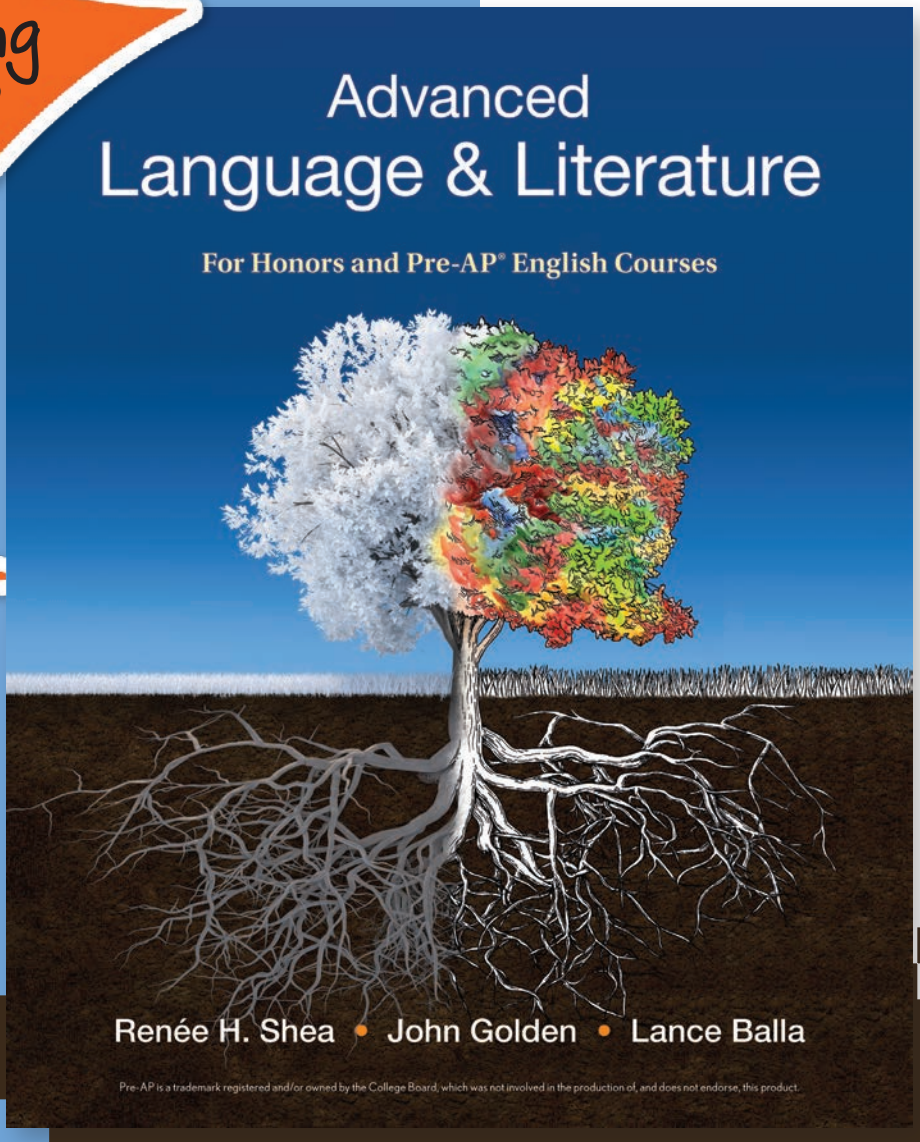
Coming
February 2016



A COMPLETE SOLUTION for Honors and Pre-AP® English 10

Praise for *Advanced Language & Literature*

When I read this, it's as through I'm looking at an ideal way of thinking about the way to choose balanced selections for any unit. There is a balance of classic to contemporary pieces, a balance of voices, and certainly the inclusion of all the visual pieces, as well as the speeches and non-fiction make this a prize! **–Sarah Brown Wessling, Johnston HS, IA**

The text offers a harmonious balance between objectives of the two AP® courses. The range of fresh material is outstanding, and I think AP® teachers will be happy to see the level of sophistication in both text and skills that the Pre-AP® students will experience. **–Ann Jackson, Crosby HS, TX**

Comprehensive, thoughtful, challenging, but with an eye toward engaging students through relevant themes and readings.

–Debbie Harrison, Kimberly HS, WI

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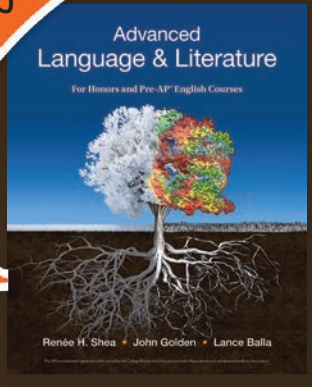

A COMPLETE SOLUTION for Honors and Pre-AP® English 10

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About the Authors

Renée H. Shea was professor of English and Modern Languages and Director of Freshman Composition at Bowie State University in Maryland. A College Board® faculty consultant for more than 30 years in AP® Language, Literature, and Pre-AP® English, she has been a reader and question leader for both AP English exams. Renee recently served as a member of the Development Committee for AP® Language and Composition, and is currently a member of the English Academic Advisory Committee for the College Board, as well as the SAT® Critical Reading Test Development Committee. She is coauthor of *The Language of Composition, Conversations in American Literature,* and *Literature & Composition* as well as two volumes in the NCTE High School Literature series (on Amy Tan and Zora Neale Hurston).

John Golden is an English teacher and instructional specialist at Cleveland High School in Portland, Oregon and is currently an advisor to the College Board®'s 6-12 English Language Arts Development Committee. An English teacher for over twenty years, John has developed curriculum and led workshops for the College Board's Pacesetter and SpringBoard® English programs. He is the author of *Reading in the Dark: Using Film as a Tool in the English Classroom* (NCTE, 2001) and *Reading in the Reel World: Teaching Documentaries and Other Nonfiction Texts* (NCTE, 2006), and the producer of *Teaching Ideas: A Video Resource for AP English* (Bedford/St. Martin's, 2008) and The NCTE Centennial Film: *Reading the Past, Writing the Future* (2010).

Lance Balla is former Curriculum Developer and current Assistant Principal in the Bellevue school district in Bellevue, Washington. He was an AP® teacher for almost twenty years, and a College Board® Faculty Consultant for over ten years, as well as being a reader and table leader for the AP® Literature Exam. Lance has been a coauthor on the College Board's Springboard® program, and was a member of the SAT® Critical Reading Test Development Committee. Awards and recognition include the White House Distinguished Teacher Award, the Teacher Recognition Award from the U.S. Department of Education, the Washington State Award for Professional Excellence, and the Woodring College of Education Award for Outstanding Teaching.

This book takes care of just about everything. I think it is a rich resource and it will provide a ready-made curriculum for the course. It organizes and illustrates a broad array of texts and focuses on skills and habits of mind.

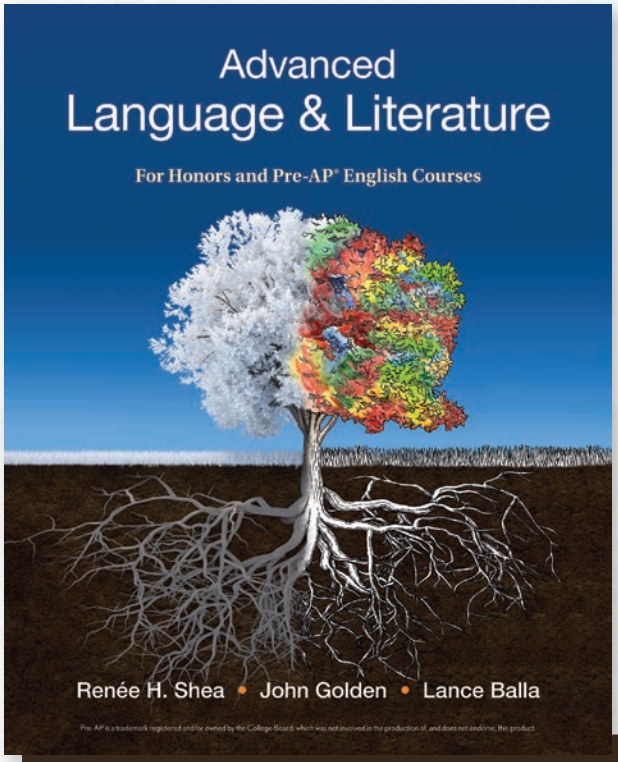
—Claudette Brassil • Mt. Ararat HS, ME

Advanced Language & Literature

For Honors and Pre-AP® English Courses

Renee H. Shea • Bowie State University (MD)
John Golden • Portland Public Schools (OR)
Lance Balla • Bellevue School District (WA)

AP® teachers know the roots of success are established in the earlier grades. That's why we've developed *Advanced Language & Literature*, a complete solution for 10th grade Honors and Pre-AP® English classes. Driven by the expertise of Renee Shea, John Golden, and Lance Balla, this book blends instruction in literary analysis, rhetoric, argument, and synthesis with a groundbreaking thematic anthology that weds fiction and nonfiction, poetry and prose, universal themes and global literary voices. The result is a book that not only builds the skills necessary for success in both AP® English courses, but draws students into the vibrant cultural conversations that define the study of English. *Advanced Language & Literature* gives students all the support they need for AP® success.



February 2016 (©2016), casebound, 1296 pages
978-1-4576-5741-2

Strong Roots for AP® Success

In-Depth Development of AP® Language and AP® Literature Skills.

Skills like close reading, literary analysis, rhetorical analysis, argumentation, and synthesis need careful development and constant reinforcement if they are to become academic habits of mind. In *Advanced Language & Literature*, these concepts are introduced through straightforward, thoroughly scaffolded lessons in the opening chapters, and then deepened through Reading and Writing Workshops in each thematic chapter.

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Advanced Language & Literature is a colorful and visually dynamic book, but it might look quite a bit different from what you are used to. We believe that visual literacy is important, and that images in a textbook should never be mere decoration. We made it our goal in *Advanced Language & Literature* for every visual text to be accompanied by a question or assignment with a clear, authentic pedagogical purpose. Images were carefully selected to inform the reading of a print text, suggest new ideas, provide additional context, extend an understanding to the real world, or allow students to make interesting connections.

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- The **Annotated Teacher's Edition** includes responses to questions, teaching tips, notes on potential pitfalls for students, called out key passages for close reading, and other essential tools and tips from master teachers.

- The **Teacher's Resource Flash Drive** includes all of the resources you need to plan and teach successfully from *Advanced Language & Literature*. It includes planning tools, text information, Pre-AP® strategies and how-tos, vocabulary support, supplemental handouts including key passages for annotation, and more. For each reading we've included an introduction to the content and context of the piece, warm-up activities, and suggested teaching approaches.

- The crown jewels of the Teacher's Resources are the **assessment pathways**. For each chapter, the Teacher's Resources suggest a possible unit pathway of key instruction, readings, and formative assessments in the book that build the skills necessary for success on the summative assessment. The summative assessment topic for each chapter has been carefully aligned to the instruction in the Reading and Writing Workshop for each chapter. For instance, Chapter 5 on Identity and Society is a chapter that lends itself to reflection and narrative writing. Because of this focus, the workshop topics in that chapter are Point of View in Narrative and Writing a Narrative. The summative assessment for that chapter is writing a narrative essay. These assessment pathways create a clear trajectory that ties together content, instruction, and assessment into helpful, flexible unit plans.

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7. Ethics

• How do we tell "right" from "wrong"? • Can there be a universal understanding of what is "right" or "wrong"? • To what extent do age, culture, and other factors affect our ethical decisions? • When making ethical decisions, whose needs should be most important? The individual's, other people's, the larger society's? • What causes us to cheat? Is cheating always wrong? Who gets to define "cheating"?

Central Text

Michael Sandel, from The Case Against Perfection (nonfiction)

Conversation—Do the Right Thing

1. **Gabriel García Márquez**, A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings (fiction)
2. **Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie**, Cell One (fiction)
3. **Nathan Englander**, Free Fruit for Young Widows (fiction)
4. **John Updike**, A & P (fiction)
5. **William Stafford**, Traveling through the Dark (poetry)
6. **Wisława Szymborska**, A Contribution to Statistics (poetry)
7. **Annie Dillard**, An American Childhood (memoir)
8. **Sam Harris**, from Lying (nonfiction)

Entering the Conversation

- Making Connections
- Synthesizing Sources

Conversation—The Cheating Culture

1. **Robert Kolker**, Cheating Upwards (nonfiction)
2. **Chuck Klosterman**, Why We Look the Other Way (nonfiction)
3. **Christopher Bergland**, Cheaters Never Win (nonfiction)
4. **Brad Allenby**, Is Human Enhancement Cheating? (nonfiction)
5. **Mia Consalvo**, Cheating is Good For You (nonfiction)
6. **David Callahan**, from The Cheating Culture (nonfiction)
7. The Ethics of Photo Manipulation (photographs)

Entering the Conversation

- Making Connections
- Synthesizing Sources

Reading Workshop—Argument by Analogy

Writing Workshop—Writing a Synthesis Essay

Thematic topics allow for lively and powerful discussions, as well as allowing students to draw connections among texts and across genres.

Essential Questions work hand-in-hand with chapter introductions to open up important issues and get students thinking critically and forming opinions.

A **Central Text** of significant richness and complexity anchors each chapter, giving students an opportunity to grapple with big ideas.

Each chapter includes a grouping of predominantly **literary texts** on a universal theme that sparks thought, writing, and contemplation of how literature informs our lives. Throughout the book, **literary selections** were chosen with global representation in mind, exposing students to new voices, cultures, and ideas.

Each piece is followed by three types of probing questions:

- **Understanding and Interpreting** questions move students from comprehension to an analysis of themes and ideas.
- **Analyzing Language, Style, and Structure** questions ask students to read closely and think carefully about how texts are created and what makes them effective.
- **Connecting, Arguing, and Extending** questions are writing prompts ranging from personal responses, to text-based interpretations, to research projects that extend beyond the text.

Each Conversation ends with **Making Connections** questions that ask students to compare and contrast the viewpoints and ideas in the texts, as well as **Synthesizing Sources** prompts that ask students to draw on multiple sources to support a literary interpretation or to extend the ideas in the Conversation beyond the text and into the real world.

The **second Conversation** in each chapter is primarily nonfiction, focusing in on a specific current issue or debate

Carefully selected readings within each Conversation represent a range of difficulty, from approachable texts to ones that might be a bit of a reach. This gives teachers the flexibility to differentiate instruction based on skill-level, while keeping all students engaged in the same Conversation.

As in the literary Conversation, the nonfiction Conversation ends with **comparison and synthesis questions**. In this case, the synthesis questions target the skills of the AP® English Language course, asking students to draw on multiple sources to support an evidence-based argument.

Drawing on the readings in the chapter, and building on the concepts and skills introduced in Chapters 1-4, these **Reading Workshops** delve deeper into a specific analytical concept.

Writing Workshops at the end of each chapter walk students step-by-step through the process of writing a specific style of academic essay. These workshops cover the big issue of purpose, while also helping students with nuts-and-bolts concerns like how to build a solid thesis, integrate quotations, and acknowledge sources.

Notes

Contents

2. **Wilfred Owen**, *Dulce Et Decorum Est* (poetry)
3. **William Shakespeare**, *St. Crispin's Day Speech* (drama)
4. **Vu Bao**, *The Man Who Stained his Soul* (fiction)
5. **Katey Schultz**, *Deuce Out* (fiction)
6. **Kevin Sites**, from *In the Hot Zone* (nonfiction)
7. **Brian Turner**, *2000 lbs.* (poetry)
8. **Karim Ben Khelifa**, *My Enemy, Myself* (photo essay)

Conversation:
Displacement and Assimilation

1. **Jean de Crevecoeur**, from *Letters from an American Farmer* (nonfiction)
2. **Anna Quindlen**, *Quilt of a Country* (nonfiction)
3. **Li-Young Lee**, *For a New Citizen of these United States* (poetry)
4. **Nola Kambanda**, *My New World Journey* (nonfiction)
5. **Amit Majmudar**, *Dothead* (poetry)
6. **Maira Kalman**, from *And the Pursuit of Happiness* (graphic essay)

Reading Workshop – Analyzing Character and Theme

Writing Workshop – Writing a Thematic Interpretation

9 – (Mis)Communication

What factors lead to effective or ineffective communication between people? • What role does culture play in effective and ineffective communication? • How do changes in technologies affect how we communicate?

Central Text
Edmond Rostand, *Cyrano de Bergerac* (drama)

Conversation:
Language and Power

1. **Frederick Douglass**, from *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (nonfiction)
2. **Sandra Cisneros**, *No Speak English* (fiction)
3. **Ha Jin**, *Children as Enemies* (fiction)
4. **Mutabaruka**, *Dis Poem* (poetry)
5. **Kory Stamper**, *Slang for the Ages* (nonfiction)
6. **Firoozeh Dumas**, *Hot Dogs and Wild Geese* (nonfiction)
7. **Marjorie Agosin**, *English* (poetry)
8. **W.S. Merwin**, *Losing a Language* (poetry)

Conversation:
Socially Networked

1. **Clive Thompson**, *Brave New World of Digital Intimacy* (nonfiction)
2. **Sherry Turkle**, from *Alone Together* (nonfiction)
3. **Tim Egan**, *The Hoax of Digital Life* (nonfiction)
4. **Sherman Alexie**, *Facebook Sonnet* (poetry)
5. **Robbie Cooper**, *Alter Egos: Avatars and their Creators* (photographs)
6. **Alexis Madrigal**, *Why Facebook and Google's Concept of 'Real Names' Is Revolutionary* (nonfiction)
7. **Leonard Pitts**, *The anonymous back-stabbing of Internet message boards* (nonfiction)
8. **Jason Harrington**, *Do you Like Me? Click Yes or No* (fiction)

Reading Workshop – Understanding Irony

Writing Workshop – Writing a Close Literary Analysis

10 – Utopia and Dystopia

What makes a perfect society? • Why do utopias often become dystopias? • How do we define "happiness"? • Will robots and artificial intelligence help us perfect ourselves and our world, or will they make humans obsolete?

Central Text
Jamaica Kincaid, from *A Small Place* (nonfiction)

Conversation:
The Pursuit of Happiness

1. **Ursula LeGuin**, *The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas* (fiction)
2. **Nikki Giovanni**, *Nikki-Rosa* (poetry)
3. **Wisława Szymborska**, *Utopia* (poetry)
4. **Jane Shore**, *Happy Family* (poetry)
5. **Pico Iyer**, *The Joy of Less* (nonfiction)
6. **Jon Meachem**, *Free to Be Happy* (nonfiction)
7. **Chinua Achebe**, *Civil Peace* (fiction)
8. **Kurt Vonnegut**, *Harrison Bergeron* (fiction)

Conversation:
Our Robotic Future?

1. **Isaac Asimov**, *Robot Dreams* (fiction)
2. **Margaret Atwood**, *Are Humans Necessary?* (nonfiction)
3. **Kevin Kelly**, from *Better than Human* (nonfiction)
4. **James Barrat**, from *Our Final Invention* (nonfiction)
5. **Rosa Brooks**, *In Defense of Killer Robots* (nonfiction)
6. **Richard Fisher**, *Is it OK to torture or murder a robot?* (nonfiction)
7. **Arthur House**, *The Real Cyborgsn* (nonfiction)
8. **Francis Fukuyama**, *Transhumanism* (nonfiction)

Reading Workshop – Analyzing Diction and Tone

Writing Workshop – Writing a Rhetorical Analysis

7
Ethics

- How do we tell “right” from “wrong”?
- Can there be a universal understanding of what is “right” or “wrong”?
- To what extent do age, culture, and other factors affect our ethical decisions?
- When making ethical decisions, whose needs should be most important? The individual’s, other people’s, the larger society’s?
- What causes us to cheat? Is cheating always wrong? Who gets to define “cheating”?

Imagine that you are the operator of a train that has suddenly lost its brakes. Ahead of you on the tracks are *five* railroad workers who are unaware that you are moments away from slamming into them at a speed that will likely kill them all. But then, you notice that there is a split up ahead, which would allow you to switch to a different track, at the end of which is only *one* railroad worker. Your choice: keep on the first track and kill five, or switch tracks and kill only one. Do you kill the one to save the five? Why or why not?

This is a classic ethical dilemma that Michael Sandel, the author of the Central Text in this chapter, offers students in his justice course at Harvard University in order to illustrate the complexity of ethical choices. Philosopher Judith Jarvis Thomson complicates the dilemma even further by asking you to imagine that you were no longer the operator, but instead a bystander on a bridge watching the train heading toward the five workers, and next to you on the bridge—leaning far over—is a rather large man. You could very easily

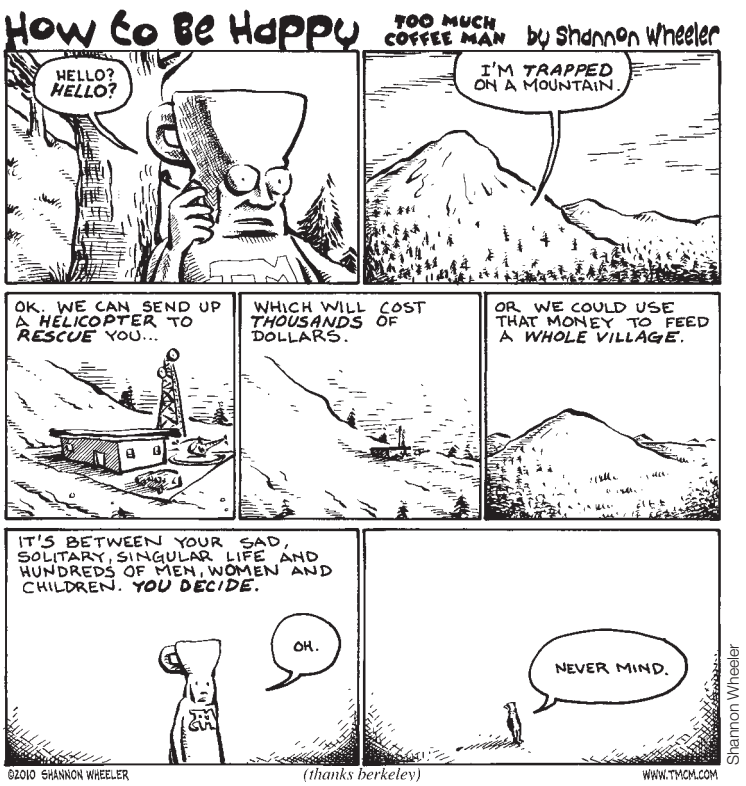
Photo: Shutterstock. Art: Christian Mojallali.

push the man off the bridge in front of the train, which would stop its progress, thereby saving the five at the end of the track. Would you push the man, killing one to save the five? Why or why not? What's similar and different between this scenario and the previous one? What if you knew for certain that the large man on the bridge was a murderer who had gotten away with his crime?

Obviously, these are situations that do not occur too frequently, but they can help us to clarify what we mean by "ethics." As a branch of philosophy, ethics tries to articulate the reasons that some actions are considered "right" and others "wrong." Just about everyone will say that killing is wrong, and yet, in scenarios such as the ones above, could killing sometimes be justified? Most people will say that stealing is wrong—yet could stealing be acceptable if you couldn't afford the medicine that was needed to save your dying child? Is it OK to cheat on a test that everyone else is cheating on, especially since you might be competing with them for acceptance into a good college?

We know that different cultures, religions, and nations have different customs, laws, and practices, but do they also have different ethical codes? Philosopher Bertrand Russell wrote, "I cannot see how to refute the arguments for the subjectivity of ethical values, but I find myself incapable of believing that all that is wrong with wanton cruelty is that I don't like it." In other words, he expects that there should be some things that all people—regardless of culture—ought to be able to agree are right or wrong, in at least some situations.

What essential ethical conflict does this cartoon rely on to make its point? Think of an example of this conflict from your own life.



OPENING ACTIVITY 1

Working with a partner or a small group, look through the following list and classify the actions as either "very bad," "kind of bad," or "not so bad." Be prepared to share your reasoning for why you put each where you did:

- robbing a bank
- taking money from a parent without asking
- cheating on a husband or wife
- cheating on a girlfriend or boyfriend
- copying answers during a test
- copying homework
- lying to your friends about why you didn't meet up with them
- lying to a friend about whether the terrible haircut he or she got looks good
- illegally downloading a song from the Internet
- stealing a CD from a music store
- overcharging an insurance company if you are a doctor
- overcharging a patient if you are a doctor
- stealing a book from a bookstore
- taking a library book without checking it out
- going 15 miles per hour over the speed limit
- texting while driving
- driving while intoxicated

OPENING ACTIVITY 2

Read through the following scenarios and determine what you would do in each situation and why:

1. It is May of your senior year and your best friend has been accepted to Harvard on a full scholarship. Unfortunately, her mother has become very sick, and your friend has had to take care of her younger siblings, which has made it difficult for her to stay on top of her schoolwork and maintain the GPA required for her scholarship. She calls you one night in a panic because she has forgotten to do a major assignment due the following day and her teacher never accepts late work. You have completed the identical assignment for a different teacher. You go to a very big school and it is unlikely that either of the two teachers will ever see the other's assignments, so if you let your friend copy your work, the chances of your being caught are not high. Nevertheless, your school has a zero tolerance policy for cheating, and if you are caught, both of you could be subject to severe punishments, including an automatic F in the class. Do you email your friend your assignment so that she can turn it in as her own work? Why or why not?
2. You are a parent of an eighteen-year-old boy, and you, he, and your spouse are traveling to Singapore, a country with extremely strict drug laws. At the airport in Singapore, the security officials, using drug-sniffing dogs, begin looking closely at

your son's bag. You have suspected in the past that your son may have smoked marijuana, but you never knew for sure or confronted him about it. As the security officials move closer to the bag, you look at your son's face, and you know for sure that he has brought marijuana with him. At the same time, you realize your spouse knows this as well and is preparing to take the blame for your son, which would likely lead to his or her serving many years in prison. When the security officials ask, "Whose bag is this?" what do you do? Why?

3. Imagine that you are working for a government intelligence agency. You captured a confirmed terrorist whom you suspect might have information about an imminent terrorist attack that you believe would result in the deaths of thousands of citizens. The terrorist is not offering the information willingly. Would you authorize torture on the terrorist if you thought it gave you a reasonable chance of preventing the attack? Why or why not?
4. The following scenario is a real-life example from a famous court case in England called *The Queen v. Dudley and Stephens.* In 1884, four British men survived a shipwreck and floated for three weeks in a lifeboat in the Atlantic. When they ran out of food and water, the captain decided that they should draw straws to determine who would be killed and eaten in order to save the remaining three. The others refused. Eventually, the cabin boy became sick. When he was near death, the captain decided to kill him. The captain and the other two survivors ate his body, which kept them alive until they were rescued four days later. Upon returning to England, the captain was charged with murder. If you were on the jury, would you vote to convict the captain? Why or why not?
5. The following scenario is a classic fictional ethical situation called "The Heinz Dilemma": Imagine that you had a wife dying from a rare disease. A drug that might save her was available from a pharmacist in town, but he was charging $200,000, a sum that you could never pay and was ten times what the pharmacy paid for the drug wholesale. You borrowed all the money you could and went to the pharmacist with half the amount needed and asked him to sell the drug cheaper. When he refused, you became desperate and broke into the pharmacy to steal the drug. Should you have done that? More important, why or why not?

from The Case against Perfection

Michael Sandel

Political philosopher and Harvard professor Michael Sandel (b. 1953) is best known for the extremely popular course on ethics and justice that he has taught for the past twenty years. His class often needs to be held in a large lecture hall to accommodate the thousand or more students who enroll each semester. The selection you are about to read comes from an article published in the *Atlantic* in April 2004; five years later, Sandel expanded his argument into a book with the same title.

KEY CONTEXT In this essay, Sandel explores the ethics of genetic engineering in order to enhance the physical, intellectual, or emotional characteristics of a child. Although such procedures are not yet approved in the United States, the Food and Drug Administration has begun explorations into radical biological procedures that, if successful, would produce genetically modified human beings. At this point, the techniques being considered involve manipulation of DNA to prevent inheritance of devastating diseases that result from genetic abnormalities.

Part 1 The Case against Perfection

Breakthroughs in genetics present us with a promise and a predicament. The promise is that we may soon be able to treat and prevent a host of debilitating diseases. The predicament is that our newfound genetic knowledge may also enable us to manipulate our own nature — to enhance our muscles, memories, and moods; to choose the sex, height, and other genetic traits of our children; to make ourselves "better than well." When science moves faster than moral understanding, as it does today, men and women struggle to articulate their unease. In liberal societies they reach first for the language of autonomy, fairness, and individual rights. But this part of our moral vocabulary is ill equipped to address the hardest questions posed by genetic engineering. The genomic revolution has induced a kind of moral vertigo.

Consider cloning. The birth of Dolly the cloned sheep, in 1997, brought a torrent of concern about the prospect of cloned human beings. There are good medical reasons to worry. Most scientists agree that cloning is unsafe, likely to produce offspring with serious abnormalities. (Dolly recently died a premature death.) But suppose technology improved to the point where clones were at no greater risk than naturally conceived offspring. Would human cloning still be objectionable? Should our hesitation be moral as well as medical? What,

exactly, is wrong with creating a child who is a genetic twin of one parent, or of an older sibling who has tragically died — or, for that matter, of an admired scientist, sports star, or celebrity?

Some say cloning is wrong because it violates the right to autonomy: by choosing a child's genetic makeup in advance, parents deny the child's right to an open future. A similar objection can be raised against any form of bioengineering that allows parents to select or reject genetic characteristics. According to this argument, genetic enhancements for musical talent, say, or athletic prowess, would point children toward particular choices, and so designer children would never be fully free.

At first glance the autonomy argument seems to capture what is troubling about human cloning and other forms of genetic engineering. It is not persuasive, for two reasons. First, it wrongly implies that absent a designing parent, children are free to choose their characteristics for themselves. But none of us chooses his genetic inheritance. The alternative to a cloned or genetically enhanced child is not one whose future is unbound by particular talents but one at the mercy of the genetic lottery.

5 Second, even if a concern for autonomy explains some of our worries about made-to-order children, it cannot explain our moral hesitation about people who seek genetic remedies or enhancements for themselves. Gene therapy on somatic (that is, nonreproductive) cells, such as muscle cells and brain cells, repairs or replaces defective genes. The moral quandary arises when people use such therapy not to cure a disease but to reach beyond health, to enhance their physical or cognitive capacities, to lift themselves above the norm.

Like cosmetic surgery, genetic enhancement employs medical means for nonmedical ends — ends unrelated to curing or preventing disease or repairing injury. But unlike cosmetic surgery, genetic enhancement is more than skin-deep. If we are ambivalent about surgery or Botox injections for sagging chins and furrowed brows, we are all the more troubled by genetic engineering for stronger bodies, sharper memories, greater intelligence, and happier moods. The question is whether we are right to be troubled, and if so, on what grounds.

In order to grapple with the ethics of enhancement, we need to confront questions largely lost from view — questions about the moral status of nature, and about the proper stance of human beings toward the given world. Since these questions verge on theology, modern philosophers and political theorists tend to shrink from them. But our new powers of biotechnology make them unavoidable.

Muscles. Everyone would welcome a gene therapy to alleviate muscular dystrophy and to reverse the debilitating muscle loss that comes with old age. But what if the same therapy were used to improve athletic performance? Researchers have developed a synthetic gene that, when injected into the muscle cells of mice, prevents and even reverses natural muscle deterioration. The gene not only repairs wasted or injured muscles but also strengthens healthy ones. This success bodes well for human applications. H. Lee Sweeney, of the University of Pennsylvania, who leads the research, hopes his discovery will cure the immobility that afflicts the elderly. But Sweeney's bulked-up mice have already attracted the attention of athletes seeking a competitive edge. Although the therapy is not yet approved for human use, the prospect of genetically enhanced weight lifters, home-run sluggers, linebackers, and sprinters is easy to imagine. The widespread use of steroids and other performance-improving drugs in professional sports suggests that many athletes will be eager to avail themselves of genetic enhancement.

Suppose for the sake of argument that muscle-enhancing gene therapy, unlike steroids,

turned out to be safe — or at least no riskier than a rigorous weight-training regimen. Would there be a reason to ban its use in sports? There is something unsettling about the image of genetically altered athletes lifting SUVs or hitting 650-foot home runs or running a three-minute mile. But what, exactly, is troubling about it? Is it simply that we find such superhuman spectacles too bizarre to contemplate? Or does our unease point to something of ethical significance?

10 It might be argued that a genetically enhanced athlete, like a drug-enhanced athlete, would have an unfair advantage over his unenhanced competitors. But the fairness argument against enhancement has a fatal flaw: it has always been the case that some athletes are better endowed genetically than others, and yet we do not consider this to undermine the fairness of competitive sports. From the standpoint of fairness, enhanced genetic differences would be no worse than natural ones, assuming they were safe and made available to all. If genetic enhancement in sports is morally objectionable, it must be for reasons other than fairness.

Sex selection. Perhaps the most inevitable nonmedical use of bioengineering is sex selection. For centuries parents have been trying to choose the sex of their children. Today biotech succeeds where folk remedies failed.

One technique for sex selection arose with prenatal tests using amniocentesis and ultrasound. These medical technologies were developed to detect genetic abnormalities such as spina bifida and Down syndrome. But they can also reveal the sex of the fetus — allowing for the abortion of a fetus of an undesired sex. Even among those who favor abortion rights, few advocate abortion simply because the parents do not want a girl. Nevertheless, in traditional societies with a powerful cultural preference for boys, this practice has become widespread.

Sex selection need not involve abortion, however. For couples undergoing *in vitro* fertilization (IVF), it is possible to choose the sex of the child before the fertilized egg is implanted in the womb. One method makes use of preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD), a procedure developed to screen for genetic diseases. Several eggs are fertilized in a petri dish and grown to the eight-cell stage (about three days). At that point the embryos are tested to determine their sex. Those of the desired sex are implanted; the others are typically discarded. Although few couples are likely to undergo the difficulty and expense of IVF simply to choose the sex of their child, embryo screening is a highly reliable means of sex selection. And as our genetic knowledge increases, it may be possible to use PGD to cull embryos carrying undesired genes, such as those associated with obesity, height, and skin color. The science-fiction movie *Gattaca* depicts a future in which parents routinely screen embryos for sex, height, immunity to disease, and even IQ. There is something troubling about the *Gattaca* scenario, but it is not easy to identify what exactly is wrong with screening embryos to choose the sex of our children.

One line of objection draws on arguments familiar from the abortion debate. Those who believe that an embryo is a person reject embryo screening for the same reasons they reject abortion. If an eight-cell embryo growing in a petri dish is morally equivalent to a fully developed human being, then discarding it is no better than aborting a fetus, and both practices are equivalent to infanticide. Whatever its merits, however, this "pro-life" objection is not an argument against sex selection as such.

15 The latest technology poses the question of sex selection unclouded by the matter of an embryo's moral status. The Genetics & IVF Institute, a for-profit infertility clinic in Fairfax, Virginia, now offers a sperm-sorting technique that makes it possible to choose the sex of one's child before it is conceived. X-bearing sperm,

seeing connections

In a survey of 999 people who sought genetic counseling, most were eager for a wider spectrum of prenatal genetic tests—as long as they were for disease, according to Feighanne Hathaway, MS, of New York University Langone Medical Center, and colleagues.

Only a handful said they'd be interested in genetic tests for such traits as intelligence or height, the researchers said online in the *Journal of Genetic Counseling*.

"Although the media portrays a desire for 'designer babies,' this does not appear to be true among consumers of genetic testing services," Hathaway said in a statement.

The findings come from a questionnaire given to 2,246 people who came to the NYU Human Genetics Program for prenatal genetic counseling from July 2006 to February 2007.

Almost half of them—999, or 45 percent—agreed to answer the ten-question survey, the researchers said.

A majority of respondents said they would screen for mental retardation (75 percent), blindness (56 percent), deafness (54 percent), heart disease (52 percent), and cancer (51 percent).

The volunteers were also asked whether they'd test for diseases that caused death within a defined period of time after birth. Almost half—49.3 percent—said they'd elect prenatal testing for a condition that resulted in death by the age of five.

But the proportion who would seek testing fell as the hypothetical lifespan increased: 41.1 percent would choose testing for a disease that caused death by the age of twenty, 24.9 percent if the age of death was forty, and 19 percent if it was fifty.

Only a minority of respondents said they'd want genetic testing for enhancements, including athletic ability (10 percent), superior intelligence (12.6 percent), height (10.4 percent), and longevity (9.2 percent).

On the other hand, a majority of the volunteers (52.2 percent) would not rule out any form of genetic testing.

The questionnaire did not ask about sex selection using genetic testing, but five respondents who added comments said they thought testing for sex was never merited.

Based on this data, what conclusions can you draw about the attitude of the general public toward genetic engineering as a means of predicting and enhancing the well-being of human offspring?

which produce girls, carry more DNA than Y-bearing sperm, which produce boys; a device called a flow cytometer can separate them. The process, called MicroSort, has a high rate of success.

If sex selection by sperm sorting is objectionable, it must be for reasons that go beyond the debate about the moral status of the embryo. One such reason is that sex selection is an instrument of sex discrimination—typically against girls, as illustrated by the chilling sex ratios in India and China. Some speculate that societies with substantially more men than women will be less stable, more violent, and more prone to crime or war. These are legitimate worries—but the sperm-sorting company has a clever way of addressing them. It offers MicroSort only to couples who want to choose the sex of a child for purposes of "family balancing." Those with more sons than daughters may choose a girl, and vice versa. But customers may not use the technology to stock up on children of

the same sex, or even to choose the sex of their firstborn child. (So far the majority of MicroSort clients have chosen girls.) Under restrictions of this kind, do any ethical issues remain that should give us pause?

The case of MicroSort helps us isolate the moral objections that would persist if muscle-enhancement, memory-enhancement, and height-enhancement technologies were safe and available to all.

It is commonly said that genetic enhancements undermine our humanity by threatening our capacity to act freely, to succeed by our own efforts, and to consider ourselves responsible — worthy of praise or blame — for the things we do and for the way we are. It is one thing to hit seventy home runs as the result of disciplined training and effort, and something else, something less, to hit them with the help of steroids or genetically enhanced muscles. Of course, the roles of effort and enhancement will be a matter of degree. But as the role of enhancement increases, our admiration for the achievement fades — or, rather, our admiration for the achievement shifts from the player to his pharmacist. This suggests that our moral response to enhancement is a response to the diminished agency of the person whose achievement is enhanced.

Though there is much to be said for this argument, I do not think the main problem with enhancement and genetic engineering is that they undermine effort and erode human agency. The deeper danger is that they represent a kind of hyperagency — a Promethean aspiration to remake nature, including human nature, to serve our purposes and satisfy our desires. The problem is not the drift to mechanism but the drive to mastery. And what the drive to mastery misses and may even destroy is an appreciation of the gifted character of human powers and achievements.

20 To acknowledge the giftedness of life is to recognize that our talents and powers are not wholly our own doing, despite the effort we expend to develop and to exercise them. It is also to recognize that not everything in the world is open to whatever use we may desire or devise. Appreciating the gifted quality of life constrains the Promethean project and conduces to a certain humility. It is in part a religious sensibility. But its resonance reaches beyond religion.

It is difficult to account for what we admire about human activity and achievement without drawing upon some version of this idea. Consider two types of athletic achievement. We appreciate players like Pete Rose, who are not blessed with great natural gifts but who manage, through striving, grit, and determination, to excel in their sport. But we also admire players like Joe DiMaggio, who display natural gifts with grace and effortlessness. Now, suppose we learned that both players took performance-enhancing drugs. Whose turn to drugs would we find more deeply disillusioning? Which aspect of the athletic ideal — effort or gift — would be more deeply offended?

Some might say effort: the problem with drugs is that they provide a shortcut, a way to win without striving. But striving is not the point of sports; excellence is. And excellence consists at least partly in the display of natural talents and gifts that are no doing of the athlete who possesses them. This is an uncomfortable fact for democratic societies. We want to believe that success, in sports and in life, is something we earn, not something we inherit. Natural gifts, and the admiration they inspire, embarrass the meritocratic faith; they cast doubt on the conviction that praise and rewards flow from effort alone. In the face of this embarrassment we inflate the moral significance of striving, and depreciate giftedness. This distortion can be seen, for example, in network-television coverage of the Olympics, which focuses less on the feats the athletes perform than on heartrending

stories of the hardships they have overcome and the struggles they have waged to triumph over an injury or a difficult upbringing or political turmoil in their native land.

But effort isn't everything. No one believes that a mediocre basketball player who works and trains even harder than Michael Jordan deserves greater acclaim or a bigger contract. The real problem with genetically altered athletes is that they corrupt athletic competition as a human activity that honors the cultivation and display of natural talents. From this standpoint, enhancement can be seen as the ultimate expression of the ethic of effort and willfulness — a kind of high-tech striving. The ethic of willfulness and the biotechnological powers it now enlists are arrayed against the claims of giftedness.

Understanding and Interpreting

1 In the opening paragraph, Michael Sandel asserts that recent "breakthroughs in genetics present us with a promise and a predicament" that have caused "a kind of moral vertigo." Why? What is his explanation of how these breakthroughs affect our moral and ethical beliefs?

2 Sandel states that "breakthroughs in genetics" challenge our basic notions of "autonomy, fairness, and individual rights" (par. 1). According to Sandel, what is the basis for each of these three moral objections to genetic manipulation, and what is his assessment of each argument?

3 Sandel argues that "questions about the moral status of nature, and about the proper status of human beings toward the given world" make many people uncomfortable, yet "our new powers of biotechnology make them unavoidable" (par. 7). Why does he believe that we cannot avoid addressing these questions?

4 Why does Sandel believe that the fairness argument against genetic enhancement of muscles "has a fatal flaw" (par. 10)? Explain how you would support or challenge his reasoning in this instance.

5 Why does the process called "MicroSort," according to Sandel, "isolate the moral objections that would persist" if various genetic enhancement technologies "were safe and available to all" (par. 17)? Pay attention to why many view MicroSort as a more acceptable alternative to other methods of genetically engineered sex selection.

6 Explain what Sandel means in this statement: "The problem is not the drift to mechanism but the drive to mastery" (par. 19). How does this "drive to mastery" relate to what Sandel characterizes as "the gifted character of human powers and achievements"?

Analyzing Language, Style, and Structure

1 Sandel makes a provocative statement at the beginning of this essay: "The genomic revolution has induced a kind of moral vertigo" (par. 1). What is the impact of the figure of speech "moral vertigo"? Do you find it appropriate? Do you think it serves the author's purpose in the introduction to his argument? Explain why or why not.

2 In paragraphs 2 and 3, Sandel discusses cloning, a technique that had not, at the time of the article's publication, proved successful. How does this issue lay a foundation for the argument he is building?

3 Sandel draws a comparison between cosmetic surgery and genetic enhancement (par. 6), then points out that the comparison is limited, even faulty. What is the effect of his drawing the comparison and then dismissing it so quickly?

4 At the end of paragraph 2, Sandel asks a series of rhetorical questions, a strategy he uses throughout the essay. To what extent is it effective in this instance?

5 In his discussion of gene therapy for muscle enhancement (par. 8), Sandel cites the work of researcher H. Lee Sweeney, not a household name to most readers of the *Atlantic*. What is Sandel's purpose in including this specific reference rather than merely explaining that research into application of muscle enhancement therapy is in progress?

6 Sandel's explanation of sex selection is quite detailed, with considerable scientific information about several biotechnologies. Why does Sandel go to such lengths in an article published in a magazine appealing to a fairly general, although educated, audience?

7 Is Sandel's allusion to the mythical Prometheus (pars. 19 and 20) rhetorically appropriate to his topic and position, or does it strike you as hyperbole? Support your response with specifics from the essay.

8 Sandel supports one of his points using two baseball players, Joe DiMaggio and Pete Rose, as examples (par. 21). What is his purpose in choosing this example? Are these athletes likely to be familiar to his audience? Why do you think the example works or does not work to support his point?

Connecting, Arguing, and Extending

1 Sandel asserts that the "moral quandary arises when people use such [gene] therapy not to cure a disease but to reach beyond health, to enhance their physical or cognitive capacities, to lift themselves above the norm" (par. 5). To what extent do you believe it is morally wrong to use gene therapy for purposes other than prevention or cure of disease? Where do you draw the line between what is morally acceptable and unacceptable?

2 Sandel points out that one of the arguments against bioengineering sex selection is that it is "an instrument of sex discrimination" (par. 16). Explain why you agree or disagree with this viewpoint.

3 Some philosophers have criticized Sandel for being guilty of the slippery-slope fallacy. That is, they believe that his contention that "science moves faster than moral understanding" (par. 1) suggests that allowing certain forms of genetic engineering will pave the way for any and all types of enhancement. To what extent do you think that Sandel's argument is weakened by a slippery-slope line of reasoning?

4 Sandel asserts that "striving is not the point of sports; excellence is" (par. 22). Develop your own argument—not necessarily discussing genetic enhancement—to support, challenge, or qualify Sandel's claim.

5 Some ethicists argue that somatic cell gene therapy, which affects only people who are already alive, is acceptable, but any genetic engineering that affects future generations is not. Explain why you do or do not agree with this distinction, and include specific examples in your explanation.

Part 2 The Case against Perfection

The ethic of giftedness, under siege in sports, persists in the practice of parenting. But here, too, bioengineering and genetic enhancement threaten to dislodge it. To appreciate children as gifts is to accept them as they come, not as objects of our design or products of our will or instruments of our ambition. Parental love is not contingent on the talents and attributes a child happens to have. We choose our friends and spouses at least partly on the basis of qualities we find attractive. But we do not choose our children. Their qualities are unpredictable, and even the most conscientious parents cannot be held wholly responsible for the kind of children they have. That is why parenthood, more than other human relationships, teaches what the theologian William F. May calls an "openness to the unbidden."

25 May's resonant phrase helps us see that the deepest moral objection to enhancement lies less in the perfection it seeks than in the human disposition it expresses and promotes. The problem is not that parents usurp the autonomy of a child they design. The problem lies in the hubris of the designing parents, in their drive to master the mystery of birth. Even if this disposition did not make parents tyrants to their children, it would disfigure the relation between parent and child, and deprive the parent of the humility and enlarged human sympathies that an openness to the unbidden can cultivate.

To appreciate children as gifts or blessings is not, of course, to be passive in the face of illness or disease. Medical intervention to cure or prevent illness or restore the injured to health does not desecrate nature but honors it. Healing sickness or injury does not override a child's natural capacities but permits them to flourish.

Nor does the sense of life as a gift mean that parents must shrink from shaping and directing the development of their child. Just as athletes and artists have an obligation to cultivate their talents, so parents have an obligation to cultivate their children, to help them discover and develop their talents and gifts. As May points out, parents give their children two kinds of love: accepting love and transforming love. Accepting love affirms the being of the child, whereas transforming love seeks the well-being of the child. Each aspect corrects the excesses of the other, he writes: "Attachment becomes too quietistic if it slackens into mere acceptance of the child as he is." Parents have a duty to promote their children's excellence.

These days, however, overly ambitious parents are prone to get carried away with transforming love — promoting and demanding all manner of accomplishments from their children, seeking perfection. "Parents find it difficult to maintain an equilibrium between the two sides of love," May observes. "Accepting love, without transforming love, slides into indulgence and finally neglect. Transforming love, without accepting love, badgers and finally rejects." May finds in these competing impulses a parallel with modern science: it, too, engages

This political cartoon by Tom Toles appeared in 1999.

To what extent is the argument Toles makes similar to that of Sandel in "The Case against Perfection"?

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us in beholding the given world, studying and savoring it, and also in molding the world, transforming and perfecting it.

The mandate to mold our children, to cultivate and improve them, complicates the case against enhancement. We usually admire parents who seek the best for their children, who spare no effort to help them achieve happiness and success. Some parents confer advantages on their children by enrolling them in expensive schools, hiring private tutors, sending them to tennis camp, providing them with piano lessons, ballet lessons, swimming lessons, SAT-prep courses, and so on. If it is permissible and even admirable for parents to help their children in these ways, why isn't it equally admirable for parents to use whatever genetic technologies may emerge (provided they are safe) to enhance their children's intelligence, musical ability, or athletic prowess?

30 The problem with genetic engineering is that [it] represent[s] the one-sided triumph of willfulness over giftedness, of dominion over reverence, of molding over beholding. Why, we may wonder, should we worry about this triumph? Why not shake off our unease about genetic enhancement as so much superstition? What would be lost if biotechnology dissolved our sense of giftedness?

From a religious standpoint the answer is clear: To believe that our talents and powers are wholly our own doing is to misunderstand our place in creation, to confuse our role with God's. Religion is not the only source of reasons to care about giftedness, however. The moral stakes can also be described in secular terms. If bioengineering made the myth of the "self-made man" come true, it would be difficult to view our talents as gifts for which we are indebted, rather than as achievements for which we are responsible. This would transform three key features of our moral landscape: humility, responsibility, and solidarity.

In a social world that prizes mastery and control, parenthood is a school for humility. That we care deeply about our children and yet cannot choose the kind we want teaches parents to be open to the unbidden. Such openness is a disposition worth affirming, not only within families but in the wider world as well. It invites us to abide the unexpected, to live with dissonance, to rein in the impulse to control. A *Gattaca*-like world in which parents became accustomed to specifying the sex and genetic traits of their children would be a world inhospitable to the unbidden, a gated community writ large. The awareness that our talents and abilities are not wholly our own doing restrains our tendency toward hubris.

Though some maintain that genetic enhancement erodes human agency by overriding effort, the real problem is the explosion, not the erosion, of responsibility. As humility gives way, responsibility expands to daunting proportions. We attribute less to chance and more to choice. Parents become responsible for choosing, or failing to choose, the right traits for their children. Athletes become responsible for acquiring, or failing to acquire, the talents that will help their teams win.

A lively sense of the contingency of our gifts — a consciousness that none of us is wholly responsible for his or her success — saves a meritocratic society from sliding into the smug assumption that the rich are rich because they are more deserving than the poor. Without this, the successful would become even more likely than they are now to view themselves as self-made and self-sufficient, and hence wholly responsible for their success. Those at the bottom of society would be viewed not as disadvantaged, and thus worthy of a measure of compensation, but as simply unfit, and thus worthy of eugenic repair. The meritocracy, less chastened by chance, would become harder, less forgiving.

35 There is something appealing, even intoxicating, about a vision of human freedom unfettered by the given. It may even be the case that the allure of that vision played a part in summoning the genomic age into being. It is often assumed that the powers of enhancement we now possess arose as an inadvertent by-product of biomedical progress — the genetic revolution came, so to speak, to cure disease, and stayed to tempt us with the prospect of enhancing our performance, designing our children, and perfecting our nature. That may have the story backwards. It is more plausible to view genetic engineering as the ultimate expression of our resolve to see ourselves astride the world, the masters of our nature. But that promise of mastery is flawed. It threatens to banish our appreciation of life as a gift, and to leave us with nothing to affirm or behold outside our own will.

Understanding and Interpreting

1 In this final section, what is Sandel's view of how bioengineering and genetic enhancement "threaten to dislodge" the "ethic of giftedness" in parenting (par. 24)?

2 Sandel explains William F. May's distinction between the "accepting love" and "transforming love" (par. 27) that parents give their children. Which of these types of love does Sandel believe is most jeopardized by genetic enhancement?

3 What does Sandel mean by "the hubris of the designing parents" (par. 25)? To what extent do you think Sandel is imposing a value judgment on parents who would consider genetically engineering their children?

4 Sandel raises the issue of parents who endeavor to help their children become successful by providing SAT tutors or private coaching in sports and asks whether these efforts are different from genetic enhancement (pars. 29–32). How does he answer that question? Do you agree or disagree?

5 How does Sandel answer the question he asks in paragraph 30: "What would be lost if biotechnology dissolved our sense of giftedness?" Consider the language he uses to frame his response, including "moral stakes" and "secular terms" (par. 31).

6 What does Sandel mean when he asserts that the "real problem" with genetic enhancement "is the explosion, not the erosion, of responsibility" (par. 33)?

7 Why does Sandel question the impact of genetic engineering on a "meritocratic' society" (par. 34)? Why is this specific context relevant to his viewpoint?

8 What is Sandel's final conclusion about genetic enhancement? Does he qualify his earlier position or reassert it?

Analyzing Language, Style, and Structure

1 As Sandel explores the concept of "giftedness," he alludes to the theologian William F. May's phrase "openness to the unbidden" (pars. 24 and 25). To what extent does using May as a source strengthen or weaken the argument Sandel is in the process of developing?

2 What counterarguments does Sandel cite in this section? How effective is he in refuting them? Comment on at least two examples of counterarguments.

3 What is the logic that Sandel uses to develop his point that genetically engineering children would undermine or "transform" our sense of "humility" and "solidarity" (par. 31)? Does he move from a series of examples to a general conclusion or the reverse: that is, from a general statement to a series of examples that support it?

4 In this section, Sandel refers to "a religious standpoint," and in the previous section he refers to the "pro-life" position on abortion (par. 14). Issues of

religion and abortion can sometimes be volatile and evoke strong reactions. How does he maintain a balanced perspective on these issues? Consider both his language and organization.

5 When Sandel argues against "a world inhospitable to the unbidden," he uses the metaphor that our world would risk becoming "a gated community writ large" (par. 32). What does that figure of speech suggest? To what extent do you think it is an effective strategy to promote his argument?

6 In paragraph 34, Sandel moves to a more political discussion of income inequity. Do you think he connects that issue clearly to the larger topic, or does it seem tangential or forced? Explain in terms of the argument he is developing.

7 How would you describe the tone of the conclusion to this essay? Is Sandel optimistic or pessimistic? Is he guarded or emphatic? Cite specific language choices to support your response.

Connecting, Arguing, and Extending

1 Consider the analogy Sandel draws between parents' efforts to ensure the best for their children—that is, sending them to expensive schools, hiring private tutors, providing music and other artistic enrichment—and the possibility of their choosing to genetically enhance their children's intellectual ability, athletic ability, and physical appearance. Where would you draw the line between what is acceptable and what is not? And why?

2 Bonnie Steinbock, PhD, is a professor of philosophy at the University at Albany, State University of New York, with a specialty in bioethics. In an October 2008 article in the *Lancet,* a well-regarded British medical journal, she argues that "it's far from obvious that such interventions [as genetic engineering] would be wrong" and concludes as follows:

> Genetic enhancement of embryos is, for the present, science fiction. Its opponents think that we need to ban it now, before it ever becomes a reality. What they have not provided are clear reasons to agree. Their real opposition is not to a particular means of shaping children, but rather to a certain style of parenting. Rather than fetishising the technology, the discussion should focus on which parental attitudes and modes of parenting help children to flourish. It may be that giving children "genetic edges" of certain kinds would not constrain their lives and choices, but actually make them better. That possibility should not be dismissed out of hand.

Are you more in agreement with Sandel in "The Case against Perfection" or with Steinbock? Explain with specific references to Sandel's essay.

3 Much of Sandel's argument in this section pivots on the distinction between accepting and transforming love. Psychologists tell us that accepting love is essential for healthy emotional development of a child. To what extent do you think that permitting all types of genetic enhancement might eliminate the very concept of accepting love?

4 What would you do? Imagine that ten years from now you want to have a child and technology that would enable you to deliberately choose specific mental or physical characteristics of the child is available. Would you use the technology or take your chances on a throw of the genetic dice?

Topics for Composing

1 **Argument**
Ultimately, how does Sandel challenge the case for perfection? Do you believe that striving for perfection is a worthy goal? A dangerous pursuit? A futile effort? Where do you draw the ethical line between what is acceptable and what is not? Is there truth in the saying that "perfect is the enemy of the good"? Explain your response with examples from your own experience and reading as well as reference to Sandel.

2 Research/Exposition
After researching the topic of genetically engineering children, explain what you believe are the most compelling ethical concerns. Consider "The Case against Perfection" in your response. You might also read other works by Sandel, listen to one or more of his lectures, or explore additional works on your own. You might also consult two U.S. government websites: the Human Genome Project and the Presidential Commission for the Study of Bioethical Issues.

3 Research/Exposition
Read "The Birthmark" by Nathaniel Hawthorne, a short story about a scientist's obsession to remove his wife's birthmark. What does this story have to say about the pursuit of perfection?

4 Research/Argument
In a review of Sandel's book that is an expansion of this essay, *The Case against Perfection*, critic William Saletan questions whether the ideas are outdated. He points out that in an earlier era, having a coach was believed to violate the spirit of sportsmanlike competition. He then asks: "Once gene therapy becomes routine, the case against genetic engineering will sound as quaint as the case against [. . .] coaches. If the genetic lottery were better than the self-made man, we might prefer the old truth to the new one. But Sandel's egalitarian fatalism already feels a bit 20th-century." Explain why you agree or disagree with Saletan's assessment.

5 Speech/Argument
Sandel's argument pivots on his definition of what it means to be a parent in the early twenty-first century. Write a speech that you would deliver to an audience of parents from your community explaining why you agree or disagree with Sandel's viewpoint.

6 Exposition
The 1997 sci-fi film *Gattaca* explores the consequences of genetic engineering. After viewing the film, explain what position the filmmakers take on the subject.

7 Research/Exposition
Broadly speaking, "The Case against Perfection" focuses on the complex ethical issues created by a new technology. Choose another example of technology and discuss the moral or ethical issues that it raises. You might choose a current technology, a technological development from the past, or a new emerging technology.

8 Multimodal/Argument
Choose one point or statement that Sandel makes and challenge or support it with your own observations, experience, or knowledge. Make your argument using only images (still, moving, or a combination) and sound but no words (neither voice-over narration nor written text).

CONVERSATION

DO THE RIGHT THING

Everyday life presents us with choices. Most times we make the right choice, sometimes we make the wrong choice, and just about every time, we wonder what would have happened had we made the other one. While it's unlikely that you have yet to face the ethical situation of "designing" your own baby as presented in the Central Text, you certainly have faced, and will face, difficult situations in which it will be hard to figure out the right thing to do. It might be something simple, such as a cashier's giving you too much change—do you really need to give it back? Or it could be a more difficult experience, such as seeing someone you don't know—or even someone you know and dislike—getting bullied at school. Do you intervene? All of those anti-bullying presentations say that you should, but do you? Why or why not?

Here's another scenario: imagine that you are walking down the street and you find an envelope filled with cash and no identification about who owns it. You know that you're *supposed* to take it to the police or put up signs in an effort to find the owner, and yet . . . in reality, most people would consider themselves lucky to find such a "gift," and keep it for themselves. Is that the right thing to do in that situation? Perhaps you could justify the act of keeping the money by giving some to charity or by paying off your grandparent's medical

In Homer's *Odyssey*, Odysseus is told by the sorceress Circe that in order to make it home, he must sail between Scylla and Charybdis—Scylla being a six-headed sea monster that jutted out from a rock to devour one sailor per head, and Charybdis being a monstrous whirlpool that engulfed entire ships. The dilemma is that if Odysseus sails too close to Charybdis, his entire ship will be destroyed and all his crew will be killed, while if he sails too close to Scylla, six of his men will be killed and eaten. Odysseus chose to sail closer to Scylla, choosing to save the many and sacrifice the few.

What does this story have to tell us about the challenges of making ethical decisions?

Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY

bills, but really, you just want to keep the money. . . . Everyone tells stories to himself or herself to put the best spin on any situation, but when we can isolate a single ethical choice, as in the scenarios above, we can begin to recognize the parameters of the ethical dilemmas we face and, more important, to determine the best ways to make those choices.

In this Conversation, you will read short stories, nonfiction, and poetry that take place in a variety of settings, including a jail cell in Nigeria, a supermarket too far from the beach for bikinis, the side of a deserted road at night, and an unnamed village overrun with crabs. In each text, the protagonists wrestle with doing the right thing. The answers rarely come easily for them, and often they come at significant costs.

TEXTS

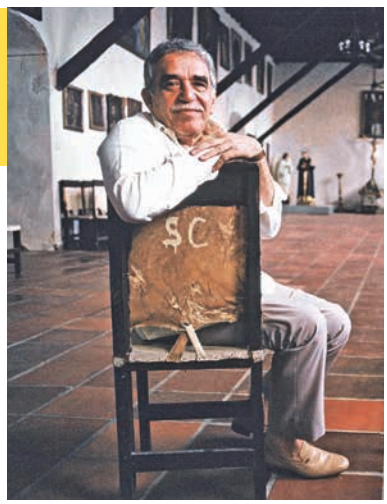
Gabriel García Márquez / A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings (fiction)
Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie / Cell One (fiction)
Nathan Englander / Free Fruit for Young Widows (fiction)
John Updike / A & P (fiction)
William Stafford / Traveling through the Dark (poetry)
Wisława Szymborska / A Contribution to Statistics (poetry)
Annie Dillard / An American Childhood (memoir)
Sam Harris / Lying (essay)

A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings: A Tale for Children

Gabriel García Márquez

Translated by Gregory Rabassa

Colombian writer Gabriel García Márquez (1928–2014) was considered to be one of the most important literary figures of the twentieth century. Winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1982, García Márquez wrote such famous novels as *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *Love in the Time of Cholera*, and *Autumn of the Patriarch*. The story included here is from his collection *Leaf Storm and Other Stories*, which was published in English in 1972.



Ulf Andersen/Hulton Archive/Getty Images

KEY CONTEXT Even though he began his career as a journalist, García Márquez popularized what is often called "magical realism," in which elements of fantasy are inserted into situations that might otherwise seem ordinary. For instance, a character in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* who is considered to be too beautiful for this world ascends to heaven while in the middle of hanging the laundry. García Márquez's magical realism can also be seen in this story, in which a character named Pelayo finds an angel face down in the mud.

On the third day of rain they had killed so many crabs inside the house that Pelayo had to cross his drenched courtyard and throw them into the sea, because the newborn child had a temperature all night and they thought it was due to the stench. The world had been sad since Tuesday. Sea and sky were a single ash-gray thing and the sands of the beach, which on March nights glimmered like powdered light, had become a stew of mud and rotten shellfish. The light was so weak at noon that when Pelayo was coming back to the house after throwing away the crabs, it was hard for him to see what it was that was moving and groaning in the rear of the courtyard. He had to go very close to see that it was an old man, lying face down in the mud, who, in spite of his tremendous efforts, couldn't get up, impeded by his enormous wings.

Frightened by that nightmare, Pelayo ran to get Elisenda, his wife, who was putting compresses on the sick child, and he took her to the rear of the courtyard. They both looked at the fallen body with mute stupor. He was dressed like a ragpicker. There were only a few faded hairs left on his bald skull and very few teeth in his mouth, and his pitiful condition of a drenched great-grandfather had taken away any sense of grandeur he might have had. His huge buzzard wings, dirty and half-plucked, were forever entangled in the mud. They looked at him so long and so closely that Pelayo and Elisenda very soon overcame their surprise and in the end found him familiar. Then they dared speak to him, and he answered in an incomprehensible dialect with a strong sailor's voice. That was how they skipped over the inconvenience of the wings and quite intelligently concluded that he was a lonely castaway from some foreign ship wrecked by the storm. And yet, they called in a neighbor woman who knew everything about life and death to see him, and all she needed was one look to show them their mistake.

"He's an angel," she told them. "He must have been coming for the child, but the poor fellow is so old that the rain knocked him down."

On the following day everyone knew that a flesh-and-blood angel was held captive in Pelayo's house. Against the judgment of the wise neighbor woman, for whom angels in those times were the fugitive survivors of a celestial conspiracy, they did not have the heart to club him to death. Pelayo watched over him all afternoon from the kitchen, armed with his bailiff's club, and before going to bed he dragged him out of the mud and locked him up with the hens in the wire chicken coop. In the middle of the night, when the rain stopped, Pelayo and Elisenda were still killing crabs. A short time afterward the child woke up without a fever and with a desire to eat. Then they felt magnanimous and decided to put the angel on a raft with fresh water and provisions for three days and leave him to his fate on the high seas. But when they went out into the courtyard with the first light of dawn, they found the whole neighborhood in front of the chicken coop having fun with the angel, without the slightest reverence, tossing him things to eat through the openings in the wire as if he weren't a supernatural creature but a circus animal.

5 Father Gonzaga arrived before seven o'clock, alarmed at the strange news. By that time onlookers less frivolous than those at dawn had already arrived and they were making all kinds of conjectures concerning the captive's future. The simplest among them thought that he should be named mayor of the world. Others of sterner mind felt that he should be promoted to the rank of five-star general in order to win all wars. Some visionaries hoped that he could be put to stud in order to implant on earth a race of winged wise men who could take charge of the universe. But Father Gonzaga, before becoming a priest, had been a robust woodcutter. Standing by the wire, he reviewed his catechism in an instant and asked them to open the door so that

seeing connections

Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY

This sixteenth-century painting by Charles Le Brun, *The Fall of the Rebel Angels*, depicts the angels who rebelled against God being sent out of heaven down to hell.

In what way is García Márquez using the biblical story of the fallen angels being cast out of heaven as an allusion in this short story? What is similar and different between the two?

The Good Samaritan, c.1550–70 (oil on canvas), Bassano, Jacopo (Jacopo da Ponte) (1510–92)/National Gallery, London, UK/Bridgeman Images

In the Bible, Jesus tells a parable about the Good Samaritan, a man who helped a stranger who was beaten and robbed, while several other people passed by without helping. The lesson is supposed to be "Love your neighbor as yourself," and everyone should be considered your neighbor.

What is the Samaritan doing in this sixteenth-century painting by Jacopo Bassano that the characters in the short story do or do not do? What point is García Márquez making about the townspeople by making an allusion to this parable?

he could take a close look at that pitiful man who looked more like a huge decrepit hen among the fascinated chickens. He was lying in a corner drying his open wings in the sunlight among the fruit peels and breakfast leftovers that the early risers had thrown him. Alien to the impertinences of the world, he only lifted his antiquarian eyes and murmured something in his dialect when Father Gonzaga went into the chicken coop and said good morning to him in Latin. The parish priest had his first suspicion of an imposter when he saw that he did not understand the language of God or know how to greet His ministers. Then he noticed that seen close

up he was much too human: he had an unbearable smell of the outdoors, the back side of his wings was strewn with parasites and his main feathers had been mistreated by terrestrial winds, and nothing about him measured up to the proud dignity of angels. Then he came out of the chicken coop and in a brief sermon warned the curious against the risks of being ingenuous. He reminded them that the devil had the bad habit of making use of carnival tricks in order to confuse the unwary. He argued that if wings were not the essential element in determining the difference between a hawk and an airplane, they were even less so in the recognition of angels. Nevertheless, he promised to write a letter to his bishop so that the latter would write to his primate[1] so that the latter would write to the Supreme Pontiff in order to get the final verdict from the highest courts.

His prudence fell on sterile hearts. The news of the captive angel spread with such rapidity that after a few hours the courtyard had the bustle of a marketplace and they had to call in troops with fixed bayonets to disperse the mob that was about to knock the house down. Elisenda, her spine all twisted from sweeping up so much marketplace trash, then got the idea of fencing in the yard and charging five cents admission to see the angel.

The curious came from far away. A traveling carnival arrived with a flying acrobat who buzzed over the crowd several times, but no one paid any attention to him because his wings were not those of an angel but, rather, those of a sidereal bat. The most unfortunate invalids on earth came in search of health: a poor woman who since childhood had been counting her heartbeats and had run out of numbers; a Portuguese man who couldn't sleep because the noise of the stars disturbed him; a sleepwalker who got up at night to undo the things he had done while awake; and many others with less serious ailments. In the midst of that shipwreck disorder that made the earth tremble, Pelayo and Elisenda were happy with fatigue, for in less than a week they had crammed their rooms with money and the line of pilgrims waiting their turn to enter still reached beyond the horizon.

The angel was the only one who took no part in his own act. He spent his time trying to get comfortable in his borrowed nest, befuddled by the hellish heat of the oil lamps and sacramental candles that had been placed along the wire. At first they tried to make him eat some mothballs, which, according to the wisdom of the wise neighbor woman, were the food prescribed for angels. But he turned them down, just as he turned down the papal lunches that the penitents brought him, and they never found out whether it was because he was an angel or because he was an old man that in the end he ate nothing but eggplant mush. His only supernatural virtue seemed to be patience. Especially during the first days, when the hens pecked at him, searching for the stellar parasites that proliferated in his wings, and the cripples pulled out feathers to touch their defective parts with, and even the most merciful threw stones at him, trying to get him to rise so they could see him standing. The only time they succeeded in arousing him was when they burned his side with an iron for branding steers, for he had been motionless for so many hours that they thought he was dead. He awoke with a start, ranting in his hermetic language and with tears in his eyes, and he flapped his wings a couple of times, which brought on a whirlwind of chicken dung and lunar dust and a gale of panic that did not seem to be of this world. Although many thought that his reaction had been one not of rage but of pain, from then on they were careful not to annoy him, because the majority understood that his passivity was not that of a hero taking his ease but that of a cataclysm in repose.

Father Gonzaga held back the crowd's frivolity with formulas of maidservant inspiration

[1] primate: The chief bishop or archbishop of a province. —Eds.

while awaiting the arrival of a final judgment on the nature of the captive. But the mail from Rome showed no sense of urgency. They spent their time finding out if the prisoner had a navel, if his dialect had any connection with Aramaic, how many times he could fit on the head of a pin,[2] or whether he wasn't just a Norwegian with wings. Those meager letters might have come and gone until the end of time if a providential event had not put an end to the priest's tribulations.

10 It so happened that during those days, among so many other carnival attractions, there arrived in town the traveling show of the woman who had been changed into a spider for having disobeyed her parents. The admission to see her was not only less than the admission to see the angel, but people were permitted to ask her all manner of questions about her absurd state and to examine her up and down so that no one would ever doubt the truth of her horror. She was a frightful tarantula the size of a ram and with the head of a sad maiden. What was most heartrending, however, was not her outlandish shape but the sincere affliction with which she recounted the details of her misfortune. While still practically a child she had sneaked out of her parents' house to go to a dance, and while she was coming back through the woods after having danced all night without permission, a fearful thunderclap rent the sky in two and through the crack came the lightning bolt of brimstone that changed her into a spider. Her only nourishment came from the meatballs that charitable souls chose to toss into her mouth. A spectacle like that, full of so much human truth and with such a fearful lesson, was bound to defeat without even trying that of a haughty angel who scarcely deigned to look at mortals. Besides, the few miracles attributed to the angel showed a certain mental disorder, like the blind man who didn't recover his sight but grew three new teeth, or the paralytic who didn't get to walk but almost won the lottery, and the leper whose sores sprouted sunflowers. Those consolation miracles, which were more like mocking fun, had already ruined the angel's reputation when the woman who had been changed into a spider finally crushed him completely. That was how Father Gonzaga was cured forever of his insomnia and Pelayo's courtyard went back to being as empty as during the time it had rained for three days and crabs walked through the bedrooms.

The owners of the house had no reason to lament. With the money they saved they built a two-story mansion with balconies and gardens and high netting so that crabs wouldn't get in during the winter, and with iron bars on the windows so that angels wouldn't get in. Pelayo also set up a rabbit warren close to town and gave up his job as bailiff for good, and Elisenda bought some satin pumps with high heels and many dresses of iridescent silk, the kind worn on Sunday by the most desirable women in those times. The chicken coop was the only thing that didn't receive any attention. If they washed it down with creolin[3] and burned tears of myrrh inside it every so often, it was not in homage to the angel but to drive away the dungheap stench that still hung everywhere like a ghost and was turning the new house into an old one. At first, when the child learned to walk, they were careful that he did not get too close to the chicken coop. But then they began to lose their fears and got used to the smell, and before the child got his second teeth he'd gone inside the chicken coop to play, where the wires were falling apart. The angel was no less standoffish with him than with other mortals, but he tolerated the most ingenious infamies with the patience of a dog who had no illusions. They both came down with chicken-pox at the same time. The doctor

[2] The common expression, "How many angels can dance on the head of a pin?" comes from an arcane theological debate over how much space an angel occupies. It has come to mean any frivolous question that is impossible to answer. —Eds.

[3] creolin: Thick black coal tar used as an antiseptic, germicide, or deodorant. —Eds.

who took care of the child couldn't resist the temptation to listen to the angel's heart, and he found so much whistling in the heart and so many sounds in his kidneys that it seemed impossible for him to be alive. What surprised him most, however, was the logic of his wings. They seemed so natural on that completely human organism that he couldn't understand why other men didn't have them too.

When the child began school it had been some time since the sun and rain had caused the collapse of the chicken coop. The angel went dragging himself about here and there like a stray dying man. They would drive him out of the bedroom with a broom and a moment later find him in the kitchen. He seemed to be in so many places at the same time that they grew to think that he'd been duplicated, that he was reproducing himself all through the house, and the exasperated and unhinged Elisenda shouted that it was awful living in that hell full of angels. He could scarcely eat and his antiquarian eyes had also become so foggy that he went about bumping into posts. All he had left were the bare cannulae of his last feathers. Pelayo threw a blanket over him and extended him the charity of letting him sleep in the shed, and only then did they notice that he had a temperature at night, and was delirious with the tongue twisters of an old Norwegian. That was one of the few times they became alarmed, for they thought he was going to die and not even the wise neighbor woman had been able to tell them what to do with dead angels.

And yet he not only survived his worst winter, but seemed improved with the first sunny days. He remained motionless for several days in the farthest corner of the courtyard, where no one would see him, and at the beginning of December some large, stiff feathers began to grow on his wings, the feathers of a scarecrow, which looked more like another misfortune of decrepitude. But he must have known the reason for those changes, for he was quite careful that no one should notice them, that no one should hear the sea chanteys that he sometimes sang under the stars. One morning Elisenda was cutting some bunches of onions for lunch when a wind that seemed to come from the high seas blew into the kitchen. Then she went to the window and caught the angel in his first attempts at flight. They were so clumsy that his fingernails opened a furrow in the vegetable patch and he was on the point of knocking the shed down with the ungainly flapping that slipped on the light and couldn't get a grip on the air. But he did manage to gain altitude. Elisenda let out a sigh of relief, for herself and for him, when she saw him pass over the last houses, holding himself up in some way with the risky flapping of a senile vulture. She kept watching him even when she was through cutting the onions and she kept on watching until it was no longer possible for her to see him, because then he was no longer an annoyance in her life but an imaginary dot on the horizon of the sea.

Understanding and Interpreting

1 Trace the townspeople's, including Pelayo's and Elisenda's, changing treatment of the old man through the course of the story. What conclusions could we draw about the theme of the story from this treatment?

2 What is the tone the narrator takes toward Father Gonzaga, and for what purpose?

3 How is "spider girl" different from the old man? Why is she a better attraction for the people? What point is García Márquez trying to make by contrasting her with the old man?

4 García Márquez gave this story a subtitle: "A Tale for Children." In what way can this be considered a children's story, and in what ways is it not one?

5 How do the last two lines, as Elisenda watches the old man fly away, illustrate the theme of the story?

Analyzing Language, Style, and Structure

1 Magical realism often includes paired contrasts; for instance, the otherworldliness of the man's wings is contrasted with the ordinariness of the few faded hairs on his bald head. Identify similar contrasts in the story and explain how they create the sense of magical realism.

2 Compare these two sentences identifying the old man, and explain the effect of the townspeople's conflicting conclusions:

a. "That was how they skipped over the inconvenience of the wings and quite intelligently concluded that he was a lonely castaway from some foreign ship wrecked by the storm" (par. 2).

b. "On the following day everyone knew that a flesh-and-blood angel was held captive in Pelayo's house" (par. 4).

3 Reread the following statement: "Pelayo threw a blanket over him and extended him the charity of letting him sleep in the shed, and only then did they notice that he had a temperature at night" (par. 12). Using this sentence and others that you identify, how would you characterize the narrator of this story? What is the narrator's tone toward the old man and toward the townspeople?

4 This piece contains many examples of figurative language intended to create an exaggerated, somewhat unreal feeling for the town, such as "The world had been sad since Tuesday." Identify other examples of figurative language and explain how they create this exaggerated effect.

Connecting, Arguing, and Extending

1 Evaluate the ethical choices that Pelayo and Elisenda make. Do they do "the right thing" or not? Who is harmed and who benefits the most from their choices? What are the most significant factors that cause them to make the choices they do?

2 Read a short story, novel, or poem classified as "magical realism." In addition to García Márquez, some of the most well-known authors of magical realism are Isabell Allende, Laura Esquivel, Jorge Luis Borges, Salman Rushdie, Toni Morrison, and Rudolfo Anaya. How is this author's use of magical realism similar to or different from García Márquez's use?

3 Throughout the story, the old man tries to speak, but in a language or dialect that no one, including the narrator, can understand. Identify a place in the story where the old man is unable to communicate effectively. Now, imagine that he is capable of making himself understood, and write a few lines of dialogue that he might say. How would the townspeople react to his speech?

4 Read the following excerpt from García Márquez's 1982 Nobel Prize speech, in which he responds to William Faulkner's 1950 Nobel speech warning of the dangers of nuclear war. After reading the speech, explain how García Márquez's tone toward humanity is reflected—or not—in "A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings":

> On a day like today, my master William Faulkner said, "I decline to accept the end of man." I would fall unworthy of standing in this place that was his, if I were not fully aware that the colossal tragedy he refused to recognize thirty-two years ago is now, for the first time since the beginning of humanity, nothing more than a simple scientific possibility. Faced with this awesome reality that must have seemed a mere utopia through all of human time, we, the inventors of tales, who will believe anything, feel entitled to believe that it is not yet too late to engage in the creation of the opposite utopia. A new and sweeping utopia of life, where no one will be able to decide for others how they die, where love will prove true and happiness be possible, and where the races condemned to one hundred years of solitude will have, at last and forever, a second opportunity on earth.

Cell One

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Ulf Andersen/Getty Images

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie [chi-mah-*man*-dah nn-*go*-zee ah-*dee*-chee] was born in Nigeria in 1977. Her father was Nigeria's first professor of statistics, and later became deputy vice-chancellor of the University of Nigeria, where her mother became the first female registrar. Adichie moved to the United States when she was nineteen to attend college. She is the author of the novels *Americanah* (2013), *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006), and *Purple Hibiscus* (2003), as well as a collection of short stories titled *The Thing around Your Neck* (2009), from which this story is taken.

KEY CONTEXT "Cell One" takes place in Nigeria and focuses on the narrator's brother, a college student and part-time criminal who finds himself at the mercy of the Nigerian justice system. Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa. Like many African nations, it was colonized by England and other Western countries in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, an experience from which it is still trying to recover. Because of its colonial past, Nigeria's official language is English. Nevertheless, many Nigerians, especially those in more rural areas, speak one or more of nearly three hundred ethnic languages, including Yoruba, Hausa, and Igbo. Of Nigeria's colonial past, Adichie has said, "Not only was colonialism an awful thing, it also created conditions where the Africans who took over became colonialists themselves. They were copying what they had seen." Transparency International, a group that tries to identify worldwide corruption, ranks Nigeria as one of the most politically corrupt countries in the world, ranked 136th out of 175 countries in terms of fairness and transparency.

Education Images/Universal Images Group/Getty Images

An aerial shot of Lagos, Nigeria. In an interview, Adichie has commented that "if you followed the media you'd think that everybody in Africa was starving to death, and that's not the case; so it's important to engage with the other Africa."

Compare this scene with your mental image of Africa.

The first time our house was robbed, it was our neighbor Osita who climbed in through the dining-room window and stole our TV and VCR, and the "Purple Rain" and "Thriller" videotapes that my father had brought back from America. The second time our house was robbed, it was my brother Nnamabia, who faked a break-in and stole my mother's jewelry. It happened on a Sunday. My parents had travelled to their home town to visit our grandparents, so Nnamabia and I went to church alone. He drove my mother's green Peugeot 504. We sat together in church as we usually did, but we did not have time to nudge each other and stifle giggles about somebody's ugly hat or threadbare caftan, because Nnamabia left without a word after ten minutes. He came back just before the priest said, "The Mass is ended, go in peace." I was a little piqued. I imagined that he had gone off to smoke or to see some girl, since he had the car to himself for once; but he could at least have told me. We drove home in silence, and when he parked in our long driveway I stayed back to pick some ixora flowers while Nnamabia unlocked the front door. I went inside to find him standing in the middle of the parlor.

"We've been robbed!" he said.

It took me a moment to take in the room. Even then, I felt that there was a theatrical quality to the way the drawers had been flung open. Or perhaps it was simply that I knew my brother too well. Later, when my parents had come home and neighbors began to troop in to say *ndo* — sorry — and to snap their fingers and heave their shoulders up and down, I sat alone in my room upstairs and realized what the queasiness in my gut was: Nnamabia had done it, I knew. My father knew, too. He pointed out that the window louvres had been slipped out from the inside, rather than from the outside (Nnamabia was usually smarter than that — perhaps he had been in a hurry to get back to church before Mass ended), and that the robber knew exactly where my mother's jewelry was: in the back left corner of her metal trunk. Nnamabia stared at my father with wounded eyes and said that he may have done horrible things in the past, things that had caused my parents pain, but that he had done nothing in this case. He walked out the back door and did not come home that night. Or the next night. Or the night after. Two weeks later, he came home gaunt, smelling of beer, crying, saying he was sorry, that he had pawned the jewelry to the Hausa traders in Enugu, and that all the money was gone.

"How much did they give you for my gold?" our mother asked him. And when he told her she placed both hands on her head and cried, "Oh! Oh! *Chi m egbuo m!* My God has killed me!" I wanted to slap her. My father asked Nnamabia to write a report: how he had pawned the jewelry, what he had spent the money on, with whom he had spent it. I didn't think that Nnamabia would tell the truth, and I don't think that my father thought he would, but he liked reports, my professor father, he liked to have things written down and nicely documented. Besides, Nnamabia was seventeen, with a carefully tended beard. He was already between secondary school and university, and was too old for caning. What else could my father have done? After Nnamabia had written the report, my father filed it in the steel cabinet in his study where he kept our school papers.

5 "That he could hurt his mother like that!" was the last thing my father said on the subject.

But Nnamabia hadn't set out to hurt her. He had done it because my mother's jewelry was the only thing of any value in the house: a lifetime's accumulation of solid-gold pieces. He had done it, too, because other sons of professors were doing it. This was the season of thefts on our serene campus. Boys who had

grown up watching *Sesame Street*, reading Enid Blyton,[1] eating cornflakes for breakfast, and attending the university staff primary school in polished brown sandals were now cutting through the mosquito netting of their neighbors' windows, sliding out glass louvres, and climbing in to steal TVs and VCRs. We knew the thieves. Still, when the professors saw one another at the staff club or at church or at a faculty meeting, they were careful to moan about the riffraff from town coming onto their sacred campus to steal.

The thieving boys were the popular ones. They drove their parents' cars in the evening, their seats pushed back and their arms stretched out to reach the steering wheel. Osita, our neighbor who had stolen our TV only weeks before Nnamabia's theft, was lithe and handsome in a brooding sort of way, and walked with the grace of a cat. His shirts were always crisply ironed, and I used to watch him across the hedge, then close my eyes and imagine that he was walking toward me, coming to claim me as his. He never noticed me. When he stole from us, my parents did not go over to Professor Ebube's house to ask for our things back. But they knew it was Osita. Osita was two years older than Nnamabia; most of the thieving boys were a little older than Nnamabia, and maybe that was why Nnamabia had not stolen from another person's house. Perhaps he did not feel old enough, qualified enough, for anything more serious than my mother's jewelry.

Nnamabia looked just like my mother — he had her fair complexion and large eyes, and a generous mouth that curved perfectly. When my mother took us to the market, traders would call out, "Hey! Madam, why did you waste your fair skin on a boy and leave the girl so dark? What is a boy doing with all this beauty?" And my mother would chuckle, as though she took a mischievous and joyful responsibility for Nnamabia's looks. When, at eleven, Nnamabia broke the window of his classroom with a stone, my mother gave him the money to replace it and didn't tell my father. When, a few years later, he took the key to my father's car and pressed it into a bar of soap that my father found before Nnamabia could take it to a locksmith, she made vague sounds about how he was just experimenting and it didn't mean anything. When he stole the exam questions from the study and sold them to my father's students, she yelled at him, but then told my father that Nnamabia was sixteen, after all, and really should be given more pocket money.

I don't know whether Nnamabia felt remorse for stealing her jewelry. I could not always tell from my brother's gracious, smiling face what he really felt. He and I did not talk about it, and neither did my parents. Even though my mother's sisters sent her their gold earrings, even though she bought a new gold chain from Mrs. Mozie — the glamorous woman who imported gold from Italy — and began to drive to Mrs. Mozie's house once a month to pay in installments, we never talked about what had happened to her jewelry. It was as if by pretending that Nnamabia had not done the things he had done we could give him the opportunity to start afresh. The robbery might never have been mentioned again if Nnamabia had not been arrested two years later, in his second year of university.

10 By then, it was the season of cults on the Nsukka campus, when signs all over the university read in bold letters, "say no to cults." The Black Axe, the Buccaneers, and the Pirates were the best known. They had once been benign

[1] Enid Blyton: A prolific English children's author whose work was most popular in the 1950s. Adichie may even be alluding to Blyton's book *The Mystery That Never Was*, which features a group of thieves as its main antagonists. One critic wrote that there was "a faint but unattractive touch of old-fashioned xenophobia in the author's attitude to the thieves," who were "foreign' [. . .] and this seem[ed] to be sufficient to explain their criminality."—Eds.

fraternities, but they had evolved, and now eighteen-year-olds who had mastered the swagger of American rap videos were undergoing secret initiations that sometimes left one or two of them dead on Odim Hill. Guns and tortured loyalties became common. A boy would leer at a girl who turned out to be the girlfriend of the Capone of the Black Axe, and that boy, as he walked to a kiosk later to buy a cigarette, would be stabbed in the thigh. He would turn out to be a Buccaneer, and so one of his fellow-Buccaneers would go to a beer parlor and shoot the nearest Black Axe in the leg, and then the next day another Buccaneer would be shot dead in the refectory, his body falling onto aluminum plates of *garri*,[2] and that evening a Black Axe — a professor's son — would be hacked to death in his room, his CD player splattered with blood. It was inane. It was so abnormal that it quickly became normal. Girls stayed in their rooms after classes, and lecturers quivered, and when a fly buzzed too loudly people jumped. So the police were called in. They sped across campus in their rickety blue Peugeot 505 and glowered at the students, their rusty guns poking out of the car windows. Nnamabia came home from his lectures laughing. He thought that the police would have to do better than that; everyone knew the cult boys had newer guns.

My parents watched Nnamabia with silent concern, and I knew that they, too, were wondering if he was in a cult. Cult boys were popular, and Nnamabia was very popular. Boys yelled out his nickname — "The Funk!" — and shook his hand whenever he passed by, and girls, especially the popular ones, hugged him for too long when they said hello. He went to all the parties, the tame ones on campus and the wilder ones in town, and he was the kind of ladies' man who was also a guy's guy, the kind who smoked a packet of Rothmans a day and was reputed to be able to finish a case of Star beer in a single sitting. But it seemed more his style to befriend all the cult boys and yet not be one himself. And I was not entirely sure, either, that my brother had whatever it took — guts or diffidence — to join a cult.

The only time I asked him if he was in a cult, he looked at me with surprise, as if I should have known better than to ask, before replying, "Of course not." I believed him. My dad believed him, too, when he asked. But our believing him made little difference, because he had already been arrested for belonging to a cult.

This is how it happened. On a humid Monday, four cult members waited at the campus gate and waylaid a professor driving a red Mercedes. They pressed a gun to her head, shoved her out of the car, and drove it to the Faculty of Engineering, where they shot three boys who were coming out of the building. It was noon. I was in a class nearby, and when we heard the shots our lecturer was the first to run out the door. There was loud screaming, and suddenly the stairwells were packed with scrambling students unsure where to run. Outside, the bodies lay on the lawn. The Mercedes had already screeched away. Many students hastily packed their bags, and okada drivers charged twice the usual fare to take them to the motor park to get on a bus. The vice-chancellor announced that all evening classes would be cancelled and everyone had to stay indoors after 9 P.M. This did not make much sense to me, since the shooting had happened in sparkling daylight, and perhaps it did not make sense to Nnamabia, either, because the first night of the curfew he didn't come home. I assumed that he had spent the night at a friend's; he did not always come home anyway. But the next morning a security man came to tell my parents that Nnamabia had been arrested at a bar with some cult boys and was at the police station. My

[2] garri: A West African dish made from cassava tubers. — Eds.

mother screamed, "*Ekwuzikwana!* Don't say that!" My father calmly thanked the security man. We drove to the police station in town, and there a constable chewing on the tip of a dirty pen said, "You mean those cult boys arrested last night? They have been taken to Enugu. Very serious case! We must stop this cult business once and for all!"

We got back into the car, and a new fear gripped us all. Nsukka, which was made up of our slow, insular campus and the slower, more insular town, was manageable; my father knew the police superintendent. But Enugu was anonymous. There the police could do what they were famous for doing when under pressure to produce results: kill people.

15 The Enugu police station was in a sprawling, sandy compound. My mother bribed the policemen at the desk with money, and with jollof rice and meat, and they allowed Nnamabia to come out of his cell and sit on a bench under a mango tree with us. Nobody asked why he had stayed out the night before. Nobody said that the police were wrong to walk into a bar and arrest all the boys drinking there, including the barman. Instead, we listened to Nnamabia talk.

"If we ran Nigeria like this cell," he said, "we would have no problems. Things are so organized. Our cell has a chief and he has a second-in-command, and when you come in you are expected to give them some money. If you don't, you're in trouble."

"And did you have any money?" my mother asked.

Nnamabia smiled, his face more beautiful than ever, despite the new pimple-like insect bite on his forehead, and said that he had slipped his money into his anus shortly after the arrest. He knew the policemen would take it if he didn't hide it, and he knew that he would need it to buy his peace in the cell. My parents said nothing for a while. I imagined Nnamabia rolling hundred-naira notes into a thin cigarette shape and then reaching into the back of his trousers to slip them into himself. Later, as we drove back to Nsukka, my father said, "This is what I should have done when he stole your jewelry. I should have had him locked up in a cell."

My mother stared out the window.

20 "Why?" I asked.

"Because this has shaken him. Couldn't you see?" my father asked with a smile. I couldn't see it. Nnamabia had seemed fine to me, slipping his money into his anus and all.

Nnamabia's first shock was seeing a Buccaneer sobbing. The boy was tall and tough, rumored to have carried out one of the killings and likely to become Capone next semester, and yet there he was in the cell, cowering and sobbing after the chief gave him a light slap on the back of the head. Nnamabia told me this in a voice lined with both disgust and disappointment; it was as if he had suddenly been made to see that the Incredible Hulk was really just painted green. His second shock was learning about the cell farthest away from his, Cell One. He had never seen it, but every day two policemen carried a dead man out of Cell One, stopping by Nnamabia's cell to make sure that the corpse was seen by all.

Those in the cell who could afford to buy old plastic paint cans of water bathed every other morning. When they were let out into the yard, the policemen watched them and often shouted, "Stop that or you are going to Cell One now!" Nnamabia could not imagine a place worse than his cell, which was so crowded that he often stood pressed against the wall. The wall had cracks where tiny *kwalikwata*[3] lived; their bites were fierce and sharp, and when he yelped his cellmates mocked him. The biting was worse during the night, when they all slept on their sides, head to foot, to make room for one

[3] kwalikwata: Bedbugs. —Eds.

another, except the chief, who slept with his whole back lavishly on the floor.

It was also the chief who divided up the two plates of rice that were pushed into the cell every day. Each person got two mouthfuls.

25 Nnamabia told us this during the first week. As he spoke, I wondered if the bugs in the wall had bitten his face or if the bumps spreading across his forehead were due to an infection. Some of them were tipped with cream-colored pus. Once in a while, he scratched at them. I wanted him to stop talking. He seemed to enjoy his new role as the sufferer of indignities, and he did not understand how lucky he was that the policemen allowed him to come out and eat our food, or how stupid he'd been to stay out drinking that night, and how uncertain his chances were of being released.

We visited him every day for the first week. We took my father's old Volvo, because my mother's Peugeot was unsafe for trips outside Nsukka. By the end of the week, I noticed that my parents were acting differently — subtly so, but differently. My father no longer gave a monologue, as soon as we were waved through the police checkpoints, on how illiterate and corrupt the police were. He did not bring up the day when they had delayed us for an hour because he'd refused to bribe them, or how they had stopped a bus in which my beautiful cousin Ogechi was travelling and singled her out and called her a whore because she had two cell phones, and asked her for so much money that she had knelt on the ground in the rain begging them to let her go. My mother did not mumble that the policemen were symptoms of a larger malaise. Instead, my parents remained silent. It was as if by refusing to criticize the police they would somehow make Nnamabia's freedom more likely. "Delicate" was the word the superintendent at Nsukka had used. To get Nnamabia out anytime soon would be delicate, especially with the police commissioner in Enugu giving gloating, preening interviews about the arrest of the cultists. The cult problem was serious. Big Men in Abuja were following events. Everybody wanted to seem as if he were doing something.

The second week, I told my parents that we were not going to visit Nnamabia. We did not know how long this would last, and petrol was too expensive for us to drive three hours every day. Besides, it would not hurt Nnamabia to fend for himself for one day.

My mother said that nobody was begging me to come — I could sit there and do nothing while my innocent brother suffered. She started walking toward the car, and I ran after her. When I got outside, I was not sure what to do, so I picked up a stone near the ixora bush and hurled it at the windshield of the Volvo. I heard the brittle sound and saw the tiny lines spreading like rays on the glass before I turned and dashed upstairs and locked myself in my room. I heard my mother shouting. I heard my father's voice. Finally, there was silence. Nobody went to see Nnamabia that day. It surprised me, this little victory.

We visited him the next day. We said nothing about the windshield, although the cracks had spread out like ripples on a frozen stream. The policeman at the desk, the pleasant dark-skinned one, asked why we had not come the day before — he had missed my mother's jollof rice. I expected Nnamabia to ask, too, even to be upset, but he looked oddly sober. He did not eat all of his rice.

30 "What is wrong?" my mother said, and Nnamabia began to speak almost immediately, as if he had been waiting to be asked. An old man had been pushed into his cell the day before — a man perhaps in his mid-seventies, white-haired, skin finely wrinkled, with an old-fashioned dignity about him. His son was wanted for armed robbery, and when the police had not been able to find his son they had decided to lock up the father.

"The man did nothing," Nnamabia said.

"But you did nothing, either," my mother said.

Nnamabia shook his head as if our mother did not understand. The following days, he was more subdued. He spoke less, and mostly about the old man: how he could not afford bathing water, how the others made fun of him or accused him of hiding his son, how the chief ignored him, how he looked frightened and so terribly small.

"Does he know where his son is?" my mother asked.

35 "He has not seen his son in four months," Nnamabia said.

"Of course it is wrong," my mother said. "But this is what the police do all the time. If they do not find the person they are looking for, they lock up his relative."

"The man is ill," Nnamabia said. "His hands shake, even when he's asleep."

He closed the container of rice and turned to my father. "I want to give him some of this, but if I bring it into the cell the chief will take it."

My father went over and asked the policeman at the desk if we could be allowed to see the old man in Nnamabia's cell for a few minutes. The policeman was the light-skinned acerbic one who never said thank you when my mother handed over the rice-and-money bribe, and now he sneered in my father's face and said that he could well lose his job for letting even Nnamabia out and yet now we were asking for another person? Did we think this was visiting day at a boarding school? My father came back and sat down with a sigh, and Nnamabia silently scratched at his bumpy face.

40 The next day, Nnamabia barely touched his rice. He said that the policemen had splashed soapy water on the floor and walls of the cell, as they usually did, and that the old man, who had not bathed in a week, had yanked his shirt off and rubbed his frail back against the wet floor. The policemen started to laugh when they saw him do this, and then they asked him to take all his clothes off and parade in the corridor outside the cell; as he did, they laughed louder and asked whether his son the thief knew that Papa's buttocks were so shrivelled. Nnamabia was staring at his yellow-orange rice as he spoke, and when he looked up his eyes were filled with tears, my worldly brother, and I felt a tenderness for him that I would not have been able to describe if I had been asked to.

There was another attack on campus — a boy hacked another boy with an axe — two days later.

"This is good," my mother said. "Now they cannot say that they have arrested all the cult boys." We did not go to Enugu that day; instead my parents went to see the local police superintendent, and they came back with good news. Nnamabia and the barman were to be released immediately. One of the cult boys, under questioning, had insisted that Nnamabia was not a member. The next day, we left earlier than usual, without jollof rice. My mother was always nervous when we drove, saying to my father, "*Nekwa ya!* Watch out!," as if he could not see the cars making dangerous turns in the other lane, but this time she did it so often that my father pulled over before we got to Ninth Mile and snapped, "Just who is driving this car?"

Two policemen were flogging a man with *koboko* as we drove into the police station. At first, I thought it was Nnamabia, and then I thought it was the old man from his cell. It was neither. I knew the boy on the ground, who was writhing and shouting with each lash. He was called Aboy and had the grave ugly face of a hound; he drove a Lexus around campus and was said to be a Buccaneer. I tried not to look at him as we walked inside. The policeman on duty, the one with tribal marks on his cheeks who always said "God bless you" when he took his bribe, looked away when he saw us, and I

knew that something was wrong. My parents gave him the note from the superintendent. The policeman did not even glance at it. He knew about the release order, he told my father; the barman had already been released, but there was a complication with the boy. My mother began to shout, "What do you mean? Where is my son?"

The policeman got up. "I will call my senior to explain to you."

My mother rushed at him and pulled on his shirt. "Where is my son? Where is my son?" My father pried her away, and the policeman brushed at his chest, as if she had left some dirt there, before he turned to walk away.

"Where is our son?" my father asked in a voice so quiet, so steely, that the policeman stopped.

"They took him away, sir," he said.

"They took him away? What are you saying?" my mother was yelling. "Have you killed my son? Have you killed my son?"

"Where is our son?" my father asked again.

"My senior said I should call him when you came," the policeman said, and this time he hurried through a door.

It was after he left that I felt suddenly chilled by fear; I wanted to run after him and, like my mother, pull at his shirt until he produced Nnamabia. The senior policeman came out, and I searched his blank face for clues.

"Good day, sir," he said to my father.

"Where is our son?" my father asked. My mother breathed noisily.

"No problem, sir. It is just that we transferred him. I will take you there right away." There was something nervous about the policeman; his face remained blank, but he did not meet my father's eyes.

"Transferred him?"

"We got the order this morning. I would have sent somebody for him, but we don't have petrol, so I was waiting for you to come so that we could go together."

"Why was he transferred?"

"I was not here, sir. They said that he misbehaved yesterday and they took him to Cell One, and then yesterday evening there was a transfer of all the people in Cell One to another site."

"He misbehaved? What do you mean?"

"I was not here, sir."

My mother spoke in a broken voice: "Take me to my son! Take me to my son right now!"

I sat in the back with the policeman, who smelled of the kind of old camphor that seemed

Image courtesy Amnesty International, © Chijioke Ugwu Clement

This drawing is an artist's depiction of overcrowded prison conditions in Nigeria in 2014. The artwork was commissioned by Amnesty International for its Stop Torture Campaign. The artwork is the artist's creative interpretation of torture techniques based on information and testimony supplied to the artist by Amnesty International.

What similarities do you see between this drawing and the prison where Nnamabia was held in this story?

to last forever in my mother's trunk. No one spoke except for the policeman when he gave my father directions. We arrived about fifteen minutes later, my father driving inordinately fast. The small, walled compound looked neglected, with patches of overgrown grass strewn with old bottles and plastic bags. The policeman hardly waited for my father to stop the car before he opened the door and hurried out, and again I felt chilled. We were in a god-forsaken part of town, and there was no sign that said "Police Station." There was a strange deserted feeling in the air. But the policeman soon emerged with Nnamabia. There he was, my handsome brother, walking toward us, seemingly unchanged, until he came close enough for my mother to hug him, and I saw him wince and back away — his arm was covered in soft-looking welts. There was dried blood around his nose.

"Why did they beat you like this?" my mother asked him. She turned to the policeman. "Why did you people do this to my son? Why?"

The man shrugged. There was a new insolence to his demeanor; it was as if he had been uncertain about Nnamabia's well-being but now, reassured, could let himself talk. "You cannot raise your children properly — all of you people who feel important because you work at the university — and when your children misbehave you think they should not be punished. You are lucky they released him."

65 My father said, "Let's go."

He opened the door and Nnamabia climbed in, and we drove home. My father did not stop at any of the police checkpoints on the road, and, once, a policeman gestured threateningly with his gun as we sped past. The only time my mother opened her mouth on the drive home was to ask Nnamabia if he wanted us to stop and buy some *okpa*.[4] Nnamabia said no. We had arrived in Nsukka before he finally spoke.

"Yesterday, the policemen asked the old man if he wanted a free half bucket of water. He said yes. So they told him to take his clothes off and parade the corridor. Most of my cellmates were laughing. Some of them said it was wrong to treat an old man like that." Nnamabia paused. "I shouted at the policeman. I told him the old man was innocent and ill, and if they kept him here it wouldn't help them find his son, because the man did not even know where his son was. They said that I should shut up immediately, that they would take me to Cell One. I didn't care. I didn't shut up. So they pulled me out and slapped me and took me to Cell One."

Nnamabia stopped there, and we asked him nothing else. Instead, I imagined him calling the policeman a stupid idiot, a spineless coward, a sadist, a bastard, and I imagined the shock of the policemen — the chief staring openmouthed, the other cellmates stunned at the audacity of the boy from the university. And I imagined the old man himself looking on with surprised pride and quietly refusing to undress. Nnamabia did not say what had happened to him in Cell One, or what happened at the new site. It would have been so easy for him, my charming brother, to make a sleek drama of his story, but he did not.

[4] okpa: A Nigerian dish made with the flour from crushed Bambara groundnuts (also known as Bambara-beans), which are grown in West Africa and resemble peanuts. —Eds.

Understanding and Interpreting

1 Trace Nnamabia's transformation throughout this story. What are the significant stages in his growing self-awareness?

2 Why does the narrator throw a stone and break the windshield of the family's Volvo (par. 28)? What does she mean by describing her action as "this little victory" (par. 28)?

3 Though she is a character in the story, the narrator, whose name we never learn, seems extremely passive. Other than throwing the rock through the car window, she does not do much other than report on her brother's actions. How does Adichie's choice of narrator affect the characterization of Nnamabia?

4 Compare the differences in the ways that at least two of the following characters view Nnamabia: his sister, his father, his mother, or the jailers. Provide evidence to support your response.

5 Evaluate the variety of ethical choices that the characters in this story face, including Nnamabia, his sister, his parents, and the jailers. Which people do the right thing in this story, and how do their choices help to illustrate a theme of "Cell One"?

6 Reread the last paragraph in the story. Notice that Nnamabia does not say anything further about his ordeal, but instead the narrator says, "Instead, I imagined him. [. . .]" What does Nnamabia's refusal to speak and his sister's imagining his actions reveal about both of the characters?

Analyzing Language, Style, and Structure

1 Because she is focused so much on her brother Nnamabia, we learn very little about the narrator, not even her name. Look back at the following excerpts and explain what each reveals about the narrator:

> Osita, our neighbor who had stolen our TV only weeks before Nnamabia's theft, was lithe and handsome in a brooding sort of way, and walked with the grace of a cat. His shirts were always crisply ironed, and I used to watch him across the hedge, then close my eyes and imagine that he was walking toward me, coming to claim me as his. He never noticed me. (par. 7)

> "How much did they give you for my gold?" our mother asked him. And when he told her she placed both hands on her head and cried, "Oh! Oh! *Chi m egbuo m!* My God has killed me!" I wanted to slap her. (par. 4)

> The second week, I told my parents that we were not going to visit Nnamabia. We did not know how long this would last, and petrol was too expensive for us to drive three hours every day. Besides, it would not hurt Nnamabia to fend for himself for one day. (par. 27)

2 While English is the official language of Nigeria and most of the educated class in the urban areas of the country speak it, Adichie also includes several non-English words as well. Sometimes they are translated for the reader and sometimes they are not. Locate examples of non-English words and explain their role within the story.

3 Though the story is called "Cell One," Adichie gives the actual cell only the most limited description. What is the effect of this absence of description?

4 There is a great deal of suspense at the end of the story as the family learns that Nnamabia has been transferred. Look back at this final scene and explain how Adichie creates the suspense.

5 How would you describe the author's attitude toward Nigeria and its criminal justice system in particular? Cite specific passages to support your response.

Connecting, Arguing, and Extending

1 Write a narrative about watching a sibling, friend, or loved one doing things that you knew at the time were wrong, dangerous, or harmful, as the narrator of this story did. Did the person you know have a transformative experience similar to Nnamabia's? Why or why not?

2 What were your perceptions of Africa before reading this story? What were those notions based on? Did this story confirm or contradict what you thought Africa was like?

3 Look back through the story and identify places where the characters seem to be influenced by American popular culture. What point is Adichie making about cross-cultural influence, or even the lingering effects of colonialism? You may need to conduct additional research on the topic of colonialism to help you answer this question.

4 The Nigerian criminal justice system, as described in this story, does not come across in a positive way. Locate a magazine or newspaper article about an event that has occurred in the United States that shows its system to be similarly flawed. Compare the real-life event from the United States with the fictionalized one from Nigeria. What conclusions can you draw about the similarities and differences between the two justice systems?

5 In "Cell One," the parents responded to the theft in their home first by denying that it was actually occurring, and then by blaming others. Is this response typical of parents? And is it better for parents to show faith in their children rather than being suspicious of them? Explain why you believe that the actions of the parents in this story do or do not seem believable or appropriate.

Free Fruit for Young Widows

Nathan Englander

Nathan Englander (b. 1970) is an American writer who wrote the novel *The Ministry of Special Cases* (2007) and two short-story collections, including *What We Talk about When We Talk about Anne Frank* (2012), which was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and from which this story is taken. Englander grew up in an Orthodox Jewish community in New York, and as an adult, lived in Israel for five years.

Basso Cannarsa/LUZphoto/Redux

KEY CONTEXT This story, told mostly in flashbacks, focuses on the ethical choices that a character named Professor Tendler, a Holocaust survivor, faces immediately after World War II. The Holocaust — also called "the Shoah," which means "the catastrophe" in Hebrew, the official language of Israel — refers to the systematic genocide by Adolf Hitler and the German Nazi regime of approximately 6 million Jewish people, as well as millions of other religious or ethnic minorities, homosexuals, and mentally or physically disabled people during the war.

After World War II, the modern state of Israel was formed in the traditional Middle Eastern homeland of the Jewish people. The land, which had become a British territory after the fall of the Ottoman Empire in World War I, was also the home of many Palestinians, who resented being displaced. This led to a series of wars between Israel and its neighboring countries, including a 1956 conflict between Israel and Egypt over control of the Suez Canal that is referred to in the beginning of this story.

When the Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser took control of the Suez Canal, threatening Western access to that vital route, an agitated France shifted allegiances, joining forces with Britain and Israel against Egypt. This is a fact neither here nor there, except that during the 1956 Sinai Campaign there were soldiers in the Israeli Army and soldiers in the Egyptian Army who ended up wearing identical French-supplied uniforms to battle.

Not long into the fighting, an Israeli platoon came to rest at a captured Egyptian camp to the east of Bir Gafgafa, in the Sinai Desert. There Private Shimmy Gezer (formerly Shimon Bibberblat, of Warsaw, Poland) sat down to eat at a makeshift outdoor mess. Four armed commandos sat down with him. He grunted. They grunted. Shimmy dug into his lunch.

A squad mate of Shimmy's came over to join them. Professor Tendler (who was then only Private Tendler, not yet a professor, and not yet even in possession of a high school degree) placed the tin cup that he was carrying on the edge of the table, taking care not to spill his tea. Then he took up his gun and shot each of the commandos in the head.

They fell quite neatly. The first two, who had been facing Professor Tendler, tipped back off the bench into the sand. The second pair, who had their backs to the professor and were still staring open-mouthed at their dead friends, fell face down, the sound of their skulls hitting the table somehow more violent than the report of the gun.

5 Shocked by the murder of four fellow soldiers, Shimmy Gezer tackled his friend. To Professor Tendler, who was much bigger than Shimmy, the attack was more startling than threatening. Tendler grabbed hold of Shimmy's hands while screaming, "Egyptians! Egyptians!" in Hebrew. He was using the same word about the same people in the same desert that had been used thousands of years before. The main difference, if the old stories are to be believed, was that God no longer raised his own fist in the fight.

Professor Tendler quickly managed to contain Shimmy in a bear hug. "Egyptian commandos — confused," Tendler said, switching to Yiddish. "The enemy. The enemy joined you for lunch."

Shimmy listened. Shimmy calmed down.

Professor Tendler, thinking the matter was settled, let Shimmy go. As soon as he did, Shimmy swung wildly. He continued attacking, because who cared who those four men were? They were people. They were human beings who had sat down at the wrong table for lunch. They were dead people who had not had to die.

"You could have taken them prisoner," Shimmy yelled. "Halt!" he screamed in German. "That's all — halt!" Then, with tears streaming and fists flying, Shimmy said, "You didn't have to shoot."

10 By then Professor Tendler had had enough. He proceeded to beat Shimmy Gezer. He didn't just defend himself. He didn't subdue his friend. He flipped Shimmy over, straddled his body, and pounded it down until it was level with the sand. He beat his friend until his friend couldn't take any more beating, and then he beat him some more. Finally he climbed off his friend, looked up into the hot sun, and pushed through the crowd of soldiers who had assembled in the minutes since the Egyptians sat down to their fate. Tendler went off to have a smoke.

For those who had come running at the sound of gunfire to find five bodies in the sand, it was the consensus that a pummeled Shimmy Gezer looked to be in the worst condition of the bunch.

At the fruit-and-vegetable stand that Shimmy Gezer eventually opened in Jerusalem's Mahane Yehuda Market, his son, little Etgar, asked about the story of Professor Tendler again and again. From the time he was six, Etgar had worked the *duchan* at his father's side whenever he wasn't in school. At that age, knowing only a child's version

of the story — that Tendler had done something in one of the wars that upset Etgar's father, and Etgar's father had jumped on the man, and the man had (his father never hesitated to admit) beat him up very badly — Etgar couldn't understand why his father was so nice to the professor now. Reared, as he was, on the laws of the small family business, Etgar couldn't grasp why he was forbidden to accept a single lira[1] from Tendler. The professor got his vegetables free.

After Etgar weighed the tomatoes and the cucumbers, his father would take up the bag, stick in a nice fat eggplant, unasked, and pass it over to Professor Tendler.

"*Kach*,"[2] his father would say. "Take it. And wish your wife well."

15 As Etgar turned nine and ten and eleven, the story began to fill out. He was told about the commandos and the uniforms, about shipping routes and the Suez, and the Americans and the British and the French. He learned about the shots to the head. He learned about all the wars his father had fought in — '73, '67, '56, '48 — though Shimmy Gezer still stopped short of the one he'd first been swept up in, the war that ran from 1939 to 1945.

Etgar's father explained the hazy morality of combat, the split-second decisions, the assessment of threat and response, the nature of percentages and absolutes. Shimmy did his best to make clear to his son that Israelis — in their nation of unfinished borders and unwritten constitution — were trapped in a gray space that was called real life.

In this gray space, he explained, even absolutes could maintain more than one position, reflect more than one truth. "You too," he said to his son, "may someday face a decision such as Professor Tendler's — may you never know from it." He pointed at the bloody stall across from theirs, pointed at a fish below the mallet, flopping on the block. "God forbid you should have to live with the consequences of decisions, permanent, eternal, that will chase you in your head, turning from this side to that, tossing between wrong and right."

But Etgar still couldn't comprehend how his father saw the story to be that of a fish flip-flopping, when it was, in his eyes, only ever about that mallet coming down.

Etgar wasn't one for the gray. He was a tiny, thoughtful, buck-toothed boy of certainties. And every Friday when Tendler came by the stand, Etgar would pack up the man's produce and then run through the story again, searching for black-and-white.

20 This man had saved his father's life, but maybe he hadn't. He'd done what was necessary, but maybe he could have done it another way. And even if the basic schoolyard rule applied in adult life — that a beating delivered earns a beating in return — did it ever justify one as fierce as the beating his father had described? A pummeling so severe that Shimmy, while telling the story, would run Etgar's fingers along his left cheek, to show him where Professor Tendler had flattened the bone.

Even if the violence had been justified, even if his father didn't always say, "You must risk your friend's life, your family's, your own, you must be willing to die — even to save the life of your enemy — if ever, of two deeds, the humane one may be done," it was not his father's act of forgiveness but his kindness that baffled Etgar.

Shimmy would send him running across Agrippas Street to bring back two cups of coffee or two glasses of tea to welcome Professor Tendler, telling Etgar to snatch a good-sized handful of pistachios from Eizenberg's cart along the way. This treatment his father reserved only for his oldest friends.

And absolutely no one but the war widows got their produce free. Quietly and with dignity,

[1] lira: The currency in Israel from 1948 to 1980. It was then replaced with the shekel. — Eds.
[2] Kach: Hebrew for "thus" or "so." — Eds.

so as to cause these women no shame, Etgar's father would send them off with fresh fruit and big bags of vegetables, sometimes for years after their losses. He always took care of the young widows. When they protested, he'd say, "You sacrifice, I sacrifice. All in all, what's a bag of apples?"

"It's all for one country," he'd say.

When it came to Professor Tendler, so clear an answer never came.

When Etgar was twelve, his father acknowledged the complexities of Tendler's tale.

"Do you want to know why I can care for a man who once beat me? Because to a story there is context. There is always context in life."

"That's it?" Etgar asked.

"That's it."

At thirteen, he was told a different story. Because at thirteen Etgar was a man.

"You know I was in the war," Shimmy said to his son. The way he said it Etgar knew that he didn't mean '48 or '56, '67 or '73. He did not mean the Jewish wars, in all of which he had fought. He meant the big one. The war that no one in his family but Shimmy had survived, which was also the case for Etgar's mother. This was why they had taken a new name, Shimmy explained. In the whole world, the Gezers were three.

"Yes," Etgar said. "I know."

"Professor Tendler was also in that war," Shimmy said.

"Yes," Etgar said.

"It was hard on him," Shimmy said. "And that is why, why I am always nice."

Etgar thought. Etgar spoke.

"But you were there too. You've had the same life as him. And you'd never have shot four men, even the enemy, if you could have taken them prisoner, if you could have spared a life. Even if you were in danger, you'd risk — " Etgar's father smiled, and stopped him.

"*Kodem kol*,"[3] he said, "a similar life is not a same life. There is a difference." Here Shimmy's face turned serious, the lightness gone. "In that first war, in that big war, I was the lucky one," he said. "In the Shoah, I survived."

"But he's here," Etgar said. "He survived, just the same as you."

"No," Etgar's father said. "He made it through the camps. He walks, he breathes, and he was very close to making it out of Europe alive. But they killed him. After the war, we still lost people. They killed what was left of him in the end."

For the first time, without Professor Tendler there, without one of Shimmy's friends from the ghetto who stopped by to talk in Yiddish, without one of the soldier buddies from his unit in the reserves, or one of the *kibbutzniks*[4] from whom he bought his fruits and his vegetables, Etgar's father sent Etgar across Agrippas Street to get two glasses of tea. One for Etgar and one for him.

"Hurry," Shimmy said, sending Etgar off with a slap on his behind. Before Etgar had taken a step, his father grabbed his collar and popped open the register, handing him a brand-new ten-shekel bill. "And buy us a nice big bag of seeds from Eizenberg. Tell him to keep the change. You and I, we are going to sit awhile."

Shimmy took out the second folding chair from behind the register. It would also be the first time that father and son had ever sat down in the store together. Another rule of good business: a customer should always find you standing. Always there's something you can be doing — sweeping, stacking, polishing apples. The customers will come to a place where there is pride.

This is why Professor Tendler got his tomatoes free, why the sight of the man who beat Shimmy made his gaze go soft with kindness in the way

[3] Kodem kol: Hebrew for "first of all." — Eds.

[4] kibbutzniks: Members of a kibbutz, a collective community in Israel. — Eds.

that it did when one of the *miskenot*[5] came by — why it took on what Etgar called his father's free-fruit-for-young-widows eyes. This is the story that Shimmy told Etgar when he felt that his boy was a man:

45 The first thing Professor Tendler saw when his death camp was liberated was two big, tough American soldiers fainting dead away. The pair (presumably war-hardened) stood before the immense, heretofore unimaginable brutality of modern extermination, frozen, slack-jawed before a mountain of putrid, naked corpses, a hill of men.

And from this pile of broken bodies that had been — prior to the American invasion — set to be burned, a rickety skeletal Tendler stared back. Professor Tendler stared and studied, and when he was sure that those soldiers were not Nazi soldiers he crawled out from his hiding place among the corpses, pushing and shoving those balsa-wood arms and legs aside.

It was this hill of bodies that had protected Tendler day after day. The poor Sonderkommandos who dumped the bodies, as well as those who came to cart them to the ovens, knew that the boy was inside. They brought him the crumbs of their crumbs to keep him going. And though it was certain death for these prisoners to protect him, it allowed them a sliver of humanity in their inhuman jobs. This was what Shimmy was trying to explain to his son — that these palest shadows of kindness were enough to keep a dead man alive.

When Tendler finally got to his feet, straightening his body out, when the corpse that was Professor Tendler at age thirteen — "your age" — came crawling from that nightmare, he looked at the two Yankee soldiers, who looked at him and then hit the ground with a thud.

Professor Tendler had already seen so much in life that this was not worth even a pause, and so he walked on. He walked on naked through the gates of the camp, walked on until he got some food and some clothes, walked on until he had shoes and then a coat. He walked on until he had a little bread and a potato in his pocket — a surplus.

50 Soon there was also in that pocket a cigarette and then a second; a coin and then a second. Surviving in this way, Tendler walked across borders until he was able to stand straight and tall, until he showed up in his childhood town in a matching suit of clothes, with a few bills in his pocket and, in his waistband, a six-shooter with five bullets chambered, in order to protect himself during the nights that he slept by the side of the road.

Professor Tendler was expecting no surprises, no reunions. He'd seen his mother killed in front of him, his father, his three sisters, his grandparents, and, after some months in the camp, the two boys that he knew from back home.

But home — that was the thing he held on to. Maybe his house was still there, and his bed. Maybe the cow was still giving milk, and the goats still chewing garbage, and his dog still barking at the chickens as before. And maybe his other family — the nurse at whose breast he had become strong (before weakened), her husband who had farmed his father's field, and their son (his age), and another (two years younger), boys with whom he had played like a brother — maybe this family was still there waiting. Waiting for him to come home.

Tendler could make a new family in that house. He could call every child he might one day have by his dead loved ones' names.

The town looked as it had when he'd left. The streets were his streets, the linden trees in the square taller but laid out as before. And when Tendler turned down the dirt road that led to his gate, he fought to keep himself from running, and he fought to keep himself from crying, because, after what he had seen, he knew that to survive in this world he must always act like a man.

[5] miskenot: Plural of *misken*, meaning unfortunate person; victim of circumstance. — Eds.

This Holocaust memorial sculpture by Kenneth Treister, titled *The Sculpture of Love and Anguish*, can be found in Miami, Florida.

How does this Holocaust memorial reflect the images of the concentration camp that Englander uses in this short story?

So Tendler buttoned his coat and walked quietly toward the fence, wishing that he had a hat to take off as he passed through the gate — just the way the man of the house would when coming home to what was his.

But when he saw her in the yard — when he saw Fanushka his nurse, their maid — the tears came anyway. Tendler popped a precious button from his coat as he ran to her and threw himself into her arms, and he cried for the first time since the trains.

With her husband at her side, Fanushka said to him, "Welcome home, son," and "Welcome home, child," and "We prayed," "We lit candles," "We dreamed of your return."

When they asked, "Are your parents also coming? Are your sisters and your grandparents far behind?," when they asked after all the old neighbors, house by house, Tendler answered, not by metaphor, and not by insinuation. When he knew the fate, he stated it as it was: beaten or starved, shot, cut in half, the front of the head caved in. All this he related without feeling — matters, each, of fact. All this he shared before venturing a step through his front door.

Looking through that open door, Tendler decided that he would live with these people as family until he had a family of his own. He would grow old in this house. Free to be free, he would gate himself up again. But it would be his gate, his lock, his world.

A hand on his hand pulled him from his reverie. It was Fanushka talking, a sad smile on her face. "Time to fatten you up," she said. "A feast for first dinner." And she grabbed the chicken at her feet and twisted its neck right there in the yard. "Come in," she said, while the animal twitched. "The master of the house has returned.

"Just as you left it," she said. "Only a few of our things."

Tendler stepped inside.

It was exactly as he remembered it: the table, the chairs, except that all that was personal was gone.

Fanushka's two sons came in, and Tendler understood what time had done. These boys, fed and housed, warmed and loved, were fully twice his size. He felt, then, something he had never known in the camps, a civilized emotion that would have served no use. Tendler felt ashamed. He turned red, clenched his jaw tight, and felt his gums bleeding into his mouth.

"You have to understand," Etgar's father said to his son. "These boys, his brothers, they were now twice his size and strangers to him."

The boys, prodded, shook hands with Tendler. They did not know him anymore.

. . .

"Still, it is a nice story," Etgar said. "Sad. But also happy. He makes it home to a home. It's what you always say. Survival, that's what matters. Surviving to start again."

Etgar's father held up a sunflower seed, thinking about this. He cracked it between his front teeth.

"So they are all making a dinner for Professor Tendler," he said. "And he is sitting on the kitchen floor, legs crossed, as he did when he was a boy, and he is watching. Watching happily, drinking a glass of goat's milk, still warm. And then the father goes out to slaughter that goat. 'A feast for dinner,' he says. 'A chicken's not enough.' Professor Tendler, who has not had meat in years, looks at him, and the father, running a nail along his knife, says, 'I remember the kosher way.'"

70 Tendler was so happy that he could not bear it. So happy and so sad. And, with the cup of warm milk and the warm feeling, Tendler had to pee. But he didn't want to move now that he was there with his other mother and, resting on her shoulder, a baby sister. A year and a half old and one curl on the head. A little girl, fat and happy. Fat in the ankle, fat in the wrist.

Professor Tendler rushed out at the last second, out of the warm kitchen, out from under his roof. Professor Tendler, a man whom other men had tried to turn into an animal, did not race to the outhouse. It didn't cross his mind. He stood right under the kitchen window to smell the kitchen smells, to stay close. And he took a piss. Over the sound of the stream, he heard his nurse lamenting.

He knew what she must be lamenting — the Tendler family destroyed.

He listened to what she was saying. And he heard.

"He will take everything," is what she said. "He will take it all from us — our house, our field. He'll snatch away all we've built and protected, everything that has been — for so long — ours."

75 There outside the window, pissing and listening, and also "disassociating," as Professor Tendler would call it (though he did not then have the word), he knew only that he was watching himself from above, that he could see himself feeling all the disappointment as he felt it, until he was keenly and wildly aware that he had felt nothing all those years, felt nothing when his father and mother were shot, felt nothing while in the camps, nothing, in fact, from the moment he was driven from his home to the moment he returned.

In that instant, Tendler's guilt was sharper than any sensation he had ever known.

And here, in response to his precocious son, Shimmy said, "Yes, yes, of course it was about survival — Tendler's way of coping. Of course he'd been feeling all along." But Tendler — a boy who had stepped over his mother's body and kept walking — had, for those peasants, opened up.

It was right then, Professor Tendler later told Shimmy, that he became a philosopher.

"He will steal it all away," Fanushka said. "Everything. He has come for our lives."

80 And her son, whom Tendler had considered a brother, said, "No." And Tendler's other almost-brother said, "No."

"We will eat," Fanushka said. "We will celebrate. And when he sleeps we will kill him." To one of the sons she said, "Go. Tell your father to keep that knife sharp." To the other she said, "You get to sleep early, and you get up early, and before you grab the first tit on that cow I want his throat slit. Ours. Ours, not to be taken away."

Tendler ran. Not toward the street but back toward the outhouse in time to turn around as the kitchen door flew open, in time to smile at the younger brother on his way to find his father, in time for Tendler to be heading back the right way.

"Do you want to hear what was shared at such a dinner?'' Shimmy asked his son. "The memories roused and oaths sworn? There was wine, I know. 'Drink, drink,' the mother said.

There was the chicken and a pot of goat stew. And, in a time of great deprivation, there was also sugar for the tea.'' At this, Shimmy pointed at the bounty of their stand. "And, as if nothing, next to the baby's basket on the kitchen floor sat a basket of apples. Tendler hadn't had an apple in who knows how long."

Tendler brought the basket to the table. The family laughed as he peeled the apples with a knife, first eating the peels, then the flesh, and savoring even the seeds and the cores. It was a celebration, a joyous night. So much so that Professor Tendler could not by its end, belly distended, eyes crossed with drink, believe what he knew to have been said.

There were hugs and there were kisses, and Tendler — the master of the house — was given his parents' bedroom upstairs, the two boys across the hall, and below, in the kitchen ("It will be warmest"), slept the mother and the father and the fat-ankled girl.

"Sleep well," Fanushka said. "Welcome home, my son." And, sweetly, she kissed Tendler on both eyes.

Tendler climbed the stairs. He took off his suit and went to bed. And that was where he was when Fanushka popped through the door and asked him if he was warm enough, if he needed a lamp by which to read.

"No, thank you," he said.

"So formal? No thanks necessary," Fanushka said. "Only 'Yes, Mother,' or 'No, Mother,' my poor reclaimed orphan son."

"No light, Mother," Tendler said, and Fanushka closed the door.

Tendler got out of bed. He put on his suit. Once again without any shame to his actions, Tendler searched the room for anything of value, robbing his own home.

Then he waited. He waited until the house had settled into itself, the last creak slipping from the floorboards as the walls pushed back against the wind. He waited until his mother, his Fanushka, must surely sleep, until a brother intent on staying up for the night — a brother who had never once fought for his life — convinced himself that it would be all right to close his eyes.

Tendler waited until he too had to sleep, and that's when he tied the laces of his shoes together and hung them over his shoulder. That's when he took his pillow with one hand and, with the other, quietly cocked his gun.

Then, with goose feathers flying, Tendler moved through the house. A bullet for each brother, one for the father and one for the mother. Tendler fired until he found himself standing in the warmth of the kitchen, one bullet left to protect him on the nights when he would sleep by the side of the road.

That last bullet Tendler left in the fat baby girl, because he did not know from mercy, and did not need to leave another of that family to grow to kill him at some future time.

"He murdered them," Etgar said. "A murderer."

"No," his father told him. "There was no such notion at the time."

"Even so, it is murder," Etgar said.

"If it is, then it's only fair. They killed him first. It was his right."

"But you always say — "

"Context."

"But the baby. The girl."

"The baby is hardest, I admit. But these are questions for the philosopher. These are the theoretical instances put into flesh and blood."

"But it's not a question. These people, they are not the ones who murdered his family."

"They were coming for him that night."

"He could have escaped. He could have run for the gate when he overheard. He didn't need to race back toward the outhouse, race to face the brother as he came the other way."

"Maybe there was no more running in him. Anyway, do you understand 'an eye for an eye'? Can you imagine a broader meaning of *self-defense?*"

"You always forgive him," Etgar said. "You suffered the same things — but you aren't that way. You would not have done what he did."

"It is hard to know what a person would and wouldn't do in any specific instance. And you, spoiled child, apply the rules of civilization to a boy who had seen only its opposite. Maybe the fault for those deaths lies in a system designed for the killing of Tendlers that failed to do its job. An error, a slip that allowed a Tendler, no longer fit, back loose in the world."

"Is that what you think?"

"It's what I ask. And I ask you, my Etgar, what you would have done if you were Tendler that night?"

"Not kill."

"Then you die."

"Only the grownups."

"But it was a boy who was sent to cut Tendler's throat."

"How about killing only those who would do harm?"

"Still it's murder. Still it is killing people who have yet to act, murdering them in their sleep."

"I guess," Etgar said. "I can see how they deserved it, the four. How I might, if I were him, have killed them."

Shimmy shook his head, looking sad.

"And whoever are we, my son, to decide who should die?"

It was on that day that Etgar Gezer became a philosopher himself. Not in the manner of Professor Tendler, who taught theories up at the university on the mountain, but, like his father, practical and concrete. Etgar would not finish high school or go to college, and except for his three years in the army, he would spend his life — happily — working the stand in the *shuk*.[6] He'd stack the fruit into pyramids and contemplate weighty questions with a seriousness of thought. And when there were answers Etgar would try employing them to make for himself and others, in whatever small way, a better life.

It was on that day too that Etgar decided Professor Tendler was both a murderer and, at the same time, a *misken*. He believed he understood how and why Professor Tendler had come to kill that peasant family, and how men sent to battle in uniform — even in the same uniform — would find no mercy at his hand. Etgar also came to see how Tendler's story could just as easily have ended for the professor that first night, back in his parents' room, in his parents' bed, a gun with four bullets held in a suicide's hand — how the first bullet Tendler ever fired might have been into his own head.

Still, every Friday Etgar packed up Tendler's fruit and vegetables. And in that bag Etgar would add, when he had them, a pineapple or a few fat mangos dripping honey. Handing it to Tendler, Etgar would say, "*Kach*, Professor. Take it." This, even after his father had died.

[6] shuk: Market. — Eds.

Understanding and Interpreting

1 The story of Professor Tendler shooting the Egyptian commandos at the beginning is one that the narrator returns to multiple times throughout the story. Summarize Tendler's actions and explain the different choices that Shimmy, and later Etgar, think Tendler could have made.

2 As much as Etgar, the "buck-toothed boy of certainties" (par. 19), wants to believe in black-and-white ethical choices, like killing, his father tries to teach him that Israelis, in particular, "were trapped in a gray space that was called real life" (par. 16), and he tells his son, "There is always context in life" (par. 27). What role does context play in the ethical decision making of the characters in this story?

3 When Professor Tendler tells the family living in his childhood home about what happened to his parents and sisters during the Holocaust, the narrator says that Tendler answered "not by metaphor, and not by insinuation. When he knew the fate, he stated it as it was" (par. 58). What does this reveal about Tendler and how he views life after the Holocaust?

4 Authors often develop their characters by describing their physical actions. Skim back through the story and focus on Shimmy's actions, especially those toward the young widows, his son, and Professor Tendler in the marketplace. What do these actions reveal about Shimmy, and how do they relate to the theme of this story?

5 Reread paragraphs 96–120 where Etgar and his father debate Professor Tendler's killing of the family. Summarize Etgar's and Shimmy's arguments, and explain what changes Etgar's mind.

6 Both Etgar and Professor Tendler, the narrator says, "became a philosopher" (pars. 78 and 121). What does this mean, and how does each character come to this moment differently?

Analyzing Language, Style, and Structure

1 Several times in this story Professor Tendler is referred to as dead; for instance in paragraph 48, the narrator says, "[T]he corpse that was Professor Tendler [. . .] came crawling from that nightmare." What does Englander's use of death imagery illustrate about Tendler's character?

2 The shooting of the Egyptian soldiers is shocking and brutal, especially since it occurs within the first three paragraphs of the story. What effect is created with this opening? How does Englander's choice to begin in this fashion lead to other structural choices he makes in the story?

3 Reread paragraphs 48–55, in which Professor Tendler walks away from the camp back to his home. How does Englander use imagery to describe his transformation and for what effect?

4 Look back at the section where Professor Tendler learns the family living in his old house is planning on killing him (pars. 78–91). How are the words "mother," "brother," and "son" used in this section, and how do these language choices illustrate aspects of Tendler's character?

5 Englander uses the phrases "a bullet for each brother" and "[t]hat last bullet Tendler left in the fat baby girl" (pars. 93–94) instead of directly stating that Tendler shot each of them. What is the effect of this phrasing, and how does it relate to the central question of the ethics of Tendler's actions?

Connecting, Arguing, and Extending

1 Were Professor Tendler's actions justified? Were they the right thing to do? Is there a difference between his actions against the Egyptian soldiers and his actions against the family? Use evidence from the text as well as your own knowledge or research to support your position.

2 Research the psychological effects that the Holocaust had on its survivors, specifically "disassociating," which Professor Tendler was experiencing outside his house listening to the family plotting to kill him. What are the implications of disassociation in people's lives? And how might this disassociation have led to Professor Tendler's actions?

3 In trying to determine a universal approach to ethics, German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) developed the concept he called the "categorical imperative," which describes laws that must be followed by all people at all times and in all circumstances. Conduct brief research about the categorical imperative and apply its approach to Professor Tendler's actions in this story. Was he justified or not, according to Kant?

4 At the end of the story, Etgar determines that Professor Tendler is both a murderer and a *misken*, which is a Hebrew word with no simple English translation. Read through the following description of the word by Rabbi Yaacov Yisroel Bar-Chaiim and explain how you think its usage relates to the theme of the story.

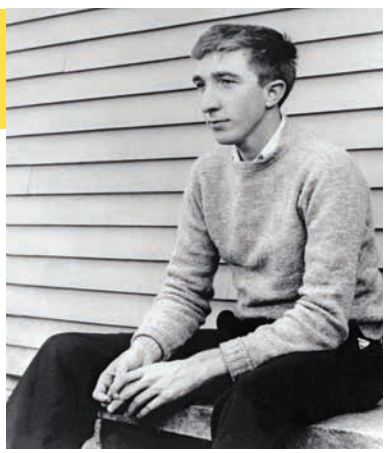
> One very common but profoundly misunderstood Hebrew word is Misken. It's usually translated as Pitiful, Poor, Miserable, Pathetic. [. . .]
>
> The problem is that all these connote condescension. Something is wrong—with that individual. He has failed at something and is now stuck in a place, at best, where we never hope to be.
>
> If you've ever heard the term being used with spontaneous Jewish compassion, however, you know it means something very different. "Oy, Misken!" conveys a piercing overlap of spirit; an abiding kinship; a mutual commiseration that leaves each feeling a little lighter, a little holier.

5 Read the following excerpt from the classic Holocaust memoir *Night* by Elie Wiesel. Explain how this passage is similar to and different from the attitude that Professor Tendler had after being released from the camp.

> Never shall I forget that night, the first night in camp, which has turned my life into one long night, seven times cursed and seven times sealed. Never shall I forget the smoke. Never shall I forget the little faces of the children whose bodies I saw turned into wreaths of smoke beneath a silent blue sky.
>
> Never shall I forget those flames which consumed my faith forever.
>
> Never shall I forget that nocturnal silence which deprived me, for all eternity, of the desire to live. Never shall I forget those moments which murdered my God and my soul and turned my dreams to dust.
>
> Never shall I forget these things, even if I am condemned to live as long as God Himself. Never.

A & P

John Updike



Hulton Archive/Getty Images

American writer John Updike (1932–2009) is best known for a series of books featuring Harry "Rabbit" Angstrom, whose fictional life Updike traced from young adulthood to old age. Averaging nearly one novel or short-story collection every year between 1960 and 2009, he is one of only three writers to win the Pulitzer Prize for literature twice. In his novels and short stories, many of which were first published in the *New Yorker* magazine, Updike often reflects the religious, economic, societal, and marital conflicts faced by middle-class white men. In this, one of his most famous short stories, published in 1961, the narrator, Sammy, recounts what seems to be a typical day in the A & P grocery store where he works, but it quickly turns into a situation in which Sammy faces an ethical choice that has significant consequences for him.

In walks these three girls in nothing but bathing suits. I'm in the third checkout slot, with my back to the door, so I don't see them until they're over by the bread. The one that caught my eye first was the one in the plaid green two-piece. She was a chunky kid, with a good tan and a sweet broad soft-looking can with those two crescents of white just under it, where the sun never seems to hit, at the top of the backs of her legs. I stood there with my hand on a box of HiHo crackers trying to remember if I rang it up or not. I ring it up again and the customer starts giving me hell. She's one of these cash-register-watchers, a witch about fifty with rouge on her cheekbones and no eyebrows, and I know it made her day to trip me up. She'd been watching cash registers for fifty years and probably never seen a mistake before.

By the time I got her feathers smoothed and her goodies into a bag — she gives me a little snort in passing, if she'd been born at the right time they would have burned her over in Salem — by the time I get her on her way the girls had circled around the bread and were coming back, without a pushcart, back my way along the counters, in the aisle between the checkouts and the Special bins. They didn't even have shoes on. There was this chunky one, with the two-piece — it was bright green and the seams on the bra were still sharp and her belly was still pretty pale so I guessed she just got it (the suit) — there was this one, with one of those chubby berry-faces, the lips all bunched together under her nose, this one, and a tall one, with black hair that hadn't quite frizzed right, and one of these sunburns right across under the eyes, and a chin that was too long — you know, the kind of girl other girls think is very "striking" and "attractive" but never quite makes it, as they very well know, which is why they like her so much — and then the third one, that wasn't quite so tall. She was the queen. She kind of led them, the other two peeking around and making their shoulders round. She didn't look around, not this queen, she just walked straight on slowly, on these long white prima-donna legs. She came down a little hard on her heels, as if she didn't walk in her bare feet that much, putting down her heels and then letting the weight move along to her toes as if she was testing the floor with every step, putting a little deliberate extra action into it. You never know for sure how girls' minds work (do you really think it's a mind in there or just a little buzz like a bee in a glass jar?) but you got the idea she had talked the other two into coming in here with her, and now she was showing them how to do it, walk slow and hold yourself straight.

She had on a kind of dirty-pink — beige maybe, I don't know — bathing suit with a little nubble all over it and, what got me, the straps were down. They were off her shoulders looped loose around the cool tops of her arms, and I guess as a result the suit had slipped a little on her, so all around the top of the cloth there was this shining rim. If it hadn't been there you wouldn't have known there could have been anything whiter than those shoulders. With the straps pushed off, there was nothing between the top of the suit and the top of her head except just *her*, this clean bare plane of the top of her chest down from the shoulder bones like a dented sheet of metal tilted in the light. I mean, it was more than pretty.

She had sort of oaky hair that the sun and salt had bleached, done up in a bun that was unraveling, and a kind of prim face. Walking into the A & P with your straps down, I suppose it's the only kind of face you *can* have. She held her head so high her neck, coming up out of those white shoulders, looked kind of stretched, but I didn't mind. The longer her neck was, the more of her there was.

5 She must have felt in the corner of her eye me and over my shoulder Stokesie in the second

slot watching, but she didn't tip. Not this queen. She kept her eyes moving across the racks, and stopped, and turned so slow it made my stomach rub the inside of my apron, and buzzed to the other two, who kind of huddled against her for relief, and then they all three of them went up the cat-and-dog-food-breakfast-cereal-macaroni-rice-raisins-seasonings-spreads-spaghetti-soft-drinks-crackers-and-cookies aisle. From the third slot I look straight up this aisle to the meat counter, and I watched them all the way. The fat one with the tan sort of fumbled with the cookies, but on second thought she put the package back. The sheep pushing their carts down the aisle — the girls were walking against the usual traffic (not that we have one-way signs or anything) — were pretty hilarious. You could see them, when Queenie's white shoulders dawned on them, kind of jerk, or hop, or hiccup, but their eyes snapped back to their own baskets and on they pushed. I bet you could set off dynamite in an A & P and the people would by and large keep reaching and checking oatmeal off their lists and muttering "Let me see, there was a third thing, began with A, asparagus, no, ah, yes, applesauce!" or whatever it is they do mutter. But there was no doubt, this jiggled them. A few houseslaves in pin curlers even looked around after pushing their carts past to make sure what they had seen was correct.

You know, it's one thing to have a girl in a bathing suit down on the beach, where what with the glare nobody can look at each other much anyway, and another thing in the cool of the A & P, under the fluorescent lights, against all those stacked packages, with her feet paddling along naked over our checkerboard green-and-cream rubber-tile floor.

"Oh Daddy," Stokesie said beside me. "I feel so faint."

"Darling," I said. "Hold me tight." Stokesie's married, with two babies chalked up on his fuselage already, but as far as I can tell that's the only difference. He's twenty-two, and I was nineteen this April.

"Is it done?" he asks, the responsible married man finding his voice. I forgot to say he thinks he's going to be manager some sunny day, maybe in 1990 when it's called the Great Alexandrov and Petrooshki Tea Company or something.

10 What he meant was, our town is five miles from a beach, with a big summer colony out on the Point, but we're right in the middle of town, and the women generally put on a shirt or shorts or something before they get out of the car into the street. And anyway these are usually women with six children and varicose veins mapping their legs and nobody, including them, could care less. As I say, we're right in the middle of town, and if you stand at our front doors you can see two banks and the Congregational church and the newspaper store and three real-estate offices and about twenty-seven old freeloaders tearing up Central Street because the sewer broke again. It's not as if we're on the Cape; we're north of Boston and there's people in this town haven't seen the ocean for twenty years.

The girls had reached the meat counter and were asking McMahon something. He pointed, they pointed, and they shuffled out of sight behind a pyramid of Diet Delight peaches. All that was left for us to see was old McMahon patting his mouth and looking after them sizing up their joints. Poor kids, I began to feel sorry for them, they couldn't help it.

Now here comes the sad part of the story, at least my family says it's sad, but I don't think it's so sad myself. The store's pretty empty, it being Thursday afternoon, so there was nothing much to do except lean on the register and wait for the girls to show up again. The whole store was like a pinball machine and I didn't know which tunnel they'd come out of. After a while they come around out of the far aisle, around

the light bulbs, records at discount of the Caribbean Six or Tony Martin Sings or some such gunk you wonder they waste the wax on, sixpacks of candy bars, and plastic toys done up in cellophane that fall apart when a kid looks at them anyway. Around they come, Queenie still leading the way, and holding a little gray jar in her hand. Slots Three through Seven are unmanned and I could see her wondering between Stokes and me, but Stokesie with his usual luck draws an old party in baggy gray pants who stumbles up with four giant cans of pineapple juice (what do these bums *do* with all that pineapple juice? I've often asked myself) so the girls come to me. Queenie puts down the jar and I take it into my fingers icy cold. Kingfish Fancy Herring Snacks in Pure Sour Cream: 49¢. Now her hands are empty, not a ring or a bracelet, bare as God made them, and I wonder where the money's coming from. Still with that prim look she lifts a folded dollar bill out of the hollow at the center of her nubbled pink top. The jar went heavy in my hand. Really, I thought that was so cute.

Then everybody's luck begins to run out. Lengel comes in from haggling with a truck full of cabbages on the lot and is about to scuttle into that door marked MANAGER behind which he hides all day when the girls touch his eye. Lengel's pretty dreary, teaches Sunday school and the rest, but he doesn't miss that much. He comes over and says, "Girls, this isn't the beach."

Queenie blushes, though maybe it's just a brush of sunburn I was noticing for the first time, now that she was so close. "My mother asked me to pick up a jar of herring snacks." Her voice kind of startled me, the way voices do when you see the people first, coming out so flat and dumb yet kind of tony, too, the way it ticked over "pick up" and "snacks." All of a sudden I slid right down her voice into the living room. Her father and the other men were standing around in ice-cream coats and bow ties and the women were in sandals picking up herring snacks on toothpicks off a big glass plate and they were all holding drinks the color of water with olives and sprigs of mint in them. When my parents have somebody over they get lemonade and if it's a real racy affair Schlitz in tall glasses with "They'll Do It Every Time" cartoons stencilled on.

15 "That's all right," Lengel said. "But this isn't the beach." His repeating this struck me as funny, as if it had just occurred to him, and he had been thinking all these years the A & P was a great big dune and he was the head lifeguard. He didn't like my smiling — as I say he doesn't miss much — but he concentrates on giving the girls that sad Sunday-school-superintendent stare.

Queenie's blush is no sunburn now, and the plump one in plaid, that I liked better from the back — a really sweet can — pipes up, "We weren't doing any shopping. We just came in for the one thing."

"That makes no difference," Lengel tells her, and I could see from the way his eyes went that he hadn't noticed she was wearing a two-piece before. "We want you decently dressed when you come in here."

"We *are* decent," Queenie says suddenly, her lower lip pushing, getting sore now that she remembers her place, a place from which the crowd that runs the A & P must look pretty crummy. Fancy Herring Snacks flashed in her very blue eyes.

"Girls, I don't want to argue with you. After this come in here with your shoulders covered. It's our policy." He turns his back. That's policy for you. Policy is what the kingpins want. What the others want is juvenile delinquency.

20 All this while, the customers had been showing up with their carts but, you know, sheep, seeing a scene, they had all bunched up on Stokesie, who shook open a paper bag as gently as peeling a peach, not wanting to miss a word. I could feel in the silence everybody getting

nervous, most of all Lengel, who asks me, "Sammy, have you rung up their purchase?"

I thought and said "No" but it wasn't about that I was thinking. I go through the punches, 4, 9, GROC, TOT — it's more complicated than you think, and after you do it often enough, it begins to make a little song, that you hear words to, in my case "Hello (*bing*) there, you (*gung*) hap-py *pee*-pul (*splat*)!" — the *splat* being the drawer flying out. I uncrease the bill, tenderly as you may imagine, it just having come from between the two smoothest scoops of vanilla I had ever known were there, and pass a half and a penny into her narrow pink palm, and nestle the herrings in a bag and twist its neck and hand it over, all the time thinking.

The girls, and who'd blame them, are in a hurry to get out, so I say "I quit" to Lengel quick enough for them to hear, hoping they'll stop and watch me, their unsuspected hero. They keep right on going, into the electric eye; the door flies open and they flicker across the lot to their car, Queenie and Plaid and Big Tall Goony-Goony (not that as raw material she was so bad), leaving me with Lengel and a kink in his eyebrow.

"Did you say something, Sammy?"

"I said I quit."

25 "I thought you did."

"You didn't have to embarrass them."

"It was they who were embarrassing us."

I started to say something that came out "Fiddle-de-doo." It's a saying of my grandmother's, and I know she would have been pleased.

"I don't think you know what you're saying," Lengel said.

30 "I know you don't," I said. "But I do." I pull the bow at the back of my apron and start shrugging it off my shoulders. A couple customers that had been heading for my slot begin to knock against each other, like scared pigs in a chute.

Lengel sighs and begins to look very patient and old and gray. He's been a friend of my parents for years. "Sammy, you don't want to do this to your Mom and Dad," he tells me. It's true, I don't. But it seems to me that once you begin a gesture it's fatal not to go through with it. I fold the apron, "Sammy" stitched in red on the pocket, and put it on the counter, and drop the bow tie on top of it. The bow tie is theirs, if you've ever wondered. "You'll feel this for the rest of your life," Lengel says, and I know that's true, too, but remembering how he made the pretty girl blush makes me so scrunchy inside I punch the No Sale tab and the machine whirs "pee-pul" and the drawer splats out. One advantage to this scene taking place in summer, I can follow this up with a clean exit, there's no fumbling around getting your coat and galoshes, I just saunter into the electric eye in my white shirt that my mother ironed the night before, and the door heaves itself open, and outside the sunshine is skating around on the asphalt.

I look around for my girls, but they're gone, of course. There wasn't anybody but some young married screaming with her children about some candy they didn't get by the door of a powder-blue Falcon station wagon. Looking back in the big windows, over the bags of peat moss and aluminum lawn furniture stacked on the pavement, I could see Lengel in my place in the slot, checking the sheep through. His face was dark gray and his back stiff, as if he'd just had an injection of iron, and my stomach kind of fell as I felt how hard the world was going to be to me hereafter.

seeing connections

Rob Gage Photography

Katie and the Dock Workers by Rob Gage

If the girls in Updike's story were on the beach and not in a grocery store, no one would even notice they were in their bathing suits.

Look at this image by Rob Gage. What is the point he is trying to make by showing a ballerina out of the context of the ballet? What is the effect of the juxtaposition between the dancer and the dock workers? How is this juxtaposition similar to or different from the one in the story "A & P"?

Understanding and Interpreting

1 All of the characterization of the girls comes directly from Sammy's point of view. Skim back through the story and locate a place where the narrator directly describes the girls. What does this description reveal about the girls, and, more important, what does it reveal about Sammy?

2 In literature, a "foil" is a character whose purpose in the story is intended to draw a contrast to the protagonist, revealing some aspect of the protagonist's character that might not have been otherwise revealed. Stokesie acts as a foil to Sammy in this story. Explain what Stokesie's actions and traits reveal about Sammy.

3 While there can be little doubt that Sammy is physically attracted to the girls, he also seems to be attracted to the way that they do not conform to the expectations of the A & P. Identify sections of the story where Sammy is attracted to the girls in this way, and explain why he might find this nonconformity attractive.

4 There are two settings in this story: the A & P store and the town in which the store sits. Explain Sammy's attitude toward both of these settings and explain the role that both play in Sammy's final decision.

5 Reread the sentence in paragraph 14: "All of a sudden I slid right down her voice into the living room." What is the contrast that Sammy draws between what he imagines about Queenie's life and his own? How might this contrast lead to Sammy's act at the end of the story?

6 Why does Sammy quit? What motivates his decision? Does he regret it? Is Sammy really an "unsuspected hero" (par. 22)?

Analyzing Language, Style, and Structure

1 Notice that Updike chooses to use the present tense, with only a few exceptions, throughout the story. What is the effect of a narrative being told in this manner? How might the effect have been different if it were in the past tense?

2 Look back through the story and identify Updike's use of parenthetical asides. What do these asides have in common? What purpose do they serve?

3 What does the repetition of the phrase "not this queen" (pars. 2 and 5) reveal both about Queenie and Sammy?

4 How do the metaphors that Updike uses to describe the customers in the store help to illustrate the theme of this story?

5 At almost exactly the halfway point, the narrator breaks the flow, and especially the time sequence, of the story when he says, "Now here comes the sad part of the story, at least my family says it's sad, but I don't think it's so sad myself" (par. 12). What is the effect of this interruption in the story at this particular point?

6 Reread the exchange between Sammy and Lengel. How does Updike create humor in this dialogue, and why does he play this scene somewhat lightly?

7 The last sentence includes a description of Lengel, who has taken Sammy's place at the checkout slot, which leads Sammy to feel "how hard the world was going to be to [him] hereafter." How does the contrast with Lengel lead to this realization? How is this line different in tone from the rest of the story?

Connecting, Arguing, and Extending

1 Is Sammy's quitting really the right thing to do? What effect does it have? Are there options that Sammy could have taken that would have been more effective? Be sure to use support from the story to support your position.

2 Even if he is less than successful, Sammy does take a stand, protesting the treatment of the girls by the manager. Describe a time when you or someone you know stood up for someone like Sammy did, or a time when someone stood up for you. What was the outcome? What was the ethical choice that was faced?

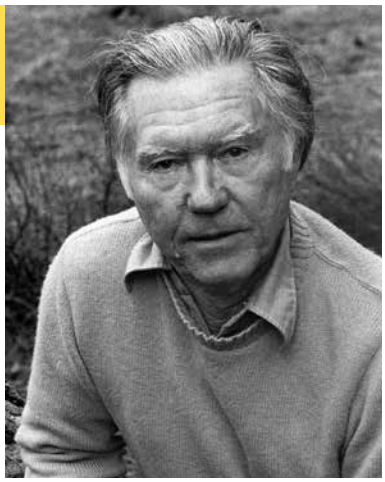
3 As much as we would all like to believe that we are willing to sacrifice something important for our philosophical beliefs, the truth is that few of do so on a regular basis. For instance, we might recognize that brain injuries are a serious risk for professional football players, but millions of us still tune in to the Super Bowl every year. Identify a philosophical belief that you hold about a topic (the environment, education, discrimination, and so on) and explain what sacrifices you personally make—or do not make—for your beliefs. What keeps you from making the sacrifices, or why do you make them?

4 What happens to Sammy afterward? Imagine him at least ten years in the future, and write a story about another ethical choice that he faces. Does he still do the right thing, or has he changed his ethical behavior?

Traveling through the Dark

William Stafford

American poet William Stafford (1914–1993) grew up in Kansas during the Depression, working odd jobs to help his family and pay his way through college at the University of Kansas. A conscientious objector who refused to serve in the military during World War II, Stafford wrote extensively in journals throughout his life but did not publish his first collection of poems until he was almost fifty. This poem, about an encounter with a deer on the edge of the road, is typical of Stafford's narrative approach to poetry.



Kim Stafford and the William Stafford Archives/Lewis & Clark College

Traveling through the dark I found a deer
dead on the edge of the Wilson River road.
It is usually best to roll them into the canyon:
that road is narrow; to swerve might make more dead.

By glow of the tail-light I stumbled back of the car
and stood by the heap, a doe, a recent killing;
she had stiffened already, almost cold.
I dragged her off; she was large in the belly.

My fingers touching her side brought me the reason —
her side was warm; her fawn lay there waiting,
alive, still, never to be born.
Beside that mountain road I hesitated.

The car aimed ahead its lowered parking lights;
under the hood purred the steady engine.
I stood in the glare of the warm exhaust turning red;
around our group I could hear the wilderness listen.

I thought hard for us all — my only swerving —,
then pushed her over the edge into the river.

Understanding and Interpreting

1 Trace the speaker's changing position on the issue of pushing the deer off the side of the road, from the first look at the deer, to the discovery of the fawn, to the final choice. Was it such a difficult choice after all, since the speaker ended up doing what he or she thought about doing at first?

2 In the last stanza, the speaker says, "I thought hard for us all" (l. 17). Who does the speaker mean by "us"? What conclusion does he or she arrive at, and why? Be sure to support your response with examples from the text.

3 Where does the poem shift in terms of theme, tone, or subject matter? What is the effect created by this shift?

4 There is a clear contrast drawn in this poem between the world of man and the world of nature. Identify how Stafford draws this contrast and for what purpose.

5 The title of the poem can be taken literally: the speaker is traveling in the dark. What are metaphorical interpretations of the title?

Analyzing Language, Style, and Structure

1 Stafford uses a form of the word "swerve" in both the first and last stanzas. Explain the similarities and contrasts in the usage in the two parts of the poem. Is Stafford referring to the same type of swerving?

2 Reread the descriptions of the fawn "waiting, / alive, still, never to be born" (ll. 10–11). Explain how the word choice here emphasizes the difficulty that the speaker faces.

3 Explain the effects of Stafford's changing use of pronouns throughout the poem: *I*, *she*, *our*, and *us.*

4 Although the poem is called "Traveling through the Dark," there are several descriptions of the light. Identify the various sources of light in the poem and explain how they contribute to the conflict the speaker is facing.

5 What is the effect of the personification in the line "I could hear the wilderness listen" (l. 16)?

6 Because of its use of commonplace words, Stafford's poetry is sometimes mistakenly considered to be simplistic. Examine Stafford's use of the following simple words, and explain how the figurative meaning of each supports the poem's theme: *narrow*, *cold*, *warm*, *dead*, *alive*, *still*, *swerving*, *road*, *river*.

Connecting, Arguing, and Extending

1 At the end of the poem, the speaker decides to push the deer off the road. Is this the right thing to do in this situation? What other alternatives could the speaker have considered?

2 How do we know what the right thing to do is? Philosophers John Stuart Mill and Immanuel Kant struggled with that question and came up with very different answers. Mill promoted the idea of utilitarianism, which means that we must make the choice that is likely to lead to the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people, while Kant proposed the idea of the categorical imperative, which determines the morality of an act by asking whether it would still be right if everyone did this act, all of the time, in all situations. Conduct research on these two approaches and explain which philosopher would likely agree with the speaker's actions in this poem and why.

3 Even though the speaker did not cause the situation, he or she feels a responsibility to act. Write a narrative about a time in your own life when you felt that you had a responsibility to do something. What were the circumstances that led up to the situation, what did you do, and why?

A Contribution to Statistics

Wisława Szymborska

Alberto Cristofari A3/Contrasto/Redux

Translated by Stanisław Barańczak and Claire Cavanagh

Wisława Szymborska [vis-*wah*-vah shim-*bawrs*-kah] (1923–2012) was born in western Poland and lived there all her life, avoiding being deported by the Nazis during World War II by working as a railroad operator throughout the war. After the war, she began writing her poetry but often found her work censored by the ruling Polish Socialist Party, from which she slowly began distancing herself. She published her first poem, "I Am Looking for a World," in 1945 and her first book, *Dlatego Żyjemy* (*That's What We Live For*), in 1952. Although she had published eighteen volumes of poetry, which had been translated into more than a dozen languages, she was not well known in the English-speaking world until she was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1996 "for poetry that with ironic precision allows the historical and biological context to come to light in fragments of human reality."

Out of a hundred people

those who always know better
— fifty-two,

doubting every step
— nearly all the rest,

glad to lend a hand
if it doesn't take too long
— as high as forty-nine,

always good
because they can't be otherwise
— four, well maybe five,

able to admire without envy
— eighteen,

suffering illusions
induced by fleeting youth
— sixty, give or take a few,

not to be taken lightly
— forty and four,

living in constant fear
of someone or something
— seventy-seven,

capable of happiness
— twenty-something tops,

harmless singly,
savage in crowds
— half at least,

cruel
when forced by circumstances
— better not to know
even ballpark figures,

wise after the fact
— just a couple more
than wise before it,

taking only things from life
— thirty
(I wish I were wrong),

hunched in pain,
no flashlight in the dark
— eighty-three
sooner or later,

righteous
— thirty-five, which is a lot,

righteous
and understanding
— three,

worthy of compassion
— ninety-nine,

mortal
— a hundred out of a hundred.
Thus far this figure still remains unchanged.

Understanding and Interpreting

1 Which human behaviors receive the highest percentages in the poem? Which ones receive the lowest? Overall, what does the speaker wish to communicate about how people behave from these percentages?

2 What are the aspects of humanity that the speaker chooses to focus on? How do these choices support the theme about people's behavior to one other?

3 The way that people act, according to the speaker, is situational. Explain how the context of the situation affects people's behavior as presented in this poem.

Analyzing Language, Style, and Structure

1 Notice how often Szymborska uses modifiers or qualifiers with the numbers. For instance, she writes "twenty-something tops" (l. 23) instead of just "twenty." What is the effect of these modifiers?

2 The author does not present the topics she chooses in random order, and often groups the statistics in pairs or clusters of ideas. Choose one or more groups of statistics and explain how they connect to or reply to each other.

3 Some of the numbers the speaker provides are very specific, but others are vague. Why do you think he or she does so?

4 Reread the final stanza of the poem, beginning with "mortal." How does this stanza serve as a conclusion for the rest of the poem?

5 Overall, is the tone pessimistic or optimistic? What language choices create this tone?

Connecting, Arguing, and Extending

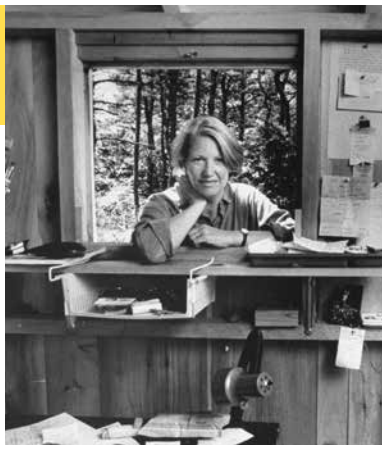
1 Polish jazz trumpet player Tomasz Stanko, with his New York Quartet, recorded an album dedicated to Szymborska. Songs from the album, which is called *Wisława*, are available on YouTube and iTunes. Listen to one or more of the songs and explain how the music compares to the tone of "A Contribution to Statistics" or other Szymborska poems you have read.

2 Rewrite the numbers for the lines with which you disagree, and write an argument in which you explain why you made the numbers higher or lower than Szymborska did.

3 Write a new poem called "A Contribution to Statistics in High School" that focuses on the teachers, students, administrators, community members, and parents involved in your school. Analyze the tone of your own poem. How similar to or different from the original is the tone of your poem?

from An American Childhood

Annie Dillard



Richard Howard/The LIFE Images Collection/Getty Images

While Annie Dillard (b. 1945) writes poetry and has published two novels, she is most widely known for what she calls nonfiction narrative writing, which tends to include observational essays about travel, nature, and the life of being a writer. One of her most famous books, *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* (1974), is typical of her topics and approach: it is a collection of essays about the natural world around her house in Virginia, with titles such as "Spring," "Flood," and "The Waters of Separation." In this excerpt from her memoir *An American Childhood* (1987), Dillard recounts events from when she was seven years old, hanging out on a neighboring street "where the boys grew up dark and furious, grew up skinny, knowing, and skilled."

Some boys taught me to play football. This was fine sport. You thought up a new strategy for every play and whispered it to the others. You went out for a pass, fooling everyone. Best, you got to throw yourself mightily at someone's running legs. Either you brought him down or you hit the ground flat out on your chin, with your arms empty before you. It was all or nothing. If you hesitated in fear, you would miss and get hurt: you would take a hard fall while the kid got away, or you would get kicked in the face while the kid got away. But if you flung yourself wholeheartedly at the back of his knees — if you gathered and joined body and soul and pointed them diving fearlessly — then you likely wouldn't get hurt, and you'd stop the ball. Your fate, and your team's score, depended on your concentration and courage. Nothing girls did could compare with it.

Boys welcomed me at baseball, too, for I had, through enthusiastic practice, what was weirdly known as a boy's arm. In winter, in the snow, there was neither baseball nor football, so the boys and I threw snowballs at passing cars. I got in trouble throwing snowballs, and have seldom been happier since.

. . .

On one weekday morning after Christmas, six inches of new snow had just fallen. We were standing up to our boot tops in snow on a front yard on trafficked Reynolds Street, waiting for cars. The cars traveled Reynolds Street slowly and evenly; they were targets all but wrapped in red ribbons, cream puffs. We couldn't miss.

I was seven; the boys were eight, nine, and ten. The oldest two Fahey boys were there — Mikey and Peter — polite blond boys who lived near me on Lloyd Street, and who already had four brothers and sisters. My parents approved Mikey and Peter Fahey. Chickie McBride was there, a tough kid, and Billy Paul and Mackie Kean too, from across Reynolds, where the boys grew up dark and furious, grew up skinny, knowing, and skilled. We had all drifted from our houses that morning looking for action, and had found it here on Reynolds Street.

5 It was cloudy but cold. The cars' tires laid behind them on the snowy street a complex trail of beige chunks like crenellated castle walls. I had stepped on some earlier; they squeaked. We could not have wished for more traffic. When a car came, we all popped it one. In the intervals

between cars we reverted to the natural solitude of children.

I started making an iceball — a perfect iceball, from perfectly white snow, perfectly spherical, and squeezed perfectly translucent so no snow remained all the way through. (The Fahey boys and I considered it unfair actually to throw an iceball at somebody, but it had been known to happen.)

I had just embarked on the iceball project when we heard tire chains come clanking from afar. A black Buick was moving toward us down the street. We all spread out, banged together some regular snowballs, took aim, and, when the Buick drew nigh, fired.

A soft snowball hit the driver's windshield right before the driver's face. It made a smashed star with a hump in the middle.

Often, of course, we hit our target, but this time, the only time in all of life, the car pulled over and stopped. Its wide black door opened; a man got out of it, running. He didn't even close the car door.

10 He ran after us, and we ran away from him, up the snowy Reynolds sidewalk. At the corner, I looked back; incredibly, he was still after us. He was in city clothes: a suit and tie, street shoes. Any normal adult would have quit, having sprung us into flight and made his point. This man was gaining on us. He was a thin man, all action. All of a sudden, we were running for our lives.

Wordless, we split up. We were on our turf; we could lose ourselves in the neighborhood backyards, everyone for himself. I paused and considered. Everyone had vanished except Mikey Fahey, who was just rounding the corner of a yellow brick house. Poor Mikey, I trailed him. The driver of the Buick sensibly picked the two of us to follow. The man apparently had all day.

He chased Mikey and me around the yellow house and up a backyard path we knew by heart: under a low tree, up a bank, through a hedge, down some snowy steps, and across the grocery store's delivery driveway. We smashed through a gap in another hedge, entered a scruffy backyard and ran around its back porch and tight between houses to Edgerton Avenue; we ran across Edgerton to an alley and up our own sliding woodpile to the Halls' front yard; he kept coming. We ran up Lloyd Street and wound through mazy backyards toward the steep hilltop at Willard and Lang.

He chased us silently, block after block. He chased us silently over picket fences, through thorny hedges, between houses, around garbage cans, and across streets. Every time I glanced back, choking for breath, I expected he would have quit. He must have been as breathless as we were. His jacket strained over his body. It was an immense discovery, pounding into my hot head with every sliding, joyous step, that this ordinary adult evidently knew what I thought only children who trained at football knew: that you have to fling yourself at what you're doing, you have to point yourself, forget yourself, aim, dive.

Mikey and I had nowhere to go, in our own neighborhood or out of it, but away from this man who was chasing us. He impelled us forward; we compelled him to follow our route. The air was cold; every breath tore my throat. We kept running, block after block; we kept improvising, backyard after backyard, running a frantic course and choosing it simultaneously, failing always to find small places or hard places to slow him down, and discovering always, exhilarated, dismayed, that only bare speed could save us — for he would never give up, this man — and we were losing speed.

15 He chased us through the backyard labyrinths of ten blocks before he caught us by our jackets. He caught us and we all stopped.

We three stood staggering, half blinded, coughing, in an obscure hilltop backyard: a man in his twenties, a boy, and a girl. He had released our jackets, our pursuer, our captor, our hero: he knew we weren't going anywhere. We all played by the rules. Mikey and I

unzipped our jackets. I pulled off my sopping mittens. Our tracks multiplied in the backyard's new snow. We had been breaking new snow all morning. We didn't look at each other. I was cherishing my excitement. The man's lower pants legs were wet; his cuffs were full of snow, and there was a prow of snow beneath them on his shoes and socks. Some trees bordered the little flat backyard, some messy winter trees. There was no one around: a clearing in a grove, and we the only players.

It was a long time before he could speak. I had some difficulty at first recalling why we were there. My lips felt swollen; I couldn't see out of the sides of my eyes; I kept coughing.

"You stupid kids," he began perfunctorily.

We listened perfunctorily indeed, if we listened at all, for the chewing out was redundant, a mere formality, and beside the point. The point was that he had chased us passionately without giving up, and so he had caught us. Now he came down to earth. I wanted the glory to last forever.

20 But how could the glory have lasted forever? We could have run through every backyard in North America until we got to Panama. But when he trapped us at the lip of the Panama Canal, what precisely could he have done to prolong the drama of the chase and cap its glory? I brooded about this for the next few years. He could only have fried Mikey Fahey and me in boiling oil, say, or dismembered us piecemeal, or staked us to anthills. None of which I really wanted, and none of which any adult was likely to do, even in the spirit of fun. He could only chew us out there in the Panamanian jungle, after months or years of exalting pursuit. He could only begin, "You stupid kids," and continue in his ordinary Pittsburgh accent with his normal righteous anger and the usual common sense.

If in that snowy backyard the driver of the black Buick had cut off our heads, Mikey's and mine, I would have died happy, for nothing has required so much of me since as being chased all over Pittsburgh in the middle of winter — running terrified, exhausted — by this sainted, skinny, furious redheaded man who wished to have a word with us. I don't know how he found his way back to his car.

Understanding and Interpreting

1 Reread the first paragraph. What elements of the narrator's character are revealed by her description of playing football?

2 There are a lot of rules in this narrative. Identify Dillard's rules for the following and explain how they are similar to or different from the expected rules for such an activity:

a. football
b. iceball throwing
c. chasing after kids who threw a snowball

3 What is the purpose of the scene in paragraph 20, in which Dillard metaphorically takes the reader to the Panama Canal? How does this illustrate a theme of this piece?

4 What is "the glory" the narrator mentions in paragraph 19? How does this "glory" relate to the overall theme that Dillard develops in this narrative?

5 Explain what Dillard means when she says "If in that snowy backyard the driver of the black Buick had cut off our heads [. . .] I would have died happy" (par. 21).

6 Is the man playing the same game as the narrator? How do you know?

7 How does Dillard use setting to reflect the theme of the piece?

Analyzing Language, Style, and Structure

1 What does the sentence "This was fine sport" (par. 1) reveal about Dillard as a child?

2 How is the effect of the last sentence of the second paragraph—"I got in trouble throwing snowballs, and have seldom been happier since"—different when you read it again knowing the ending of the story?

3 What does Dillard mean in these contrasting descriptions of the man?

a. "our pursuer, our captor, our hero" (par. 16)
b. "this sainted, skinny, furious redheaded man" (par. 21)

4 Dillard describes her pursuer's "ordinary Pittsburgh accent with his normal righteous anger and the usual common sense" (par. 20). How do her word choices reflect the lessons she learns from this incident?

5 Writing a narrative about a time in childhood can be difficult because a writer often tries to re-create a child's voice while maintaining the voice of an adult looking backward at the event. Describe the narrative voice in this story. When is the voice childlike and when is it more adult? What words and phrases does Dillard use to capture these distinct voices?

Connecting, Arguing, and Extending

1 Write about a time in your life when you learned one of the following lessons that Dillard communicates in this narrative:

a. "[Y]ou have to fling yourself" (par. 13).
b. "But how could the glory have lasted forever?" (par. 20).
c. "I would have died happy, for nothing has required so much of me since" (par. 21).

2 Nostalgia is a sentimental yearning for the past. Would you characterize this piece by Dillard as nostalgic? Why or why not?

3 This could be read as a "carpe diem" piece, which is Latin for "seize the day." Write an argument about the dangers and benefits of "carpe diem" as a guiding philosophy in life.

4 At several points in this narrative, Dillard describes various rules for situations that are not usually thought of as having rules, such as chasing kids who throw snowballs. Choose a situation that does not have explicitly stated rules and describe five or ten rules that, in your opinion, should govern the actions in that situation.

5 In this piece, Dillard makes an implicit argument for the value of physical activity in teaching a child about life. Begin by examining Dillard's argument, and introduce research into childhood development that either supports, qualifies, or challenges the argument implicit in her narrative.

Lying

Sam Harris

Sam Harris (b. 1967) is an American author and neuroscientist who has written a number of books examining ethics and morality from a scientific and philosophical perspective, including *Waking Up: A Guide to Spirituality without Religion* (2014), *The Moral Landscape: How Science Can Determine Values* (2010), *Letter to a Christian Nation* (2006), and *The End of Faith* (2004). Harris is a self-described secularist and a critic of organized religions. This excerpt from *Lying*, a long essay published in 2011, advocates always telling the truth regardless of the circumstances.

Charles Ommanney/Getty Images

Among the many paradoxes of human life, this is perhaps the most peculiar and consequential: *We often behave in ways that are guaranteed to make us unhappy*. Many of us spend our lives marching with open eyes toward remorse, regret, guilt, and disappointment. And nowhere do our injuries seem more casually self-inflicted, or the suffering we create more disproportionate to the needs of the moment, than in the lies we tell to other human beings. Lying is the royal road to chaos.

As an undergraduate at Stanford, I took a seminar that profoundly changed my life. It was called "The Ethical Analyst," and it was conducted in the form of a Socratic dialogue by an extraordinarily gifted professor, Ronald A. Howard.[1] Our discussion focused on a single question of practical ethics:

Is it wrong to lie?

At first glance, this may seem a scant foundation for an entire college course. After all, most people already believe that lying is generally wrong — and they also know that some situations seem to warrant it. What was so fascinating about this seminar, however, was how difficult it was to find examples of virtuous lies that could withstand Professor Howard's scrutiny. Whatever the circumstances, even in cases where most good people would lie without a qualm, Howard nearly always found truths worth telling.

5 I do not remember what I thought about lying before I took "The Ethical Analyst," but the course accomplished as close to a firmware upgrade of my brain as I have ever experienced. I came away convinced that lying, even about the smallest matters, needlessly damages personal relationships and public trust.

It would be hard to exaggerate what a relief it was to realize this. It's not that I had been in the habit of lying before taking Howard's course — but I now knew that endless forms of suffering and embarrassment could be easily avoided by *simply telling the truth*. And, as though for the first time, I saw all around me the consequences of others' failure to live by this principle.

That experience remains one of the clearest examples in my life of the power of philosophical reflection. "The Ethical Analyst" affected me in ways that college courses seldom do: It made me a better person.

What Is a Lie?

Deception can take many forms, but not all acts of deception are lies. Even the most ethical among us regularly struggle to keep appearances and reality apart. By wearing cosmetics, a woman seeks to seem younger or more beautiful than she otherwise would. But honesty does not require that she issue continual disclaimers — "I see that you are looking at my face: Please be aware that I do not look this good first thing in the morning . . ." A person in a hurry might pretend not to notice an acquaintance passing by on the street. A polite host might not acknowledge that one of her guests has said something so stupid as to slow the rotation of the earth. When asked "How are you?" most of us reflexively say that we are well, understanding the question to be merely a greeting, rather than an invitation to discuss our career disappointments, our marital troubles, or the condition of our bowels. Elisions of this kind can be forms of deception, but they are not quite lies. We may skirt the truth at such moments, but we do not deliberately manufacture falsehood or conceal important facts to the detriment of others.

The boundary between lying and deception is often vague. It is even possible to deceive with the truth. I could, for instance, stand on the sidewalk in front of the White House and call the headquarters of Facebook on my cell phone: "Hello, this is Sam Harris. I'm calling from the White House, and I'd like to speak to Mark Zuckerberg." My words would, in a narrow sense, be true — but the statement seems calculated to deceive. Would I be lying? Close enough.

10 To lie is to intentionally mislead others when they expect honest communication.[2] This leaves stage magicians, poker players, and other harmless dissemblers off the book, while illuminating a psychological and social landscape whose general shape is very easy to recognize. People lie so that others will form beliefs that are not true. The more consequential the beliefs — that is, the more a person's well-being demands a correct understanding of the world or of other people's opinions — the more consequential the lie.

As the philosopher Sissela Bok observed, however, we cannot get far on this topic without first distinguishing between truth and truthfulness — for a person may be impeccably truthful while being mistaken.[3] To speak truthfully is to accurately represent one's beliefs. But candor offers no assurance that one's beliefs about the world are true. Nor does truthfulness require that one speak the *whole* truth, because communicating every fact on a given topic is almost never useful or even possible. Of course, if one is not sure whether or not something is true, representing one's degree of uncertainty is a form of honesty.

Leaving these ambiguities aside, communicating what one believes to be both true and useful is surely different from concealing or distorting that belief. The *intent* to communicate honestly is the measure of truthfulness. And most of us do not require a degree in philosophy to distinguish this attitude from its counterfeits.

People tell lies for many reasons. They lie to avoid embarrassment, to exaggerate their accomplishments, and to disguise wrongdoing. They make promises they do not intend to keep. They conceal defects in their products or services. They mislead competitors to gain advantage. Many of us lie to our friends and family members to spare their feelings.

Whatever our purpose in telling them, lies can be gross or subtle. Some entail elaborate ruses or forged documents. Others consist merely of euphemisms or tactical silences. But it is in believing one thing while intending to communicate another that every lie is born.

15 We have all stood on both sides of the divide between what someone believes and what he intends others to understand — and the gap generally looks quite different depending on

whether one is the liar or the dupe. The liar often imagines that he does no harm so long as his lies go undetected. But the one lied to rarely shares this view. The moment we consider our dishonesty from the perspective of those we lie to, we recognize that we would feel betrayed if the roles were reversed.

A friend of mine, Sita, was once going to visit the home of another friend and wanted to take her a small gift. Unfortunately, she was traveling with her young son and hadn't found time to go shopping. As they were getting ready to leave their hotel, however, Sita noticed that the bath products supplied in their room were unusually nice. So she put some soaps, shampoos, and body lotions into a bag, tied it with a ribbon she got at the front desk, and set off.

When Sita presented this gift, her friend was delighted.

"Where did you get them?" she asked.

Surprised by the question, and by a lurching sense of impropriety, Sita sought to regain her footing with a lie: "Oh, we just bought them in the hotel gift shop."

20 The next words came from her innocent son: "No, Mommy, you got them in the bathroom!"

Imagine the faces of these women, briefly frozen in embarrassment and then yielding to smiles of apology and forgiveness. This may seem the most trivial of lies — and it was — but it surely did nothing to increase the level of trust between two friends. Funny or not, the story reveals something distasteful about Sita: She will lie when it suits her needs.

The opportunity to deceive others is ever present and often tempting, and each instance of deception casts us onto some of the steepest ethical terrain we ever cross. Few of us are murderers or thieves, but we have all been liars. And many of us will be unable to get into our beds tonight without having told several lies over the course of the day.

What does this say about us and about the life we are making with one another?

The Mirror of Honesty

At least one study suggests that 10 percent of communication between spouses is deceptive.[4] Another found that 38 percent of encounters among college students contain lies.[5] Lying is ubiquitous, and yet even liars rate their deceptive interactions as less pleasant than truthful ones. This is not terribly surprising: We know that trust is deeply rewarding and that deception and suspicion are two sides of the same coin. Research suggests that all forms of lying — including white lies meant to spare the feelings of others — are associated with less satisfying relationships.[6]

25 Once one commits to telling the truth, one begins to notice how unusual it is to meet someone who shares this commitment. Honest people are a refuge: You know they mean what they say; you know they will not say one thing to your face and another behind your back; you know they will tell you when they think you have failed — and for this reason their praise cannot be mistaken for mere flattery.

Honesty is a gift we can give to others. It is also a source of power and an engine of simplicity. Knowing that we will attempt to tell the truth, whatever the circumstances, leaves us with little to prepare for. Knowing that we told the truth in the past leaves us with nothing to keep track of. We can simply be ourselves in every moment.

In committing to being honest with everyone, we commit to avoiding a wide range of long-term problems, but at the cost of occasional short-term discomfort. However, the discomfort should not be exaggerated: You can be honest and kind, because your purpose in telling the truth is not to offend people. You simply want them to have the information you have and would want to have if you were in their shoes.

But it may take practice to feel comfortable with this way of being in the world — to cancel plans, decline invitations, negotiate contracts, critique others' work, all while being honest

about what one is thinking and feeling. To do this is also to hold a mirror up to one's life — because a commitment to telling the truth requires that one pay attention to what the truth is in every moment. What sort of person are you? How judgmental, self-interested, or petty have you become?

You might discover that some of your friendships are not really that — perhaps you habitually lie to avoid making plans, or fail to express your true opinions for fear of conflict. Whom, exactly, are you helping by living this way? You might find that certain relationships cannot be honestly maintained. Of course, we all have associations that must persist in some form, whether we enjoy them or not — with family, in-laws, colleagues, employers, and so forth. I'm not denying that tact can play a role in minimizing conflict. Holding one's tongue, or steering a conversation toward topics of relative safety, is not the same as lying (nor does it require that one deny the truth in the future).

30 Honesty can force any dysfunction in your life to the surface. Are you in an abusive relationship? A refusal to lie to others — How did you get that bruise? — would oblige you to come to grips with this situation very quickly. Do you have a problem with drugs or alcohol? Lying is the lifeblood of addiction. If we have no recourse to lies, our lives can unravel only so far without others' noticing.

Telling the truth can also reveal ways in which we want to grow but haven't. I remember learning that I had been selected as the class valedictorian at my high school. I declined the honor, saying that I felt that someone who had been at the school longer should give the graduation speech. But that was a lie. The truth was that I was terrified of public speaking and would do almost anything to avoid it. Apparently, I wasn't ready to confront this fact about myself — and my willingness to lie at that moment allowed me to avoid doing so for many years. Had I been forced to tell my high school principal the truth, he might have begun a conversation with me that would have been well worth having. [. . .]

White Lies

Have you ever received a truly awful gift? The time it took to tear away the wrapping paper should have allowed you to steel yourself — but suddenly there it was:

"Wow . . ."

"Do you like it?"

35 "That's amazing. Where did you get it?"

"Bangkok. Do you like it?"

"When were you in Bangkok?"

"Christmas. Do you like it?"

"Yes . . . Definitely. Where else did you go in Thailand?"

40 I have now broken into a cold sweat. I am not cut out for this. Generally speaking, I have learned to be honest even when ambushed. I don't always communicate the truth in the way that I want to — but one of the strengths of telling the truth is that it remains open for elaboration. If what you say in the heat of the moment isn't quite right, you can amend it. I have learned that I would rather be maladroit, or even rude, than dishonest.

What could I have said in the above situation?

"Wow . . . Does one wear it or hang it on the wall?"

"You wear it. It's very warm. Do you like it?"

"You know, I'm really touched you thought of me. But there's no way I can pull this off. My style is somewhere between boring and very boring."

45 This is getting much closer to the sort of response I'm comfortable with. Some euphemism is creeping in, perhaps, but the basic communication is truthful. I have given my friend fair warning that she is unlikely to see me wearing her gift the next time we meet. I have also given her an opportunity to keep it for herself or perhaps bestow it on another friend who might actually like it.

Some readers may now worry that I am recommending a regression to the social ineptitude of early childhood. After all, children do not learn to tell white lies until about the age of four, once they have achieved a hard-won awareness of the mental states of others.[7] But we have no reason to believe that the social conventions that happen to stabilize in primates like ourselves at about the age of eleven will lead to optimal human relationships. In fact, there are many reasons to believe that lying is precisely the sort of behavior we need to outgrow in order to build a better world.

What could be wrong with truly "white" lies? First, they are still lies. And in telling them, we incur all the problems of being less than straightforward in our dealings with other people. Sincerity, authenticity, integrity, mutual understanding — these and other sources of moral wealth are destroyed the moment we deliberately misrepresent our beliefs, whether or not our lies are ever discovered.

And although we imagine that we tell certain lies out of compassion for others, it is rarely difficult to spot the damage we do in the process. By lying, we deny our friends access to reality[8] — and their resulting ignorance often harms them in ways we did not anticipate. Our friends may act on our falsehoods, or fail to solve problems that could have been solved only on the basis of good information. Rather often, to lie is to infringe on the freedom of those we care about.

A primal instance:

"Do I look fat in this dress?"

Most people insist that the correct answer to this question is always "No." In fact, many believe that it's not a question at all: The woman is simply saying, "Tell me I look good." If she's your wife or girlfriend, she might even be saying, "Tell me you love me." If you sincerely believe that this is the situation you are in — that the text is a distraction and the subtext conveys the entire message — then so be it. Responding honestly to the subtext would not be lying.

But this is an edge case for a reason: It crystallizes what is tempting about white lies. Why not simply reassure someone with a tiny lie and send her out into the world feeling more confident? Unless one commits to telling the truth in situations like this, however, one finds that the edges creep inward, and exceptions to the principle of honesty begin to multiply. Very soon, you may find yourself behaving as most people do quite effortlessly: shading the truth, or even lying outright, without thinking about it. The price is too high.

A friend of mine recently asked me whether I thought he was overweight. In fact he probably was just asking for reassurance: It was the beginning of summer, and we were sitting with our wives by the side of his pool. However, I'm more comfortable relying on the words that actually come out of a person's mouth, rather than on my powers of telepathy. So I answered my friend's question very directly: "No one would ever call you 'fat,' but if I were you, I'd want to lose twenty-five pounds." That was two months ago, and he is now fifteen pounds lighter.[9] Neither of us knew that he was ready to go on a diet until I declined the opportunity to lie about how he looked in a bathing suit.

Back to our friend in the dress: What is the truth? Perhaps she does look fat in that dress but it's the fault of the dress. Telling her the truth will allow her to find a more flattering outfit.

But let's imagine the truth is harder to tell: Your friend looks fat in that dress, or any dress, because she *is* fat. Let's say she is also thirty-five years old and single, and you know that her greatest desire is to get married and start a family. You also believe that many men would be disinclined to date her at her current weight. And, marriage aside, you are confident that she would be happier and healthier, and would feel better about herself, if she got in shape.

A white lie is simply a denial of these realities. It is a refusal to offer honest guidance in a storm. Even on so touchy a subject, lying seems a clear failure of friendship. By reassuring your friend about her appearance, you are not helping her to do what you think she should do to get what she wants out of life.[10]

In many circumstances in life, false encouragement can be very costly to another person. Imagine that you have a friend who has spent years striving unsuccessfully to build a career as an actor. Many fine actors struggle in this way, of course, but in your friend's case the reason seems self-evident: He is a terrible actor. In fact, you know that his other friends — and even his parents — share this opinion but cannot bring themselves to express it. What do you say the next time he complains about his stalled career? Do you encourage him to "just keep at it"? False encouragement is a kind of theft: It steals time, energy, and motivation that a person could put toward some other purpose.

This is not to say that we are always correct in our judgments of other people. And honesty demands that we communicate any uncertainty we may feel about the relevance of our own opinions. But if we are convinced that a friend has taken a wrong turn in life, it is no sign of friendship to simply smile and wave him onward.

If the truth itself is painful to tell, often background truths are not — and these can be communicated as well, deepening the friendship. In the examples above, the more basic truth is that you love your friends and want them to be happy, and they could make changes in their lives that might lead to greater fulfillment. In lying to them, you are not only declining to help them — you are denying them useful information and setting them up for future disappointment. Yet the temptation to lie in these circumstances can be overwhelming.

60 When we presume to lie for the benefit of others, we have decided that *we* are the best judges of how much they should understand about their own lives—about how they appear, their reputations, or their prospects in the world. This is an extraordinary stance to adopt toward other human beings, and it requires justification. Unless someone is suicidal or otherwise on the brink, deciding how much he should know about himself seems the quintessence of arrogance. What attitude could be more disrespectful of those we care about?

Notes

1 Howard has put much of his material in book form: R. A. Howard and C. D. Korver, *Ethics for the Real World: Creating a Personal Code to Guide Decisions in Work and Life* (Cambridge: Harvard Business School Press, 2008). While I do not entirely agree with how the authors separate ethics from the rest of human values, I believe readers will find this a very useful book.

2 Some have argued that evolution must have selected for an ability to deceive oneself, thereby making it easier to mislead others [see William von Hippel and Robert Trivers, "The Evolution and Psychology of Self-Deception," *The Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 34, no. 1 (2011): 1–16; discussion 16–56]. But whether a form of self-deception exists that is really tantamount to "lying to oneself" is still a matter of controversy. There is no question that we can be blind to facts about ourselves or about the world that we really *should* see — and the research on cognitive bias is fascinating — but the question remains whether we see the truth and unconsciously convince ourselves otherwise, or simply do not see the truth in the first place. In any case, truly believing one's own falsehoods when in dialogue with others is tantamount to honesty. Thus, it seems that we need not worry about self-deception for the time being.

3 S. Bok, *Lying: Moral Choice in Public and Private Life* (New York: Vintage, 1999).

4 B. M. DePaulo and D. A. Kashy, "Everyday Lies in Close and Casual Relationships," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 74, no. 1 (Jan. 1998): 63–79.

5 B. M. DePaulo, et al., "Lying in Everyday Life," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 70, no. 5 (1996): 979–995.

6 P. J. Kalbfleisch, "Deceptive Message Intent and Relational Quality," *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 20, nos. 1–2 (2001): 214–230; T. Cole, "Lying to the One You Love: The Use of Deception in

Romantic Relationships," *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* 18, no. 1 (2001): 107–129.

7 K. A. Broomfield, E. J. Robinson, and W. P. Robinson, "Children's Understanding about White Lies," *British Journal of Developmental Psychology* 20, no. 1 (2002): 47–65.

8 At the very least, we deny them access to reality *as we see it*. Of course, when it is a matter of our *opinions* — whether we like a person's work, his new haircut, and so forth — there is no difference between the reality in question and our view of it.

9 He eventually lost twenty pounds. It has now been two years, and he has kept the weight off.

10 Many readers have pushed back strongly on this point — and some have come up with scenarios where the consequences of telling the truth are so grave, and the benefits so obscure, that the virtue of a white lie seems undeniable. For instance:

Imagine that you are with your daughter on her wedding day and are now seeing her wedding dress for the first time. Should she look fat in it, there is no way for her to put your candor to good use. You are about to walk her down the aisle; delivering anything but pure reassurance at this point seems a failure of love. This is one of the most important days in your daughter's life. You have a choice between (selfishly) maintaining your unblemished record of honesty and protecting her from feeling terrible about herself at the precise moment when she can least afford it. What do you do? Here's a hint: A good father would not say, "Yes, you look fat in that dress," and then offer advice on diet and exercise as he led his daughter down the aisle.

I agree. I suspect, however, that honest reassurance would still be possible even here. Given a father's love for his daughter, "You look beautiful" — a statement that focuses on the daughter rather than the particulars of her dress — seems like a more important truth that can be easily told. But I am not dogmatically adhering to the principle of honesty at any cost. If the parameters of the situation are tuned so that there is really no conceivable benefit to telling the truth, and the harm seems obvious, then the lie seems genuinely "white."

Understanding and Interpreting

1 Reread the section headed "What Is a Lie?" What distinction does Harris draw between the following, and why are these distinctions important to his argument?

a. certain forms of deception (like makeup) and lying
b. truth and truthfulness

2 According to Harris, what is the definition of a lie? How does he use evidence to support his definition?

3 Look back through the section called "The Mirror of Honesty." It is clear that Harris is arguing, at least in part, that we should all avoid lying. What does he claim are some of the most significant benefits of telling the truth? What counterarguments does Harris *not* include in this section about the potential harm that can result from always telling the truth?

4 Probably most people agree that lying is wrong, but most people are also likely to think that telling "white lies" is OK in certain circumstances. What are the main reasons that Harris offers to support his claim that even white lies should be avoided?

5 Reread the final two paragraphs of the piece. Harris is claiming that when we lie, we are being arrogant. What evidence or explanation does he offer as support? To what extent do you think Harris proves his claim?

6 Reread paragraphs 55–56, which end with note 10. Read that note and explain what Harris seems to suggest is the one possible definition of a truly harmless white lie. What is achieved by putting this exception in the notes section, not in the body of his essay?

Analyzing Language, Style, and Structure

1 The opening paragraph of this essay states an assumption about human behavior. What tone is created through this assumption, and how does this tone assist Harris in making his argument?

2 How does the story about the course that Harris took at Stanford as an undergraduate help to establish his ethos at the very beginning of the essay?

3 Throughout this piece, Harris uses specific examples from his own life as well as made-up scenarios to support his argument. Locate one such example, explain its purpose within Harris's argument, and evaluate its effectiveness.

4 Reread paragraph 24 following the heading "The Mirror of Honesty," and then look at Harris's notes 4, 5, and 6. How does Harris illustrate his credibility and support his claim through his choice of sources?

5 Evaluate Harris's logical reasoning in the section in paragraph 52 where he discusses how white lies lead to other lies.

6 Harris is particularly good at explaining complex topics, such as ethics, to a general audience. Identify examples of this accessible writing style and explain how it assists him in making his argument. Or, identify places where you feel Harris's style is not accessible and keeps his audience from understanding his position.

Connecting, Arguing, and Extending

1 Harris talks a lot about the value of honesty in friendship, but after reading this excerpt, would you want him as a friend? Why or why not? Use specific evidence from the text to support your response.

2 Make a list of things that you have said to people in the past week that Harris might consider to be lies. Why would Harris classify them as lies? Be sure to use direct evidence from this piece as support. Then, in retrospect, explain what you might have said instead, according to Harris, and explain your reasoning.

3 Write a piece in which you argue in favor of "white lies." Be sure to counter at least one direct quote from Harris on the subject.

4 Write a piece in which you try to define a lie, as Harris has tried to do. What would constitute a lie to you and what would not?

5 Most of what Harris talks about in this selection are the lies that happen between individuals, specifically the erosion of trust that happens between friends who lie. What about the lies that governments, corporations, or other institutions tell the public? Choose a significant lie or deception that has been told to a large number of people and, after conducting brief research, explain the effect that the lie had.

ENTERING THE CONVERSATION
DO THE RIGHT THING

Making Connections

1 Choose one line or a cluster of related lines from the poem "A Contribution to Statistics" and explain why those lines accurately describe the actions of a character, speaker, or narrator from one of the other texts in the Conversation.

2 Questions of ethics often come down to power. In several of the texts in this Conversation, whoever has more power gets to decide what the right thing is. Choose two texts from the Conversation, compare the ways that power leads to decisions, and examine the results of those decisions.

3 Part of doing the right thing is being able to empathize with other people, to understand their situation and act in a ways that account for their feelings. Choose two characters from the Conversation and compare the ways that they empathize—or do not empathize—with others. What are the similarities and differences in the results of their actions?

4 What would Sam Harris, the author of *Lying*, have to say about the actions of a narrator, character, or speaker from one of the other works in the Conversation? Use evidence from both texts to support your response.

5 Look back at Opening Activity 2 from the beginning of this chapter, which presents a series of ethical dilemmas. Choose two characters, speakers, or narrators from two different texts in the Conversation and explain how they would each respond to the dilemma. Be sure to use evidence from each text to support your position.

Synthesizing Sources

1 Throughout the Conversation you have been reading about people wrestling with what it means to do the right thing. Based on these readings, what values, actions, or attitudes seem to define "the right thing"? Refer to at least two texts in the Conversation in your response, as well as examples from your own experience.

2 In *The Republic*, Plato tells a story a man who finds a magical ring that lets him become invisible, and begins to steal anything he wants. Plato uses the story to wonder whether human beings only do the right thing because they fear being caught. Write a piece in which you consider the following: Do people do the right thing only when other people are watching? Is an act still a moral one if you do it for selfish reasons, such as feeling good about yourself or being thought of as a good person? Be sure to refer to at least two texts from the Conversation, as well as your own ideas, to help illustrate your position.

3 Most of the texts in this Conversation focus on how poorly or well people treat each other. How much should the idea of "generosity" determine the right way to act toward someone else? Is generosity a virtue demonstrated only by the most ethical, or is it a characteristic of everyone within a society? Write an expository piece in which you examine the role of generosity in your experience, making sure to refer to at least two texts in this Conversation.

4 With the exception of "Cell One," the stories and poems in this Conversation explore dilemmas that characters experience outside any organized justice system. In an expository piece, explain the appropriate role that government and a formalized justice system should play in ethical issues. Should the courts and government become involved in issues typically considered to be ethical, not criminal? You can use your own knowledge and experience, in addition to texts from this Conversation, to illustrate your points.

5 Imagine that a character, narrator, or speaker from one text in the Conversation had to face the ethical situation of another character, narrator, or speaker. What would Professor Tendler do, for example, if he were in Sammy's shoes at the A & P? In your written response, include direct references to the texts to support your conclusions about how the character, narrator, or speaker would act.

CONVERSATION

THE CHEATING CULTURE

"The Josephson Institute Center for Youth Ethics surveyed 43,000 high school students in public and private schools and found that:

- 59 percent of high school students admitted cheating on a test during the last year. 34 percent self-reported doing it more than two times.
- One out of three high school students admitted that they used the Internet to plagiarize an assignment."

Based upon these results, it's very likely that someone sitting on either side of you in your class right now has cheated this year, maybe even you. It would be a mistake, however, to think that cheating is only something that happens in school. If you spend any time following the news, you'd notice that cheating seems pretty widespread in a wide variety of aspects of life. Look at this list of a few recent examples:

- **Sports:** Cyclist Lance Armstrong was stripped of his Tour de France titles after admitting to cheating by using banned substances. Major League Baseball stars Barry Bonds, Mark McGwire, Sammy Sosa, Rafael Palmeiro, Jason Giambi, and many others have been implicated in so many steroid scandals that the entire period of

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baseball in the 1990s and early 2000s is now called "the steroid era," during which few records are considered valid. In football, New England Patriots head coach Bill Belichick was caught videotaping the New York Jets' defensive signals. National Basketball Association referee Tim Donaghy was convicted of intentionally missing foul calls or making incorrect ones in order to win bets and was sentenced to fifteen months in prison.

- **Education:** In the Atlanta public schools, several teachers, test coordinators, and administrators, were convicted in 2015 for participating in a massive cheating scandal in which adults regularly changed the students' responses on standardized exams. According to a study released by the U.S. Government Accountability Office in May 2013, "Officials in 40 states reported allegations of cheating in the past two school years, and officials in 33 states confirmed at least one instance of cheating. Further, 32 states reported that they canceled, invalidated, or nullified test scores as a result of cheating."
- **Business:** Bernie Madoff, the founder of a popular Wall Street investment firm, was arrested in 2008 after authorities were informed that his whole operation was a fraud; his investors' losses totaled an estimated $64.8 billion. Madoff was sentenced to 150 years in jail. When U.S. energy company Enron went bankrupt in 2001, several high-level executives were convicted of corporate fraud and cheating individual customers.
- **Politics:** In 2011, former Illinois governor Rod Blagojevich was convicted for a number of crimes, including his efforts to "sell" President Obama's vacant U.S. Senate seat to the highest bidder. In 2013, former U.S. representative Jesse Jackson Jr., who had resigned after being investigated by the FBI, admitted to using campaign funds to make personal purchases.
- **Relationships:** Not a day goes by without a tabloid magazine reporting that one celebrity has cheated on his or her spouse or partner with yet another celebrity. And according to the *New York Times*, which in 2008 cited a National Science Foundation study, "In any given year, about 10 percent of married people—12 percent of men and 7 percent of women—say that they have had sex outside their marriage."

Is cheating really so widespread, or is it just sensationalized when it's discovered because it makes for good news stories? Is cheating always wrong, or can there be situations in which it might be acceptable? Is there a clear agreement on what actually defines cheating? In this Conversation, you will read about cheating in sports, school, the workplace—even in video games and photography.

TEXTS

Robert Kolker / Cheating Upwards (nonfiction)
Chuck Klosterman / Why We Look the Other Way (nonfiction)
Christopher Bergland / Cheaters Never Win (nonfiction)
Brad Allenby / Is Human Enhancement Cheating? (nonfiction)
Mia Consalvo / Cheating Is Good for You (nonfiction)
David Callahan / The Cheating Culture (nonfiction)
The Ethics of Photo Manipulation (photographs)

Cheating Upwards

Robert Kolker

Photo by Christopher Bonanos. Courtesy Robert Kolker

Robert Kolker (b. 1969) is the author of *Lost Girls* (2013), about a series of unsolved Long Island, NY, murders and the lives of five victims. He is also a contributing editor and writer for *New York* magazine, from which this article has been taken.

KEY CONTEXT In this piece, Kolker examines an extensive cheating scandal that took place in June 2012 at Stuyvesant High School, an exclusive public high school in New York City that, unlike most public schools in the United States, has extraordinarily rigorous entrance requirements; typically, over twenty thousand students apply for only eight hundred spots. Through interviews with parents, students, and school administrators, Kolker tries to answer the question of why students, especially those at the most demanding schools, cheat.

On Wednesday, June 13, Nayeem Ahsan walked into a fourth-floor classroom at Stuyvesant High School with some two dozen other students to take a physics test — one of a number of Regents Exams that many New York State high-school juniors are required to take. Small and skinny with thick black hair and a bright, shy smile, Nayeem is 16. Like many teenage boys, he seems to straddle two worlds: One moment you see a man, another a boy.

The son of Bangladeshi immigrants, Nayeem was born in Flushing Hospital and raised in Jackson Heights, a 35-minute subway ride to Stuyvesant in lower Manhattan. In the academically elite world of Stuyvesant, Nayeem maintains solid if unremarkable grades, and is a friendly, popular-enough kid known to take photographs of sports teams after school and post them on Facebook. When he walked into the exam room that morning, he seemed confident and calm. Nothing about him suggested he was about to pull off the most brazen feat of cheating in the illustrious school's 107-year history.

Nayeem had cased the room beforehand. His iPhone had spotty service inside Stuyvesant, and he wanted to be sure he'd have a signal. He tested the device in the second seat of the first row — he'd assumed he would be seated alphabetically — and it worked. He tried out the second seat counting from the other side of the room just to be safe — also good. Then he examined the sight lines to both seats from the teacher's desk — what could the proctor see and not see? — and checked out the seats where he thought some of his friends would be sitting. One was right in front of the teacher. He made a note of that. That kid was out.

Nayeem had cheated on tests before. By his junior year, he and his friends had become fairly well-known procurers of copies of exams handed down from students who had taken a class a year or two earlier. But since that wasn't possible with a Regents Exam, the phone was his method of choice. He'd cheated that way before, too. In his three years at Stuyvesant, in fact, he'd become somewhat skilled at surreptitiously texting during a test, developing a knack for taking out his phone and glancing down at it for just a millisecond without being noticed.

5 Regents Exams are typically administered for three hours. After two hours, students who

are done are allowed to leave. Nayeem is a good physics student. He worked his way through the test quickly, as he knew he would, finishing in an hour and a half. (He'd later learn he received a 97.) His plan had been to use the next half-hour or so to type the multiple-choice answers into his phone, then send them to his friends, all of whom were taking the test at the same time, many in other parts of the school. In return, he expected help from others on future tests. He was the point person on this exam; others would play that role for subjects they excelled in. He and his friends had been helping one another this way for some time.

That day, however, there was a glitch. The proctor was someone Nayeem knew, Hugh Francis, an English teacher, and he was not just sitting at the desk but walking around the room. Francis even caught the girl next to Nayeem using her phone in the first few minutes of the test. While cell phones technically aren't allowed in city schools, that rule was widely ignored at Stuyvesant. Many of the school's students, some as young as 13, travel far from home, and their families insist on staying in touch. "Put it back in your pocket," the proctor said, and the girl complied. It was all Nayeem could do to send a text to his friends: "Okay, I got you guys later."

Nayeem had been writing the answers on a piece of scrap paper as he went along so he wouldn't have to flip back and forth once he had the chance to text. He waited for the shift change. During a Regents Exam, two teachers share the proctoring duties, handing off the mantle at the 90-minute mark. When Francis left, he was replaced by a woman Nayeem had never seen before. She sat behind the desk and was less vigilant. As long as she stayed seated, Nayeem realized, she couldn't see his phone. All he had to do was place it flat on the desk and curl his forearm around it.

He got bolder. Turning to page one of his completed exam, Nayeem lifted his phone just enough to snap a picture of that page, then put the phone down again. Over the next few minutes, he photographed the whole test booklet — all fifteen pages.

The night before, Nayeem had sent a group-text message to 140 classmates: "If you guys get this, I've got the answers for you tomorrow." The students on Nayeem's list included honor-roll students, debate-team members, and "Big Sibs" (upperclassmen deemed responsible enough to mentor incoming freshmen). There were kids who were also good at physics (to double check Nayeem's answers) and a girl he liked. That list still existed on his phone from the text he'd sent the night before. He hit send fifteen times, once for each page of the test. When it occurred to him that some kids didn't have iPhones, he went back to manually typing in all the answers and sent them too. The proctor never saw anything.

10 The next day, Nayeem used the same scheme during his U.S. history Regents Exam — only this time it was his turn to get help from others. He sat in the first seat of the first row, just a few feet from the proctor, and received the answers. Next, on June 18, came the Spanish Regents. Spanish was Nayeem's weakest subject; he needed a score high enough to lift his final grade in the class out of the cellar (Regents are often factored into class grades at Stuyvesant). This time his plan was to take pictures of the questions, text them to friends who were facile with the language but not taking the test, then wait for his phone to vibrate with fully written paragraphs of Spanish.

About halfway through that test, just after the proctor switch, the school's principal, Stanley Teitel, accompanied by a handful of other administrators, entered the exam room. A science teacher by background who still taught chemistry at the time, Teitel is tall and thin with a thick Brooklyn accent. As principal, he was known as an intense presence, liked personally but given to policies the students often found

While the topic of this *New Yorker* cartoon is cheating, what is the artist suggesting about parents' role in cheating? What might the teacher say in response to the parent?

"So what if he paid a classmate to do his homework—it was his own allowance."

Barbara Smaller/The New Yorker Collection/The Cartoon Bank

too restrictive. Teitel walked past Nayeem, then doubled back and stared down at him, taking him by surprise.

"Do you have a phone?"

"Yeah," Nayeem said.

"Give it to me."

15 "Why?"

"Because," Teitel said, "I'm the principal."

Nayeem knew Teitel was aware he was cheating, although he wasn't sure how Teitel found out. His best guess was that his answers on one of the earlier exams had been too similar to too many other students' (he'd later learn that was true for the physics test). Nayeem's phone not only had the recently incriminating texts and the names of those he'd been texting with on it, it still contained a record of every test he'd shared answers on since the start of the term. But there was no time to wipe the device clean. He had no choice now but to give it to Teitel.

Teitel escorted Nayeem to the front office, and instructed him to continue taking the test while Teitel and the others discussed how to proceed. Nayeem tried to calm himself with the thought that his phone was password-protected, but Teitel quickly got it open (Nayeem doesn't know how). Moments later, Teitel and an assistant principal began scribbling down names as fast as they could. The school called Nayeem's father, and when he got there, Teitel seemed almost as shaken as Nayeem was. "There's no way he can go back to Stuy in the fall," Teitel said. "If this hits the *Post*, the school is through."

The Stuyvesant scandal may have been the most notorious act of cheating to take place at a high school in the United States, but it is by no means the only high-profile cheating scandal of recent vintage. In May, a few weeks before Nayeem walked into his first Regents Exam, Harvard University professor Matthew Platt was grading the final exams for his spring lecture class, Government 1310: "Introduction to Congress," when he noticed that somewhere between ten

and twenty exams seemed similar. The test was a take-home exam. It was also open-book and open-Internet, meaning that students were allowed to research their answers in any manner they saw fit, with one exception: The first page of the test featured specific instructions not to work with other students. Platt brought the case to Harvard's Administrative Board, which investigated the incident over the summer. In August, the school went public with its findings. Some 125 students' tests were found suspect; close to half of the class's 259 students now found themselves under investigation. One Harvard dean called the matter "unprecedented in anyone's living memory." One of the first jokes that circulated was about how some of the students must have gone to Stuyvesant.

20 Around the country, there are other cases: In March, nine seniors just months from graduation from Leland High School, an acclaimed public school in San Jose, California, were accused of taking part in a cheating ring (one student was said to have broken in to at least two classrooms to steal test information before winter exams). In May, a high-achieving junior from Panther Creek High School in Cary, North Carolina, was caught distributing a test to four classmates. And last fall, some twenty students from Great Neck, Roslyn, and other Long Island Gold Coast towns were arrested in an SAT cheating ring; at least four of them were said to have hired themselves out to take the test for their friends.

Eric Anderman, a professor of educational psychology at Ohio State University, has been studying cheating in schools for decades. He says research shows that close to 85 percent of all kids have cheated at least once in some way by the time they leave high school (boys tend to cheat a bit more than girls, although they might just be more likely to admit the transgression; otherwise, cheating is fairly uniform across demographic groups). Three months before Nayeem walked into his physics Regents Exam, the Stuyvesant *Spectator*, the school's official student newspaper, happened to publish the results of a survey it conducted in which 80 percent of respondents (nearly two-thirds of the school's 3,295 students) admitted to cheating in some way, with only 10 percent saying they'd ever been caught. Seventy-nine percent of all students, and about 90 percent of seniors, admitted to learning about questions before tests at least once a year.

It's impossible to determine whether the recent incidents reflect an uptick in the overall incidence of cheating ("It has been high, it continues to be high, and it's extremely high now," says Anderman). But the much-publicized scandals have shined a light on the problem, and social psychologists say today's high-school students live in a culture that, perhaps more than ever, fosters cheating, or at least the temptation to cheat. The prime offender, they say, is the increased emphasis on testing. Success in school today depends not just on the SAT, but on a raft of federal and state standardized exams, often starting as early as fourth grade and continuing throughout high school. More than ever, those tests determine where kids go to college — and most kids believe that in an increasingly globalized, competitive world, college, more than ever, determines success. (A weak economy only intensifies the effect.) Carol Dweck is a Stanford psychology professor. Her research shows that when people focus on a score rather than on improvement, they develop a fixed idea of their intellectual abilities. They come to see school not as a place to grow and learn, but as a place to demonstrate their intelligence by means of a number. To a student with that mind-set, the importance of doing well, and the temptation to cheat, increases. In 2010, Eric Anderman found that even the most impulsive cheaters cheated less often when they believed the point of the test was to help them master the material, not

just get a score. "If everything is always high-stakes," Anderman says, "you're going to create an environment conducive to cheating."

The culture of sharing appears to also create fertile ground for cheating. It's not just that e-mailing, texting, and the web make exchanging answers and plagiarizing far more practical. We live in a Wikipedia world, where file-sharing and blurry notions of personal privacy have, for some young people, made the idea of proprietary knowledge seem like a foreign, almost ridiculous, concept. If in the seventies, some students argued that pocket calculators made it senseless to do arithmetic by hand, now the very value of sole authorship is called into question. Today's plagiarists may not even think they're doing much of anything wrong, according to Kristal Brent Zook, the director of the M.A. journalism program at Hofstra University on Long Island, who recently wrote in the *Columbia Journalism Review* about students who lift passages, apologize, and then do it again and again. "I mean, the word *plagiarism*, to me, is a hurtful word," she said one Hofstra student told her when accused.

It's tricky business to blame the Dick Fulds[1] of the world for breeding a generation of cheaters, but Wall Street titans, politicians, and other high-visibility leaders who cheat — and especially when they get away with it — can have an impact. Dan Ariely, a Duke social scientist and the author of *The (Honest) Truth About Dishonesty*, has made a career studying the effects of social norms on decision-making, particularly when it comes to irrational and unethical decisions. "There is right and wrong, and there is what people around us tell us is right and wrong. The people around us are often more powerful," Ariely says. "There's a speed limit, but you see people around you driving at a certain speed, and you get used to it pretty quickly." In one experiment, Ariely and his team filled separate rooms with test-taking Carnegie Mellon students and hired two acting students to visibly cheat with impunity in front of them, one in each room. One of the actors wore a University of Pittsburgh sweatshirt, the other a Carnegie Mellon sweatshirt. Ariely found that in the room where the actor was wearing the University of Pittsburgh sweatshirt, fewer people followed his lead. But in the room where the actor was wearing a Carnegie Mellon sweatshirt, more cheating took place. The Pittsburgh cheater was not one of the group, so the cheating felt less normal; the Carnegie Mellon cheater was one of them, so it didn't seem like such an unacceptable thing to do.

25 We now understand enough about brain science to blame biology as well. Modern research shows that the parts of the brain responsible for impulse control (measured in the lateral prefrontal cortex) may not completely develop until early adulthood, while the parts that boost sensation-seeking (the ventral striatum and the orbitofrontal cortex) get started growing just after puberty begins. Teenagers may cheat (or do drugs or drive too fast) partly because their sense of the thrill outweighs their sense of the risk. The phenomenon is magnified when friends are present, which may help explain why teens often cheat in groups. A 2010 Temple University study found that when playing a driving video game, teenagers were more likely to take big risks and even crash when their friends were watching than they were when playing the game alone.

But why do bright kids — Stuyvesant and Harvard students — cheat? Aren't they smart enough to get ahead honestly? One might think so, but the pressure to succeed, or the perception of it anyway, is often only greater for such students. Students who attend such schools

[1] Dick Fuld: Head of Lehman Brothers when the investment firm declared bankruptcy during the financial crisis of 2008. —Eds.

often feel they not only have to live up to the reputation of the institution and the expectations that it brings, but that they have to compete, many of them for the first time, with a school full of kids as smart, or smarter, than they are. Harvard only admits so many Stuy students, Goldman Sachs will hire only so many Harvard kids. Competition can get ratcheted up to extreme levels. "Kids here know that the difference between a 96 and a 97 on one test isn't going to make any difference in the future," says Edith Villavicencio, a Stuyvesant senior. "But they feel as if they need the extra one point over a friend, just because it's possible and provides a little thrill."

Stuyvesant's 2012 valedictorian, Vinay Mayar, talked about the pressure at the school in his graduation speech. Mayar, who lives on the Upper East Side and just started at MIT, called his classmates "a volatile mix of strong-minded people armed in opposition against one other." He listed a few things his friends said epitomized the Stuyvesant experience, like "copying homework in the hallway while walking to class," "sneaking in and out of school during free periods," and, at the end of the list, "widespread Facebook cheating."

Teitel, Stuyvesant's principal, used to like to share a quip with incoming freshmen: Grades, friends, and sleep — choose two. The work can be so demanding at top schools that students sometimes justify cheating as an act of survival, or rebellion even. At Harvard, the *Crimson*, which broke the story, reported that part of the take-home exam — an unexpected set of short-answer questions — seemed to rankle the students. And so, even on something so relatively insignificant (as indeed the Regents were for the Stuyvesant kids), students may have felt justified in banding together against the professor and helping one another. At Harvard, "everyone thinks this incident is not unique at all," says Julie Zauzmer, managing editor of the *Crimson*. "It's fairly unique in the scale of it, and especially the way Harvard has handled it by going public. But I don't think it's unusual in other ways. Everyone comes here surprised to find they're not the best anymore. Everyone feels they're able to come out at the same point they came in." When they can't, perhaps, some people decide to cheat.

"Not everyone cheats, but it is collaborative," says Daniel Solomon, a former Stuyvesant *Spectator* staffer who graduated in June, and is now starting at Harvard. "One of my friends told me, 'School is a team effort.' That's sort of the ethos at Stuy."

30 Some students rationalize cheating as a victimless crime — even an act of generosity. Sam Eshagoff, one of the students involved in the Long Island SAT scandal, justified taking the test at least twenty times, and charging others up to $2,500 per test to take the exam for them, by casting himself as a sort of savior. "A kid who has a horrible grade-point average, who, no matter how much he studies is going to totally bomb this test," Eshagoff told *60 Minutes*. "By giving him an amazing score, I totally give him . . . a new lease on life."

Nayeem and I meet for dinner on a weeknight in August at the Old Town pub, near Union Square. He says he decided to speak to me to tell his side of the story, and make his case for returning to Stuyvesant. His parents know about his decision, he told me later, but aren't happy about it.

Nayeem speaks rapidly, and barely bothers with his food when it comes. He is wearing two bands on his wrist, one from the Stuyvesant Red Cross Club, another a hospital I.D. bracelet. Back in July, as news of the cheating scandal spread, he underwent a previously scheduled surgery, the removal of a benign tumor from his leg. "That was a real low point," he says. "I was limping home with my parents. I was experiencing physical pain from the stitches. And people were contacting me on Facebook, asking 'What's

gonna happen to the Regents?'" (Nayeem's father, Najmul, had told a reporter that the tumor, along with a recent mugging, left Nayeem stressed and forced him to miss time at school. Those factors, he said, explained the cheating incident.)

Nayeem's parents, he says, had always wanted him to go to Stuyvesant. Najmul publishes a small cultural Bangladeshi newspaper in Queens, and his mother, Nilasur, stays at home. Nayeem's older sister had gone to La Guardia High School and later NYU, but Nayeem felt he was expected to do even better. When Nayeem was in seventh grade, he went to an open house at Stuyvesant. He remembers marveling at how big the place was — ten floors, with a swimming pool — and hearing about the colleges graduates attended. "It's almost like a dream experience, right? It showed me that I'm not just working to make my parents happy. I'm working to make my future look a lot better than what it is now."

Nayeem started studying for the city's Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHSAT), the gateway to the city's elite public schools, two or three afternoons a week in the summer before seventh grade at a so-called cram school in Queens. By the middle of seventh grade, he bumped up to five days a week. By the time the SHSAT came around, he'd practically memorized every question on every published test-prep manual for the exam. In eighth grade, he scored in the low 600s on the test — not as well as his coaches expected, but good enough to get into Stuyvesant. His long-term goal was Harvard.

35 Almost from his first day at Stuyvesant, Nayeem knew what GPA he'd need to maintain to have a shot at Harvard. "When you get into Stuy, they show you where the graduating seniors went to college and what grades they got," Nayeem says. "You don't get to see names, but you get to see their GPA in every subject and their SAT scores." But the schoolwork was more difficult than Nayeem expected. He dreaded double-period science days, when he'd come home with nine pages of notes, handwritten back and front, then have to comb through them to complete an assignment. So he learned to set priorities. He knew, for instance, that one of his teachers checked homework once every four days. "There were days where I had so much other work, I was like, 'Okay, what are the chances she's going to check today?' And most of the time, she didn't check."

By the end of the first term, Nayeem's GPA hovered around 89 — solid, but not high enough for Harvard. He began staying up all night studying at friends' houses. "My parents were a little tentative," he says. "They'd rather I stay home, but they understood." By the end of his second term, Nayeem had raised his GPA to 92. That's when he says his biology teacher offered the class a deal: If everyone correctly completed their final Friday assignment, working through the weekend on it, she would raise everyone's average by three points. "She knew there was this one guy who wouldn't do it," he says. "He never did a single homework or a single lab."

But Nayeem wasn't going to miss out on this chance for extra credit because of a slacker. On Friday night, he rushed and finished the homework. Then he put it up on Facebook as a note, tagging about fifteen of the kids in his class (he says he did it to lift the whole group up). It was, as he recalls, his first major act of cheating. He got caught and the class didn't get the three points, but, he says, the teacher took mercy on him and didn't turn him in.

When Nayeem began struggling in his sophomore year (trigonometry was especially hard for him), he started sharing — and borrowing — answers more. By junior year, when grades matter most to colleges, cheating had become a regular habit. "History had five teachers. I was

getting tests for four of them. I was being nice to everyone, and they started helping me out." By now he realized "how lazy teachers could be. I studied for the first test. But I looked at the new test and last year's test and they were, like, 75 percent the same exact questions and the same exact answers. So I was like, 'Okay, why am I studying?'"

Some teachers teach not just the same subject but the same class for three or four different periods over the course of a day. Nayeem began passing test answers from the early classes to the later ones. He knew he was taking a risk, but he also knew he hadn't officially been caught yet, not even for a first offense. (At Stuyvesant, a first cheating incident triggers a warning, and a second goes on your permanent record, which compels you to answer *yes* when asked on college applications if you've ever cheated.) Nayeem's rationale for who he did and didn't share answers with was byzantine. "There's kids you know, and there's kids you really know. There are kids I trust a lot and kids I care about. There are kids I really don't care too much about, but I want them to have a bright future. There are kids that can help me in the future. There are kids that are good at most subjects, but they suck at one, and I worked that to my advantage."

40 Nayeem remembers wondering before the physics Regents if it was worth it to put so much time into cheating on such an easy test. But he decided it was — especially considering the help he could use on the Spanish test. Studying, he says, seemed pointless. "It's not like studying is going to change one point on my exam," he says, "because there are things I am bound to not know." He says he thought about it morally, too. "I was like, 'There's a ton of kids that are studying so hard, and here's 140 kids that are just going to ace the exam without knowing shit, right?' But a good number of people at Stuy have asked me for some kind of help."

The only reason he got caught, he says, was that "it was too many people with one exam. It got really big, much faster than I thought it would. One day it was 5 people, and one day it was 140."

Stanley Teitel told Nayeem right away that he couldn't return to Stuyvesant in the fall, but Nayeem had all summer to fight that decision, which he did. Since last March, ironically enough, he's been working teaching kids at a test-prep center in Queens.

Nayeem's identity might never have become public knowledge if a friend hadn't tried to help him by circulating a petition online to try to convince the school not to expel him. "He told me, 'There's a lot of people that do a lot worse in Stuy. There's people that smoke weed, people that do drugs. True, it's unethical, it's an extreme breach of academic integrity, and it's at an elite school. It is bad, but I don't get how kicking you out would help anything.'" The DOE had previously acknowledged it was investigating the incident, but the petition exposed the scandal, and outed Nayeem.

Shortly after Nayeem got caught, he went home and remotely wiped his phone of its data; the school and the DOE aren't commenting, but Nayeem has implied that they didn't get the names of all 140 recipients of his text message before that. Initial press reports held that the school had 92 names. Later that number drifted down to 72, and more recently to 66. A few of those 66 students were cleared owing to lack of evidence. While at first it seemed that only a handful of the remaining accused students would be suspended, the DOE announced earlier this month that all 66 would be suspended — a dozen for up to ten days and the rest for up to five days, depending on what each of them has to say in a one-on-one conference with school officials. Those students will also have to retake all of their Regents tests. On the

face of it, this seems fair enough. But Nayeem notes that the glaring absence of Regents scores on the students' college applications (at least some of the next Regents Exams aren't offered until after applications are due), combined with the fact that they go to Stuyvesant, would lead any college-admissions officer to assume they were on Nayeem's list.

45 Nayeem says he feels bad about what may happen to the kids who are being punished. "I don't want them to go to lousy colleges because of this." But he insists his friends aren't upset with him. "I've done a lot for these people, so much so that they know I have got good intentions." He says his parents go back and forth about what happened. "Sometimes they're mad at me. Sometimes they're sad. Sometimes they're very optimistic."

Nayeem says he is ready to accept any punishment the DOE throws at him as long as he is able to go back to Stuyvesant. The worst damage, he argues, has already been done — a simple Google search will ruin him in the eyes of any college-admissions office. Why kick him out on top of everything else? He insists he's learned his lesson. "The fact that I could have gotten kicked out, that changed my life."

On August 3, Stanley Teitel resigned from Stuyvesant, saying in a letter that it was "time to devote my energy to my family and personal endeavors." Teitel's critics say he pushed kids too hard. "He saw the students' stress as a sign that the school was doing what it was supposed to be doing," says one teacher. Another calls him "a visionless bureaucrat who is sort of like, 'Well, if it ain't broke, don't fix it. And we know it ain't broke because everyone's doing such a good job getting into college.'" His defenders note that he did more than most administrators to curb cheating, and caught Nayeem.

The new interim principal, Jie Zhang, is a Chinese-born veteran teacher and administrator who most recently oversaw a network of schools that includes Stuyvesant. She'll have to deal with the scandal's aftermath, at least for now, starting with how to prevent future cheating. In a recent letter to Stuyvesant families, Zhang said all students and parents will now have to review and sign an "academic honesty policy." She has also stepped up enforcement of the school system's cell-phone ban, reportedly seizing seventeen phones in the first two days of classes. At least one teacher says those moves are not enough. "I hope this will be a chance for self-examination, of what high school should be and why we're all here." Less homework, a decreased focus on testing, curbs on competition have all been raised as possible reforms. But to accept any such change, Zhang — and whoever is chosen to lead the school long-term — will have to be convinced that a less cutthroat Stuyvesant is still Stuyvesant.

While many Stuyvesant parents are outraged by the scandal, some seem to think the school has been unfairly vilified. In terms of cheating, Stuyvesant "is no different from Horace Mann or Bronx Science," one father says. Many of the students who were not implicated, meanwhile, feel betrayed by Nayeem and his confederates. "All the people I talked to said [Nayeem] deserved to be expelled," says one student. "They said they were angry taking the tests knowing other people were cheating it."

50 As for Harvard, the probe there is expected to continue well into the fall and perhaps even beyond, with each student's situation being adjudicated individually. "It will take as long as it will take," says Harvard spokesman Jeff Neal. "We are committed to ensuring the students involved have their due-process rights." The Administrative Board at Harvard has wide latitude in formulating punishments. Depending on the proof and a student's extenuating circumstances, he could receive informal admonishment, a mandatory redo, a failing grade on the

What connection are both Kolker and the artist in this editorial cartoon making between Wall Street and the Stuyvesant cheating scandal?

Bill Bramhall/NY Daily News via Getty Images

test itself, a mark of no credit for the entire course, or even probation or a one-year suspension. According to a tipster e-mail to the IvyGate blog, the Ad Board has told at least some of the students who were involved that it will not take into consideration the "culture of collaboration" that supposedly existed in the course for many years when reaching its decisions.

As of this writing, Nayeem has been sitting out the start of the school year, not yet enrolling at another high school in hopes that the DOE will relent and allow him to return to Stuyvesant. He's hopeful, but far from confident, that will happen. When he visited other schools with an eye toward transferring, Nayeem says, his heart sank. "I just wanted to stay at Stuy more. Now I realize, but before I didn't — you're so lucky to go to Stuy. You're able to learn. In other schools, there are kids in school who are texting during the day while the teacher's talking. There's no learning. It would have been easier, but it wouldn't have been what I wanted."

When I ask him if he thinks he'd be able to handle the workload at Stuyvesant without cheating, he doesn't hesitate. "I can definitely study my way out of it. Like, now that my future's on the line."

But he says he still wonders if maybe he could have gotten away with his cheating scheme if he spent more time organizing it, or put more locks on his phone. At times, it seems, he's still trying to rationalize what he did. He says he didn't think the Regents was as big a deal as the SAT. "I didn't know I could have gotten kicked out of Stuy if I pulled this off. That was never made clear to me."

This stops me. He cheated on not just one but three different Regents Exams, and he didn't think that could get him kicked out of high school?

55 Nayeem squints. "I mean, like, I really didn't think so." Then he sits up straighter. "And now it's like a second chance. It's like a second chance that has a lot of dark clouds. It still has consequences, right? I was still suspended. I still won't be able to go to a decent college. But hopefully I'll be able to go somewhere. That's what I'm worried about. Somewhere decent enough to work my way up into a career."

What career?

"I want to be an investment banker."

Understanding and Interpreting

1 What is a conclusion that you could draw, according to Carol Dweck, who is cited in paragraph 22, about the effect that standardized testing may have on cheating?

2 What is the "culture of sharing" that Kolker identifies in paragraph 23, and what role does it play in how today's students define cheating?

3 Kolker includes quotes from people who essentially rationalize the cheating. What are the arguments that those people put forward?

4 Does Kolker seem to believe that the steps the new principal of Stuyvesant has taken will have any effect on cheating at the school (par. 48)? Why or why not? Use evidence from the text to support your argument.

Analyzing Language, Style, and Structure

1 How does Kolker give the reader the impression that Nayeem's cheating was premeditated? What effect does this have on his argument about cheating?

2 How valid is the evidence that Kolker provides in support of the following factors that also might influence students' decisions to cheat?

a. social norms
b. biology
c. competition

3 How does Kolker create suspense in the events leading up to Nayeem's being caught?

4 What is Kolker's purpose in moving away from Stuyvesant to describe other cheating scandals (pars. 19–20)? Why does he place that section there, instead of at the beginning of the piece?

5 Reread the last few paragraphs of the article, starting with "As of this writing" (par. 51). Though he never explicitly says, what do you think Kolker's feelings are about Nayeem and his actions? Point to specific evidence from this section to support your response.

6 The final sentence of the article is Nayeem's statement that he wants to be an investment banker in the future. What is the effect of this ending?

Connecting, Arguing, and Extending

1 During the testing, Stuyvesant principal Teitel seized Nayeem's phone and accessed his messages, likely without Nayeem's consent. Were Teitel's actions legal? Were they justified? Were they ethical? Conduct research on the Supreme Court decision *New Jersey v. T.L.O.* (1985), which is the case that has set the precedent for school search and seizures, to support your response.

2 Kolker offers several possible reasons why students cheat—rise of the importance of standardized tests, the culture of sharing, social factors, biology of adolescent brains, and the competitive nature of school. Which reasons do you think are most valid from your own experience? Why? What are other factors that he does not identify that might play a role?

3 Near the end of the article, Nayeem says, "I didn't know I could have gotten kicked out of Stuy if I pulled this off. That was never made clear to me" (par. 53). Locate your own school's academic honesty policies. What are the consequences for cheating at your school? Have you or anyone you know ever been disciplined for cheating? Why or why not? What changes would you recommend to your school's policies?

4 After Nayeem was expelled from Stuyvesant, over two hundred students signed the following petition to have him reinstated. Would you have signed? Why or why not?

To:
Stuyvesant High School Administration, Attn: Principal Teitel

I just signed the following petition addressed to:
Stuyvesant High School Administration.

Reinstate Nayeem Ahsan as a student at Stuyvesant

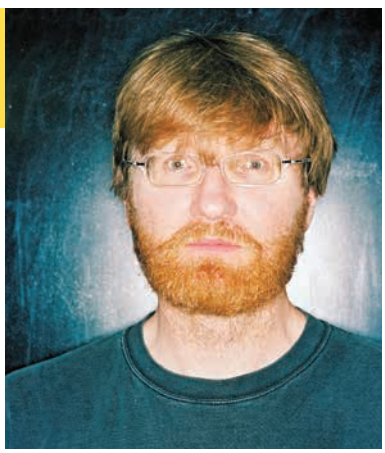
Nayeem Ahsan is a valued member of the Stuyvesant community. He plays an integral role in school morale, photographing all major school events among the countless other selfless deeds he's done for the class of 2013. His absence would leave the senior class of 2013 defunct. Expulsion from his home for the last three years is an exorbitant repercussion for his mistake, Nayeem does not deserve to have his future ripped out of his hands, simply so the administration can set an example.

Sincerely,
[Your name]

Why We Look the Other Way

Chuck Klosterman

Chuck Klosterman (b. 1972) is an American writer who publishes essays on music, sports, and pop culture. He is a regular contributor to the sports-entertainment blog *Grantland*, writes a column for the *New York Times* on ethics, and often is a guest columnist for *ESPN The Magazine*, from which this piece has been taken. In this 2007 article, Klosterman weighs in on the debate about performance-enhancement drugs (PEDs) and their effects on sports, in particular on the National Football League (NFL).



Rabsch/laif/Redux

Shawne Merriman weighs 272 pounds. This is six pounds less than Anthony Muñoz, probably the most dominating left tackle of all time. Shawne Merriman also runs the 40-yard dash in 4.61 seconds. When Jerry Rice attended the NFL draft combine in 1985, he reportedly ran a 4.60; Rice would go on to gain more than 23,000 all-purpose yards while scoring 207 career touchdowns.

You do not need Mel Kiper's[1] hard drive to deduce what these numbers mean: As an outside linebacker, Shawne Merriman is almost

[1]Mel Kiper: NFL draft analyst for ESPN. It is at the NFL draft workout that 40-yard dash times are recorded. —Eds.

as big as the best offensive tackle who ever played and almost as fast as the best wide receiver who ever played. He is a rhinoceros who moves like a deer. Common sense suggests this combination should not be possible. It isn't.

Merriman was suspended from the San Diego Chargers for four games last season after testing positive for the anabolic steroid nandrolone. He argues this was the accidental result of a tainted nutritional supplement. "I think two out of 10 people will always believe I did something intentional, or still think I'm doing something," Merriman has said. If this is truly what he believes, no one will ever accuse him of pragmatism. Virtually everyone who follows football assumes Merriman used drugs to turn himself into the kind of hitting machine who can miss four games and still lead the league with 17 sacks. He has been caught and penalized, and the public shall forever remain incredulous of who he is and what he does.

5 The public knows the truth, or at least part of it. And knowing this partial truth, the public will return to ignoring this conundrum almost entirely.

The public will respond by renewing its subscription to NFL Sunday Ticket, where it will regularly watch dozens of 272-pound men accelerate at speeds that would have made them Olympic sprinters during the 1960s. This, it seems, is the contemporary relationship most people have with drugs and pro football: unconditional distrust of anyone who tests positive, balanced by an unconscious willingness to overlook all the physical impossibilities they see. This is partially understandable; socially, sports serve an escapist purpose. Football players are real people, but they exist in a constructed nonreality. Within the context of any given game, nobody cares how a certain linebacker got so big while remaining so fast. Part of what makes football successful is its detachment from day-to-day life. For 60 minutes, it subsists in a vacuum. But this detachment is going to become more complicated in the coming years, mostly because reality is evolving, becoming harder to block out. And the Evolved Reality is this: It's starting to feel like a significant segment of the NFL is on drugs.

As a consequence, you will have to make some decisions.

Not commissioner Roger Goodell.

You.

10 On Feb. 27, federal, state and local authorities seized the records of an Orlando pharmacy, accusing the owners of running an online bazaar for performance-enhancing drugs. This came on the heels of a raid on a similar enterprise in Mobile, Ala., where the customer list apparently included recognizable names like boxer Evander

Josh Umphrey/Getty Images Sport/Getty Images

In this photo, we see a typical football hit, but when frozen in a shot, we can see the violence of the impact between two very large and strong men.

How could this photo be used as evidence to promote new regulations against performance-enhancement drugs in the NFL?

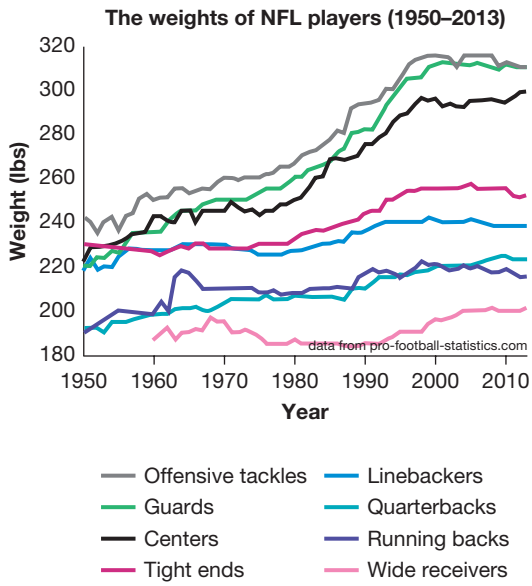
Holyfield and late-blooming outfielder Gary Matthews Jr.

None of this is particularly shocking.

But then there is the case of Richard Rydze. In 2006 Rydze, an internist, purchased $150,000 of testosterone and human growth hormone from the Florida pharmacy over the Internet. This is not against the law. However, Rydze is a physician for the Pittsburgh Steelers. He says he never prescribed any of those drugs to members of the team, and I cannot prove otherwise. However, the Steelers have had a complicated relationship with performance enhancers for a long time. Offensive lineman Steve Courson (now deceased) admitted he used steroids while playing for Pittsburgh in the 1970s and early '80s, as did at least four other guys. Former Saints coach Jim Haslett, a player in Buffalo from 1979 to 1985, has said the old Steelers dynasty essentially ran on steroids. The team, obviously, denies this.

Several members of the Carolina Panthers' 2004 Super Bowl team were implicated in a steroid scandal involving Dr. James Shortt, a private practitioner in West Columbia, S.C. One of these players was punter Todd Sauerbrun. Do not mitigate the significance of this point: *The punter was taking steroids*. The punter had obtained syringes and injectable Stanozolol, the same chemical Ben Johnson used before the 1988 Olympics. I'm not suggesting punters aren't athletes, nor am I overlooking how competitive the occupation of punting must be; I'm merely pointing out that it's kind of crazy to think punters would be taking steroids but defensive tackles would not. We all concede that steroids, HGH and blood doping can help people ride bicycles faster through the Alps. Why do we even momentarily question how much impact they must have on a game built entirely on explosion and power?

"People may give a certain amount of slack to football players because there's this unspoken



Looking over the information presented in this chart about the weight of NFL players, what is a conclusion that you can draw that would support or contradict Klosterman's argument about the use of PEDs?

sense that in order to play the game well, you need an edge," USC critical studies professor Todd Boyd told the *Los Angeles Times* last month. Boyd has written several books about sports, race and culture. "That's what people want in a football player — someone who's crazy and mean."

15 It's a subtle paradox: People choose to ignore the relationship between performance enhancers and the NFL because it's unquestionably the league where performance enhancers would have the biggest upside. But what will happen when such deliberate naïveté becomes impossible? Revelatory drug scandals tend to escalate exponentially (look at Major League Baseball and U.S. track and field). Merriman, Sauerbrun and the other 33 players suspended by the NFL since 2002 could be exceptions; it seems far more plausible they are not. We are likely on the precipice of a bubble that is going to burst. But if it does, how are we supposed to

feel about it? Does this invalidate the entire sport, or does it barely matter at all?

This is where things become complicated.

It can be strongly argued that the most important date in the history of rock music was Aug. 28, 1964. This was the day Bob Dylan met the Beatles in New York City's Hotel Delmonico and got them high.

Obviously, a lot of people might want to disagree with this assertion, but the artistic evidence is hard to ignore. The introduction of marijuana altered the trajectory of the Beatles' songwriting, reconstructed their consciousness and prompted them to make the most influential rock albums of all time. After the summer of 1964, the Beatles started taking serious drugs, and those drugs altered their musical performance. Though it may not have been their overt intent, the Beatles took performance-enhancing drugs. And this is germane to sports for one reason: Absolutely no one holds it against them. No one views *Rubber Soul* and *Revolver* as "less authentic" albums, despite the fact that they would not (and probably could not) have been made by people who weren't on drugs.

Jack Kerouac wrote *On the Road* on a Benzedrine binge, yet nobody thinks this makes his novel less significant. A Wall Street stockbroker can get jacked up on cocaine before going into the trading pit, yet nobody questions his bottom line. It's entirely possible that you take 10mg of Ambien the night before a big day at the office, and then drink 32 ounces of coffee when you wake up (possibly along with a mind-sharpening cigarette). Anytime a person takes drugs for purposes that aren't exclusively recreational (i.e., staring at your stereo speakers, watching *Planet of the Apes*, etc.), he or she is using them to do something at a higher level. Yes, I realize there is a difference between caffeine and HGH. But there's probably an even greater difference between a morning of data processing and trying to cut-block Shawne Merriman.

20 My point is not that all drugs are the same, nor that drugs are awesome, nor that the Beatles needed LSD to become the geniuses they already were. My point is that sports are unique in the way they're retrospectively colored by the specter of drug use. East Germany was an Olympic force during the 1970s and '80s; today, you can't mention the East Germans' dominance without noting that they were pumped full of Ivan Drago–esque chemicals. This relationship changes the meaning of their achievements. You simply don't see this in other idioms. Nobody looks back at Pink Floyd's *Dark Side of the Moon* and says, "I guess that music is okay, but it doesn't really count. Those guys were probably high in the studio."

Now, the easy rebuttal to this argument is contextual, because it's not as if Roger Waters was shooting up with testosterone in order to strum his bass-guitar strings *harder*. Unlike songwriting or stock trading, football is mostly physical; it seems like there needs to be a different scale — an uncrossable line — for what endangers competitive integrity. But how do we make that distinction? In all of these cases (sports-related and otherwise), people are putting foreign substances into their bodies in the hope of reaching a desired result. The motive is the same. What's different, and sometimes arbitrary, is when people care. Baseball fans are outraged that Rafael Palmeiro tested positive for Stanozolol; they are generally indifferent to the fact that most players regularly took amphetamines for 40 years. Meanwhile, as a member of the Philadelphia Eagles in 1994, Bill Romanowski electively received two trauma IVs to help recover from injuries. Trauma IVs are what emergency room doctors give to people dying from car accidents. In his autobiography, Romanowski claims one of his teammates received six trauma IVs in the span of one season. This is natural?

I am told we live in a violent society. But even within that society, football players are

singular. Another former Eagle, strong safety Andre Waters, committed suicide last November at age 44. A postmortem examination of his brain indicated he had the neurological tissue of an 85-year-old man with Alzheimer's, almost certainly the result of using his skull as a weapon for 12 seasons. Andre Waters hit people so hard, and so often, that he cut his time on earth in half. Hitting was his life. This is why the relationship between drugs and football is different from the relationship between drugs and baseball: Baseball is mostly about tangible statistics, which drugs skew and invalidate; football is more about intangible masculine warfare, which drugs quietly enhance.

Announcers casually lionize pro football players as gladiators, but that description is more accurate than most would like to admit. For the sake of entertainment, we expect these people to be the fastest, strongest, most aggressive on earth. If they are not, they make less money and eventually lose their jobs.

This being the case, it seems hypocritical to blame them for taking steroids. We might blame them more if they did not.

25 Around this time last year, I wrote an essay for *[ESPN] The Magazine* about Barry Bonds — specifically, how steroids made his passing of Babe Ruth on the career home run list problematic. I still believe this to be true, just as I believe that the notion of an NFL that's more juiced than organic is more negative than interesting. It would be easier to be a football fan if none of this was going on. But since it is going on, we will all have to decide how much this Evolved Reality is going to bother us.

This will not be simple. I don't think there will be a fall guy for the NFL; over time, we won't be able to separate Merriman from the rest of the puzzle (which MLB has so far successfully done with Bonds). It won't be about the legitimacy of specific players. This will be more of an across-the-board dilemma, because we will have to publicly acknowledge that the most popular sport in the country has been kinetically altered by drugs, probably for the past 25 years. In many ways, the NFL's reaction barely matters. What matters more is how fans will attempt to reconcile that realization with their personal feelings toward the game. The question, ultimately, is this: If it turns out the lifeblood of the NFL is unnatural, does that make the game less meaningful?

The answer depends on who you are. And maybe how old you are.

In 1982, I read a story about Herschel Walker in *Sports Illustrated* headlined "My Body's Like an Army." It explained how, at the time, Walker didn't even lift weights; instead, he did 100,000 sit-ups and 100,000 push-ups a year, knocking out 25 of each every time a commercial came on the television. This information made me worship Herschel; it made him seem human and superhuman at the same time. "My Body's Like an Army" simultaneously indicated that I could become Herschel Walker and that I could never become Herschel Walker. His physical perfection was self-generated and completely pure. He had made himself better than other mortals, and that made me love him.

But I was 10 years old.

30 There comes a point in every normal person's life when they stop looking at athletes as models for living. Any thinking adult who follows pro sports understands that some people are corrupt and the games are just games and money drives everything. It would be strange if they did not realize these things. But what's equally strange is the way so many fans (and sportswriters, myself included) revert back to their 10-year-old selves whenever an issue like steroids shatters the surface.

Most of the time, we don't care what football players do when they're not playing football. On any given Wednesday, we have only a passing interest in who they are as people or how they

choose to live. But Sunday is different. On Sunday, we have wanted them to be superfast, superstrong, superentertaining and, weirdly, superethical. They are supposed to be pristine 272-pound men who run 40 yards in 4.61 seconds simply because they do sit-ups during commercial breaks for *Grey's Anatomy*. Unlike everybody else in America, they cannot do whatever it takes to succeed; they have to fulfill the unrealistic expectations of 10-year-old kids who read magazines. And this is because football players have a job that doesn't matter at all, except in those moments when it matters more than absolutely everything else.

It may be time to rethink some of this stuff.

Understanding and Interpreting

1 Klosterman is not making a simplistic argument about performance-enhancing drugs here. He is not, for instance, simply suggesting that PEDs should be banned in football. What is his central claim about the relationship between the football players and the viewers of the NFL?

2 In two different places, Klosterman uses the phrase "Evolved Reality" (pars. 6 and 25). What does this phrase mean, and what purpose does it serve in this argument?

3 The references to Bob Dylan, the Beatles, Jack Kerouac, and Pink Floyd are likely included here as counterarguments to the idea that PEDs are always automatically bad. Explain the conclusion the reader is expected to draw from these references and evaluate how well they support Klosterman's overall claim. Do they really work as counterarguments?

4 Throughout the piece, Klosterman compares the use of PEDs in football and in baseball. What are the significant differences that he identifies, and how do these differences support his overall claim about PEDs in sports?

Analyzing Language, Style, and Structure

1 What is a likely reason that Klosterman started his argument with a description of Shawne Merriman's size and speed? What is a reader expected to conclude from the first two paragraphs?

2 Since this article appeared in *ESPN The Magazine*, we can assume that Klosterman's audience is made up of sports fans. What words, phrases, and allusions does Klosterman include that make it clear that this is his intended audience? What might he have included if he were writing for an audience not as familiar with sports?

3 Evaluate Klosterman's logical reasoning in paragraph 12. What evidence does he include? Where does he make unsupported assumptions? Where does he commit logical fallacies? What are his biases? Overall, how effective is this paragraph in supporting his position?

4 In paragraph 23, Klosterman uses the word "gladiators" to describe NFL players. What are the positive and the negative connotations of this word, and how do these conflicting meanings help illustrate Klosterman's claim?

5 Klosterman saves his story about how his ten-year-old self admired Herschel Walker until the end of his piece (pars. 28–29). What purpose does this section serve in his argument, and why is it most effective—or not—at the end of the piece?

6 A rhetorical question is a device that authors use in which they pose a question for the purpose of trying to make a point. Klosterman uses this device regularly throughout this piece. Identify one or two examples and explain the point the question helps Klosterman make.

7 Reread the last three paragraphs. What is Klosterman's tone toward NFL players and viewers? How does this tone reflect his central claim?

Connecting, Arguing, and Extending

1 There are several issues that Klosterman raises in this piece: use of PEDs, dangers of concussions and injury in sport, recreational drug use by musicians and writers, and the ethical decisions facing sports fans. Choose one of these topics and write an argument in which you explain why you support, challenge, or qualify the conclusion that Klosterman draws.

2 Think about yourself as a fan. You might not like to watch sports like Klosterman does, but you likely are a fan of specific celebrities, musicians, authors, actors, and so on. Explain the positive and negative aspects of your relationship with them. What are the costs and benefits of your fandom, to those you watch and to yourself?

3 Choose an athlete who has been caught or accused of using PEDs. Research the types of drugs he or she may have been using and how the drugs helped, and explain to what extent the athlete behaved unethically.

4 If they are adults and are informed about the potential health risks, should athletes be allowed to take whatever PEDs they want as long as they identify exactly what drugs they take? Choose a sport or another form of competition and write an argument about what types of benefits should be allowed or prohibited under the governing rules for that sport or competition.

5 While Klosterman focuses mostly on PEDs that allow athletes to become faster and stronger, there is another class of PEDs, known as beta blockers, that has also been banned from many athletic competitions. This category includes drugs that decrease the anxiety that people can feel in pressure situations such as competitive pistol shooting. Read the following excerpt from an article by Carl Elliot, "In Defense of the Beta Blocker," and explain why you think that such drugs should be legal or not in competitive sports.

> So the question for pistol shooting is this: should we reward the shooter who can hit the target most accurately, or the one who can hit it most accurately under pressure in public? Given that we've turned big-time sports into a spectator activity, we might well conclude that the answer is the second—it is the athlete who performs best in front of a crowd who should be rewarded. But that doesn't necessarily mean that that athlete is really the best. Nor does it mean that using beta blockers is necessarily a disgrace in other situations. If Barack Obama decides to take a beta blocker before his big stadium speech at the Democratic Convention next week, I doubt his audience will feel cheated. And if my neurosurgeon were to use beta blockers before performing a delicate operation on my spine, I am certain that I would feel grateful.

Cheaters Never Win

Christopher Bergland

Christopher Bergland (b. 1966) is a retired ultra-endurance athlete who holds a Guinness World Record for treadmill running (153.76 miles in 24 hours). He completed the Triple Ironman competition—swimming 7 miles, biking 340 miles, and running 79 miles, consecutively—in a record time of 38 hours and 46 minutes. He is the author of the book *The Athlete's Way: Sweat and the Biology of Bliss*, writes a regular column for *Psychology Today*, and maintains the sports and health website The Athlete's Way.

Courtesy Tom Ackerman

KEY CONTEXT Bergland wrote this piece for *Psychology Today* in 2012, when Lance Armstrong, the winner of seven consecutive Tour de France cycling races, announced that he would no longer fight the charges of using illegal drugs and in the months after would finally acknowledge that he had, in fact, used performance-enhancing drugs during his career, despite having denied doing so for years. In his books, personal appearances, and on his website, Bergland espouses a philosophy about athletic competition that he calls "The Athlete's Way," which, he says, "should be about fostering character, resilience and camaraderie — not about winning at all costs."

Lance Armstrong was a hero to me and millions of people from all walks of life. This week, Armstrong announced he would no longer contest doping charges brought against him by the United States Anti-Doping Agency. The USADA will strip Lance of his seven *Tour de France* titles and ban him for life. In his first public appearance since conceding defeat, Lance asked his fans "not to cry for him." But, how can you not feel really bad for him?

Do you think that Lance Armstrong cheated? If so, was it justifiable if in the world of cycling — where all of your top competition seems to be using performance enhancing drugs — that if you want to "beat them" that you have to join them in not playing by the rules? Although Lance has given up his fight against the charges, he maintains his innocence and says that he was subjected to an "unconstitutional witch hunt." But this may only be the beginning of his saga and legal woes. The International Cycling Union is demanding that the USADA hand over evidence and many civil suits are expected to follow.

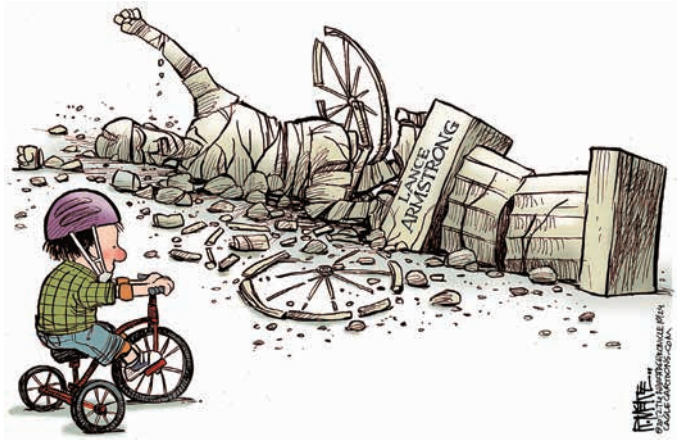
Shame is a toxic emotion. It seems impossible that Lance Armstrong won't be consumed with shame on a conscious or subconscious level for the rest of his life. Shame eats you up inside and prevents you from being able to truly connect with other people. The shame associated with cheating is the price cheaters pay, and why cheaters never win — even if they're never caught. The next time you think about cheating, ask yourself — would you rather have won seven *Tour de France* titles and had all the glory in your prime, if you then had to pay the price that Lance will pay for the rest of his life?

This morning I went in search of some Lance Armstrong quotations about "sports and competition" that might show a part of his psyche when it came to a "win-at-all-costs" mentality. There are many amazing and inspiring quotes from Lance Armstrong but one that jumped out at me as showing a more Machiavellian side to his competitiveness was when he was quoted as saying, "Two things scare me. The first is getting hurt. But that's not nearly as scary as the second, which is losing. Athletes . . . they're too busy cultivating the aura of invincibility to admit to being fearful, weak, defenseless, vulnerable, or fallible, and for that reason neither are they especially kind, considerate, merciful, or benign, lenient, or forgiving. To themselves or anyone around them." The sentiment of this quotation is the antithesis of everything that *The Athlete's Way* stands for. The priority of sports and athletic competition in our society should be about fostering character, resilience and camaraderie — not about winning at all costs.

5 Athletic competition — especially in games like pick-up basketball or tennis with friends — is a great opportunity for players to self-referee and prove the integrity of character and trustworthiness by making fair calls against our opponents. This morning I was talking about this blog topic over breakfast with my friend Paul Tasha. He was sharing stories of his experiences playing basketball with people he does

This editorial cartoon by Rick McKee of the *Augusta Chronicle* visually depicts the idiom of "a fallen idol."

What is the effect of having the child on a tricycle in the front of the image? How is the child similar to Bergland in this piece?



Rick McKee, The Augusta Chronicle

business with and how he realized a long time ago that people who will cheat you on the basketball court will cheat you in commerce, too. He pointed out that being known in your community as someone who has integrity and is trustworthy will ultimately make you more likely to succeed. People who play by the rules ultimately prevail.

We live in such a competitive world. From a very young age our children are taught that if they want to "succeed" in life that they have to finish in the top percentile in just about every challenge they face. The world does not automatically reward people who are viewed as being "mediocre" in a meritocracy. But not everyone can be a champion. There is always a bell-curve. So, how does someone who is not at the top of the heap maintain optimism, enthusiasm and a sense of self-worth? I think it's important for people who have made it and become successful to mentor young people and share their stories of success and failure and to show the wide range of happiness that we can achieve by readjusting how we describe success.

I believe that it is the time we spend with family, friends and feeling healthy, alive and connected that is our biggest source of joy. Again, it is easy when you have "made it" to proselytize about the virtues of not caring if you "win or lose". The reality can be much different, especially if you're struggling economically. Because winning does matter. This is a paradox we all have to navigate in sport and in life. Yes, you want to be your absolute best and to try your hardest to win and to be thrilled if you are victorious. . . . But you cannot cheat to win on an ethical and karmic level. I believe that the bad karma and ill-will of being a cheater has the power to eat you up from the inside out and ultimately destroy you.

But what do you do if all of the people you're competing against are taking performance enhancing drugs, especially if they're legal? Adderall and other "brain enhancing" prescription drugs that people take to get better grades or seem like a rock star at work create an uneven playing field. But again, if all of your peers are doing it and you want to remain competitive what are you supposed to do? I am a zealot about the power of physical activity to take the place of many prescription drugs. Physical activity will boost brain power, creativity, focus, reduce stress and give you grace under pressure when you face a big challenge. All without any negative side effects of a pill.

Regular physical activity at a tonic level is a magical elixir with very little pecuniary costs or

detrimental side effects. One thing that I find so depressing about the drug abuse in cycling is that for the short-term glory of standing on a podium or wearing a yellow jersey that competitors in the *Tour de France* will toss away their long-term wellness. The bottom line is that when it comes to taking any performance-enhancing drug — there is a very real payback on your long-term mental and physical health for the short-term gain of winning.

10 Ultimately, sportsmanlike behavior and *The Athlete's Way* is about building mindset, character, resilience and close-knit human bonds. It is not about how many trophies or gold medals you "win". It really is about how you play the game and what you learn through the process. If you cheat in sport or life you are ultimately sabotaging yourself and making yourself less of a viable competitor. Karma is a boomerang and the long-term shame and anxiety of cheating will ultimately negate the short-term gains of victory. So, be a good sport and play fair! It will end up rewarding you in the long run and make you a happier person.

Understanding and Interpreting

1 What are the reasons that Bergland gives for his statement "[C]heaters never win"?

2 At times, Bergland uses sports as a metaphor for how to live life in general. Explain what he is suggesting about the connection between sports and life outside sports.

3 An effective argument should always address the opposition's main arguments. Where and how does Bergland address those who might think differently? How successful is he at refuting the counterarguments?

4 Summarize what Bergland is suggesting about the differences between short-term and long-term goals.

5 According to what he wrote in this piece, how would Bergland define the term "success"?

Analyzing Language, Style, and Structure

1 What is Bergland's tone toward Lance Armstrong? What word choice and topics help to create this tone?

2 In the fourth paragraph, Bergland intentionally juxtaposes a quote from Lance Armstrong with a description of the ideals of athletic competition he writes about in his book *The Athlete's Way.* How does this juxtaposition reflect the theme of this piece?

3 Look back through this piece and consider Bergland's use of questions. Choose two questions that you find interesting rhetorically and examine their intended effect.

4 How does Bergland establish his ethos in this piece? How does this help or hinder his argument?

Connecting, Arguing, and Extending

1 Bergland makes several claims about sports, life, and human nature. Explain why you agree with, disagree with, or would qualify each:

a. "People who play by the rules ultimately prevail" (par. 5).

b. "The priority of sports [. . .] should be about fostering character" (par. 4).

c. "[Y]ou cannot cheat to win on an ethical and karmic level" (par. 7).

d. "So, be a good sport and play fair! It will [. . .] make you a happier person" (par. 10).

2 Bergland says that at some point we all come to recognize that in both sports and life "winning does matter." Write about a time when you or someone you know had to learn this lesson. What was gained and lost when you or your subject learned this lesson about winning?

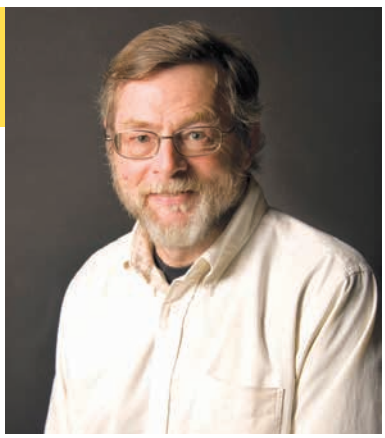
3 Take a look at the following chart from an article titled "Anabolic Steroids and Pre-Adolescent Athletes: Prevalence, Knowledge, and Attitudes," which was published in 2008 in the *Sports Journal*. What conclusions can you draw about the information that adolescents receive about steroids and what Bergland might suggest to change adolescents' perceptions of steroid use?

TABLE 5. Primary Source of Information about Anabolic Steroids

	No. of Youth Sports Participants (n = 1,553)	
Source	**–n**	**%**
Book/Magazine	433	28
Parent	322	21
Coach	267	17
Friend/Teammate	113	7
Gym Personnel	112	7
Athletic Trainer	89	6
Teacher	47	3
Television	29	2
Dealer	17	1
Sibling	15	1

Is Human Enhancement Cheating?

Brad Allenby



Arizona State University

Braden R. Allenby (b. 1950) is the director of the Center for Earth Systems Engineering and Management at Arizona State University and Lincoln Professor of Engineering and Ethics. He is a regular contributor on science and technology matters for *Slate*, an online magazine. This article was published in the May 9, 2013, issue of *Slate*.

KEY CONTEXT In 2012, Lance Armstrong was stripped of his seven wins of the Tour de France cycling competition due to his acknowledgment of using illegal performance-enhancing drugs (PEDs). Allenby uses this news to wonder why the general public frowns on PEDs in sports but encourages human self-enhancement in other areas like plastic surgery and even warfare.

Were you incensed when Lance Armstrong was finally cornered and stripped of his seven Tour de France titles? Almost everyone seemed to be. While some felt he had been treated unfairly, most appeared to feel betrayed by a cheater in whom they had believed. In 2013, neither Barry Bonds nor Roger Clemens made the Baseball Hall of Fame, even with their clearly superior records, because they used steroids. This was despite the fact that, as a *New York Times* editorial put it, the Hall of Fame is hardly a Hall of Virtue, filled as it is with "lowlifes, boozers and bigots." Steroid use is apparently a different level of sin: It is cheating.

In another area, however, the American Society for Plastic Surgeons reported that in 2011 Americans spent $11.4 billion on cosmetic surgery and underwent 13.8 million procedures (figures exclude reconstructive surgery).

No allegations of cheating in that arena — or, apparently, even slowing down.

In yet a different domain, campaigners are increasingly concerned by the possibility of enhanced military "superwarriors," especially as technologists strive to separate the soldier from immediate conflict areas — as, for example, unmanned aircraft systems (commonly called drones) do now. Meanwhile, autonomous robots and human/robot hybrids connected by powerful computer-brain interfaces might conceivably be deployed in the future. Such developments raise cultural adjustment issues within military institutions, and larger questions of where the "human" begins and ends when we're dealing with cyborgs and integrated techno-human systems. In addition, however, they raise questions of "cheating," as discussions in some recent workshops and war games illustrated. The argument is that real warriors don't hide behind remotely controlled machines; it is only fair that soldiers be killed by other soldiers. And many people are indeed frightened by the idea of creating "superwarriors" who, through drugs, genetic engineering, and cyborg technologies, are more weapon system than soldier.

We are deeply conflicted when it comes to human enhancement technologies. It is unclear, for example, precisely whom Armstrong was cheating. Enhancing has been pervasive in cycling for many years, and when he was stripped of his Tour de France titles, they were not awarded to anyone else because . . . well, everyone else was also under "a cloud of suspicion," as the Union Cycliste Internationale put it. So he was not cheating his competitors, or at least not completely. And if just breaking rules — which he, and apparently some of his peers, were doing — is cause for substantial retribution, traffic speeders across the country, and those of you who just "borrowed" that pen from work, are in deep trouble.

Heathcliff O'Malley/Rex Features/Associated Press

DARPA/U.S. Department of Defense

Probably few people would have objections to these exoskeletons to help disabled people to walk and function fully, but what are the ethical lines that could be drawn for their use in other areas, such as in warfare or sports competitions, or even in their use in jobs that require physical force?

5 Surgical enhancement of various body parts, on the other hand, does not appear to be regarded as cheating. False allure is apparently caveat emptor. (And are you really going to ban cosmetics?)

Questions of the impact of enhancement technologies on the psychology of conflict, especially in counterinsurgency environments, are complex. But arguments that it's cheating to use technology to distance soldiers from potential harm are weak. War has rules, but it is not a sport, and the idea that an individual should be exposed to maiming or death out of some misplaced demand for "fairness," as if war were a soccer game, is difficult to defend.

That doesn't mean we can't draw some conclusions from this confusion. First, "cheating" does not seem to be an issue of enhancement generally. People seem fine with personal enhancement, especially where the practice is long-standing and they have had time to adapt to it. Vaccines, for example, are an obvious human enhancement — I specifically design a new technology to be embedded in your body with the direct result that your immune system is artificially enhanced in such a way as to provide you with better health and a longer life. Yet few challenge vaccination on enhancement grounds. Surgical interventions to correct failing wetware systems (joint replacement surgery, for example), and to enhance wetware systems perceived to be inadequate (like with breast enhancement technology), appear to be generally acceptable.

People get queasy, however, when human enhancement shifts from the quotidian to the highly symbolic. Major professional sports, for example, have long been dominated by commercial ethics, money, and entertainment dollars, and few indeed are the athletic stars who cannot be lured elsewhere by money. Professional teams and sports heroes, however, are not seen as simply part of the commercial entertainment enterprise. Rather, in an increasingly complex and unstable age, sports events and stars become not just symbols of city and home but a part of personal identity. Look at the visceral outrage that Clevelanders expressed when a local star, LeBron James, left for Miami rather than staying in Cleveland. That's not about contract or business; that's something going on at a far deeper level. More poignantly, it is remarkable how the healing of Boston after the recent bombing is entwining the Boston Red Sox, the Celtics, and the Bruins.

Moreover, sports are still iconic for purity, for the simplicity of an idyllic earlier America (which even a fleeting brush with history tells us is illusory). Look, for example, at the frequency with which the myth of the "student-athlete" still pops up in big college sports, and how often that term gets used by announcers for huge entertainment conglomerates that provide the audience of millions that fuels the modern sports machine. Sports, in other words, are often a psychological path back to a mythic Golden Age that becomes ever more appealing during a period of confusion and rapid social change. Messing with that myth through enhancements, no matter what the reason, is simply not done. You may not be cheating your competitors, but you are cheating archetypal myth. And you will lose.

10 Military human enhancements seem to occupy a middle ground. There is unquestionably some concern about what human enhancements in this domain might come to, especially if one moves beyond temporary enhancements like pharmaceuticals to more permanent enhancements, such as genetic engineering. The concerns here go beyond the operational. If enhanced humans leave the military and return to civilian life, for instance, what will happen? The differences may be subtle — genetic engineering enabling one to see in the dark, or providing maximum muscle development and efficiency, or augmented cognitive and neural performance, for example. Or they may be less so — one might have a set of personal

technologies that are accessed by onboard computer-brain interfaces, for example. It's only a hypothetical, but it is a worrisome one. Would such veterans get an unfair advantage in the workplace, or would they be discriminated against — or would they discriminate? Moreover, the obvious benefits of technologies that help protect soldiers make the primal responses that sports seem to generate less feasible. Various types of enhancements, from vaccines not approved by the FDA to cognitive boosters for various missions, are already used by the U.S. military, and while there has been debate, there hasn't been the emotive responses seen in sports.

What does all this mean? It means that social responses to human enhancement are more nuanced and complex than is usually recognized. More specifically, it means that the same enhancement will generate different responses depending on the domain in which it is introduced. If one wants to promote an enhancement, making it available and familiar to the public might be an excellent strategy. A military use that doesn't trigger sci-fi fantasies — "OMG! A killer robot!" — is a secondary path. Don't even think about sports. And similarly, if one is an activist and wants to stop a technology, make it symbolic if you can. So, for example, using the loaded term killer robot is an excellent start to a campaign against a technology that might otherwise be desirable because it could save soldiers' lives.

From a social perspective, however, perhaps the most important observation is that to the extent an enhancement technology has symbolic dimensions, it will be very difficult to evaluate rationally and objectively. The risk is that various enhancement technologies are regulated or rejected not based on a realistic assessment of their costs and benefits, but because of how they were introduced, in sports or in doctors' offices. The challenge, then, is not "cheating" but the far more difficult challenge of developing the ability to interact ethically, rationally, and responsibly with the world of enhancement technologies that is already here.

Understanding and Interpreting

1 What can you conclude about the author's opinion of Lance Armstrong's actions? To what extent does Allenby seem to think Armstrong cheated? Explain your answer using evidence from the article.

2 Explain what Allenby means when he says "We are deeply conflicted when it comes to human enhancement technologies" (par. 4).

3 Create a line graph to illustrate how Allenby identifies the general public's acceptance of the various human enhancements he describes in this piece. Plot your graph on a scale from "Fully accepted" to "Unacceptable."

4 According to Allenby, why do some people react so emotionally when they hear about cheating in sports, as opposed to other human enhancements, such as cosmetic surgery?

5 What are the pros and cons of the "superwarrior" that Allenby describes (par. 3)?

6 Reread the last paragraph and summarize Allenby's conclusion about what is most important for the general public to understand about human-enhancement technologies.

Analyzing Language, Style, and Structure

1 Even though Allenby begins by asking if readers had an emotional reaction to the news of Lance Armstrong's use of performance-enhancing drugs, most of his argument relies on his use of logos. Review the article carefully and explain how he uses rhetorical appeals to build his argument.

2 Allenby uses a term in this piece—"superwarriors"—to describe soldiers who use human-enhancement technologies (par. 3). How does his use of this term reflect his tone toward the issue of "cheating"?

3 Allenby utilizes a very complex organizational structure in this piece. Notice how often he juxtaposes sports, the military, and other areas of human enhancement. Identify one significant place where he puts two topics near each other and explain how this juxtaposition helps to support his argument or to illustrate a point he is trying to make.

Connecting, Arguing, and Extending

1 According to Allenby, Lance Armstrong "was not cheating his competitors" and was "just breaking rules" (par. 4). Based on what you know about Armstrong, why do you agree or disagree with this assertion?

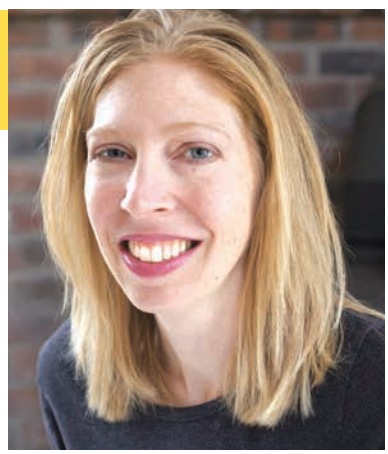
2 Allenby is fairly broad in his initial definition of "human enhancement," including socially accepted changes, such as plastic surgery, vaccines, and joint replacements, but there are many other types of enhancements that he does not mention. Adderall, for instance, is a drug that is often prescribed to people diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) but is also used by some students as a study aid. In a March 2013 opinion piece in the *New York Times*, Roger Cohen states, "Adderall has become to college what steroids are to baseball: an illicit performance enhancer for a fiercely competitive environment." Conduct brief research on Adderall and write an argument about whether it should be banned for students taking tests like the SAT, ACT, or other high-stakes assessments, the scores for which are compared to those of other students for college entrance. Use evidence from your research to support your position and explain whether Allenby would agree or disagree.

3 When discussing human enhancements in the military, Allenby seems to suggest that military leaders need to think carefully about the language they use when naming their technologies, avoiding terms such as "killer robot." Think about some current technologies that have particularly effective names. What makes those names so effective? Then, consider how some technologies could be either enhanced or hindered by having a different name. Propose new names for these products and explain the effect of the new name. You might go so far as creating a whole new brand, including a logo, packaging, an advertisement, etc.

Cheating Is Good for You

Mia Consalvo

A professor of game studies and design at Concordia University in Montreal, Mia Consalvo (b. 1969) is the author of *Cheating: Gaining Advantage in Videogames* (2007), which is the result of her research into how and why people cheat while playing video games. In this article, published on the Forbes.com website in 2006, Consalvo summarizes some of her findings and questions whether cheating is *always* a bad thing.



Courtesy Mia Consalvo

Most of the time, we think of cheating as despicable. Cheating is what lazy people do. It's the easy way out. Calling someone a cheater is rarely a compliment, and being cheated is never a good thing.

At least, in everyday life it isn't — outside of the occasional "cheat day" on a diet. But what about in the world of videogames? After spending the last five years talking with game players, game developers, security experts and others, I've learned a few counterintuitive things about cheating.

First, everybody cheats. Some may justify it, others proudly proclaim it, and others will deny their cheating vigorously, but it's a common activity. Players use walkthroughs, cheat codes, social engineering techniques (basically being crafty and tricking others), hacks and other unauthorized software. Cheats are popular, big business and not going away anytime soon. Individual gamers set boundaries for what they will or won't do, and there are several general reasons why people cheat. But either way, can the activity be good for you?

When I first started examining the practice of cheating, I took it as a given that most people viewed it as a negative activity. Cheating implies that you aren't a good enough player to finish a game on your own, or that you want an unfair — and unearned — advantage over other players. Yet in researching why people cheat and how they cheat, I've found that, much of the time, cheating actually implies a player is actively engaged in a game and wants to do well, even when the game fails *them*.

There are four major reasons why players cheat in a game: they're stuck, they want to play God, they are bored with the game, or they want to be a jerk. The overwhelming reason most players cheat is because they get stuck. Either the game is poorly designed, too hard, or the players are so inexperienced that they can't advance. A boss monster can't be beaten, or a puzzle solved, or the right direction found. In such situations, players face a choice: They either cheat or stop playing altogether.

The next most common reason is that we all like to play God sometimes. We want all the weapons or all the goodies, and we want them now. We don't want to wade through 20 levels to get to the one we like best — we want to beam directly there. We don't want to drive around in a boring car — we want to "unlock" the invincible bicycle instead. In those situations, cheating is about extending the play experience for ourselves. No one is harmed in the process.

Third, we can get bored with games. But as with an annoying novel, we still want the option of flipping to the last page to see how things turn out. In a game, we may find the fighting tedious, or the storyline dreary, or the never-ending grind to reach higher levels in World of Warcraft just too much trouble, and so we use some sort of cheat to jump ahead in the game's timeline, maybe all the way to the conclusion.

And finally, some people just can't resist cheating others. We want to overwhelm others, not just defeat them. We'll use "aimbots" (programs that automatically aim and shoot for us) or "wall hacks" (programs that allow you to see and even walk through walls) to gain every advantage in an online shooting game. Or we'll intercept the data stream in an online poker game to find out what cards our opponent is actually holding.

But even if everyone does it, why is cheating actually good for us?

First, players get stuck all the time. It doesn't matter if you are a master at real-time strategy games — if it's your first action-adventure game, you might be really bad at it. Likewise, maybe the game developer rushed the game out the door with less than perfect directions or a less than perfect design. In those situations, cheating

lets the player keep playing the game they spent good money on. It can mean the difference between completing a game and abandoning it mid-stream.

Imagine reading a book and getting to a difficult passage in chapter three. And then imagine the book won't let you skip to chapter four until you have signified you understand that passage. This is how many video games are designed.

Now imagine instead that players can consult walkthroughs (in essence, detailed, step-by-step directions to winning a game) on an "as-needed" basis to help them through the troublesome spots, or receive "hints" that help them figure things out on their own. Players who have completed the game create these walk-throughs for later players. In short, players are teaching one another and learning from each other, and getting only the information they need to keep going. Everyone is taking an active part in playing and learning how to play. This is a good thing for everyone involved.

Next, players often use cheat codes, which unlock special items or powers, to get the most value from a game. This suggests that players enjoy the game so much that when they reach the end, they want to play it more. That means more opportunities for interaction with the game. Cheat codes can be hidden in a game for players to find and then share with others. Or, codes can be awarded to excellent players, or given to newer, more tentative players to encourage them to keep playing. Cheat codes can keep the experience enjoyable in different ways for different players.

What about when players get bored? Game designers don't usually want them skipping to the end of a game. Yet does the game need to have a linear progression? Could players choose where in the game to go next, or the elements they want to tackle? Are there different ways to succeed — through battle, through puzzle solving, through dialog? Different players have different skill sets, so giving everyone an equal shot at doing well is preferable. As is allowing players to more quickly get to the sections they find rewarding.

15 But what about the jerks? Everyone wants a perfect opponent like Lisa Simpson, but more often we end up playing with her brother Bart. In EVE Online, for instance, one player, Nightfreeze, allegedly cheated his in-game friends and rivals out of hundreds of millions of in-game "credits" using nothing but fake accounts, a public library's telephone, some help from friends, and his wits.

In such situations, the value is found not in the cheating itself, but in our reaction to it.

There are a couple of things that can be done to either stop this sort of cheating or make it a positive aspect of play. Users themselves often encourage a culture of non-cheating, making cheating not cool. Most commonly, player communities can take an active role in deciding what happens when people are discovered cheating. Psychologists have found that when playing games, if players aren't allowed to punish others they suspect of cheating, the game community falls apart. People will even pay money out of their own pocket to punish cheaters. So figuring out ways to keep the larger community involved in dealing with cheaters can keep the group engaged in ways that "regular" game play might never allow for.

As counterintuitive as it may seem, cheating can sometimes be good for you. It can keep you active and involved in a game, reward game play and allow expert players to teach others. It can indicate to developers when games are too hard or flawed, and it can even help a community form. We will never get rid of cheating, but at least in games, we can make it a positive thing, even a way to teach and learn.

Understanding and Interpreting

1 According to the article, what benefits can be gained by cheating in video games?

2 Reread the analogy that Consalvo uses to compare cheating to reading in paragraph 11. How effective is this analogy in supporting her claim that cheating can be good?

3 Consalvo identifies four main reasons that people cheat in video games. Which ones are also applicable to cheating in the real world? Which ones are not? Explain your response with examples from the article.

4 An effective argument should always address the opposition, those who think differently than the author. To what extent has Consalvo successfully raised and refuted the opposition's main arguments? Support your conclusion by pointing to what's included in her piece as well as to what's missing.

Analyzing Language, Style, and Structure

1 Having read the short biography of Consalvo that preceded this piece, you likely understand that she has an extensive background in video games. Identify word choices in this piece that reveal her knowledge of the gaming industry.

2 Who is Consalvo's intended audience? To support your conclusion, examine Consalvo's specific word choices and the information she provides.

3 This article employs a familiar organizational structure: an introduction with a thesis, body paragraphs with transitions, and a conclusion that summarizes the main points. Identify each of these components and explain why this fixed structure is effective—or not—in communicating Consalvo's ideas.

Connecting, Arguing, and Extending

1 When discussing the "jerks" who cheat in video games just for the sake of hurting others, Consalvo writes, "In such situations, the value is found not in the cheating itself, but in our reaction to it" (par. 16). What does she mean by this, and how have you reacted to an experience of cheating in your own life?

2 In this article, Consalvo describes why players might choose to use cheat codes. Are cheat codes ethical? Does your response change if you are playing a multiplayer game rather than a single-person game?

3 In 2012, the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Television in South Korea took an unusual step in proposing a ban on "farming" in video games, a practice in which someone spends hours in an online game gathering virtual items and then sells them to other people who did not "earn" them within the game. The punishments can include both fines and jail time. Is "farming" cheating? Should it be banned? Is it unethical? Why or why not?

4 Why might it be OK to cheat in video games rather than cheat in games or sports played in real life? Is there an ethical difference between cheating in video games and in reality? If so, why? If not, why not? Refer to your own experiences as well as the article to support your response.

from The Cheating Culture: Why More Americans Are Doing Wrong to Get Ahead

David Callahan

Courtesy David Callahan

David Callahan (b. 1965) is a cofounder of the liberal-leaning think tank Demos and the author of several books about economic and social policy issues, including *Fortunes of Change: The Rise of the Liberal Rich and the Remaking of America* (2010). In *The Cheating Culture: Why More Americans Are Doing Wrong to Get Ahead* (2004), Callahan explores the various ways that he says Americans regularly cheat: in sports, on taxes, at work, and in school. This excerpt is from near the beginning of his book, in which he examines the rationalizations people use for their cheating.

KEY CONTEXT At the beginning of this excerpt, Callahan refers to what he calls "the Winning Class," which he describes as those people in society who are successful economically, but who utilize unethical means to get there. Later in the excerpt Callahan refers to the "social contract," which is a political theory that people in a society willingly submit some of their individual freedoms to a government they perceive as legitimate in return for basic protections and services. One example of a social contract is that when people pay taxes, they have a reasonable expectation that public schools will provide education for their children.

For those who are part of the Winning Class, or trying to be, there are plenty of reasons to cheat. The rewards are bigger and the rules are toothless. Yet many Americans with more modest ambitions and more humble means are also cheating.

Take the mild-mannered bookkeeper as an example. He is, by all appearances, an honorable man. He neither drinks nor smokes, and is quiet and dependable in the way of many bookkeepers. He rarely misses a day of work or tarries on his lunch break. When United Way comes around, he always contributes. He and his wife lead an orderly life with their two polite children and spend Sunday mornings at church.

The bookkeeper works hard during the early years of his job and finally gets up the gumption to ask for a raise of $100 a month. He is crushed when the request is denied. But the bookkeeper seems to get over his disappointment and soldiers on. He still arrives punctually every day. He never calls in sick when, in truth, he is well.

After twenty years, the bookkeeper finally retires. The company throws a small farewell party for him and gives him a watch. He and his wife pack up for Florida to start their golden years. A new bookkeeper takes his place. Poring over the financial records, this new bookkeeper finds that something is wrong. Things aren't adding up. He flags his concern to the company. No, no, he's told, the old bookkeeper would never get into any fishy business. He was a rock of reliability, the soul of integrity.

5 And yet, when the new bookkeeper completes his investigation, the facts are incontrovertible. The old bookkeeper, it is clear,

engaged in a systematic pattern of embezzlement. The pattern is oddly consistent. Year after year, the amount of money stolen is never greater and never smaller, nor is it particularly large. It is $100 a month.

The thieving bookkeeper exists in an apocryphal story passed down over many years among fraud examiners who probe workplace theft. The story is told to illustrate a point these investigators know all too well: that people are prone to invent their own morality when the rules don't seem fair to them. This tendency explains a lot of cheating in America today.

There are roughly four reasons why people obey rules. First, we may toe the line because the risks of breaking the rules outweigh the benefits. Second, we might be sensitive to social norms, or peer pressure — we follow the rules because we don't want to be treated as a pariah. Third, we may obey rules because they agree with our personal morality. And fourth, we may obey rules because they have legitimacy in our eyes — because we feel that the authority making and enforcing the laws is just and ultimately working in our long-term interests.

When people don't obey the rules, you'll often find several things going on at once. The Winning Class cheats so much because there's more to be gained nowadays and there are fewer penalties, either legally or socially. Students often cheat for the same reasons: the stakes of academic competition are higher and the normalization of cheating means that there's little peer pressure to be honest.

Motives like these are not hard to understand. Cases like the bookkeeper are more complex. A simple risk/benefit analysis doesn't explain everything, since the bookkeeper was running a serious risk for only a modest sum of money and could easily have taken more. Nor do social norms offer much insight, since the bookkeeper's thefts were not condoned by his peers. Instead, the bookkeeper operated by his own moral code to take from the company what he felt it owed him.

10 A lot of Americans have been inventing their own morality lately. Tens of millions of ordinary middle-class Americans routinely commit serious crimes ranging from tax evasion (a felony), to auto insurance fraud (also a felony), to cable television theft (yes, a felony as well in some states), to Internet piracy of music and software (more felonies). Most of these types of crimes are committed for small potatoes: to receive $700 more on a tax refund, to save $400 a year on an insurance premium, to get $40 a month worth of premium cable or an $18 CD for nothing. These crimes are being perpetrated by people who see themselves as law-abiding citizens, people who don't imagine themselves above the law and who don't have big-shot lawyers on call.

Day-to-day criminality among ordinary Americans is nothing new. "Unlawful behavior, far from being an abnormal social or psychological manifestation, is, in truth, a very common phenomenon," commented the authors of a 1947 article about "law-abiding law-breakers."[1] However, evidence indicates that this familiar problem has worsened in recent years — even as conventional street crime has fallen dramatically.

What is going on here?

Much of the answer, I suspect, lies in our broken social contract. An orderly democratic society depends on having a social contract in place that delineates people's rights and responsibilities. It also depends on people having faith that the social contract applies fairly across the board. The social contract will break down when those who play by the rules feel mistreated, and those who break the rules get rewarded — which has been happening constantly in recent years.

John Q. Public need not to be versed in John Locke to feel that he has a legitimate cause for cynicism. He knows that white-collar criminals walk free, that fat-cat tax cheats get off the hook, that corporate money buys political favors, and

that Ivy League schools are filled with kids whose rich parents greased the system to get them in. He also knows that when there's a war, it's working-class kids who fight it; when there's a tax cut, he probably won't get more than peanuts; and when there are layoffs, it's those lower down the totem poll who'll get the ax.

15 Polls confirm that many Americans see "the system" as rigged against them. When asked who runs the country, many say corporations and special interests. When asked who benefits from the tax system, most say the rich. When asked who is underpaid in our society, most agree that lots of people are underpaid: nurses, policemen, schoolteachers, factory workers, restaurant workers, secretaries. And when people are asked whether it is possible to get ahead just by working hard and playing by the rules, many say that it is not.[2] [. . .]

The psychological fallout from people's economic struggles has been significant. People worry intensely about their finances, especially the heavy debt burdens that they often carry.[3] Many people are also less happy. "Happiness and satisfaction with life are, in many ways, the ultimate bottom line, a test of the good society," observes scholar Michael Hout. Yet in the past quarter century, Hout's work shows, gains in happiness have not been shared evenly in a U.S. society more divided by income: "the affluent are getting slightly happier and the poor are getting sadder; the affluent are increasingly satisfied with their financial and work situation while the poor are increasingly dissatisfied with theirs."[4]

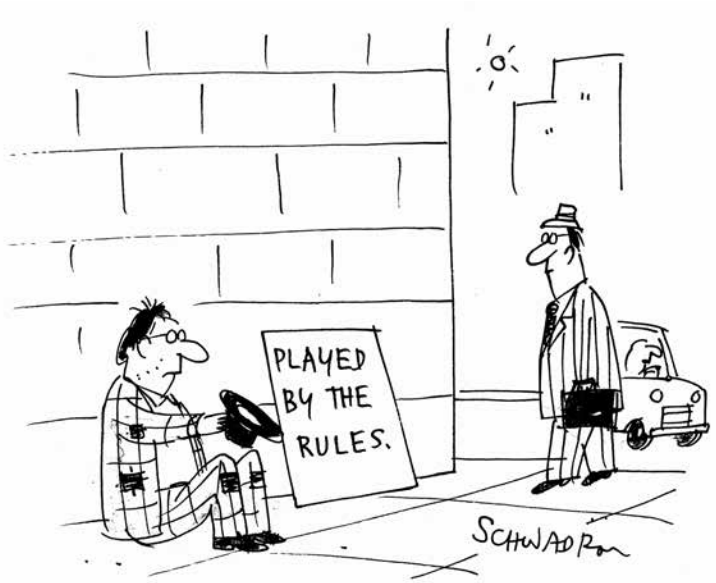
Such endemic unease might itself be a corrupting force in society. But economic struggle is all the more dangerous when mixed with high expectations of well-being — that is, the expectation that one that should be as happy as the shiny rich people on television and in magazines seem to be. Writing in the mid-twentieth century, the sociologist Robert Merton observed that Americans are taught that everyone can succeed if they work hard enough. America was "a society which places a high premium on economic affluence and social ascent for all its members." But Merton also pointed out that there is no "corresponding emphasis upon the legitimate avenues on which to march toward this goal." Americans worshipped financial success without being too concerned about how people got ahead. "The moral mandate to achieve success thus exerts pressures to succeed, by fair means if possible and by foul means if necessary." These pressures were especially poisonous, Merton said, in a nation where not everyone actually could succeed — where there were limits on the economic opportunities that were available.[5]

Merton could have made these points yesterday. The pressures on Americans to make a lot of money are extremely high — higher, maybe, than they've ever been before. To be sure, there are many legitimate opportunities to do well financially. Yet ultimately the opportunities are finite. America needs only so many skilled and well-paid professionals. In an economy where structural conditions allow only the top fifth or so of earners to really get ahead, the other four fifths of Americans are stuck in the bind that Robert Merton identified: they live in a society with insanely high material expectations but with limited ways to meet these expectations.

What to do in this conundrum? Whatever you can get away with.

20 And how do ordinary, moral people justify doing wrong to do well? Often, they point to the unfairness around them — to the structures that keep them struggling while others thrive, to the ways that bad guys easily climb to the top, to the cheating that goes on by the rich and powerful every day. "People in subordinate positions make moral judgments about existing social arrangements and assert their prerogatives to

Identify a sentence from the Callahan piece that would support the point being made by the artist in this cartoon.



Harley Schwadron/CartoonStock

personal entitlements and autonomy," writes Elliot Turiel, a leading authority on moral development. Turiel is fascinated with why people break rules, and much of his analysis centers on what he dryly calls "asymmetrical reciprocity implicit in differential distribution of power and powers" — in other words, feelings of injustice. Turiel observes that "in daily life people engage in covert acts of subterfuge and subversion aimed at circumventing norms and practices judged unfair, oppressive, or too restrictive of personal choices." These acts may place people on the wrong side of the law, or the established rules, Turiel says, but their true ethical implications are often a fuzzier question. "In my view, it would be inaccurate to attribute these types of acts of deception to failures of character or morality. Many who engage in these acts are people who generally consider themselves and are considered by others as responsible, trustworthy, upstanding members of our culture."[6]

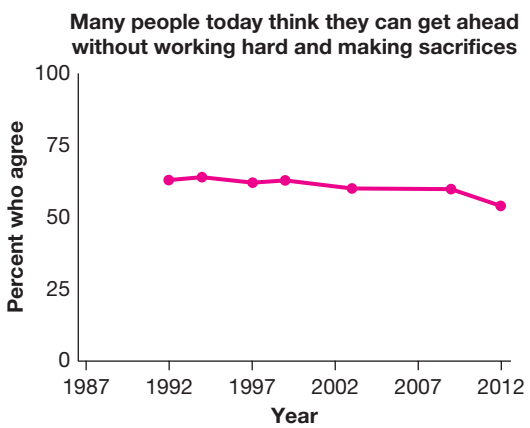
It is easy to cheat like crazy and yet maintain respect for yourself in a society with pervasive corruption. It's easy, for example, to justify cheating in a country like Brazil where oligarchical families have been abusing the little people for a couple of hundred years and are still doing it, or a country like Pakistan where government ministers and their pals in business live in luxury while millions rot in the slums of Karachi.

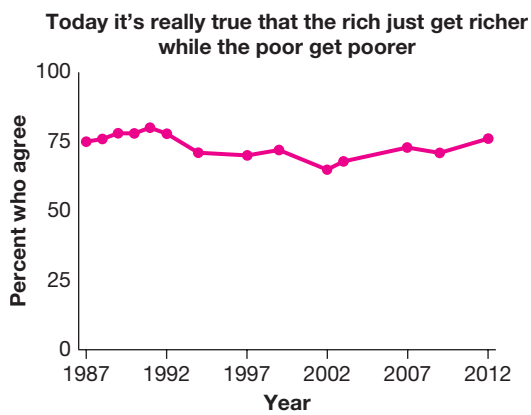
And more and more, similar rationalizations can work just fine in the United States.

The social theorist Max Weber was among the first scholars to explore how people's views of "legitimacy" shape their respect for rules. He argued the commonsense point that people are more likely to follow rules or laws that seem fair and are made by an authority that deserves its power. There was nothing actually path-breaking about this point when Weber made it a century ago. Numerous big thinkers going back to Plato had made similar arguments, and support for this idea cut across fields — from political science to anthropology to sociology to education. Yet if the idea seemed like common sense, what Weber and other scholars typically lacked was the empirical "proof." How can you really tell why people either obey the law or break it? How can you weigh legitimacy as a factor when there are so many other influences

seeing connections

State a claim that Callahan makes about a reason that Americans are willing to cheat and support that statement with a conclusion that you draw from one of these charts.





on people's behavior? I may speed for many reasons: because I'm late or I'm a thrill seeker or I think it's wrong for the federal government to impose speed limits and usurp local authority on this issue. Short of hearing me and lots of other speeders out and somehow verifying that we're telling the truth about our motives, who can say why people like me drive so fast?

Proof that views about legitimacy explain ethical decisions remains hard to come by. But the evidence has gotten a lot more compelling since Weber's day. In his 1990 book, *Why People Obey the Law*, Tom Tyler picked up the legitimacy baton and ran with it into new empirical terrain. Tyler marshaled data going back thirty five years in arguing that most people are inclined to obey the law, but that this reflex can easily be undermined if the law is widely seen as lacking legitimacy. He looked at studies of juvenile delinquents in England, college students in Kentucky, middle-class workers in Germany, and poor black men in Newark, among others. He also conducted his own large surveys of Chicago residents. Tyler's conclusion after all of this? Pretty much what Weber said a hundred years earlier.[7]

25 Yet if the link between respecting authority and following the rules has found more support in general, this is still complex terrain. Much of the time when people break rules you'll find a sticky wicket of conflicting evidence about their motives and no easy way to nail down what they were really thinking. Most people don't like to talk openly about cutting corners. Also, the root causes of why people break rules can be obscured when cheating becomes so routine that people no longer give it much thought.[8]

The candor of Jennifer Bennett (not her real name) sheds some light on what is going on in many American households — and, in particular, how cynicism and anger might cause a person who normally wouldn't even run a red light to commit a felony that is punishable by up to five years in prison.

Bennett should be one of the good guys in my story. She was raised in New Jersey by parents who taught her to play by the rules. She works in the arts in New York City but is obsessed with neither money nor status. She just wants to do her art and get by. She believes that government can make a difference in people's lives and, if anything, that taxes should probably be higher than they are.

Yet every year, come April 15, she submits a work of fiction to the IRS.

"Much of the money I earn is off the books — it's money earned in cash through private teaching or tutoring. I generally claim a portion of this money, but not all of it," Bennett says. "It's the money I earn to support my pursuit of a career in the arts. I put thousands of dollars a year into this career, pay my own insurance, and receive no benefits. I guess that's the way I justify writing off as much as I can and claiming as little as I can. I feel that most other first-world countries support their artists and the arts in a much stronger way than we do, and that the wealthy in this country are the ones with the real benefits."

30 Bennett has struggled financially for years, despite her Ivy League degree. Meeting the rent has often been an adventure, and she now lives 130 blocks north of Times Square, in a low-income neighborhood near the George Washington Bridge. "When I see people getting million-dollar bonuses for moving money around, who then walk in free to city museums because their companies are corporate sponsors, my jaw drops. Most artists I know can't afford to attend arts events on a regular basis. I figure the amount of money I earn is so tiny compared to what most people in this city are earning, and that if I had to pay thousands of dollars in taxes at the end of the year, on the relatively small amount I earn, I couldn't afford to continue doing what I'm doing."

Bennett has anguished about her tax cheating — for, like, three seconds — over the past five years. "I don't think it's the 'right' thing to do, but personally, I don't really care. I know that one wrong doesn't right another wrong, but until I see any sign of a real move to universal health-care coverage or the closing of loopholes for the rich, or increased benefits for those making their living in the arts, I don't feel particularly inclined to be honest. When I read about the IRS going after those in lower-income brackets, it makes my blood boil."

Notes

1 The article, by James Wallerstein and Clement J. Wylie, is cited in Robert Merton, *Social Structure and Social Theory* (New York: Free Press, 1957), 144.

2 Regarding people's views on whether their voice matters in politics, see data from the National Election Studies and science literature that documents and discusses political efficacy. See, for example, Sidney Verba, Henry E. Brady, and Kay L. Schlozman, *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995); and Steven J. Rosenstone and John M. Hansen, *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America* (Boston: Prentice Hall, 1993). On public perceptions of the excessive power of

corporations in American society, see for example, "Pew Values Update: American Social Beliefs, 1997," The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, 20 April 1998. On views about fairness of taxes, see National Public Radio/Kaiser Family Foundation/Kennedy School of Government, "National Survey of Americans' Views on Taxes," 2003. On the ability of hard work to get people ahead and for who's underpaid, see, for example, Everett Carll Ladd and Karlyn H. Bowman, *Attitudes Toward Economic Inequality* (Washington, D.C.: AEI Press, 1998), 56 and 20–21.

3 On anxiety, see Robert Putnam's analysis of DDB Needham Life Style Survey data, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000), 475. On job satisfaction, see Fligstein and Shin, "The Shareholder Value Society." Evidence of growing insecurity and anxiety is by no means ironclad and this remains a disputed point among scholars. See, for example, Kenneth Deavers, "Downsizing, Job Insecurity, and Wages: No Connection," Employment Policy Foundation, May 1998.

4 Michael Hout, "Money and Morale: What Growing Economic Inequality Is Doing to Americans' View of Themselves and Others," working paper, Survey Research Center, 3 January 2003.

5 Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (New York: The Free Press, 1957), 136–47, 169.

6 Elliot Turiel, *The Culture of Morality: Social Development, Context, and Conflict* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 261 and 266. For another analysis along somewhat similar lines, see James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990). Scott's book deals extensively with what he calls the "veiled cultural resistance of subordinate groups" and the "infrapolitics of the powerless."

7 Tom R. Tyler, *Why People Obey the Law* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).

8 The interplay between social norms, law, economics, societal values, and compliance with rules has been examined from a variety of angles. One critical — and obvious — observation is that social norms are the key to enforcing rules, since coercion, punishment, and deterrence can never stop everyone who wants to do wrong. Some scholars like Eric Posner argue that law actually plays only a small role in regulating people's behavior. For an overview of some of this work, see Amitai Etzioni, "Social Norms: Internalization, Persuasion, and History," *Law and Society Review* 34, no. 1 (2000): 157–78. See also Eric A. Posner, *Law and Social Norms* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002); and Michael Hechter and Karl-Dieter Opp, eds., *Social Norms* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2001).

Understanding and Interpreting

1 Several times in the piece, Callahan describes people "inventing their own morality" (for example, par. 10). What does he mean by this phrase?

2 Callahan claims that a lot of the cheating by ordinary, otherwise law-abiding citizens is due to "our broken social contract" (par. 13). Reread paragraphs 13–18, where he supports this claim. What evidence does he use and to what extent does he sufficiently support his claim? Do you detect any bias that might prevent him from seeing other possibilities? Explain.

3 In paragraphs 16 and 17, Callahan connects the idea of cheating with the desire for happiness. What is the conclusion that he expects the reader to draw about the "high expectations of well-being" from the evidence he provides? Evaluate his logical reasoning in this section.

4 To support his argument, Callahan cites Elliot Turiel, "a leading authority on moral development." Reread the following quotes from Turiel, summarize them, and explain how they relate to Callahan's central argument:

a. "[P]eople in subordinate positions make moral judgments about existing social arrangements and assert their prerogatives to personal entitlements and autonomy" (par. 20).

b. "asymmetrical reciprocity implicit in differential distribution of power and powers" (par. 20).

c. "[I]n daily life people engage in covert acts of subterfuge and subversion aimed at circumventing norms and practices judged unfair, oppressive, or too restrictive of personal choices" (par. 20).

5 Callahan claims that at least one reason why otherwise honest people cheat is the way they view the legitimacy of power. Summarize his views on legitimacy and explain how he uses evidence to support his position.

6 In paragraph 7, Callahan identifies four reasons why people obey rules. Apply these four reasons to the case of the artist Jennifer Bennett, who regularly cheats on her taxes (pars. 26–31). Which ones would Bennett likely agree or disagree with? Why?

Analyzing Language, Style, and Structure

1 What role does the fictional story of the bookkeeper play in setting up Callahan's argument? In other words, why begin this section with the story?

2 Trace the development of Callahan's argument from the beginning to the point where he asks: "And how do ordinary, moral people justify doing wrong to do well?" (par. 20). What components does Callahan have to include in his argument before he can ask this question?

3 It is no secret that Callahan is politically liberal and often sees middle- and working-class people as victims of the rich. Look back through the article and identify places where he chooses words with negative connotations to describe the wealthy. Does this word choice seem to be effective in making his argument, or is it detrimental? Why?

4 Reread the paragraph that concludes with note 8. The last sentence makes a claim about people's behavior that appears to be unsubstantiated. Read note 8 and explain how Callahan uses the sources to support his claim. Choose one other annotation from the article and explain how the use of evidence affects Callahan's ethos.

5 Until paragraph 21, Callahan focuses on cheating in the United States, at which point he expands his argument to include Brazil and Pakistan. What is the purpose of this switch? How does it assist his argument?

6 While much of Callahan's argument is rooted in logos, he does at times employ appeals to pathos. Identify these places and evaluate their effectiveness in supporting his claim.

Connecting, Arguing, and Extending

1 In this selection from *The Cheating Culture*, Callahan mostly focuses on identifying the causes of cheating. Later on in the book, he offers some solutions, which include a need to teach the values he thinks are important: "respect, responsibility, fairness, honesty, justice." Where and how are these values best taught? Home, school, religious institutions, other organizations? Why?

2 In an article from the *Springfield State Journal-Register* in 2008, "A recent survey conducted by the University of Hertfordshire showed that the average teen has 800 illegally obtained songs on his or her MP3 or other music-playing device. This same survey showed that 50 percent of people between 14 and 24 would share all of their music on their computers." Write an argumentative piece in which you take a position on the issue of illegal downloading of music and/or movies. Is this cheating? Why or why not? Be sure to refer to Callahan as evidence to support your claims or as part of your counterclaims.

3 How does the phrase "Everybody does it" apply to cheating in your own life and experiences? Is it difficult to be the one who does not, or is the idea itself that "everybody does it" overblown by adults and the media? What would Callahan's response likely be?

The Ethics of Photo Manipulation

The use of photography became widespread by the mid-1800s, and at almost the same time, photographers realized that their images could be manipulated to influence their viewers, truth, and even history.

Original

Altered

This portrait, arguably the most famous image of President Abraham Lincoln, was created by putting Lincoln's head onto the body of another politician, John C. Calhoun. After Lincoln's death, many believed that there were not any truly heroic, presidential-looking, portraits of him, so this composite was created.

This photo manipulation was done to honor a beloved president, but is it an ethical use of photo manipulation? Why or why not?

Glenn Hill/SSPL/Getty Images

This famous example of photo manipulation dates from 1917. Two young girls in Cottingley, England, took a series of photographs that purported to capture fairies near their house. They later explained that they were just "photographs of figments of our imagination."

What do you think was the motivation behind creating these images, and do you believe that it was ethically wrong or just harmless fun?

Original

Altered

The photo above demonstrates one dark side of photo manipulation: changing history. In the Soviet Union under Joseph Stalin, the Communist Party regularly manipulated historical photographs, removing people who had fallen out of favor with the dictator. One of the most famous examples is the pair here. In the photograph on the left, Leon Trotsky can be seen standing beside his close friend Vladimir Lenin, the first leader of the Soviet Union. Lenin's successor, Stalin, saw Trotsky as a threat and had him removed from the photograph.

Clearly this alteration of history is unethical, but can you articulate precisely why?

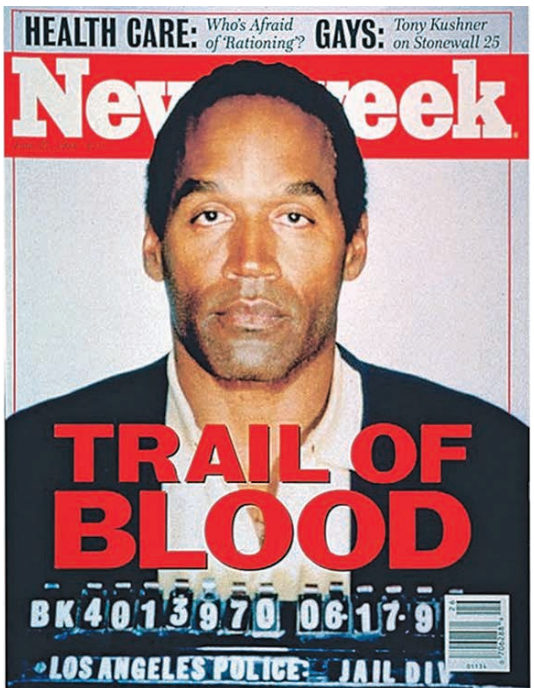
Original

Altered

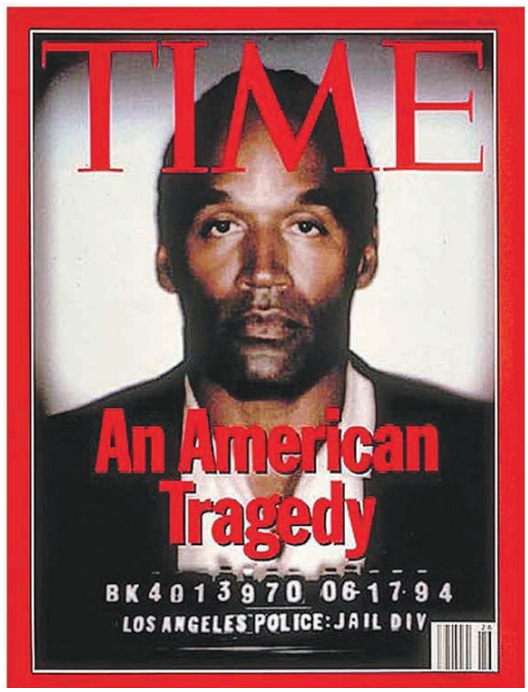
Here is a much more borderline case. The original picture here was taken by John Filo at Kent State University on May 4, 1970, when National Guard soldiers fired into the crowd during a student protest, killing four people. It won Filo the Pulitzer Prize for Photography. Later, someone at *Time* magazine altered the photo to remove the unsightly post from the fence behind the woman's head. The altered image ran for years in magazines and newspapers without indication that the picture had been altered.

What was changed in terms of the photo's message by removing the post, if anything? Was this alteration ethical? Explain.

Original



Altered



In 1994, retired professional football star O. J. Simpson was arrested for the murder of his wife and her friend. From the beginning, the case touched on many elements of race because Simpson is black and his wife was white. The covers of both newsmagazines used the same mug shot from the day of his arrest, but the one on the right controversially altered the image, making Simpson's skin appear darker.

Why do you think the image on the right caused so much controversy? To what extent were the editors of *Time* magazine acting unethically in presenting the image in the manner they did?

This uncredited photograph, with a time stamp of "09 11 01," was reportedly found in a digital camera amid the rubble of the World Trade Center after the 9/11 attacks in New York City in 2001. It was shared and viewed extensively online before being discredited as a hoax.

What was the possible intent behind this altered photograph? How is the audience cheated through this manipulation? How do the ethics of this photo manipulation compare with the ethics of the fairy hoax on p. 110?

ok? or page

Original

Altered

The original photograph was taken in 2002 when President George W. Bush was visiting George Sanchez Charter School in Houston. An unknown person altered the second picture, flipping the book in Bush's hands, and it was widely distributed online.

What statement might the unknown manipulator have been trying to make about President Bush? Why do you think this photograph was so widely distributed prior to its being discredited? How does this image relate to the photo manipulation practiced in the Soviet Union (described on p. 111)?

ok? or page

Original

Altered

In July 2008, Iran announced it had successfully test-fired missiles. The image released by the Iranians, on the right, showed the launch of four missiles and was reprinted by many news organizations. It was later revealed to be Photoshopped; as you can see here, the original image shows only three missiles.

What are the political implications of this kind of photo manipulation? How does this manipulation reveal the difficulty of trusting photography?

Original

Altered

In 2007, country singer Faith Hill posed for *Redbook*, an American women's magazine. The original picture is on the left, and the one on the right was enhanced for the cover.

Photo manipulation of model's bodies, especially of women, is a typical practice for magazines and catalogs. Who is cheated in this kind of manipulation, and what effect, if any, do these kinds of images have on the viewers?

Photographer Paul Hansen took this picture, *Gaza Burial*, which won the 2012 World Press Photo of the Year award. He was subsequently accused of photo manipulation and some thought that he should have been stripped of his award.

According to journalist Sebastian Anthony:

> Basically, as far as we can surmise, Hansen took a series of photos—and then later, realizing that his most dramatically situated photo was too dark and shadowy, decided to splice a bunch of images together and apply a liberal amount of dodging (brightening) to the shadowy regions. For what it's worth, Hansen claims that the light in the alley was natural—and to be fair, sometimes magical lighting does occur. I think most of you will agree, though, that the photo simply feels fake—there's just something about the lighting that sets off a warning alarm in your brain.

Is enhancing an image to make a bigger impact ethical?

Connecting, Arguing, and Extending

1 Take a picture of someone you know with a digital camera or your cell phone and then use software (Photoshop or another program) to manipulate the image in some significant way. Show the person the manipulated image and ask him or her if it would be ethical for you to post this new picture online. What objections does the person have, if any?

2 Paul Hansen admits that he manipulated his photograph, *Gaza Burial*, but the question is did he manipulate it so much that it should no longer qualify as "journalism"? Write an argument in the form of a letter to the directors of World Press Photo about why Hansen should be able to keep his award or not based upon the level of manipulation and who might be cheated in the process.

3 Choose one of the altered photographs above and write an argument about why it ought to be considered cheating. Who exactly is cheated and who benefits through the manipulation?

4 In the past few years, a new professional field called "digital forensics" has emerged to authenticate photographs and film footage. Why do you think such a service has become necessary?

5 There is an expression that a picture is worth a thousand words. Based on your examination of these photographs, is this statement true or not? Why?

ENTERING THE CONVERSATION
THE CHEATING CULTURE

Making Connections

1 Christopher Bergland in "Cheaters Never Win" (p. 90), Chuck Klosterman in "Why We Look the Other Way" (p. 84), and Brad Allenby in "Is Human Enhancement Cheating?" (p. 94) address cheating in sports. What are the similarities and differences in the authors' attitudes toward the role of cheating in sports?

2 How would David Callahan, author of *The Cheating Culture* (p. 102), likely respond to the case of Nayeem Ahsan, the teenager profiled in "Cheating Upwards" (p. 73)? To what extent would he condemn his actions and/or condemn the culture that taught or caused him to cheat? Write your answer in the form of a dialogue or a transcript of a conversation between Callahan and Ahsan.

3 Mia Consalvo (p. 98) identifies four reasons why people cheat in video games. Similarly, David Callahan gives reasons why people cheat in real life. Compare at least one of the reasons Consalvo presents to a real-life example Callahan presents. To what extent does the reason apply or not in the real world outside video games?

Synthesizing Sources

1 In recent years there have been a number of high-profile cases of cheating in sports, often through the use of performance-enhancing drugs (PEDs). If an athlete is an adult, is aware of the consequences of using PEDs, and knows that his or her competition is also using those drugs, why shouldn't he or she be allowed to use any PEDs he or she wants? If the spectators also know about the PEDs, who is being cheated? Support your position by referring to at least two of the texts in the Conversation.

2 Is cheating an inevitable part of human society? Is it impossible, or even desirable, to completely eliminate cheating? Use your own experiences and references to at least two texts in the Conversation to support your response.

3 Describe the extent of the problem with cheating that happens at your school, propose a solution to the problem, and explain how you would implement that solution. Refer to at least two of the texts from the Conversation to support your response.

4 Many of the texts in this Conversation try to explain why a particular action—using video game cheat codes, copying homework, taking PEDs, and so on—is either cheating or not cheating. Using the various scenarios presented in these texts—sports, school, video games, etc.—write a definition of cheating that covers as many of the situations as possible. Be sure to address the questions of who is cheating whom and for what purpose. Refer to at least two texts from the Conversation in your response.

5 There appear to be generational differences in what is considered to be cheating. One survey, for instance, claims that almost 90 percent of teenagers do not see anything wrong with practices that could be defined as music piracy or illegal downloading, while another shows that almost 50 percent of adults disagree with the idea that you should be able to download media from the Internet free of charge. Identify a practice that you believe could be considered cheating and conduct interviews or surveys to see if there is a generational difference in opinion. In your explanation, be sure to refer to at least two texts from the Conversation that support or counter your results.

ARGUMENT BY ANALOGY

What Is Argument by Analogy?

When Forrest Gump, the main character in the movie of the same title, quotes his mother's advice that has guided him through life's challenges, he is using an analogy—a comparison between two ideas, concepts, or situations on the basis of shared qualities. It's a gently funny line, likely to bring a smile by the way it compares something trivial and familiar (a box of chocolates) with something mysterious and profound (life). It's intended to be charming, but it is also a very simple argument, claiming that life is unpredictable, while also implying that life is sweet, even if it's not always what you hoped it would be.

> "Life is like a box of chocolates: you never know what you're gonna get."
>
> — Forrest Gump

When used as part of an argument, analogies can be very powerful tools, drawing on familiar ideas and experiences to tap into an audience's beliefs and emotions. But they can also be risky rhetorical moves, drawing connections that might be tenuous or, in some cases, even offensive.

The Benefits of Analogy

The primary benefit of drawing an analogy in an argument is that it appeals to an experience familiar to the audience. It makes a connection. The writers of *Forrest Gump* knew that pretty much everybody has bitten into a chocolate only to be disappointed by a filling that wasn't expected or hoped for. This connection can be used in a number of different ways: to emphasize shared values (ethos), to assert what we all know to be true (logos), or to tap into strong emotions based on personal experience (pathos).

This image has been removed from this sample at the request of the rights holder.

Take a look at the cartoon on the previous page by Tony Auth on the controversy about the name of the Cleveland Indians, a professional baseball team. He argues that the name is offensive by drawing an analogy to other similar names that reflect ethnic groups. So, if the Cleveland Indians is a perfectly acceptable name for a professional sports team, he claims through his cartoon, then why not the Cleveland Asians or Africans or Hispanics—all clearly offensive names. But he goes even further by drawing visual analogies: if Chief Wahoo, the symbol of the Cleveland Indians since the 1940s, is acceptable (though many do see him as racist), then wouldn't such stereotyped caricatures of other ethnicities also be appropriate? The artist casts doubt on the name and logo of the Cleveland Indians by drawing an analogy to other examples that are patently offensive. In light of arguments such as this, the Cleveland Indians abandoned the Chief Wahoo mascot and replaced it with a simple letter *C*.

ACTIVITY

In the following excerpt, political commentator Charles Krauthammer argues that the name of the Washington Redskins, a professional football team, should be changed because language "evolves" over time. How does the analogy he draws contribute to his argument?

> Fifty years ago the preferred, most respectful term for African Americans was Negro. The word appears 15 times in Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech. Negro replaced a long list of insulting words in common use during decades of public and legal discrimination.
>
> And then, for complicated historical reasons (having to do with the black power and "black is beautiful" movements), usage changed. The preferred term is now black or African American. With a rare few legacy exceptions, Negro carries an unmistakably patronizing and demeaning tone.
>
> If you were detailing the racial composition of Congress, you wouldn't say: "Well, to start with, there are 44 Negroes." If you'd been asleep for 50 years, you might. But upon being informed how the word had changed in nuance, you would stop using it and choose another.
>
> And here's the key point: You would stop not because of the language police. Not because you might incur a Bob Costas harangue. Not because the president would wag a finger. But simply because the word was tainted, freighted with negative connotations with which you would not want to be associated.
>
> Proof? You wouldn't even use the word in private, where being harassed for political incorrectness is not an issue.
>
> Similarly, regarding the further racial breakdown of Congress, you wouldn't say: "And by my count, there are two redskins." It's inconceivable, because no matter how the word was used 80 years ago, it carries invidious connotations today.

Another way of thinking about the power of analogy is that it can shed light on inconsistencies. For instance, in "Why We Look the Other Way" (p. 84), Chuck Klosterman draws an analogy between musicians' using drugs and athletes' using drugs to explore why we react very differently to the two. Specifically, he writes about the legendary musical group, the Beatles:

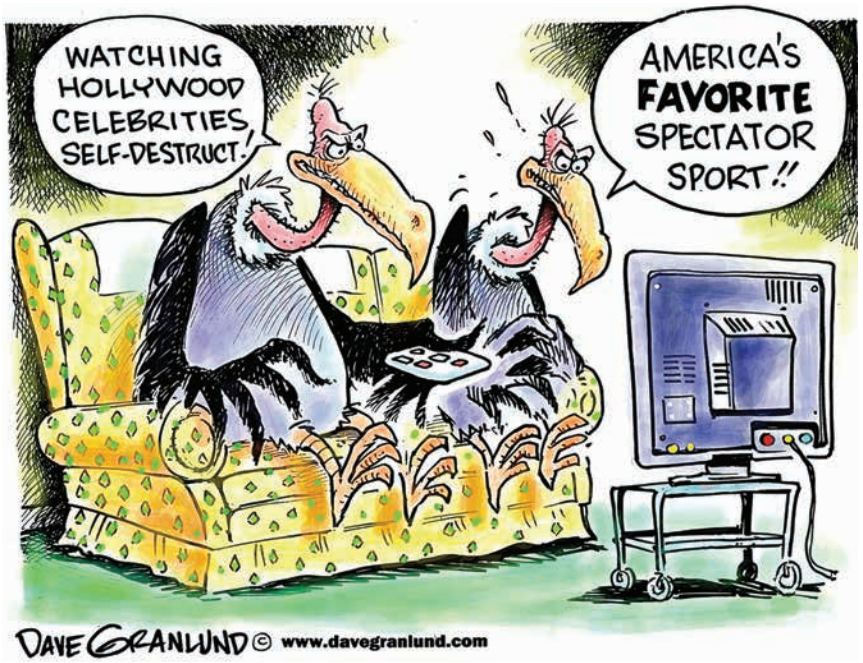
> It can be strongly argued that the most important date in the history of rock music was Aug. 28, 1964. This was the day Bob Dylan met the Beatles in New York City's Hotel Delmonico and got them high.
>
> Obviously, a lot of people might want to disagree with this assertion, but the artistic evidence is hard to ignore. The introduction of marijuana altered the trajectory of the Beatles' songwriting, reconstructed their consciousness and prompted them to make the most influential rock albums of all time. After the summer of 1964, the Beatles started taking serious drugs, and those drugs altered their musical performance. Though it may not have been their overt intent, the Beatles took performance-enhancing drugs. And this is germane to sports for one reason: Absolutely no one holds it against them. No one views *Rubber Soul* and *Revolver* as "less authentic" albums, despite the fact that they would not (and probably could not) have been made by people who weren't on drugs.

What does Klosterman gain from this analogy between the Beatles' use of "performance-enhancing drugs" and athletes' use of PEDs? For one, most of his readers are likely to be familiar with and admiring of the Beatles; he references album titles without explanation, so he must assume the audience knows them. In his lead-in to this section, Klosterman admits that "a lot of people might want to disagree" with his claim that "the most important date in the history of rock music" was when the Beatles were introduced to drugs; that acknowledgment softens his assertion. Then, he explicitly states the point of his analogy: no one devalues the music because the Beatles used drugs when they were creating it.

By using this analogy, Klosterman essentially poses a series of questions to his audience. First, is it wrong for musicians to use drugs to stimulate their creativity? He's banking on most people agreeing that it is not. Is the music less impressive or admirable because it was written while the musicians were under the influence of drugs? Again, Klosterman hopes his audience will agree that it is not. Given these two points, then, he asks us to think about why such acceptance of performance-enhancing drugs in one area (in this case, music) is different from acceptance in the field of professional sports where the financial stakes are high and career horizons short.

The Risks of Analogy

The problem with analogies is that no two things are ever *entirely* alike. By definition, an analogy is comparing apples to oranges, and that makes it vulnerable as an argument strategy. The stronger the comparison, the more similarities there are, but as soon as the differences begin to surface, the analogy weakens. When the differences are more pronounced than the similarities, you're in the territory of a *faulty analogy*, which is a logical fallacy.



Dave Granlund

For instance, think about this cartoon. For some, it probably hits the spot: those big ugly vultures, birds of prey, sitting on a couch watching a little television point up the wrong-headed nature of taking pleasure from watching celebrities on the skids. But think about the downside: Is it fair to compare followers of celebrity culture to vultures? Is watching celebrities self-destruct specifically a spectator sport, or do people tend to enjoy watching positive moments as much as the negative ones? And, considering that much of his audience likely keeps up with celebrity gossip, isn't the artist running the risk of alienating people by likening them to vultures?

These questions do not establish definitively that the analogy is "wrong"—but they point to the vulnerability of analogy as a rhetorical move in argument. The punch of the analogy in this case may be outweighed by the potential weakness inherent in drawing a comparison between birds of prey and people's fascination with celebrities gone wrong. The best advice is not to rely on an analogy as your main rhetorical strategy unless you're 99.9 percent sure that your audience will see the similarities that you do.

ACTIVITY

Look back at the analogy in the Klosterman article that we just discussed (p. 84). What potential risk(s) is Klosterman taking? How might his analogy be vulnerable to criticism? To what extent might the comparison be a faulty analogy? All in all, in terms of risk versus benefit, how effective is this analogy as a rhetorical strategy?

USING SOURCES TO WRITE A SYNTHESIS ARGUMENT

What Is a Synthesis Argument?

Most of us aren't short on opinions when it comes to any number of personal and public issues. We have a perspective on community decisions, national debates, and global conflicts. But what sets an individual opinion apart from an argument that is likely to influence others is evidence that extends beyond the purely personal: that is, an argument informed by what others have thought, said, and written. This is what we call a "synthesis argument"; it is an argument based on sources.

If you were writing about a proposed change in school policy, you might interview your principal, parents, and other students. Or you might read about the experience of other schools, how they identified needed changes, what process they implemented to approve changes, and what some of the results of the changes were. As you wrote your own argument, you would consult sources. Some of these would report research conducted by experts, some would provide statistical data, and some would draw on relevant first-hand experience.

What Makes an Effective Synthesis Argument?

The answer to this question lies in how you use your sources. First of all, as we discussed in Chapter 4, where we introduced synthesis, your voice—your opinion—remains central: don't let it be drowned out by your sources, regardless of their impressive credentials or expertise! You are in charge of choosing which sources you'll use and what comments you want to make about them. Some of these sources will support your position, but remember that you can also use sources to present a counterargument.

Your goal is to present a reasoned and informed argument that takes into account multiple perspectives. You need to show the world that you've done your homework on the topic—that you're aware of its context and what others have had to say about it. In short, you need to contribute to an ongoing conversation.

Steps to Writing a Synthesis Argument

When you're writing any argument, including one that's informed by sources, it's important to start by figuring out what you know. Even if you have only a vague idea of the issues surrounding a controversy, even just a gut reaction, putting your ideas on paper or on the

ACTIVITY

Take fifteen minutes and brainstorm your response to the following prompt:

> Why do you think the public is so outraged when it finds out that a professional athlete has taken performance-enhancing drugs (PEDs)? Is this outrage appropriate?

screen will give you a sense of what you already know, what you don't know, and what you need to know. Doing so will also provide a context for reading ideas others have on the topic.

Now let's focus on three specific essays from this chapter's Conversation on cheating. These all take up some dimension of the controversy about PEDs. Before we get started, read (or reread) these sources carefully:

- Chuck Klosterman, "Why We Look the Other Way" (p. 84)
- Christopher Bergland, "Cheaters Never Win" (p. 90)
- Brad Allenby, "Is Human Enhancement Cheating?" (p. 94)

Step 1: Analyze the Sources

The first step to writing an effective source-based synthesis argument is to read about different views on the issue in question. You want to understand the pros and the cons, and, most important, the gray areas in between. The gray areas of an issue are often where you'll find civil compromises, reasonable solutions, and new ideas.

One way to find the gray area of an issue is to use a mental exercise called "yes, but," in which you concede a point that others have made about the issue, but then think about how to refute it. This puts every idea under the microscope:

> **Yes**, performance-enhancing drugs diminish the purity of sports, **but** is the idea of "purity" in sports an outdated notion?

ACTIVITY

Complete the following chart to start your analysis of the three sources. We have begun the Bergland essay as a model, but you can add to it as you analyze the others. Don't worry about complete sentences at this point; just gather ideas.

Source	Position on Overall Issue	Key Issues (2 or 3)	Relevant Quotation (1 or 2)
Klosterman			
Bergland	Totally opposed to athletes' using PEDs: taints purity of sports	• PED use = cheating self and others • •	"you cannot cheat to win on an ethical and karmic level" (par. 7)
Allenby			

Step 2: Put the Texts in Conversation

Now that you've analyzed the sources individually, imagine that you are putting them in a room together. Assume each author has read the others' work. As you imagine this encounter, try to write in the voice of each author—get into character. And remember: you're reporting what they say to each other, not personally commenting or responding.

What questions would they ask one another? How would one respond to the other? You might generate questions by asking yourself where one writer would take issue with another. It's easy to see, for instance, that Allenby would disagree with Bergland in fundamental ways, so there's no point in setting up a dialogue in which Allenby asks, "What do you think of PEDs?" But, it might be interesting for Allenby to ask Bergland, "Isn't your view of the connection between sports and well-being unrealistic when it comes to spectator sports involving huge amounts of money?"

Question from Klosterman to Bergland: _____.

Bergland's Response: _____.

Question from Allenby to Klosterman: _____.

Klosterman's Response: _____.

Question from Bergland to Allenby: _____.

Allenby's Response: _____.

Step 3: Take a Stand

Now that you've read, analyzed, and role-played with the sources, you have a bunch of notes and a deep enough understanding of the issue to explain your viewpoint as an evidence-based argument. Start by writing a clear thesis—though don't expect that it will necessarily be your final polished one.

Don't worry either about taking an all-or-nothing stand. In fact, a position that is qualified can demonstrate your awareness of the complexity of the issue—that it's not black or white, but shades of gray. Start drafting with a simple template:

(I believe) that professional athletes (should/should not) be allowed to use performance-enhancing drugs because _____.

Once you have a working thesis, start matching sources to your ideas: some may support you, whereas others may provide an opportunity for you to push back on an idea you disagree with.

Title and author of source that supports your thesis: _____

Direct quote that demonstrates the support: _____ (page number)

Explanation of how that source supports your thesis: _____

Although most of the time, you'll use sources as supporting evidence, you can also use a source that runs counter to your thesis; by conceding some portion of the argument, but

refuting the bulk of it (see Chapter 3, p. 000), you can turn the source to your advantage. This move is similar to the "yes, but" mental exercise that we talked about on p. 122.

Title and author of source that counters your thesis (or your position in general): _____

Direct quote that demonstrates the challenge to your position: _____

(page number)

Concession and refutation _____

Step 4: Integrate the Sources into Your Own Argument

Once you have begun working so closely with sources, it is tempting to feel that you have nothing original to say, that everything on the subject has all been said and said well. But resist this type of thinking! The point of such careful analysis is to learn as much as possible so that you can contribute to a discussion about a controversial issue and not simply rehash what's already been said.

Let's look at an example of a student's voice being drowned out by a persuasive source and then work on a strategy that you can use to make yourself heard.

Here's paragraph 7 from "Cheaters Never Win" by Christopher Bergland:

> I believe that it is the time we spend with family, friends, and feeling healthy, alive and connected that is our biggest source of joy. Again, it is easy when you have "made it" to proselytize about the virtues of not caring if you "win or lose." The reality can be much different, especially if you're struggling economically. Because winning does matter. This is a paradox we all have to navigate in sport and in life. Yes, you want to be your absolute best and to try your hardest to win and to be thrilled if you are victorious. . . . But you cannot cheat to win on an ethical and karmic level. I believe that the bad karma and ill-will of being a cheater has the power to eat you up from the inside out and ultimately destroy you.

Now suppose a student writer who is in agreement with Bergland wants to use him as a source in order to make the point that performance-enhancing drugs diminish an athletic accomplishment. The student might draft a paragraph like this:

> Winning when using performance-enhancing drugs diminishes the sense of accomplishment that derives from old-fashioned hard work, strict discipline, and just plain grit. In "Cheaters Never Win," Christopher Bergland acknowledges that "winning does matter" (par. 7). However, the "paradox we all have to navigate in sport and in life" is that victory is sweet, but "you cannot cheat to win on an ethical and karmic level." Ultimately, "the bad karma and ill-will of being a cheater has the power to eat you up from the inside out and ultimately destroy you."

Notice all of the direct quotations and references to Bergland. After the opening topic sentence, which is clear, Bergland takes over and we lose the writer's voice and ideas entirely.

A good rule of thumb is to make sure that you make at least two comments about every source that you paraphrase or quote directly. Here's a revision of the previous paragraph using that technique:

> Winning when using performance-enhancing drugs diminishes the sense of accomplishment that derives from old-fashioned hard work, strict discipline, and just plain grit. Everybody wants to win, especially in our society that prizes victory so highly—but it is a mistake to do so at the expense of self-respect. In "Cheaters Never Win," Christopher Bergland argues that "you cannot cheat to win on an ethical and karmic level." The result of cheating, whether through drugs or any other manner, is dishonesty not only with colleagues and fans but more important with yourself. Needing to win at any and all costs, including using PEDs, can ultimately "eat you up from the inside out," which is a sure road to self-destruction (Bergland, par. 7). Participating in competitive sports is supposed to increase our self-esteem because of the physical and mental effort athletes put into their training; participating under the influence of drugs undermines that effort.

In this revision, the writer is fully in charge. The topic sentence focuses on the writer's opinion about the pride developed by working hard to become an excellent athlete, and Bergland is brought in to emphasize how PEDs erode the athlete's pride. The writer quotes Bergland, but then adds commentary on what he has to say. The final sentence is the writer's own. You might think of the structure in this way:

S1: Topic sentence (writer's own words)

S2: Further explanation and lead-in to source

S3: Source paraphrased and/or quoted

S4: Commentary on source

S5: Additional reference to source

S6: Commentary and conclusion (writer's own words)

ACTIVITY

Turn your notes from one of the sources you've examined into a fully developed paragraph of your own. Make sure that the topic sentence links to the thesis you wrote and that the bulk of the paragraph consists of your own ideas and commentary informed—but not overwhelmed—by the source.