

WRITING ABOUT THE THEME

PURSUING HAPPINESS

1. The authors in this chapter approach the subject of happiness from very different angles, and each offers a unique definition as a result. Carlin Flora (p. 270) offers a clinical explanation of a psychological state. Dagoberto Gilb (p. 270) considers the emotional benefits of a tight-knit community. Judy Brady (p. 276) examines her dissatisfaction from a feminist angle, while Augusten Burroughs (p. 281) reflects on the sources of unhappiness. And Jessica Sayuri Boissy (p. 287) draws on personal experience and cultural tradition to find pleasure in each moment. How do these writers' perspectives influence their ideas? What do their definitions have in common, and where do they disagree? How do you define happiness? Answer in an essay, citing as examples the paragraphs and essays in this chapter and your own experiences and desires.
2. Many of the writers in this chapter identify education as a prerequisite to a happy life. Carlin Flora cites the importance of "a willingness to learn and stretch and grow." Judy Brady wants to go back to school, Augusten Burroughs notes that the happiest people he knows are also the smartest, and Jessica Sayuri Boissy treasures the twice-weekly meetings of her college English class. What, in your mind, constitutes a good education? Has school been a positive or a negative experience for you? How can you get the most out of your time as a student? Write an essay analyzing the role you think education will play in your potential for success and happiness in the future.
3. In an epigraph on page 281, psychologist Daniel Gilbert asserts, "We are happy when we have family, we are happy when we have friends, and almost all the other things we think make us happy are just ways of getting more family and friends." Most of the writers in this chapter would seem to agree. Dagoberto Gilb, Judy Brady, Augusten Burroughs, and Jessica Sayuri Boissy all write of the impact that loved ones have on a person's satisfaction with life, and even Carlin Flora stresses that happiness is enhanced "when you also feel part of a community." How important is family (immediate or extended) in shaping our sense of who we are and what we want? To what extent does the larger community — friends, teachers, neighbors — also play a significant role in forming a person's identity? Answer in an essay, citing as examples the selections in this chapter and observations of your own.

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CAUSE-AND-EFFECT ANALYSIS

INVESTIGATING THE WORKING WORLD

Why did free agency become so important in professional baseball, and how has it affected the sport? What caused the recent warming of the Pacific Ocean, and how did the warming affect the earth's weather? We answer questions like these with **cause-and-effect analysis**, the method of dividing occurrences into their elements to find relationships among them. Cause-and-effect analysis is a specific kind of analysis, the method discussed in Chapter 8.

When we analyze *causes*, we try to discover which of the events preceding a specified outcome actually made it happen:

What caused Adolf Hitler's rise in Germany?

Why have herbal medicines become so popular?

When we analyze *effects*, we try to discover which of the events following a specified occurrence actually resulted from it:

What do we do for (or to) drug addicts when we imprison them?

What happens to our foreign policy when the president's advisers disagree over its conduct?

These are existing effects of past or current situations, but effects are often predicted for the future:

How would a cure for cancer affect the average life expectancy of men and women?

How might your decision to take family leave affect your future job prospects?

Causes and effects can also be analyzed together, as the questions opening this chapter illustrate.

Like everyone else, you probably consider causes and effects many times a day: Why is the traffic so heavy? What will happen if I major in art rather than business? In writing you'll also draw often on cause-and-effect analysis, perhaps explaining why the school's basketball team has been so successful this year, what made a bridge collapse, or how a new stoplight has worsened rush-hour traffic. You'll use the method for persuasion, too, as in arguing that families, not mass media, bear responsibility for children's violence (focusing on causes) or that adult illiteracy threatens American democracy (focusing on possible effects). Because cause-and-effect analysis attempts to answer *why* and *what if*—two of the most basic questions of human experience—you'll find the method often in your reading as well.

Reading Cause-and-Effect Analysis

Cause-and-effect analysis is found in just about every discipline and occupation, including history, social science, natural science, engineering, medicine, law, business, and sports. In any of these fields, as well as in writing done for college courses, the purpose in analyzing may be to explain or to persuade. In explaining why something happened or what its outcome was or will be, writers try to order experience and pin down connections. In arguing with cause-and-effect analysis, they try to demonstrate why one explanation of causes is more accurate than another or how a proposed action will produce desirable or undesirable consequences.

The possibility of arguing about causes and effects points to the main challenge of this method. Related events sometimes overlap, sometimes follow one another immediately, and sometimes connect over gaps in time. They vary in their duration and complexity. They vary in their importance. Analyzing causes and effects thus requires not only identifying them but also discerning their relationships accurately and weighing their significance fairly.

Causes and effects often do occur in a sequence, each contributing to the next in what is called a *causal chain*. For instance, an unlucky man named Jones ends up in prison, and the causal chain leading to his imprisonment can be outlined as follows: Jones's neighbor, Smith, dumped trash on Jones's lawn. In reprisal, Jones set a small brush fire in Smith's

yard. A spark from the fire accidentally ignited Smith's house. Jones was prosecuted for the fire and sent to jail. In this chain each event is the cause of an effect, which in turn is the cause of another effect, and so on to the unhappy conclusion.

Identifying a causal chain partly involves sorting out events in time:

- **Immediate** causes or effects occur nearest an event. For instance, the immediate cause of a town's high unemployment rate may be the closing of a large manufacturing plant where many townspeople work.
- **Remote** causes or effects occur further away in time. The remote cause of the town's unemployment rate may be a drastic decline in the company's sales or (more remote) a weak regional or national economy.

Analyzing causes also requires distinguishing their relative importance in the sequence:

- **Major** causes are directly and primarily responsible for the outcome. For instance, if a weak economy is responsible for low sales, it is a major cause of the manufacturing plant's closing.
- **Minor** causes (also called *contributory* causes) merely contribute to the outcome. The manufacturing plant may have closed for the additional reason that the owners could not afford to repair its machines.

As these examples illustrate, time and significance can overlap in cause-and-effect analysis: a weak economy, for instance, is both a remote and a major cause; the lack of funds for repairs is both an immediate and a minor cause.

Since most cause-and-effect relationships are complex, several pitfalls can weaken an analysis or its presentation. One is a confusion of coincidence and cause—that is, an assumption that because one event preceded another, it must have caused the other. This error is nicknamed **post hoc**, from the Latin *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*, meaning “after this, therefore because of this.” Superstitions often illustrate post hoc: a basketball player believes that a charm once ended her shooting slump, so she now wears the charm whenever she plays. But post hoc also occurs in more serious matters. For instance, the office of a school administrator is vandalized, and he blames the incident on a recent speech by the student-government president criticizing the administration. But the administrator has no grounds for his accusation unless he can prove that the speech incited the vandals. In the absence of proof, the administrator commits the error of

post hoc by asserting that the speech caused the vandalism simply because the speech preceded the vandalism.

Another potential problem to watch for in cause-and-effect writing is **oversimplification**. An effective analysis must consider not just the causes and effects that seem obvious or important but all the possibilities: remote as well as immediate, minor as well as major. One form of oversimplification confuses a necessary cause with a sufficient cause:

- A *necessary* cause, as the term implies, is one that must happen in order for an effect to come about; an effect can have more than one necessary cause. For example, if emissions from a factory cause a high rate of illness in a neighborhood, the emissions are a necessary cause.
- A *sufficient* cause, in contrast, is one that brings about the effect *by itself*. The emissions are not a sufficient cause of the illness rate unless all other possible causes—such as water pollution or infection—can be eliminated.

Oversimplification can also occur if opinions or emotions are allowed to cloud the interpretation of evidence. Suppose that a writer is examining the reasons a gun-control bill she opposed was passed by the state legislature. Some of the evidence strongly suggests that a member of the legislature, a vocal supporter of the bill, was unduly influenced by lobbyists. But if the writer attributed the passage of the bill solely to this legislator, she would be exaggerating the significance of a single legislator and ignoring the opinions of the many others who also voted for the bill. To achieve a balanced analysis, she would have to put aside her personal feelings and consider all possible causes for the bill's passage.

Analyzing Causes and Effects in Paragraphs

Barbara Ehrenreich (born 1941) is an investigative journalist with a PhD in biology. A contributing writer for a wide range of periodicals, she is probably best known for her books about contemporary class struggles in the United States, especially *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America* (2001), the book in which the following paragraph appears.

The problem of rents is easy for a noneconomist, Cause (topic sentence underlined); competition for housing even a sparsely educated low-wage worker, to grasp. . . . When the rich and the poor compete for housing on

the open market, the poor don't stand a chance. The rich

can always outbid them, buy up their tenements or trailer parks, and replace them with condos, McMansions, golf courses, or whatever they like. Since the rich have become more numerous, thanks largely to rising stock prices and executive salaries, the poor have necessarily been forced into housing that is more expensive, more dilapidated, or more distant from their places of work. . . . Insofar as the poor have to work near the dwellings of the rich—as in the case of so many service and retail jobs—they are stuck with lengthy commutes or dauntingly expensive housing.

Malcolm Gladwell was born in 1963 to an English father and a Jamaican mother and immigrated with his parents to Canada when a child. Now a staff writer at the *New Yorker*, he is known for his highly readable articles and books that synthesize complex research in the sciences and social sciences. This paragraph is from *Outliers* (2008), an exploration of why some people are more successful in their work than others.

Personal explanations of success don't work. People don't rise from nothing. We do owe something to parentage and patronage. The people who stand before kings may look like they did it all by themselves. But in fact they are invariably the beneficiaries of hidden advantages and extraordinary opportunities and cultural legacies that allow them to learn and work hard and make sense of the world in ways others cannot. It makes a difference where and when we grew up. The culture we belong to and the legacies passed down by our forebears shape the patterns of our achievements in ways we cannot begin to imagine. It's not enough to ask what successful people are like, in other words. It is only by asking where they are *from* that we can unravel the logic behind who succeeds and who doesn't.

Effects:

Rich buy inexpensive properties for themselves

Poor are forced to pay more, accept less, or move

Effect (topic sentence underlined): success

Causes:

Background

Opportunities

Influences

Developing an Essay by Cause-and-Effect Analysis

▶ Getting Started

Assignments in almost any course or line of work ask for cause-and-effect analysis: What caused the Vietnam War? In the theory of sociology, what are the effects of altruism on the survival of the group? Why did costs exceed the budget last month? You can find your own subject for cause-and-effect analysis from your experiences, from observation of others, from your course work, or from your reading outside school. Anytime you find yourself wondering what happened or why or what if, you may be onto an appropriate subject.

Remember that your treatment of causes or effects or both must be thorough; thus your subject must be manageable within the constraints of time and space imposed on you. Broad subjects like those in the following examples must be narrowed to something whose complexities you can cover adequately.

BROAD SUBJECT	Causes of the decrease in American industrial productivity
NARROWER SUBJECT	Causes of decreasing productivity on one assembly line
BROAD SUBJECT	Effects of cigarette smoke
NARROWER SUBJECT	Effects of parents' secondhand smoke on small children

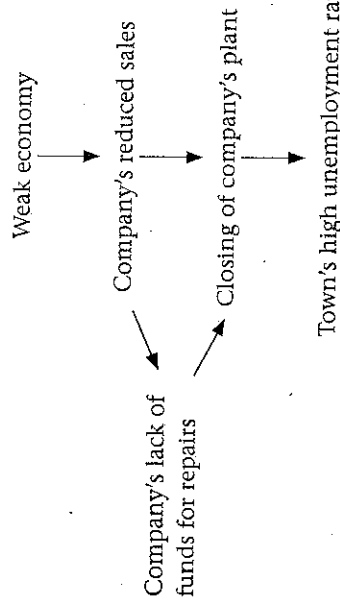
Whether your subject suggests a focus on causes or effects or both, list as many of them as you can from memory or from further reading. If the subject does not suggest a focus, then ask yourself questions to begin exploring it:

- Why did it happen?
- What contributed to it?
- What were or are its results?
- What might its consequences be?

One or more of these questions should lead you to a focus and, as you explore further, to a more complete list of ideas.

But you cannot stop with a simple list, for you must arrange the causes or effects in sequence and weigh their relative importance: Do the events break down into a causal chain? Besides the immediate causes and effects, are there also less obvious, more remote ones? Besides the major

causes or effects, are there also minor ones? At this stage, you may find that diagramming relationships helps you see them more clearly. The following diagram illustrates the earlier example of the plant closing (see p. 297):



Though uncomplicated, the diagram does sort out the causes and effects and shows their relationships and sequence.

While you are developing a clear picture of your subject, you should also be anticipating the expectations and needs of your readers. As with the other methods of essay development, consider especially what your readers already know about your subject and what they need to be told:

- Do readers require background information?
- Are they likely to be familiar with some of the causes or effects you are analyzing, or should you explain every one completely?
- Which causes or effects might readers already accept?
- Which ones might they disagree with?

If, for instance, the plant closing affected many of your readers—putting them or their relatives out of work—they might blame the company's owners rather than economic forces beyond the owners' control. You would have to address these preconceptions and provide plenty of evidence for your own interpretation.

▶ Forming a Thesis

To help manage your ideas and information, try to develop a working thesis sentence that states your subject, your perspective on it, and your purpose. For instance:

EXPLANATORY THESIS SENTENCE Unemployment has affected not only my family's finances but also our relationships.

PERSUASIVE THESIS SENTENCE Contrary to local opinion, the many people put out of work by the closing of Windsor Manufacturing were victims not of the owners' incompetence but of the nation's weak economy.

Notice that these thesis sentences reflect clear judgments about the relative significance of possible causes or effects. Such judgments can be difficult to reach and may not be apparent when you start writing. Often you will need to complete a draft of your analysis before you are confident about the relationship between cause and effect. And even if you start with an idea of how cause and effect are connected, you may change your mind after you've mapped out the relationship in a draft. That's fine: just remember to revise your thesis sentence accordingly.

► Organizing

The introduction to a cause-and-effect essay can pull readers in by describing the situation whose causes or effects you plan to analyze, such as the passage of a bill in the legislature or a town's high unemployment rate. The introduction may also provide background, such as a brief narrative of a family quarrel; or it may summarize the analysis of causes or effects that the essay disputes, such as townspeople blaming owners for a plant's closing. If your thesis is not already apparent in the introduction, stating it explicitly can tell readers exactly what your purpose is and which causes or effects or both you plan to highlight. But if you anticipate that readers will oppose your thesis, you may want to delay stating it until the end of the essay, after you have provided the evidence to support it.

The arrangement of the body of the essay depends primarily on your material and your emphasis. If events unfold in a causal chain with each effect becoming the cause of another effect, and if stressing these links coincides with your purpose, then a simple chronological sequence will probably be clearest. But if events overlap and vary in significance, their organization will require more planning. Probably the most effective way to arrange either causes or effects is in order of increasing importance. Such an arrangement helps readers see which causes or effects you consider minor and which major, while it also reserves your most significant (and probably most detailed) point for last. The groups of minor or major events may then fit into a chronological framework.

To avoid being preoccupied with organization while you are drafting your essay, prepare some sort of outline before you start writing (see p. 27). The outline need not be detailed so long as you have written the details elsewhere or can retrieve them easily from your mind. But it should

show all the causes or effects you want to discuss and the order in which you will cover them.

In the **conclusion** to your essay, you may want to restate your thesis—or state it, if you deliberately withheld it for the end—so that readers are left with the point of your analysis. If your analysis is complex, readers may also benefit from a summary of the relationships you have identified. And depending on your purpose, you may want to specify why your analysis is significant, what use your readers can make of it, or what action you hope they will take.

► Drafting

While drafting your essay, strive primarily for clarity—sharp details, strong examples, concrete explanations. To make readers see not only *what* you see but also *why* you see it, you can draw on just about any method of writing discussed in this book. For instance, you might narrate the effect of a situation on one person, analyze a **process**, or **compare and contrast** two interpretations of cause. Particularly if your thesis is debatable (like the earlier example asserting the owners' blamelessness for the plant's closing), you will need accurate, representative facts to back up your interpretation, and you may also need quotations from experts such as witnesses and scholars. If you do not support your assertions specifically, your readers will have no reason to believe them. (For more on evidence in persuasive writing, see pp. 330 and 336–37. For more on finding and documenting sources, see the Appendix.)

► Revising and Editing

While revising and editing your draft, consider the following questions and the Focus box on the next page to be sure your analysis is sound and clear.

- *Have you explained causes or effects clearly and specifically?* Readers will need to see the pattern of causes or effects—their sequence and relative importance. And readers will need facts, examples, and other evidence to understand and accept your analysis.
- *Have you demonstrated that causes are not merely coincidences?* Avoid the error of post hoc, of assuming that one event caused another just because it preceded the other. To be convincing, a claim that one event caused another must be supported with ample evidence.

FOCUS ON CONCISENESS

While drafting a cause-and-effect analysis, you may need to grope a bit to discover just what you think about the sequence and relative importance of reasons and consequences. As a result, your sentences may grope a bit, too, reflecting your need to circle around your ideas in order to find them. The following draft passage reveals such difficulties:

WORDY Employees often worry about negative comments from others. The employee may not only worry but feel the need to discuss the situation with coworkers. One thing that is an effect of harassment, especially verbal harassment, in the workplace is that productivity is lost. Plans also need to be made to figure out how to deal with future comments. Engaging in these activities is sure to take time and concentration from work.

Drafting this passage, the writer seems to have built up to the idea about lost productivity (third sentence) after providing support for it in the first two sentences. The fourth sentence then adds more support. And sentences 2–4 all show a writer working out ideas: sentence subjects and verbs do not focus on the main actors and actions of the sentences, words repeat unnecessarily, and word groups run longer than needed for clarity.

These problems disappear from the edited version below, which moves the main ideas up front, uses subjects and verbs to state what the sentences are about, and cuts unneeded words.

CONCISE Verbal harassment in the workplace causes loss of productivity. Worrying about negative comments, discussing those comments with coworkers, planning how to deal with future comments—all these activities take a harassed employee's time and concentration away from work.

For more on editing for conciseness, see pages 48–49.

- *Have you considered all the possible causes or effects? Your analysis should go beyond what is most immediate or obvious so that you do not oversimplify the cause-and-effect relationships. Your readers will expect you to present the relationships in all their complexity.*
- *Have you represented the cause-and-effect relationships honestly? Don't deliberately ignore or exaggerate causes or effects in a misguided effort*

to strengthen your essay. If a cause fails to support your thesis but still does not invalidate it, mention the cause and explain why you believe it to be unimportant. If a change you are proposing will have bad effects as well as good, mention the bad effects and explain how they are outweighed by the good. As long as your reasoning and evidence are sound, such admissions will not weaken your essay; on the contrary, readers will appreciate your fairness.

- *Have you used transitions to signal the sequence and relative importance of events? Transitions between sentences can help you pinpoint causes or effects (for this reason, as a result), show the steps in a sequence (first, second, third), link events in time (in the same month), specify duration (a year later), and indicate the weights you assign events (equally important, even more crucial).*

A Note on Thematic Connections

Analyzing the workplace often prompts writers to ask what leads to success or failure or what may result from a business decision. The authors in this chapter all attempt to pinpoint a cause-and-effect relationship between business practices and their consequences for workers. In a paragraph, Barbara Ehrenreich considers how the real estate market makes it difficult for low-wage workers to find housing (p. 298). In another paragraph, Malcolm Gladwell asserts that our chances for success are determined by hidden opportunities (p. 299). In essays, Ellen Goodman examines the results of overwork (next page), while student writers Stephanie Alaimo and Mark Koester (p. 311) and journalist Dana Thomas (p. 316) investigate the impacts our shopping choices have on workers around the globe.

ON DEATH

The Bustle in a House / The Morning after Death / Is solemnness of industries / Enacted upon Earth.

—Emily Dickinson

Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind.

—John Donne

No one on his deathbed has ever said, "I wish I'd spent more time at the office."

—Paul Tsongas

JOURNAL RESPONSE In your journal, reflect on the purpose of living. What do you hope to accomplish in your lifetime, and where do your priorities lie? Is career most important? family? community? country? service? faith? something else? Why?

Ellen Goodman

Social commentator Ellen Goodman has had a distinguished career as a journalist and speaker. She was born in 1941, grew up in Boston, Massachusetts, and earned a degree from Radcliffe College (a part of Harvard University) in 1963. Goodman researched for *Newsweek* and reported for the *Detroit Free Press* and the *Boston Globe* before becoming a full-time syndicated columnist in 1974. Her observations on life and politics have been published in more than four hundred newspapers nationwide and collected in six volumes: *Close to Home* (1979), *At Large* (1981), *Keeping in Touch* (1985), *Making Sense* (1989), *Value Judgments* (1993), and *Paper Trail: Common Sense in Uncommon Times* (2004). One of the first American women to make a career as a columnist, Goodman won the Pulitzer Prize for distinguished commentary in 1980 and a lifetime achievement award from the National Society of Newspaper Columnists in 2008. She lives in Boston and spends summers with her family on the coast of Maine.

The Company Man

Goodman is known for her evenhanded thoughtfulness on contentious subjects ranging from the women's movement to bioethics. In this essay from *Close to Home*, she relates a story about one man's career to show how competitive office culture can damage lives.

He worked himself to death, finally and precisely, at 3:00 a.m. Sunday morning.

The obituary didn't say that, of course. It said that he died of a coronary thrombosis—I think that was it—but everyone among his friends and acquaintances knew it instantly. He was a perfect Type A, a workaholic, a classic, they said, to each other and shook their heads—and thought for five or ten minutes about the way they lived.

This man who worked himself to death finally and precisely at 3:00 a.m. Sunday morning—on his day off—was fifty-one years old and a vice-president. He was, however, one of six vice-presidents, and one of three who might conceivably—if the president died or retired soon enough—have moved to the top spot. Phil knew that.

He worked six days a week, five of them until eight or nine at night, during a time when his own company had begun the four-day week for everyone but the executives. He worked like the Important People. He had no outside "extracurricular interests," unless, of course, you think about a monthly golf game that way. To Phil, it was work. He always ate egg salad sandwiches at his desk. He was, of course, overweight, by twenty or twenty-five pounds. He thought it was okay, though, because he didn't smoke.

On Saturdays, Phil wore a sports jacket to the office instead of a suit, because it was the weekend.

He had a lot of people working for him, maybe sixty, and most of them liked him most of the time. Three of them will be seriously considered for his job. The obituary didn't mention that.

But it did list his "survivors" quite accurately. He is survived by his wife, Helen, forty-eight years old, a good woman of no particular marketable skills, who worked in an office before marrying and mothering. She had, according to her daughter, given up trying to compete with his work years ago, when the children were small. A company friend said, "I know how much you will miss him." And she answered, "I already have."

"Missing him all those years," she must have given up part of herself which had cared too much for the man. She would be "well taken care of."

His "dearly beloved" eldest of the "dearly beloved" children is a hard-working executive in a manufacturing firm down South. In the day and a half before the funeral, he went around the neighborhood researching his father, asking the neighbors what he was like. They were embarrassed.

His second child is a girl, who is twenty-four and newly married. She lives near her mother and they are close, but whenever she was alone with her father, in a car driving somewhere, they had nothing to say to each other.

The youngest is twenty, a boy, a high school graduate who has spent the last couple of years, like a lot of his friends, doing enough odd jobs to stay in grass and food. He was the one who tried to grab at his father,

and tried to mean enough to him to keep the man at home. He was his father's favorite. Over the last two years, Phil stayed up nights worrying about the boy.

The boy once said, "My father and I only board here."

At the funeral, the sixty-year-old company president told the forty-eight-year-old widow that the fifty-one-year-old deceased had meant much to the company and would be missed and would be hard to replace. The widow didn't look him in the eye. She was afraid he would read her bitterness and, after all, she would need him to straighten out her finances—the stock options and all that.

Phil was overweight and nervous and worked too hard. If he wasn't at the office, he was worried about it. Phil was a Type A, a heart-attack natural. You could have picked him out in a minute from a lineup.

So when he finally worked himself to death, at precisely 3:00 a.m. Sunday morning, no one was really surprised.

By 5:00 p.m. the afternoon of the funeral, the company president had begun, discreetly of course, with care and taste, to make inquiries about his replacement. One of three men. He asked around: "Who's been working the hardest?"

Meaning

1. What killed Phil, according to his obituary? according to Goodman?
2. "The Company Man" does not include a thesis statement. What is Goodman's point? Express the author's main idea in your own words.
3. Notice Goodman's frequent use of numbers: "five or ten minutes" (paragraph 2), "fifty-one years old" (3), "six vice-presidents" (3), and so on. What other numbers does she cite in this essay? What does the focus on such details contribute to her point?
4. If you do not know the following words, try to determine their meanings from the context of Goodman's essay. Test your guesses in a dictionary, and then use each word in a sentence or two of your own.

coronary (2) board (12) discreetly (16)
thrombosis (2)

Purpose and Audience

1. For whom is Goodman writing: Phil's family? his employer? the men in line for his job? someone else? Why do you think so?
2. Describing the reaction to Phil's death among his friends, Goodman says they "shook their heads"—and thought for five or ten minutes about the

way they lived" (paragraph 2). What does this comment reveal about her purpose for writing?

Method and Structure

1. What cause does Goodman examine? What effects does she identify?
2. "He worked himself to death, finally and precisely, at 3:00 a.m. Sunday morning," Goodman says in paragraph 1, then again (with some variation) in paragraphs 3 and 15. Why does she stress these details? What other details does she repeat? What is the effect of her repetitions?
3. Goodman gives no indication of what Phil's job was. Why not? What does leaving out this detail contribute to her meaning? What other details does she omit?
4. **OTHER METHODS** "The Company Man" is also a model of **definition** (Chapter 12). What does "Type A" (paragraphs 2 and 14) mean? What other details in the essay give you a clue to Phil's personality?

Language

1. How would you characterize Goodman's **tone**? Support your answer with specific details, sentence structures, and phrases from the essay.
2. At several points in the essay Goodman quotes Phil's obituary as well as comments made by his family and coworkers. How do these quotations reinforce the main idea of her essay?
3. Explain the **irony** of Goodman's conclusion.

Writing Topics

1. **JOURNAL TO ESSAY** Most of us have to work to support ourselves and our families, but as Goodman suggests, the demands of some jobs can overshadow, or even destroy, the rest of a person's life. Look again at the quotations preceding her essay and at your journal notes (p. 306), and then compose an essay on the subject of work/life balance. What role does work play in a person's happiness? What role do personal relationships play? How can a person successfully juggle the demands and rewards of both?
2. Goodman writes that Phil's two sons took very different approaches to their independence as adults: the elder followed in his father's footsteps and became a "hard-working executive" (paragraph 9), while the younger chose to drift through odd jobs after finishing high school (11). How would you define *independence* for young adults? What freedoms does

independence entail? What responsibilities? What problems can occur for the newly independent person?

3. CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS Contemporary American society places great importance on work, encouraging people to find and devote themselves to jobs that entail responsibility and opportunity for advancement, to put in long hours when required, and to be available and productive at all times. In contrast, many other cultures emphasize leisure (in some European countries, for instance, businesses shut down for a few hours every afternoon; in others, workers are entitled to eight weeks of paid vacation a year). Write an essay in which you consider the benefits and drawbacks of the American work ethic. What do we gain through hard work and determination? What do we lose?

4. RESEARCH Phil's oldest son "went around the neighborhood researching his father, asking the neighbors what he was like," Goodman writes in paragraph 9. How well do you know your parents? Even if you're close, you may not be fully aware of what they do with their time or how they get along with others. Pick a parent to research, and interview several people—coworkers, for example, siblings, neighbors, or friends—to learn how others perceive him or her. In an essay, write a profile of your parent, focusing on how he or she interacts with the larger community.

5. CONNECTIONS While Goodman writes with compassion about the consequences of pressures put on business executives, Stephanie Alaimo and Mark Koester, in "The Backdraft of Technology" (opposite), blame those executives for putting low-wage employees out of work. In an essay of your own, consider some aspect of competition and fairness in a capitalist economy. Are executive salaries too high, for instance? Should all workers be guaranteed a living wage? What role should the government play in ensuring citizens' economic well-being? Why do you think so?

There is no reason that the universe should be designed for our convenience.

—John D. Barrow
All of the biggest technological inventions created by man—the airplane, the automobile, the computer—say little about his intelligence, but speak volumes about his laziness.

—Mark Kennedy
Besides black art [such as voodoo and witchcraft], there is only automation and mechanization.

—Federico García Lorca

JOURNAL RESPONSE Write a short journal entry about a modern convenience that you dislike. (Examples might include online banking, cruise control, or automated call centers.) Why don't you care for it? In what ways is this technology harmful or just more trouble than it's worth?

Stephanie Alaimo and Mark Koester

Stephanie Alaimo (born 1984) and Mark Koester (born 1983) both studied at DePaul University of Chicago and the Université de Strasbourg in France. Alaimo, a Spanish major while at DePaul, volunteered as a tutor of English as a second language and as an intern with the Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice. She is currently a graduate student at the University of California, San Diego, where she is studying the sociology of migration and development. Koester, a native of Omaha, Nebraska, majored in philosophy and taught English in Hangzhou, China, after graduation. Now an entrepreneur, he still lives in China and is working on multiple startups that aim to merge Web technology, business, and sustainable development.

The Backdraft of Technology (Student Essay)

How important is it to save a few minutes in the supermarket? Would you stand in line to save someone else's job? Alaimo and Koester think you should—and they explain why by analyzing the causes and effects of self-service checkout machines. They collaborated on this op-ed piece for the *DePaulia*, a student newspaper, in 2006.

You have picked up the bread and the milk and the day's miscellaneous foodstuffs at your local grocery store. The lines at the traditional, human-operated checkouts are a shocking two customers deep. Who wants to

wait? Who would wait when we have society's newest upgrade in not having to wait: the self-checkout?

Welcome to the automated grocery store. "Please scan your next item," a repetitively chilling, mechanical voice orders you.

If you have yet to see it at your nearest grocer, a new technological advance has been reached. Instead of waiting for some minimally waged, minimally educated, and, most likely, immigrant cashier to scan and bag your groceries for you, you can now do it yourself. In a consumer-driven, hyperactive, "I want" world, an increase in speed is easily accepted thoughtlessly. We're too busy. But, in gaining efficiency and ease, a number of jobs have been lost, particularly at the entry level, and a moment of personal, human engagement with actual people has vanished.

It seems easy enough to forget about the consequences when you are rushed and your belly is grumbling. The previously utilized checkout lanes at local grocery stores and super, mega, we-have-everything stores are now routinely left unattended during the peak hours. In these moments, your options are using the self-checkout or waiting for a real human being. Often in a hurried moment we choose the easiest, fastest, and least mentally involved option without much consideration.

We forget to consider that with the aid of the self-checkout at least two jobs have been lost. As a result, a human cashier and grocery bagger are now waiting in the unemployment line. Furthermore, self-checkout machines are probably not manufactured in the United States, thus shipping more jobs overseas. And sadly, the job openings are now shrinking by putting consumers to work. The wages from these jobs are stockpiled by those least in need—corporations and those who own them.

The mechanization of the service industry has been occurring throughout our lifetimes. Gas stations were once full-service. Human bank tellers handled simple cash withdrawals, instead of ATMs. Even video stores are being marginalized from people ordering online from companies like Netflix. And did you know that you can now order a pizza for delivery online without even talking to a person?

Sure, these new robots and computers reduce work, which could potentially be a really good thing. But these mechanizations have only increased profit margins for large corporations and have reduced the need to hire employees. Jobs are lost along with means of providing for one's self and family.

For those who find the loss of grocery store labor to be meaningless and, quite frankly, beyond impacting their future lives as accountants or lawyers, it does not seem to be entirely implausible that almost any job or task could become entirely technologically mechanized and your elitist job market nuked.

We are a society trapped in a precarious fork in the road. We can either eliminate the time and toil of the human workload and still allow people to have jobs and maintain the same standard of living, though working less, or, in a darker scenario, we can eliminate human work in terms of actual human jobs and make the situation of the lower classes more tenuous. Is it our goal to reduce the overall time that individuals spend laboring? Or is it our goal to increase corporate profits at the loss of many livelihoods?

At present, corporations and their executives put consumers to work, cut the cost of labor through the use of technology such as self-checkouts and ATMs, and profit tremendously. But a host of workers are now scrambling to find a way to subsist. To choose the self-checkout simply as a convenience cannot be morally justified unless these jobs remain.

The choices we make on a daily basis affect the whole of our society. Choosing convenience often translates to eliminating actual jobs that provide livelihoods and opportunities to many. Think before you simply follow the next technological innovation. Maybe it could be you in their soon-to-be-jobless shoes. Say "No!" to self-checkout.

Meaning

1. What do you make of the title of this essay? What is a backdraft, and what does it have to do with technology?
2. In paragraph 4, Alaimo and Koester write, "Often in a hurried moment we choose the easiest, fastest, and least mentally involved option without much consideration." Do they condemn this tendency?
3. Try to guess the meanings of the following words, based on their context in Alaimo and Koester's essay. Test your guesses in a dictionary, and then try to use each word in a sentence or two of your own.

stockpiled (5)	implausible (8)	tenuous (9)
marginalized (6)	precarious (9)	subsist (10)

Purpose and Audience

1. Do you believe that Alaimo and Koester are writing mainly to express their viewpoint or to persuade readers to do something? Make specific references to the text to support your opinion.
2. Who is the "you" being addressed in the two opening paragraphs? What do these paragraphs and the rest of the essay tell you about the authors' conception of their audience?

Method and Structure

1. Why do you think Alaimo and Koester rely on cause-and-effect analysis to develop their ideas? What are some causes of long checkout lines, in their opinion? What is the effect of the option to serve ourselves rather than wait for a cashier?
2. The authors open and close their essay by having their readers imagine waiting in line at the supermarket. What is the effect of this scenario?
3. In your opinion, is the cause-and-effect analysis in this essay sufficiently thorough and convincing? Why, or why not?
4. **OTHER METHODS** In addition to cause-and-effect analysis, Alaimo and Koester rely on **example** (Chapter 7) and **argument and persuasion** (Chapter 14). What does each of these other methods contribute to the essay?

Language

1. How would you describe the authors' tone? Are they angry? optimistic? passionate? earnest? hesitant? friendly?
2. Alaimo and Koester begin paragraph 7 with the interjection "Sure." They also use phrases such as "miscellaneous foodstuffs" (1), "super, mega, we-have-everything stores" (4), "naked" (8), and "fork in the road" (9). How would you characterize this language? What does it add to (or take away from) the essay?

Writing Topics

1. **JOURNAL TO ESSAY** On the basis of your journal entry and your reaction to the quotations preceding this essay (p. 311), expand your ideas about the drawbacks of a modern convenience. Do you agree with Alaimo and Koester that "[t]he choices we make on a daily basis affect the whole of our society" (paragraph 11)? When do technological conveniences help us? At what point does convenience for ourselves become harmful and destructive for others? Write to persuade your readers to change their behavior, as Alaimo and Koester do, or from a narrower personal perspective. If you choose the latter course, however, be sure to make your experience meaningful to others and offer plenty of details and examples.
2. Alaimo and Koester challenge their readers to reject self-service opportunities because they believe mechanization deprives unskilled workers of desperately needed jobs. But are such menial, low-paying jobs really worth saving? Write an essay that offers an alternative solution to the

employment issue Alaimo and Koester describe. Define the problem as you interpret it, and explain its causes. In your proposal, outline the changes you would like to see take place, identify who would have to make them, and predict how your changes would improve things.

3. **CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS** In paragraph 3, Alaimo and Koester say that many cashiers are immigrants; later they express concern that American jobs are being shipped to other countries (paragraph 5). What is your response to these remarks? Write an essay that considers the impact of foreign labor on the US job market. What are some sources of friction? What are some advantages? To what extent should the United States encourage immigration and globalization, and to what extent should the country restrict them? Why? Use examples from your own experience, observations, and reading.
4. **CONNECTIONS** Like Alaimo and Koester, Brandon Griggs, in "The Most Annoying Facebookers" (p. 186), questions the need for a modern technology while understanding why people use it anyway. But whereas Alaimo and Koester take their subject quite seriously, Griggs draws on humor to make his point. Compare and contrast these writers' strategies in an effort to determine when humor is appropriate and when it detracts from a writer's purpose. How, for example, would "The Backdraft of Technology" have worked if the authors had taken a more lighthearted approach? What would be lost in Griggs's essay if he hadn't tried to make his readers laugh?

On a cool August evening, my family and I visited the preppy town of Mill Valley, California, outside San Francisco. In the town square was an all-American sight: a couple of kids behind a card table selling homemade lemonade. My six-year-old wanted some, so I gave her a quarter and sent her over to the booth. After a few minutes, I joined the kids and noticed that one, a cute eight- or nine-year-old girl with a blonde blunt cut, had a little Murakami¹ pouch slung over her shoulder.

"Nice handbag," I said to her.

"It's Louis Vuitton," she responded proudly.

"No," I thought to myself as I gave it a good look-over. "It's a counterfeit Louis Vuitton. And it was probably made by a Chinese kid the same age as you in a slum halfway around the world."

Though the fashion business has muscled up its fight against counterfeiting, with many brands investing millions of dollars each year, the battle is ongoing. Since 1982, the global trade in counterfeit and pirated goods has grown from an estimated \$5.5 billion to approximately \$600 billion annually. Experts believe that counterfeiting costs American businesses \$200 billion to \$250 billion annually and is directly responsible for the loss of more than 750,000 jobs in the United States.

What's counterfeited? Everything. A couple of years ago, a counterfeit investigator discovered a workshop in the Thai countryside that produced fake versions of the classic Ferrari P4. Ferrari itself originally made only three P4s back in 1967. The Food and Drug Administration has said that counterfeit medicine could account for upwards of 10% of all drugs worldwide. Unknowingly taking a fake version of your medicine could have horrific effects on your health. European Union officials have seen a dramatic rise in the seizure of counterfeit personal-care items such as creams, toothpastes, and razor blades. The television series *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* recently highlighted this problem in an episode in which several children died after ingesting counterfeit mouthwash that had been made with a poisonous chemical found in antifreeze. "There have been counterfeit perfumes tested by laboratories that have found that a major component was feline urine," says Heather McDonald, a partner at the law firm Baker Hostetler in New York who specializes in anticounterfeiting litigation. Counterfeit automotive brakes made with compressed grass and wood have been found in US stores.

One of the primary reasons counterfeiting keeps flourishing is that, as the little girl in Mill Valley proved, people keep happily buying fakes.

¹ Japanese artist Takashi Murakami designed a line of Louis Vuitton handbags featuring whimsical, colorful patterns. [Editors' note.]

A bargain is in its very essence a hostile transaction. Do not all men try to abate the price of all they buy? I contend that a bargain even between brethren is a declaration of war.

—Lord Byron

Every time you see the Wal-Mart smiley face, whistling and knocking down the prices, somewhere there's a factory worker being kicked in the stomach.

—Sherrill Ford

Real happiness is cheap enough, yet how dearly we pay for its counterfeit.

—Hosea Ballou

JOURNAL RESPONSE Are name brands and designer logos important to you? Have you ever knowingly purchased something that pretended to be a luxury product but obviously wasn't, such as fake Versace sunglasses or an imitation Coach wallet? Do you have any reservations about making such purchases? Why, or why not? In your journal, write a few paragraphs exploring your thoughts about counterfeit goods.

Dana Thomas

Fashion journalist Dana Thomas (born 1964) grew up in an upscale neighborhood of Philadelphia, attended the American University in Washington, DC, and taught journalism at the American University in Paris. A contributing editor for the *Wall Street Journal's* monthly magazine *WSJ*, she was a style reporter for *Newsweek* and has contributed articles to the *New York Times Magazine*, the *New Yorker*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and *Vogue*, as well as several international newspapers. Noticing in the 1990s that high-end fashion brands such as Louis Vuitton, Gucci, and Prada had begun marketing low-end versions of their products, Thomas was inspired to research and write *Deluxe: How Luxury Lost Its Luster* (2007), an exposé of diminishing standards in the luxury industry that quickly became an international best-seller. She lives in Paris with her husband and daughter.

The Fake Trade

Thomas has been praised for offering an unexpected look at luxury merchandise and its impact on the people who make, sell, and buy it. In this article from *Harper's Bazaar Australia*, she relates a story about a little girl and a fake Louis Vuitton purse to explain why trading in counterfeit goods is not the victimless crime many shoppers assume it to be.

According to a study published last year by the British law firm Davenport Lyons, almost two-thirds of UK consumers are “proud to tell their family and friends that they bought fake luxury [fashion items].” And according to a 2003 survey carried out by Market & Opinion Research International in Great Britain, around a third of those questioned would consider buying counterfeit. Why? Because we still think of counterfeiting as a “victimless crime.” Buying a counterfeit Vuitton bag surely doesn’t affect the company, we reason. The parents of that Mill Valley girl probably wouldn’t have invested in a real Vuitton Murakami for her, so it wasn’t a loss of sales for the company.

8 But the reality is that we’re all victims of counterfeiting, whether from the loss of jobs or of tax revenue that could fund our schools and our roads, or because by buying counterfeit goods, we are financing international crime syndicates that deal in money laundering, human trafficking, and child labor. Each time I read the horrid tales about counterfeiting from my book, *Deluxe: How Luxury Lost Its Luster*—like the raid I went on in a clandestine factory in the industrial city of Guangzhou, China, where we found children making fake Dunhill and Versace handbags—audience members or radio listeners tell me they had no idea it was such a dark and dangerous world and that by purchasing these goods they were contributing personally to it. Then they invariably swear that they will never knowingly buy another fake good.

9 Brands as well as law enforcement have cracked down on the counterfeit business severely in the past few years, here in the US and abroad. I saw a difference in Hong Kong, for example: a decade ago, you could buy a fake Vuitton handbag or Burberry knapsack for a couple of bucks from a vendor in the subway; today you can’t even find them on the street. There are still dealers, but now they lurk in doorways, whispering, “Rolex? Chanel?” and you hurry down dark streets to armored hideaways to close the deal. To say it’s scary is an understatement. “If you can keep the stuff out of the public eye, you are halfway to winning the battle,” McDonald says. “The brands that are doing aggressive enforcement are hidden in back alleys and not on the street corners.”

10 As long as there is a demand, however, there will be a supply. Traditionally, the supply chain worked like this: an order of ten thousand handbags would be divided into ten groups of one thousand to be made—often by children—in hidden workshops in Guangzhou. Once completed, the items would be wrapped up and deposited in a neutral place, like the courtyard of a local school, where they were picked up by a local transporter, often simply a guy on a bike with a cart. The transporter delivered the package to the wholesaler, who would take it to another neutral place

to be picked up by the international shipping agent and put in a shipping container. The goods were often packed in shipments of foodstuffs or legitimately manufactured clothing to escape detection by receiving customs officials. Each time the goods changed hands, the prices doubled. All transactions were done in cash.

11 But as fashion companies grew wise to the process and went after the sources in China, leading to raids on workshops and busts at ports, the counterfeit-crime rings came up with new routes to supply fake goods: produce them, or at least finish them, in the destination country. Law enforcement witnessed this firsthand during a big bust this past October. The New York Police Department raided a commercial building in Queens, arrested thirteen, and seized around \$4 million in counterfeit apparel that carried the logos of major brands including Polo, Lacoste, Rocawear, the North Face, and 7 for All Mankind. Officers also found a stash of fake labels and buttons for Tommy Hilfinger, Nike, and Adidas as well as embroidery machines. Investigators believe that the site was a finishing facility. Workers took generic items that may have been imported legally and sewed on fake logos and labels, turning the items into counterfeit branded goods.

12 Another trick is to import counterfeit items that are hiding under a legitimate face. “Some of the counterfeiters put a whole separate coating on the bag, and you peel it off like contact paper to see the logo fabric underneath,” McDonald tells me. “We seized a load of Lacoste men’s dress shirts, and on the left breast pocket, where the alligator should be, there was a little generic label that read, ‘Metro.’ When you pulled out the threads and removed the Metro label, you found the alligator.”

13 There’s another method that is catching on rapidly: counterfeiters who will take a legitimate logo, tinker with it slightly, apply for a trademark for the new design, then import those items under a false pretense of legality, showing the official application paperwork as their defense. For example, a company takes the Ralph Lauren polo-horse-and-rider logo and puts the polo mallet down instead of up in the air. The counterfeiter files a trademark application with the US Patent and Trademark Office and gets a document that states the application is pending. “It’s a legitimate document fraudulently secured, and the application will probably be rejected in six months,” the intellectual-property counsel for a luxury brand explains to me. “But between now and then, the customs agents will approve the importation of the items—believing, incorrectly, that the pending application proves the importer must have a legitimate right to the trademark.”

14 By the time the brand realizes what’s going on, the lawyer says, thousands of items will have been imported and the counterfeiter will have

"made millions" and fled. Luxury companies discovered one operation using this technique about two years ago, and now several more have popped up. "We must be doing a good job, since counterfeiters are looking for such complicated ways to get in," the lawyer says.

People often ask me, "How do you know it's fake?"
 Well, if it's being sold at a fold-up table on a sidewalk corner or on the back of a peddler on the beach, chances are it's fake. Or if it's at a flea market. Or a church fundraiser. Or in Wal-Mart or Sam's Club or other discount mass retailers. In June 2006, Fendi filed suit in a US district court against Wal-Mart Stores, Inc., asserting that the world's largest retailer was selling counterfeit Fendi handbags and wallets in its Sam's Club stores. For example, one bag was offered for \$295; the legitimate Fendi handbag of the same design normally retailed for \$925. In the suit, Fendi stated that Wal-Mart has never purchased Fendi products and never checked with Fendi to see if the items were real. The case was settled out of court last summer after Sam's Club agreed to pay Fendi an undisclosed sum.

If you want to guarantee that your luxury-brand purchases are legitimate, don't shop in wholesale markets like those in Chinatown in Manhattan or Santee Alley in Los Angeles. "We'll go on raids on Chinatown wholesalers, and we'll find five or six suburban women standing there—customers," New York security expert Andrew Oberfeldt has told me. "We'll say to these women, 'The dealers take you down dark corridors, through locked doors. The police say, 'Open up!' The lights are turned out and everyone is told to be quiet. At what point did you realize that something was amiss here?'"

If you find an item for sale on the Internet for a price so low that it seems too good to be true, it probably is too good to be true. Last fall, the UK-based Authenticity Foundation, an international nonprofit organization devoted to raising public awareness about counterfeiting, launched *myauthentic.com*, a Web site that helps Internet shoppers determine if the products they are eyeing on the Web are real. It includes blogs and forums, news, myths, and tips on how to spot fakes; *eBay* now has links to the site. *eBay* also works with brands in its VeRO (Verified Rights Owner) program to find out if the items for offer on the site are genuine. If the brand deems a particular item to be counterfeit, the sale will be shut down. However, not all online sales sites have such verification processes in place. Besides, counterfeiters are known to post photos of genuine items to sell fakes. So as the old saying goes, buyer beware.

Of course, the best way to know if you are buying a genuine product is to buy it from the brand, either in directly operated boutiques or in a company's shop in a department store. If you are curious about the

authenticity of a used Vuitton item you purchased at a vintage shop or online, you can always contact one of the brand's boutiques.

Most important, we need to spread the word on the devastating effects counterfeiting has on society today. I didn't tell the girl in Mill Valley that her bag was fake. It wasn't her fault her family had given it to her. But if I had met her parents, I would have said something. Awareness is key. Counterfeiting will never go away—it's been around since the dawn of time—but we can surely cut it down to size if we just stop buying the stuff. Without the demand, the supply will shrink. It's up to us.

Meaning

1. Throughout her essay, Thomas repeats the words *counterfeit* and *legitimate*. How does she define these terms? Why is the distinction between the two important?
2. In paragraph 7, Thomas says that consumers believe counterfeiting is a "victimless crime." What does that mean? Does she believe it herself? Why does she bring it up?
3. Although Thomas stresses the importance of raising awareness of counterfeiting, she does not say anything to the girl with the fake designer handbag. Why not? Do you think she was right to keep quiet?
4. If any of the following words are new to you, try to guess their meanings from their context in Thomas's essay. Look up the words in a dictionary to check your guesses, and then use each word in a sentence of your own.

pirated (5)	flourishing (7)	pretense (13)
ingesting (6)	syndicates (8)	fraudulently (13)
feline (6)	clandestine (8)	counsel (13)
litigation (6)	invariably (8)	devastating (20)

Purpose and Audience

1. What seems to be Thomas's primary purpose in this piece? Does she want to express her opinion about counterfeit goods? persuade consumers not to buy them? educate her readers? How can you tell?
2. To whom does Thomas seem to be writing here? Why do you think so?

Method and Structure

1. How well does cause-and-effect analysis suit Thomas's subject? How does this method provide Thomas with an effective means of achieving her purpose?

2. "The Fake Trade" explores both causes and effects of counterfeiting. What, according to Thomas, are the main reasons for the practice? What are the most significant consequences?
3. Analyze the organization of Thomas's essay by creating an outline of her major points. What is the effect of this structure?
4. A journalist, Thomas supports her ideas with information from published studies and quotations from interviews with experts. Locate at least two examples of each. How effective do you find this evidence? Is it more, or less, persuasive than the examples she takes from her own experience? Why do you think so?
5. **OTHER METHODS** Thomas provides many examples (Chapter 7) of counterfeit goods, and she uses process analysis (Chapter 10) to describe how such goods are manufactured, distributed, and sold. What does she accomplish by using these methods?

Language

1. How does Thomas use transitions to guide readers through her cause-and-effect analysis?
2. How would you characterize Thomas's tone? Is it appropriate, given her purpose and her audience?

Writing Topics

1. **JOURNAL TO ESSAY** In your journal entry (p. 316), you wrote about your attitude toward counterfeit goods. Now that you've read "The Fake Trade," has your attitude changed in any way? Has Thomas persuaded you that counterfeiting has "devastating effects," or are you unmoved by her analysis? Why? Drawing on your own experience with fake goods and on what Thomas has to say, write an essay that argues for or against buying counterfeits. (If you share Thomas's concerns, be careful not just to repeat her points; look for additional examples of counterfeit products, and add your own reasons for rejecting them.)
2. Thomas focuses on luxury goods, but in paragraph 6 she mentions that medicine is frequently counterfeited as well, compromising the health and threatening the lives of people who inadvertently buy ineffective or tainted drugs. Many supporters of health-care reform have raised the same point to argue that drugmakers charge excessive prices for medications and that such costs should be controlled through government action. Write an essay that explores your thoughts on this issue. Should

everyone have access to safe and effective medications, regardless of cost? Who should pay? Should some drugs be made available to all while other drugs are available only to those who can afford them? Do pharmaceutical companies have an obligation to make drugs affordable, or do they have a right to profit from the fruits of their research and development efforts? What, if anything, can be done to strike a fair balance between patients' and corporations' needs?

3. **CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS** Thomas suggests that American culture promotes a desire for luxury, or at least an approximation of it. Many cultures, however, actively discourage indulgence, prizing thrift and generosity over personal acquisition. Write an essay that defends or argues against consumption for its own sake, making a point of explaining what, in your mind, constitutes a necessity and a luxury. Do we have a right—even an obligation—to spend money on things we don't truly need? Why, or why not?
4. **CONNECTIONS** In "The Fake Trade," Thomas shows how efforts to get a bargain can impose high costs on people in less affluent countries. Conversely, Stephanie Alaimo and Mark Koester, in "The Backdraft of Technology" (p. 311), assert that self-checkout machines and similar labor-saving technologies ship jobs overseas. Write an essay that compares these authors' beliefs about the benefits and drawbacks of a global economy. What assumptions, if any, do both essays share? Where do their perspectives diverge? How do their attitudes reinforce or conflict with your own views?

WRITING WITH THE METHOD

CAUSE-AND-EFFECT ANALYSIS

Select one of the following questions, or any question they suggest, and answer it in an essay developed by analyzing causes or effects. The question you choose should concern a topic you care about so that your cause-and-effect analysis is a means of communicating an idea, not an end in itself.

People and Their Behavior

1. What makes a soldier, police officer, or firefighter a hero?
2. What does a sound body contribute to a sound mind?
3. Why do people root for the underdog?
4. How does a person's alcohol or drug dependency affect others?

Gender and Sexuality

5. Why would a man or woman enter a field that has traditionally been filled by the opposite sex, such as nursing or engineering?
6. What effect has the legalization of gay marriage in several states had on you and your friends?
7. At what age should a person be allowed to seek gender-reassignment surgery, and why?
8. How has feminism changed men's lives, for better or for worse?

Art and Entertainment

9. Why did hip-hop music become so popular both in the United States and abroad?
10. How has the Internet changed the music industry?
11. What makes some professional sports teams succeed year after year while others consistently fail?
12. What impact has a particular television show or movie had on American culture?

Contemporary Issues

13. Why does the United States spend so much money on health care?
14. How will global climate change influence the nature and frequency of extreme weather events?
15. Is a college education worth the expense?
16. Why have political debates become so heated and angry?

WRITING ABOUT THE THEME

INVESTIGATING THE WORKING WORLD

1. The writers in this chapter seem to take a dim view of the working world. Barbara Ehrenreich (p. 298) and Stephanie Alaimo and Mark Koester (p. 311) portray service workers as victims. Malcolm Gladwell (p. 299) suggests that success in the workplace is determined by forces beyond our control. Dana Thomas (p. 316) describes the "horrid" reality of child labor in China and the dangers counterfeit workers face as they do their jobs. And Ellen Goodman (p. 306) equates work with death. But for many people, working is a source of happiness, even joy. Some define themselves by the work they do; some take deep satisfaction in their efforts; others enjoy the benefits of employment even if they don't particularly like their jobs. What does work mean to you? Is it merely a means to a paycheck, or do you expect to get something more out of a job or career? Write an essay explaining how you perceive work, making sure to provide plenty of examples to support your claims. To get started, you might want to think about a job you particularly enjoyed or hated, or what kind of career you want to start when you finish college.
2. Many of the writers in this chapter examine the unintended consequences of actions taken by businesses and consumers. Stephanie Alaimo and Mark Koester's warning against self-service checkout and Dana Thomas's exposé on counterfeiting are most notable in this respect, but even Barbara Ehrenreich's analysis of high rents suggests wealthier people's real estate purchases can affect lower-income strangers. Think of a contemporary product or service that you believe holds the potential to do unexpected harm — or that could bring unanticipated benefits — and write an essay predicting its consequences. (Be sure to review the cause-and-effect guidelines on pp. 296–98 and 300–305 before beginning your analysis.)
3. Although the writers represented in this chapter all touch on questions of success or failure, their tones vary widely, from urgent to ironic to moralistic. Choose the two selections that seem most different in tone, and analyze how their tones help clarify the authors' points. Is one piece's tone more effective than the other's? If so, why?