

Reading Argument and Persuasion

Technically, argument and persuasion are two different processes:

- *Argument* appeals mainly to an audience's sense of reason in order to negotiate a common understanding or to win agreement with a claim. It is the method of a columnist who defends a president's foreign policy on the grounds of economics and defense strategy.
- *Persuasion* appeals mainly to an audience's feelings and values in order to compel some action, or at least to win support for an action. It is the method of a mayoral candidate who urges voters to support her because she is sensitive to the poor.

But argument and persuasion so often mingle that we will use the one term *argument* to mean a deliberate appeal to an audience's reason and emotions in order to create compromise, win agreement, or compel action. Making an effective case for an opinion requires upholding certain responsibilities and attending to several established techniques of argumentation, most of them dating back to ancient Greece.

▶ The Elements of Argument

All arguments share certain elements:

- *The core of any argument is a debatable claim about the subject.* Generally, this **assertion** or **proposition** is expressed as a thesis statement. It may defend or attack a position, suggest a solution to a problem, recommend a change in policy, or challenge a value or belief. Here are a few examples:

The college should give first priority for on-campus jobs to students who need financial aid.

School prayer has been rightly declared unconstitutional and should not be reinstated in any form.

Smokers who wish to poison themselves should be allowed to do so, but not in any place where their smoke will poison others.

- *The central assertion is broken down into subclaims*, each one supported by evidence.

- *Significant opposing arguments are raised and dispensed with*, again with the support of evidence.

ARGUMENT AND PERSUASION DISCUSSING SOCIAL ISSUES

Since we argue all the time—with relatives, with friends, with the auto mechanic or a sales associate—a chapter devoted to argument and persuasion may at first seem unnecessary. But arguing with a sales associate over the cost of an extended warranty is quite a different process from arguing with readers over a complex issue. In both cases we are trying to find common ground with our audience, perhaps to change others' views or even to compel them to act as we wish. But the salesperson is in front of us; we can shift our tactics in response to his or her gestures, expressions, and words. The reader, in contrast, is "out there"; we have to anticipate those gestures, expressions, and words in the way we structure the argument, the kinds of evidence we use to support it, even the way we conceive of the subject.

A great many assertions that are worth making are debatable at some level—whether over the facts on which the assertions are based or over the values they imply. Two witnesses to an accident cannot agree on what they saw; two economists cannot agree on what measures will reduce unemployment; two doctors cannot agree on what constitutes life or death. We see such disagreements play out in writing all the time, whether we're reading an accident report, a magazine article claiming the benefits of unemployment rates, or an editorial responding to a Supreme Court decision.

■ *The parts of the argument are organized into a clear, logical structure that pushes steadily toward the conclusion.*

A writer may draw on classification, comparison, or any other rhetorical method to develop the entire argument or to introduce evidence or strengthen the conclusion. For instance, in a proposal arguing for raising a college's standards of admission, a dean might contrast the existing standards with the proposed standards, analyze a process for raising the standards over a period of years, and predict the effects of the new standards on future students' preparedness for college work.

► Appeals to Readers

Effective arguments appeal to readers: they ask others to listen to what someone has to say, judge the words fairly, and, as much as possible, agree with the writer. Most arguments combine three kinds of appeals to readers: ethical, emotional, and rational. These appeals are sometimes referred to as *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*.

Ethical Appeal

Known to classical rhetoricians as *ethos* (the Greek word for "character"), the **ethical appeal** is often not explicit in an argument, yet it pervades the whole. It is the sense a writer conveys of his or her expertise and character, projected by the reasonableness of the argument, by the use of evidence, and by tone. A rational argument shows readers that the writer is thinking logically and fairly (see pp. 330–32). Strong evidence establishes credibility (see pp. 336–38). And a sincere, reasonable tone demonstrates balance and goodwill (see pp. 340–41).

Emotional Appeal

An **emotional appeal** (*pathos* in Greek) aims directly for readers' hearts—for the beliefs, values, and feelings deeply embedded in all of us. We are just as often motivated by these ingrained ideas and emotions as by our intellects. Even scientists, who stress the rational interpretation of facts above all else, are sometimes influenced in their interpretations by emotions deriving from, say, competition with other scientists. And the willingness of a nation's citizens to go to war may result more from their patriotism and pride than from their reasoned considerations of risks and

gains. An emotional appeal in an argument attempts to tap such feelings for any of several reasons:

- To heighten the responsiveness of readers
- To inspire readers to new beliefs
- To compel readers to act
- To assure readers that their values remain unchallenged

A writer's use of *pathos* may be explicit, as when an argument against capital punishment appeals to readers' religious values by citing the Bible's Sixth Commandment, "Thou shalt not kill." But an emotional appeal may also be less obvious, because individual words may have **connotations** that elicit emotional responses from readers. For instance, one writer may characterize an environmental group as "a well-organized team representing diverse interests," while another may call the same group "a hodgepodge of nature lovers and profit-seeking businesspeople." The first appeals to readers' preference for order and balance, the second to readers' fear of extremism and disdain for greed.

The use of *pathos* requires care:

- *An emotional appeal must be directed at the audience's actual beliefs and feelings.*
- *An emotional appeal must be presented calmly enough that readers have no reason to doubt the fairness in the rest of the argument.*
- *An emotional appeal must be appropriate to the subject and to the argument.* For instance, in arguing against a pay raise for city councilors, a legislator might be tempted to appeal to voters' resentment of wealthy people by pointing out that two of the councilors are rich enough to work for nothing. But such an appeal would divert attention from the issue of whether the pay raise is justified for all councilors on the basis of the work they do and the city's ability to pay the extra cost.

Carefully used, *pathos* has great force, particularly when it contributes to an argument based largely on sound reasoning and evidence. The appropriate mix of emotion and reason in a given essay is entirely dependent on the subject, the writer's purpose, and the audience. Emotions are out of place in most arguments in the natural sciences, for instance, where rational interpretations of factual evidence are all that will convince readers of the truth of an assertion. But emotional appeals may be essential to persuade an audience to support or take an action, for emotion is frequently a stronger motivator than reason.

Rational Appeal

A rational appeal is one that, as the name implies, addresses the rational faculties of readers—their capacity to reason logically about a problem. It establishes the truth of a proposition or claim by moving through a series of related subclaims, each supported by evidence. In doing so, rational appeals—*logos* to the ancient Greeks—follow processes of reasoning that are natural to all of us. These processes are induction and deduction.

INDUCTION Inductive reasoning moves from the particular to the general, from evidence to a generalization or conclusion about the evidence. It is a process we begin learning in infancy and use daily throughout our lives: a child burns herself the first two times she touches a stove, so she concludes that stoves burn; a moviegoer has liked four movies directed by Guillermo del Toro, so he forms the generalization that Guillermo del Toro makes good movies. Inductive reasoning is also very common in argument: a nurse administrator might offer data to show that two hundred past patients in the psychiatric ward received drugs but no therapy and then conclude that the hospital relies exclusively on drugs to treat mental illness.

The movement from particular to general is called an *inductive leap* because we must make something of a jump to conclude that what is true of some instances (the patients whose records were examined) is also true of all other instances in the class (the rest of the patients). In an ideal world we could perhaps avoid the inductive leap by pinning down every conceivable instance, but in the real world such thoroughness is usually impractical and often impossible. Instead, we gather enough evidence to make our generalizations probable. The evidence for induction may be of several kinds:

- **Facts:** statistics or other hard data that are verifiable or, falling that, attested to by reliable sources (for instance, the types of drugs prescribed, derived from hospital records).
- **The opinions of recognized experts on the subject,** opinions that are themselves conclusions based on research and observation (for instance, the testimony of an experienced hospital doctor).
- **Examples** illustrating the evidence (for instance, the treatment history of one patient).

DEDUCTION A sound inductive generalization can form the basis for the second reasoning process, **deductive reasoning.** Working from the gen-

eral to the particular, we start with such a generalization and apply it to a new situation in order to draw a conclusion about that situation. Like induction, deduction is a process we use constantly to order our experience. The child who learns from two experiences that all stoves burn then sees a new stove and concludes that this stove also will burn. The child's thought process can be written in the form of a **syllogism**, a three-step outline of deductive reasoning:

All stoves burn me.

This is a stove.

Therefore, this stove will burn me.

The first statement, the generalization derived from induction, is called the *major premise*. The second statement, a more specific assertion about some element of the major premise, is called the *minor premise*. And the third statement, an assertion of the logical connection between the premises, is called the *conclusion*. The following syllogism takes the earlier example about a psychiatric ward one step further:

MAJOR PREMISE The hospital relies exclusively on drugs to treat psychiatric patients.

MINOR PREMISE Drugs do not cure mental illness.

CONCLUSION Therefore, the hospital does not cure psychiatric patients.

Unlike an inductive conclusion, which requires a leap, the deductive conclusion derives necessarily from the premises: as long as the reasoning process is valid and the premises are accepted as true, then the conclusion must also be true. To be valid, the reasoning must conform to the process outlined earlier. The following syllogism is *not* valid, even though the premises are true:

All radicals want to change the system.

Georgia Allport wants to change the system.

Therefore, Georgia Allport is a radical.

The flaw in this syllogism is that not *only* radicals want to change the system, so Allport does not *necessarily* fall within the class of radicals just because she wants to change the system. The conclusion, then, is invalid.

A syllogism can be valid without being true if either of the premises is untrue. For example:

All people who want political change are radicals.

Georgia Allport wants political change.

Therefore, Georgia Allport is a radical.

The conclusion here is valid because Allport falls within the class of people who want political change. But the conclusion is untrue because the major premise is untrue. As commonly defined, a radical seeks extreme change, often by revolutionary means. But other forms and means of change are also possible. Allport, for instance, may be interested in improving the delivery of services to the poor and in achieving passage of tougher environmental-protection laws—both political changes, to be sure, but neither radical.

In arguments, syllogisms are rarely spelled out as neatly as in these examples. Sometimes the order of the statements is reversed, as in this sentence paraphrasing a Supreme Court decision:

The state may not imprison a man just because he is too poor to pay a fine; the only justification for imprisonment is a certain danger to society, and poverty does not constitute certain danger.

The buried syllogism can be stated thus:

MAJOR PREMISE The state may imprison only those who are a certain danger to society.

MINOR PREMISE A man who is too poor to pay a fine is not a certain danger to society.

CONCLUSION Therefore, the state cannot imprison a man just because he is too poor to pay a fine.

Often, one of a syllogism's premises or even its conclusion is implied but not expressed. Each of the following sentences omits one part of the same syllogism:

All five students cheated, so they should be expelled. [Implied major premise: cheaters should be expelled.]

Cheaters should be punished by expulsion, so all five students should be expelled. [Implied minor premise: all five students cheated.]

Cheaters should be punished by expulsion, and all five students cheated. [Implied conclusion: all five students should be expelled.]

► Fallacies

Inappropriate emotional appeals and flaws in reasoning—called logical fallacies—can trap writers as they construct arguments. Watch out for the following errors:

■ *Hasty generalization*: an inductive conclusion that leaps to include *all* instances when at best only *some* instances provide any evidence. Hasty generalizations form some of our worst stereotypes:

Physically challenged people are mentally challenged, too.
African Americans are good athletes.
Italians are volatile.

■ *Oversimplification*: an inductive conclusion that ignores complexities in the evidence that, if heeded, would weaken the conclusion or suggest an entirely different one. For example:

The newspaper folded because it couldn't compete with the Internet.
Although the Internet may have taken some business from the newspaper, other newspapers continue to thrive; thus the Internet could not be the only cause of the newspaper's failure.

■ *Begging the question*: assuming a conclusion in the statement of a premise, and thus begging readers to accept the conclusion—the question—before it is proved. For example:

We can trust the president not to neglect the needy because he is a compassionate man.

This sentence asserts in a circular fashion that the president is not uncompassionate because he is compassionate. He may indeed be compassionate, but the question that needs addressing is what will he do for the needy.

■ *Ignoring the question*: introducing an issue or consideration that shifts the argument away from the real issue. Offering an emotional appeal as a premise in a logical argument is a form of ignoring the question. The following sentence, for instance, appeals to pity, not to logic:

The mayor was badly used by people he loved and trusted, so we should not blame him for the corruption in his administration.

■ *Ad hominem* (Latin for "to the man"): a form of ignoring the question by attacking the opponent instead of the opponent's arguments. For example:

O'Brien is married to a convict, so her proposals for prison reform should not be taken seriously.

■ *Either-or*: requiring that readers choose between two interpretations or actions when in fact the choices are more numerous.

Either we imprison all drug users, or we will become their prisoners.

The factors contributing to drug addiction, and the choices for dealing with it, are obviously more complex than this statement suggests. Not all either-or arguments are invalid, for sometimes the alternatives encompass all the possibilities. But when they do not, the argument is false.

■ *Non sequitur* (Latin for "it does not follow"): a conclusion derived illogically or erroneously from stated or implied premises. For instance:

Children are too immature to engage in sex, so they should not be taught about it.

This sentence implies one of two meanings, both of them questionable: only the sexually active can learn anything about sex, or teaching children about sex will cause them to engage in it.

■ *Post hoc* (from the Latin *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*, "after this, therefore because of this"): assuming that because one thing preceded another, it must have caused the other. For example:

After the town banned smoking in public places, the incidence of vandalism went up.

Many things may have caused the rise in vandalism, including warmer weather and a climbing unemployment rate. It does not follow that the ban on smoking, and that alone, caused the rise.

Analyzing Argument and Persuasion in Paragraphs

Jenny Price (born 1960) is a public scholar whose research interests include history and environment. The following paragraph is from "Gun Violence at UC Irvine," a 2009 op-ed article she wrote for the *Los Angeles Times* in response to readers' shock that a woman was shot and killed in a college neighborhood generally considered safe. The paragraph offers an inductive argument.

Twelve thousand people are shot to death in the United States every year—accounting for more than two out of every three killings. That's an average of 33 people daily. An additional 240 people get shot and injured every day, and more than 65 million Americans own a total of 283 million firearms. Where, exactly, do we expect the 12,000 homicides to happen? Do we really think that the places with gangs and high crime rates are the only places where people are going to use their guns? The widespread numbness to the especially high murder rates in our poor inner-city neighborhoods is egregious enough. But that's matched by the widespread denial that the epidemic of gun violence is playing out every day in every kind of neighborhood across America.

Evidence:

Number of gun-related homicides
Number of non-fatal shootings
Extent of gun ownership

The generalization (underlined): shootings can happen anywhere

Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929–68), was a revered and powerful leader of the civil rights movement during the 1950s and 1960s. When leading sit-ins, boycotts, and marches, he always insisted on nonviolent resistance. In this paragraph from "Letter from Birmingham Jail" (1963), King uses deduction to argue in favor of civil disobedience.

You express a great deal of anxiety over our willingness to break laws. This is certainly a legitimate concern. Since we so diligently urge people to obey the Supreme Court's decision of 1954 outlawing segregation in the public schools, at first glance it may seem rather paradoxical for us consciously to break laws. One may well ask: "How can you advocate breaking some laws and obeying others?" The answer lies in the fact that there are two types of laws: just and unjust. I would be the first to advocate obeying just laws. One has not only a legal but a moral responsibility to obey just laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws. I would agree with St. Augustine that "an unjust law is no law at all."

Major premise: laws should be obeyed

Minor premise: some laws are unjust and therefore are not laws

Conclusion: unjust laws should not be obeyed

Developing an Argumentative and Persuasive Essay

▶ Getting Started

You will have many chances to write arguments, from defending or opposing a policy such as progressive taxation in an economics course to justifying a new procedure at work to persuading a company to refund your money for a bad product. To choose a subject for an argumentative essay, consider a behavior or policy that irks you, an opinion you want to defend, a change you would like to see implemented, or a way to solve a problem. The subject you pick should meet certain criteria:

- *It should be something you have some knowledge of*—from your own experience or observations, from class discussions, or from reading, although you may need to do further research as well.
- *It should be limited to a topic you can treat thoroughly in the space and time available to you*—for instance, the quality of computer instruction at your school rather than in the whole nation.
- *It should be something that you feel strongly about* so that you can make a convincing case. (However, it's best to avoid subjects that you can't view with some objectivity, seeing the opposite side as well as your own; otherwise, you may not be open to flaws in your argument, and you may not be able to represent the opposition fairly.)

Once you have selected a subject, do some preliminary research to make sure that you will have enough evidence to support your opinion. This step is especially important with issues that we all tend to have opinions about whether we know the facts or not, such as welfare cheating or tax advantages for the wealthy. Where to seek evidence depends on the nature of your argument.

- *For an argument derived from your own experiences and observations*, such as a recommendation that all students work part-time for the education if not for the money, gathering evidence will be primarily a matter of searching your own thoughts and also uncovering opposing views, perhaps by consulting others.

- *For some arguments derived from personal experience*, you can strengthen your evidence with judicious use of facts and opinions from other sources. An essay arguing in favor of vegetarianism, for instance,

could mix the benefits you have felt with those demonstrated by scientific data.

- *For an argument on a nonpersonal or a controversial subject*, you will have to gather the evidence of other sources. Though you might strongly favor or oppose a massive federal investment in solar-energy research, your opinions would count little if they were not supported with facts and the opinions of experts.

For advice on conducting research and using the evidence you find, see the Appendix.

In addition to evidence, knowledge of readers' needs and expectations is absolutely crucial in planning an argument. In explanatory writing, detail and clarity alone may accomplish your purpose, but you can't hope to move readers in a certain direction unless you have some idea of where they stand. You need a sense of their background in your subject, of course. But even more, you need a good idea of their values and beliefs, their attitudes toward your subject—in short, their willingness to be convinced. In a composition class, your readers will probably be your instructor and your classmates, a small but diverse group. A good target when you are addressing a diverse audience is the reader who is neutral or mildly biased one way or the other toward your subject. This person you can hope to influence as long as your argument is reasonable, your evidence is thorough and convincing, your treatment of opposing views is fair, and your appeals to readers' emotions are appropriate to your purpose, your subject, and especially your readers' values and feelings.

▶ Forming a Thesis

With your subject and some evidence in hand, you should develop a tentative thesis. But don't feel you have to prove your thesis at this early stage; fixing it too firmly may make you unwilling to reshape it if further evidence, your audience, or the structure of your argument so demands.

Stating your thesis in a preliminary thesis sentence can help you form your idea. Make this sentence as clear and specific as possible. Don't resort to a vague generality or a nondebatable statement of fact. Instead, state the precise opinion you want readers to accept or the precise action you want them to take or support. For instance:

VAGUE Computer instruction is important.

NONDEBATABLE The school's investment in computer instruction is less than the average investment of the nation's colleges and universities.

PRECISE Money designated for new dormitories and athletic facilities should be diverted to constructing computer facilities and hiring first-rate computer faculty.

VAGUE Cloning research is promising.

NONDEBATABLE Scientists have been experimenting with cloning procedures for many years.

PRECISE Those who oppose cloning research should consider the potentially valuable medical applications.

Since an argumentative thesis is essentially an opinion reached by examining evidence, you will probably need to do some additional reading to ensure that you have a broad range of facts and ideas supporting not only your view of a subject but also any opposing views. Though it may be tempting to ignore your opposition in the hope that readers know nothing of it, it is dishonest and probably futile to do so. Acknowledging and, whenever possible, refuting significant opposing views will enhance your credibility with readers. If you find that some counterarguments damage your own argument too greatly, then you will have to rethink your thesis.

► Organizing

Once you have formulated your thesis and evaluated your reasons and evidence against the needs and expectations of your audience, begin planning how you will arrange your argument.

The **introduction** to your essay should draw readers into your framework, making them see how the subject affects them and predisposing them to consider your argument. Sometimes a forthright approach works best, but an eye-opening anecdote or quotation can also be effective. Your thesis sentence may end your introduction. However, if you think readers will not even entertain your thesis until they have seen some or all of your evidence, withhold your thesis for later.

The body of the essay consists of your reasons and your evidence for them. The evidence you generated or collected should suggest the reasons that will support the claim of your thesis—essentially the minor arguments that bolster the main argument. In an essay favoring federal investment in solar-energy research, for instance, the minor arguments might include the need for sustainable resources, the feasibility of widespread use of solar energy, and its cost and safety compared with other energy sources. It is in developing these minor arguments that you are most

likely to use induction and deduction consciously—generalizing from specifics or applying generalizations to new information. Thus the minor arguments provide the entry points for your evidence, and together they should encompass all the relevant evidence.

Unless the minor arguments form a chain, with each link growing out of the one before, their order should be determined by their potential effects on readers. In general, it is most effective to arrange the reasons in order of increasing importance or strength so as to finish powerfully. But to engage readers in the argument from the start, try to begin with a reason that they will find compelling or that they already know and accept; that way, the weaker reasons will be sandwiched between a strong beginning and an even stronger ending.

The views opposing yours can be raised and refuted wherever it seems most appropriate to do so. If a counterargument pertains to just one of your minor arguments, then dispose of it at that point. But if the counterarguments are more basic, pertaining to your whole thesis, you should dispose of them either after the introduction or shortly before the conclusion. Bring up counterarguments early if the opposition is particularly strong and you fear that readers will be disinclined to listen unless you address their concerns first. Hold counterarguments for the end when they are generally weak or easily dispensed with once you've presented your case.

In the **conclusion** to your essay, you may summarize the main point of your argument and restate your thesis from your introduction, or state it for the first time if you have saved it for the end. An effective quotation, an appropriate emotional appeal, or a call for support or action can often provide a strong finish to an argument.

► Drafting

While you are drafting the essay, work to make your reasoning clear by showing how each bit of evidence relates to the reason or minor argument being discussed and how each minor argument relates to the main argument contained in the thesis. In working through the reasons and evidence, you may find it helpful to state each reason as the first sentence in a paragraph and then support it in the following sentences. If this scheme seems too rigid or creates overlapping paragraphs, you can always make changes after you have written your draft. Draw on a range of methods to clarify your points. For instance, define specialized terms or those you use in a special sense, compare and contrast one policy or piece of evidence with another, or carefully analyze causes or effects.

► Revising and Editing

When your draft is complete, use the following questions and the Focus box to guide your revision and editing.

- *Is your thesis debatable, precise, and clear?* Readers must know what you are trying to convince them of, at least by the end of the essay if not up front.
- *Is your argument unified?* Does each minor claim support the thesis? Do all opinions, facts, and examples provide evidence for a minor claim? On behalf of your readers, question every sentence you have written to be sure it contributes to the point you are making and to the argument as a whole.
- *Is the structure of your argument clear and compelling?* Readers should be able to follow easily, seeing when and why you move from one idea to the next.
- *Is the evidence specific, representative, and adequate?* Facts, examples, and expert opinions should be well detailed, should fairly represent the available information, and should be sufficient to support your claim.
- *Have you slipped into any logical fallacies?* Detecting fallacies in your own work can be difficult, but your readers will find them if you don't. Look for the fallacies discussed earlier (pp. 332–34): hasty generalization, oversimplification, begging the question, ignoring the question, ad hominem, either-or, non sequitur, and post hoc. (All of these are also listed in the Glossary under *fallacies*.)

FOCUS ON TONE

Readers are most likely to be persuaded by an argument when they sense a strong *ethos*, meaning that the writer comes across as reasonable, trustworthy, and sincere. A rational appeal, strong evidence, and acknowledgment of opposing views do much to convey these attributes, but so does **tone**, the attitude implied by word choices and sentence structures.

Generally, you should try for a tone of moderation in your view of your subject and a tone of respectfulness and goodwill toward readers and opponents.

- State opinions and facts calmly:

OVEREXCITED One clueless administrator was quoted in the newspaper as saying she thought many students who claim learning disabilities are faking their difficulties to obtain special treatment! Has she never heard of dyslexia, attention deficit disorder, and other well-established disabilities?

CALM Particularly worrisome was one administrator's statement, quoted in the newspaper, that many students who claim learning disabilities may be "faking" their difficulties to obtain special treatment.

- Replace arrogance with deference:

ARROGANT I happen to know that many students would rather party or just bury their heads in the sand than get involved in a serious, worthy campaign against the school's unjust learning-disabled policies.

DEFERENTIAL Time pressures and lack of information about the issues may prevent students from joining the campaign against the school's unjust learning-disabled policies.

- Replace sarcasm with plain speaking:

SARCASTIC Of course, the administration knows even without meeting students what is best for every one of them.

PLAIN SPEAKING The administration should agree to meet with each learning-disabled student to understand his or her needs.

- Choose words whose connotations convey reasonableness rather than anger, hostility, or another negative emotion:

HOSTILE The administration coerced some students into dropping their lawsuits. [*Coerced* implies the use of threats.]

REASONABLE The administration convinced some students to drop their lawsuits. [*Convinced* implies the use of reason.]

See pages 37–38 for more on tone and pages 52–53 for more on connotation.

A Note on Thematic Connections

Argument and persuasion is the ideal method for presenting an opinion or a proposal on a controversial topic, making it a natural choice for the writers in this chapter, all of whom wanted to make a case about a social or political concern. In paragraphs, Jenny Price argues that we should expect gun violence rather than be shocked by it (p. 335), while Martin Luther King, Jr., urges readers to condone civil disobedience (p. 335). Anna Quindlen asserts that changing our attitude toward mental illness may help to prevent school shootings (opposite). In an essay based on careful research and his own experience as an inmate, Charlie Spence explains why he believes that trying juveniles as adults is morally wrong (p. 349). Sherry Turkle draws on her work as a social psychologist to warn that giving up privacy online damages the foundations of our democracy (p. 356). And the final three essays all touch on issues of immigration: George F. Will (p. 363) and Marie Myung-Ok Lee (p. 368) square off on the question of whether children born in America to illegal immigrants should be granted citizenship, while Roberto Rodriguez (p. 374) insists that calls for immigration reform are both racist at heart and beside the point.

I am not insane. I am angry. . . . I killed because people like me are mistreated every day.

He just seemed strange. . . . He didn't seem dangerous in any way.

The reality is that schools are very safe environments for our kids. —Jim Mercy
—Karan Grewal

JOURNAL RESPONSE School shootings seem to have become an epidemic in the United States. Most notoriously, in 1999 two students at Columbine High School in Colorado killed thirteen people, in 2007 a student at Virginia Tech killed thirty-two people, and in 2012 a former student forced his way into an elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut, killing twenty children and six adults. Because of such tragedies, many students now must pass through locked doors and metal detectors on their way to class, and several school districts have initiated zero-tolerance policies that call for the removal of children who show any potential to do harm. How do you feel about the violence and its consequences? In a journal entry, comment on the problem of student violence. How extensive is it? What causes it? What should be done about it?

Anna Quindlen

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize for commentary in 1992, Anna Quindlen writes sharp, candid columns on subjects ranging from family life to social issues to international politics. She was born in 1953 in Philadelphia, where she grew up, as she puts it, “an antsy kid with a fresh mouth.” After graduating from Barnard College, Quindlen began writing for the *New York Post* and then joined the *New York Times*, where she worked her way up from a city hall reporter to a columnist. From 1999 to 2009 she wrote a regular column for *Newsweek*. Her columns have been collected in *Living Out Loud* (1988), *Thinking Out Loud* (1993), and *Loud and Clear* (2004). Quindlen is also the author of the nonfiction books *How Reading Changed My Life* (1998), *A Short Guide to a Happy Life* (2000), and *Being Perfect* (2005); the memoirs *Good Dog. Stay.* (2007) and *Lots of Candles, Plenty of Cake* (2012); and the novels *Object Lessons* (1991), *One True Thing* (1994), *Black and Blue* (1998), *Blessings* (2002), *Rise and Shine* (2006), *Every Last One* (2010), and *Still Life with Bread Crumbs* (2014).

The C Word in the Hallways

Quindlen wrote this selection in November 1999, a few months after the massacre at Columbine High School. Similar events since then have made her message as urgent as ever.

The saddest phrase I've read in a long time is this one: psychological autopsy. That's what the doctors call it when a kid kills himself, and they go back over the plowed ground of his short life, and discover all the hidden markers that led to the rope, the blade, the gun.

There's a plague on all our houses, and since it doesn't announce itself with lumps or spots or protest marches, it has gone unremarked in the quiet suburbs and busy cities where it has been laying waste. The number of suicides and homicides committed by teenagers, most often young men, has exploded in the last three decades, until it has become routine to have black-bordered photographs in yearbooks and murder suspects with acne problems. And everyone searches for reasons, and scapegoats, and solutions, most often punitive. Yet one solution continues to elude us, and that is ending the ignorance about mental health, and moving it from the margins of care and into the mainstream where it belongs. As surely as any vaccine, this would save lives.

So many have already been lost. This month Kip Kinkel was sentenced to life in prison in Oregon for the murders of his parents and a shooting rampage at his high school that killed two students. A psychiatrist who specializes in the care of adolescents testified that Kinkel, now seventeen, had been hearing voices since he was twelve. Sam Manzie is also seventeen. He is serving a seventy-year sentence for luring an eleven-year-old boy named Eddie Werner into his New Jersey home and strangling him with the cord to an alarm clock because his Sega Genesis was out of reach. Manzie had his first psychological evaluation in the first grade.

Excuses, excuses. That's what so many think of the underlying pathology in such hideous crimes. In the 1956 movie *The Bad Seed*, little Patty McCormack played what was then called a "homicidal maniac" and the film censors demanded a ludicrous mock curtain call in which the child actress was taken over the knee of her screen father and spanked. There are still some representatives of the "good spanking" school out there, although today the spanking may wind up being life in prison. And there's still plenty of that useless adult "what in the world does a sixteen-year-old have to be depressed about" mind-set to keep depressed sixteen-year-olds from getting help.

It's true that both the Kinkel and the Manzie boys had already been introduced to the mental health system before their crimes. Concerned by her son's fascination with weapons, Faith Kinkel took him for nine sessions with a psychologist in the year before the shootings. Because of his rages and his continuing relationship with a pedophile, Sam's parents had tried to have him admitted to a residential facility just days before their son invited Eddie in.

But they were threading their way through a mental health system that is marginalized by shame, ignorance, custom, the courts, even by business practice. Kip Kinkel's father made no secret of his disapproval of therapy. During its course he bought his son the Glock that Kip would later use on his killing spree, which speaks sad volumes about our peculiar standards of masculinity. Sam's father, on the other hand, spent days trying to figure out how much of the cost of a home for troubled kids his insurance would cover. In the meantime, a psychiatrist who examined his son for less time than it takes to eat a Happy Meal concluded that he was no danger to himself or others, and a judge lectured Sam from the bench: "You know the difference between right and wrong, don't you?"

The federal Center for Mental Health Services estimates that at least six million children in this country have some serious emotional disturbance and, for some of them, right and wrong take second seat to the voices in their heads. Fifty years ago their parents might have surrendered them to life in an institution, or a doctor flying blind with an ice pick might have performed a lobotomy, leaving them to loll away their days. Now lots of them wind up in jail. Warm fuzzies aside, consider this from a utilitarian point of view: psychological intervention is cheaper than incarceration.

The most optimistic estimate is that two-thirds of these emotionally disturbed children are not getting any treatment. Imagine how we would respond if two-thirds of America's babies were not being immunized. Many health insurance plans do not provide coverage for necessary treatment, or financially penalize those who need a psychiatrist instead of an oncologist. Teachers are not trained to recognize mental illness, and some dismiss it, "Bad Seed" fashion, as bad behavior. Parents are afraid, and ashamed, creating a home environment, and national atmosphere, too, that tells teenagers their demons are a disgrace.

And then there are the teenagers themselves, slouching toward adulthood in a world that loves conformity. Add to the horror of creeping depression or delusions that of peer derision, the sound of the C word in the hallways: crazy, man, he's crazy, haven't you seen him, didn't you hear? Boys, especially, still suspect that talk therapy, or even heartfelt talk,

is somehow sissified, weak. Sometimes even their own fathers think so, at least until they have to identify the body.

Another sad little phrase is "If only," and there are always plenty of them littering the valleys of tragedy. If only there had been long-term intervention and medication, Kip Kinkel might be out of jail, off the taxpayers' tab, and perhaps leading a productive life. If only Sam Manzie had been treated aggressively earlier, new psychotropic drugs might have slowed or stilled his downward slide. And if only those things had happened, Faith Kinkel, William Kinkel, Mikael Nickolauson, Ben Walker, and Eddie Werner might all be alive today. Mental health care is health care, too, and mental illness is an illness, not a character flaw. Insurance providers should act like it. Hospitals and schools should act like it. Above all, we parents should act like it. Then maybe the kids will believe it.

Meaning

1. What is Quindlen's main idea, and where do you find it in the essay?
2. What examples of teen violence does Quindlen give? What reason does she provide to explain these students' behavior?
3. Why is Quindlen so alarmed about our attitudes toward mental illness? Whom does she blame for the problems experienced by troubled teenagers?
4. In paragraph 6, Quindlen writes that William Kinkel's purchase of a gun for his son "speaks sad volumes about our peculiar standards of masculinity." What does she mean?

5. If you are unsure of any of the following words used by Quindlen, try to determine their meanings from their context in the essay. Check their meanings in a dictionary to test your guesses. Then use each word in a sentence or two of your own.

scapegoats (2)	loll (7)	oncologist (8)
pathology (4)	utilitarian (7)	derision (9)
marginalized (6)	incarceration (7)	psychotropic (10)

Purpose and Audience

1. What seems to be Quindlen's purpose in writing this essay? Is she writing mainly to express a concern, offer a solution to a problem, influence government decisions, change individuals' attitudes, or do something else? What evidence from the text supports your answer?
2. Who do you think is the author's target audience? How does Quindlen engage these readers' support?

3. Although this essay was written only a few months after the tragedy at Columbine (which at the time was the deadliest school shooting in American history), Quindlen makes no mention of the shooters in that attack, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold. Why do you suppose she leaves them out of her discussion?

Method and Structure

1. Is Quindlen's appeal mostly emotional or mostly rational? Explain your answer with examples from the essay.
2. Where in the essay does Quindlen address opposing viewpoints? How fair is her depiction of people with conflicting opinions?
3. Quindlen makes two literary references in this essay: "a plague on all our houses" (paragraph 2) is an **allusion** to Shakespeare's play *Romeo and Juliet*, and "slouching toward adulthood" (9) is an allusion to William Butler Yeats's poem "The Second Coming." What is the effect of these references?
4. **OTHER METHODS** Quindlen supports her argument with other methods, such as **example** (Chapter 7), **comparison and contrast** (Chapter 11), and **cause-and-effect analysis** (Chapter 13). Locate one instance of each method. What does each contribute to the essay?

Language

1. What is the "C word" to which Quindlen refers in her title? Why do you suppose she waits until the end of the essay to use the word itself?
2. How does Quindlen use **parallel** sentence structure in her conclusion to drive home her point?
3. How would you describe Quindlen's tone? Is it consistent throughout? Is it appropriate for her subject?

Writing Topics

1. **JOURNAL TO ESSAY** Take off from the comments you made in your journal entry (p. 343) to write an essay that agrees or disagrees with Quindlen. Has the incidence of teenage suicide and homicide really "exploded" (paragraph 2) to the degree that Quindlen describes? Are teenage killers victims of inadequate mental health care? Is better psychological treatment the answer to the problem? Are there other solutions we should consider? Your essay may but need not be an argument; that is, you could explain your answer to any of these questions or argue a specific point. Either way, use examples and details to support your ideas.

2. **CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS** At several points in her essay, Quindlen suggests that American codes of masculinity are at least partly to blame for teenage boys' tendency toward violence. Write an essay that explores what our culture expects of boys and men, and how those expectations might translate into inappropriate behavior. How does American culture define manhood? Do we, in fact, pressure boys to keep silent about their emotions? To what extent is masculine aggression encouraged or rewarded? How does society respond to boys—and men—who don't conform to expectations? And to what extent are individuals responsible for their own behavior? In formulating your analysis, consider also how a person from another culture might respond—a resident of, say, Mexico or Japan or France.
3. **RESEARCH** Although Quindlen's essay demonstrates a large degree of compassion for troubled teenagers, some scholars and psychologists would caution that the cause-and-effect relationship it draws between mental illness and violence is misinformed. Using the library or the Internet, research articles or studies concerning media stigmatization of the mentally ill. In an essay, discuss whether you think Quindlen's analysis of teen violence reflects negative stereotypes. If you find that it does, consider whether such stereotypes affect the persuasiveness of her argument. (For advice on finding and using research sources, see the Appendix.)
4. **CONNECTIONS** Both Quindlen and Marie Myung-Ok Lee, in "I Was an Anchor Baby" (p. 368), write with emotion about a social issue—mental illness in Quindlen's case, illegal immigration in Lee's. In an essay, explore how the concept of personal shame, or social taboo, informs each writer's approach. How effective is each writer's strategy of tackling a controversial issue from an emotional perspective? What would these essays have lost (or gained) if they had been written from a more psychologically distant point of view?

ON PRISONS

Prison continues, on those who are entrusted to it, a work begun elsewhere, which the whole of society pursues on each individual through innumerable mechanisms of discipline.

Man is not made better by being degraded; he is seldom restrained from crime by harsh measures, except the principle of fear predominates in his character; and then he is never made radically better for its influence.

—Dorothea Dix

Of the three official objects of our prison system—vengeance, deterrence, and reformation of the criminal—only one is achieved; and that is the one which is nakedly abominable.

—George Bernard Shaw

JOURNAL RESPONSE What is the purpose of prison in a civilized society? Do we jail people to punish them, to rehabilitate them, or to protect others from them? Are there other ways to respond to crime? In your journal, write a few paragraphs exploring your thoughts on these questions.

Charlie Spence

Charlie Spence was born in 1980 and grew up in Sacramento, California, with two brothers and a single mother "who always tried her best." At the age of sixteen, Spence was sentenced to a prison term of twenty-six years to life; he is serving his time at San Quentin and has been working with at-risk youth since 2005. He completed an associate of arts degree from Patten University through the Prison University Project in 2013 and plans to continue studying social psychology, with the goal of eventually becoming licensed as a marriage and family therapist. Spence reports that he "strongly desires to be not only free, but a leading voice for change in America's juvenile justice practices." Beyond sentencing reform, his interests include reading and sports.

Sixteen (Student Essay)

Spence first wrote "Sixteen" for a Prison University Project composition course in 2009 and revised it for the *Compact Reader* in 2010. Not surprisingly, Spence is opposed to sentencing juveniles as adults. Although we might have reason to suspect his objectivity, he overcomes the problem by presenting his case rationally and by backing up his claims with ample evidence from reliable sources. In

accordance with MLA style, Spence names his sources in the text and lists them at the end. (See the Appendix for information on using and citing sources.)

They seemed larger than me that day, the rain drops, as they fell from an endless gray sky. They illuminated the headlights of oncoming traffic in an iridescent and blurred shine. The display of colors seemed only to intensify the fear and magnify the pain I felt inside about yet another tragedy taking place in my life. I sat there dressed in an orange jumpsuit, feet shackled together and a waist chain tightly secured around my midsection to restrict my arms firmly to my sides. The sheriff's van traveled at what felt like the speed of light, never allowing me to collect my thoughts before arriving at my next destination: life in an adult institution at the age of sixteen. The words compassionately spoken by the sheriff that day have never left the confines of my soul: "I didn't even start to get it together until I was twenty-five," he said. The sheriff will never understand the extent to which his words thrashed about my heart. Had I been tried and convicted as a juvenile, I would have been given a better chance at rehabilitation and a second chance in society at the age of twenty-five. I feel even more strongly now than I did back then that trying juvenile offenders as adults and sentencing them to life in prison is immoral.

In the year 2000, the people of California voted and passed Proposition 21. This allowed for juveniles as young as fourteen who are accused of a serious crime to be tried as adults at the discretion of the district attorney trying the case. Prior to Proposition 21, juveniles accused of such crimes were given what is called a "707(b) hearing" in front of a judge, to determine if they met the criteria to be tried as an adult. Before Proposition 21 was introduced, only in rare and extreme cases of violence were juveniles tried as adults.

It is easy for me to understand the feelings of one who is opposed to my position. Juveniles do commit crimes that are serious and are considered to be "adult crimes." The juveniles who receive life sentences are certainly not receiving them for petty crimes; it is not as if the fourteen-year-old shoplifter is locked up and the key is then thrown away. I would agree, too, that most juveniles have a sense of right and wrong from an early age. Surely children know that they are not supposed to take cookies out of the cookie jar unless given permission by their parents. On a greater scale most adolescents know it is wrong to smoke, use drugs, cheat, or steal and, therefore, know it is wrong to commit crime, period. But it seems only fair that if we are going to take into account the social development of morality within these children, then by that same token

we should also consider their mental development and take into account the neuroscience and the high likelihood of rehabilitating these same children.

According to a newspaper article published in the *Los Angeles Times* and a study conducted for the University of San Francisco's Center for Law and Global Justice, 2,387 juvenile offenders have been given life sentences here in the United States (Weinstein; Leighton and de la Vega 2). To understand this prodigious number, and to contemplate the depraved nature of this practice, consider that Israel, the *only other* country in the world to hand out such sentences, is a far and distant second with seven. According to the study, Israel has not handed out such sentences since 2004 (Leighton and de la Vega iii). While the populations in these two countries widely differ, these statistics seem to suggest that Israel uses such sentences in extreme cases only. It should be noted that of the juveniles sentenced to life without parole here in the United States, half of those sentences were issued to first-time offenders (Leighton and de la Vega 14). It is alarming that we are willing to sentence, at a staggering number, our youth offenders to life with or without parole considering that juveniles stand the greatest chance to be rehabilitated.

Senator Leland Yee of San Francisco-San Mateo, whose background is in child psychology, states, "Children have the highest capacity for rehabilitation. The neuroscience is clear; brain maturation continues well through adolescence and thus impulse control, planning, and critical-thinking skills are not fully developed" (qtd. in Weinstein). Other studies support this same finding: the San Francisco Center for Law and Global Justice study asserts, "Psychologically and neurologically, children cannot be expected to have achieved the same level of mental development as an adult, even when they become teenagers" (Leighton and de la Vega i). A perfect example of an immature brain is a fourteen-year-old child, with whom I became acquainted in juvenile hall, who had been asked by a peer to beat up a homeless man for twenty-five cents. This child, having never been accepted by a peer group before, proceeded to beat up the homeless man. The subsequent and tragic outcome of the situation was the homeless man died from his injuries and the child was given life in prison, all because he acted on an impulse to be accepted by friends and lacked the critical thinking skills of a fully developed mind. Had this been a mature adult who had been asked to beat up a homeless man for twenty-five cents, I find it hard to believe that he would have done it.

Juvenile offenders should be punished for serious crimes they commit, but as juveniles in juvenile facilities, where a "life" sentence ends at

age twenty-five. The oldest that children can be tried as minors is seventeen, an age that allows for eight years of time in which they can serve their punishment and in which we have an opportunity to rehabilitate them. Age sixteen allows for nine years and so on. By placing our youth in adult facilities with life sentences, we are giving up on them. According to the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice, fifteen- to twenty-one-year-olds make up 13% of our prison population and together they make up 22% of all suicide deaths in our institutions. Juveniles are 7.7 times more likely to commit suicide in adult facilities than in juvenile facilities. Whereas only 1% of juveniles reported rape in the juvenile system, that actual number is nine times higher in the adult system. It is not just about these numbers, though. At what point do we brand a person for life for the worst thing he or she did as a child?

The lack of mental maturity and development within the minds of juveniles is what sets the stage for a 2005 US Supreme Court ruling in which the Court determined that it is unconstitutional to execute a person under the age of eighteen. In their majority opinion, the Court cited research saying that the mental capacity of juveniles was not the same as that of adults (*Roper v. Simmons*). Here, the highest court in the United States is acknowledging that juveniles lack careful and exact evaluation and judgment, as well as the ability to control sudden spontaneous inclinations or urges because of their undeveloped minds. Perhaps this is the reason why juveniles are not allowed to choose for themselves whether or not they can go watch an R-rated movie until the age of seventeen. They cannot vote until age eighteen, buy a pack of cigarettes until age eighteen, or buy alcohol until the age of twenty-one. The contrast here is drastic: by one means we are suggesting that seventeen-year-old teenagers are only entering a mature enough mental state to choose whether they wish to watch an R-rated movie, yet by another we are suggesting that they are mature enough to understand the full consequences of a crime they may commit.

Obviously, we as a society recognize the difference between the mental capacity of juveniles and adults too, or we would not have constructed laws based on the age of an individual as a determining factor for conduct. It seems unfair that we only want to recognize the difference in mental development between adult and child up to the point when the child exercises bad judgment. I hate to think that we are so cruel as a society and a country that we would rather place our children in prison because of poor decision making with an immature brain, for a crime they are convicted of, than try to rehabilitate them while their mental capacity for reform is at its pinnacle.

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Meaning

1. According to Spence, what is the purpose of sending people to prison? What *should* be the purpose, as he sees it? Where in the text does he state the central assumption that grounds his argument?
2. Why does Spence believe that sentencing juveniles to life is immoral? Summarize his supporting arguments in your own words.
3. Spence tells readers that he is serving a life sentence, but he doesn't say what crime he committed. Does it matter? Why, or why not?
4. Some of the following words may be new to you. Try to guess their meanings from the context of Spence's essay. Test your guesses in a dictionary, and then use each new word in a sentence of your own.

iridescent (1)	prodigious (4)	spontaneous (7)
confines (1)	depraved (4)	inclinations (7)
discretion (2)	capacity (5, 8)	pinnacle (8)
neuroscience (3, 5)	subsequent (5)	

Purpose and Audience

1. What is the purpose of the personal story with which Spence opens his essay? How did it affect you?
2. Who would Spence's ideal readers be: politicians? prisoners? average citizens? Why do you think so?

Method and Structure

1. Examine how Spence uses information and ideas from sources to develop and support his main idea. What might his argument have lost without this material?

2. How would you rate Spence's *ethos*, or ethical appeal? What strategies does he use to overcome readers' potential doubts about his objectivity?
3. How does Spence handle opposing viewpoints? What is the effect of acknowledging that juveniles do commit serious crimes and that life sentences for juvenile offenders are not handed down lightly?
4. **OTHER METHODS** In paragraph 4, Spence uses **comparison and contrast** (Chapter 11) to examine the sentencing practices in the United States and Israel. What are the differences? How does this comparison further Spence's argument that trying juveniles as adults is wrong?

Language

1. How would you describe Spence's attitude toward his subject? What is the overall tone of his argument?
2. Why does Spence take such pains to refer to juvenile offenders as "children" throughout his essay? How does he use **repetition** of key words to reinforce his main point?

Writing Topics

1. **JOURNAL TO ESSAY** The United States imprisons more of its citizens than almost any other country. Why is this the case? Look again at the quotations you read and the journal entry you wrote before reading Spence's essay (p. 349). Develop your ideas into an essay that explains and supports your thoughts on the uses of imprisonment in America. Do we, as Spence suggests, jail people to punish them for their crimes, or do other motives come into play? Are such motives reasonable? Is imprisonment effective at accomplishing the purposes assigned to it? Is the institution abused or misused in any way? Whatever your position, be sure to support it with plenty of details and examples and to consider how others might disagree with you.
2. Prison is a perennially popular subject in fiction. Pick a novel, film, or television show that takes prison, or something related to prison (such as involuntary commitment to a mental hospital), as its subject. (For novels, you might consider Charles Dickens's *Little Dorrit*, Malcolm Braly's *On the Yard*, or Kurt Vonnegut's *Hocus Pocus*. Films touching on this subject include *Cool Hand Luke*, *Escape from Alcatraz*, *Bad Boys*, *The Green Mile*, and *The Shawshank Redemption*, the last two based on stories by Stephen King. Popular television programs include *The Wire* and *Orange Is the New Black*.) Write an essay comparing and contrasting the novel's, film's, or show's attitudes toward prison with Spence's views. Are the criticisms the same? Where do they differ?

3. **CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS** As the quotation from Michel Foucault (p. 349) suggests, laws reflect and reinforce basic social values: What behaviors are acceptable? What transgressions are punishable? How far should we go to enforce social norms? Although incarceration practices might seem reasonable in a contemporary cultural context, viewed from an outsider's perspective they can often be quite surprising. For much of American history, for instance, whole families—including dependent infants—were routinely placed in debtors' prisons for a father's failure to provide for them. And in the early twentieth century, unmarried women could be jailed for pregnancy. Think of a past or current law that strikes you as absurd or extreme, and look for the underlying social value that it's meant to enforce. Then write an essay that explains the law to somebody from another culture or another time who might have trouble understanding it. You may be ironic or satiric, if you wish, or you may prefer a more straightforward informative approach.

4. **CONNECTIONS** Spence and Anna Quindlen, in "The C Word in the Hallways" (p. 343), both write about violent crimes committed by teenagers, and both use psychology to suggest that juvenile offenders aren't fully responsible for their actions. While Spence refrains from detailing such crimes, Quindlen indicates that the subjects of her essay are serving life sentences for brutal, premeditated murders. How, if at all, do Quindlen's examples affect the persuasiveness of Spence's argument? Are some crimes so terrible that the perpetrators should be locked away forever, regardless of circumstance? Why do you think so? Write an essay that explains your answers to these questions, drawing for evidence on Spence's and Quindlen's arguments as well as your own opinions.

ON PRIVACY

I don't want to live in a world where everything that I say, everything I do, everyone I talk to, every expression of creativity or love or friendship, is recorded.

—Edward Snowden

We increasingly know things about each other (or think we do) that we should not know, have no right to know, and have a right, actually, not to know.

—Peggy Noonan

I love solitude, but I prize it most when company is available.

—Saul Bellow

JOURNAL RESPONSE Think of a moment when you either did something embarrassing or witnessed someone else's embarrassment online. In your journal, write about the incident as you remember it.

Sherry Turkle

Sherry Turkle was born in New York City in 1948, completed her PhD at Harvard University in 1976, and has taught at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology ever since. She is regarded as the leading expert in the psychology and sociology of electronic media, a subject she has explored in her best-selling books *Life on the Screen: Identity in the Age of the Internet* (1995), *The Second Self: Computers and the Human Spirit* (2005), and *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other* (2011). A frequent guest on television and radio programs, Turkle is a licensed clinical psychologist and the founding director of MIT's Initiative on Technology and Self, a group of scholars who study the interactions between people and machines from a social perspective. She lives in Boston.

Privacy Has a Politics

Turkles Alone Together draws on laboratory research and hundreds of interviews with users of technology to assess the impact that robotics, artificial intelligence, and digital connectivity have had on human interaction. In this self-contained section from the book, Turkle argues that despite the many opportunities and advantages inherent in social networking, the Internet also poses a potential threat to democracy.

It has become commonplace to talk about all the good the Web has done for politics. We have new sources of information, such as news of political events from all over the world that comes to us via photographs and videos taken by the cameras on cell phones. There is organizing and fund-raising: ever since the 2004 primary run of Howard Dean, online

connections have been used as a first step in bringing people together physically. The Barack Obama campaign transformed the Dean-era idea of the "meet up" into a tool for bringing supporters out of the virtual and into each other's homes or onto the streets.¹ We diminish none of these very positive developments if we attend to the troubling realities of the Internet when it comes to questions of privacy. Beyond passivity and resignation, there is a chilling effect on political speech.

When they talk about the Internet, young people make a disturbing distinction between embarrassing behavior that will be forgiven and political behavior that might get you into trouble. For high school and college students, stalking and anything else they do to each other fall into the first category. Code such antics as embarrassing. They believe that you can apologize for embarrassing behavior and then move on. Celebrity culture, after all, is all about transgression and rehabilitation. (These young people's comfort with "bullying" their peers is part of this pattern — something for which they believe they will be forgiven.) But you can't "take back" political behavior, like signing a petition or being at a demonstration. One eighteen-year-old puts it this way: "It [the Internet] definitely makes you think about going to a protest or something. There would be so many cameras. You can't tell where the pictures could show up."

Privacy has a politics. For many, the idea "we're all being observed all the time anyway, so who needs privacy?" has become a commonplace. But this state of mind has a cost. At a Webby Awards ceremony, an event to recognize the best and most influential websites, I was reminded of just how costly it is. The year I attended the Webbies, the ceremonies took place just as a government wiretapping scandal dominated the press. When the question of illegal eavesdropping arose, a common reaction among the gathered "Weberati" was to turn the issue into a nonissue. There was much talk about "all information being good information," "information wanting to be free," and "if you have nothing to hide, you have nothing to fear." At a pre-awards cocktail party, one Web luminary spoke to me with animation about the wiretapping controversy. To my surprise, he cited Michel Foucault on the panopticon² to explain why he was not worried about privacy on the Internet.

¹Early in the 2004 campaign, Howard Dean used *Meetup.com*, an early social networking site built around message boards, to reach out to voters and collect donations. Four years later, Barack Obama's team tapped the interactive and streaming abilities of Web 2.0 to organize and galvanize supporters on a scale that most observers described as revolutionary. [Editors' note.]

²Michel Foucault (1926–84) was a French philosopher. He discusses his theory of the panopticon in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1979). [Editors' note.]

For Foucault, the task of the modern state is to reduce its need for actual surveillance by creating a citizenry that will watch itself. A disciplined citizen minds the rules. Foucault wrote about Jeremy Bentham's design for a panopticon because it captured how such a citizenry is shaped. In the panopticon, a wheel-like structure with an observer at its hub, one develops the sense of always being watched, whether or not the observer is actually present. If the structure is a prison, inmates know that a guard can potentially always see them. In the end, the architecture encourages self-surveillance.

The panopticon serves as a metaphor for how, in the modern state, every citizen becomes his or her own policeman. Force becomes unnecessary because the state creates its own obedient citizenry. Always available for scrutiny, all turn their eyes on themselves. By analogy, said my Webby conversation partner, on the Internet, someone might always be watching, so it doesn't matter if, from time to time, someone actually is. As long as you are not doing anything wrong, you are safe. Foucault's critical take on disciplinary society had, in the hands of this technology guru, become a justification for the US government to use the Internet to spy on its citizens. All around us at the cocktail party, there were nods of assent. We have seen that variants of this way of thinking, very common in the technology community, are gaining popularity among high school and college students.

If you relinquish your privacy on *MySpace* or *Facebook* about everything from your musical preferences to your sexual hang-ups, you are less likely to be troubled by an anonymous government agency knowing whom you call or what websites you frequent. Some are even gratified by a certain public exposure; it feels like validation, not violation. Being seen means that they are not insignificant or alone. For all the talk of a generation empowered by the Net, any discussion of online privacy generates claims of resignation and impotence. When I talk to teenagers about the certainty that their privacy will be invaded, I think of my very different experience growing up in Brooklyn in the 1950s.

As the McCarthy era swirled about them, my grandparents were frightened.³ From Eastern European backgrounds, they saw the McCarthy

³Spurred by fears of Soviet expansion, Senator Joseph McCarthy, the FBI, and the House Un-American Activities Committee led a campaign through the 1950s accusing government employees, actors, teachers, union members, and others of engaging in communist activities or being sympathetic to communist ideals. Thousands of Americans who fell under suspicion lost their jobs or their reputations; others were sent to jail. [Editors' note.]

hearings not as a defense of patriotism but as an attack on people's rights. Joseph McCarthy was spying on Americans, and having the government spy on its citizens was familiar from the old world. There, you assumed that the government read your mail, which never led to good. In America, things were different. I lived with my grandparents as a young child in a large apartment building. Every morning, my grandmother took me downstairs to the mailboxes. Looking at the gleaming brass doors, on which, she noted, "people were not afraid to have their names listed, for all to see," my grandmother would tell me, as if it had never come up before, "In America, no one can look at your mail. It's a federal offense. That's the beauty of this country." From the earliest age, my civics lessons at the mailbox linked privacy and civil liberties. I think of how different things are today for children who learn to live with the idea that their e-mail and messages are shareable and unprotected. And I think of the Internet guru at the Webby awards who, citing Foucault with no apparent irony, accepted the idea that the Internet has fulfilled the dream of the panopticon and summed up his political position about the Net as follows: "The way to deal is to just be good."

But sometimes a citizenry should not simply "be good." You have to leave space for dissent, real dissent. There needs to be technical space (a sacrosanct mailbox) and mental space. The two are intertwined. We make our technologies, and they, in turn, make and shape us. My grandmother made me an American citizen, a civil libertarian, a defender of individual rights in an apartment lobby in Brooklyn. I am not sure where to take my eighteen-year-old daughter, who still thinks that *Loopt* (the application that uses the GPS capability of the iPhone to show her where her friends are) seems "creepy" but notes that it would be hard to keep it off her phone if all her friends had it. "They would think I had something to hide."

In democracy, perhaps we all need to begin with the assumption that everyone has something to hide, a zone of private action and reflection, one that must be protected no matter what our techno-enthusiasms. I am haunted by the sixteen-year-old boy who told me that when he needs to make a private call, he uses a pay phone that takes coins and complains how hard it is to find one in Boston. And I am haunted by the girl who summed up her reaction to losing online privacy by asking, "Who would care about me and my little life?"

I learned to be a citizen at the Brooklyn mailboxes. To me, opening up a conversation about technology, privacy, and civil society is not romantically nostalgic, not Luddite in the least. It seems like part of democracy defining its sacred spaces.

Meaning

1. How does Turkle account for young people's willingness to reveal personal information on the Web? What reasons does she give to discourage such behavior?
2. Where does Turkle place the blame for the average American's reluctance to participate in political activities?
3. By what means does the author bring her argument around to the subject of civil liberties?
4. Try to guess the meanings of the following words, based on their context in Turkle's essay. Test your guesses in a dictionary, and then use each word in a sentence of your own.

transgression (2)	assent (5)	impotence (6)
rehabilitation (2)	relinquish (6)	dissent (8)
wiretapping (3)	gratified (6)	libertarian (8)
luminary (3)	validation (6)	

Purpose and Audience

1. What thesis does Turkle attempt to support? What is her purpose?
2. Judging from the allusions made in this essay, would you say that Turkle is writing for a highly specialized audience or an educated but non-specialized general audience?

Method and Structure

1. What does the author accomplish by opening with examples of the political good that has been done by the Internet?
2. As a whole, is this essay an example of appeal to emotion or reasoned argument or both? Give evidence for your answer.
3. **OTHER METHODS** Turkle includes as evidence two narratives (Chapter 5) of her personal experiences. What is the point of the narrative about her grandmother (paragraph 7)?

Language

1. What is a "panopticon" (paragraphs 3–5)? Why does the metaphor trouble Turkle?
2. What does Turkle mean when she insists that her position is "not Luddite in the least" (paragraph 10)?

3. Examine Turkle's tone. How would you characterize her attitude toward young people in particular? As a student, how do you respond to that attitude?

Writing Topics

1. **JOURNAL TO ESSAY** In your journal entry (p. 356) you recalled an embarrassing moment that you experienced or witnessed on the Internet. Now expand your notes into an essay that explains why you believe that a personal Web presence is risky—or beneficial. Narrate the incident to set the scene, but consider also the concerns that Turkle explores in her essay. For instance, what motivated the embarrassing behavior, and what were the consequences? Was the mistake, in fact, forgiven? What lessons might readers take from the incident as you understand it?
2. Write a paper in which you analyze and evaluate any one of the sub-claims Turkle uses to support her argument. For instance: Do the people you know distinguish between personal and political activities online (paragraph 2)? Are we as resigned to lack of privacy as Turkle says (6)? Do we really need privacy in the first place (8)? Support your view with evidence from your experience, observations, or reading.
3. **CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS** "We make our technologies, and they, in turn, make and shape us," writes Turkle (paragraph 8). What does she mean? And do you agree? In an essay of your own, develop one example of a technology—such as television, streaming media, smartphones, or GPS navigation—that, in your opinion, has (or has not) affected society or culture in a meaningful way. As you write, consider the original purposes for the technology, the ways it came to be used, and its intended and unintended effects on individual behavior.
4. **CONNECTIONS** While Turkle is concerned with protecting the foundations of democracy, George F. Will, in "Subject to Interpretation" (next page), argues for reinterpreting the US Constitution to deny some residents the protections of citizenship. In an essay, compare these two writers' perspectives on American civil liberties. What rights, privileges, and responsibilities does US citizenship confer on individuals, in Turkle's mind and in Will's? What are the primary functions of a democracy, as each author sees it? What are the primary threats to it? What assumptions, if any, do their arguments have in common? How might their differences be resolved?

CASEBOOK: IMMIGRATION

Common sense is not so common.

It's in the democratic citizen's nature to be like a leaf that doesn't believe in the tree it's part of.

What is a moderate interpretation [of the US Constitution]? Halfway between what it really means and what you'd like it to mean? —Antonin Scalia

—Voltaire

—David Foster Wallace

JOURNAL RESPONSE What does American citizenship mean to you? Is it something you take for granted, a source of pride (or shame), or is it something you hope to achieve someday? Why? In your journal, reflect on the privileges and responsibilities that come with being a citizen of the United States.

George F. Will

George F. Will, born in 1941 in Champaign, Illinois, is a nationally known political columnist and television commentator. He was educated at Trinity College, Oxford University, and Princeton University (PhD, 1967). He taught politics at Michigan State University and the University of Toronto, served as an aide to a US senator, and in 1972 became Washington editor of the *National Review*. Since the mid-1970s he has been the author of a syndicated newspaper column that received a Pulitzer Prize for commentary in 1977 and now appears in more than 450 papers across the country. After providing more than three decades of columns for *Newsweek* and on-air commentary for ABC News, Will joined the Fox News Channel in 2013. His essays — notable for their wit, eloquence, and lasting influence on conservative politics — have been collected in multiple volumes, including *The Pursuit of Happiness and Other Sobering Thoughts* (1978), *The Pursuit of Virtue and Other Toy Notions* (1982), and *With a Happy Eye, But . . . : America and the World, 1997–2002* (2003). Will has also written several books on politics and baseball, the latest being *A Nice Little Place on the North Side: Wrigley Field at One Hundred* (2014). He lives outside Washington, DC.

Subject to Interpretation

With the exception of American Indians, every person who lives in the United States can trace his or her ancestry back to relatives who moved here from another country. Recent years, however, have seen a renewed push for various reforms of

immigration policy, from calls for tighter border controls to demands that those in the country without proper documentation be found and deported. One area of especially contentious debate has been the legal tenet of birthright citizenship. Some scholars and politicians have proposed repealing the Fourteenth Amendment of the US Constitution — which traditionally confers citizenship to anybody born in the United States — on the grounds such a birthright incentivizes illegal immigration and places excess pressure on already overburdened institutions and social benefit programs. Will proposes an alternate solution to this problem of so-called “anchor babies” in the essay reprinted here. “Subject to Interpretation” (editor’s title) first appeared in the *Washington Post* in 2010.

A simple reform would drain some scalding steam from immigration arguments that may soon again be at a rolling boil. It would bring the interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment into conformity with what the authors of its text intended, and with common sense, thereby removing an incentive for illegal immigration.

To end the practice of “birthright citizenship,” all that is required is to correct the misinterpretation of that amendment’s first sentence: “All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside.” From these words has flowed the practice of conferring citizenship on children born here to illegal immigrants.

A parent from a poor country, writes professor Lino Graglia of the University of Texas law school, “can hardly do more for a child than make him or her an American citizen, entitled to all the advantages of the American welfare state.” Therefore, “It is difficult to imagine a more irrational and self-defeating legal system than one which makes unauthorized entry into this country a criminal offense and simultaneously provides perhaps the greatest possible inducement to illegal entry.”

Writing in the *Texas Review of Law and Politics*, Graglia says this irrationality is rooted in a misunderstanding of the phrase “subject to the jurisdiction thereof.” What was this intended or understood to mean by those who wrote it in 1866 and ratified it in 1868? The authors and ratifiers could not have intended birthright citizenship for illegal immigrants because in 1868 *there were and never had been any illegal immigrants because no law ever had restricted immigration.*

If those who wrote and ratified the Fourteenth Amendment had imagined laws restricting immigration — and had anticipated huge waves of illegal immigration — is it reasonable to presume they would have wanted to provide the reward of citizenship to the children of the violators of those laws? Surely not.

The Civil Rights Act of 1866 begins with language from which the Fourteenth Amendment's citizenship clause is derived: "All persons born in the United States, and not subject to any foreign power, excluding Indians not taxed, are hereby declared to be citizens of the United States." (Emphasis added.) The explicit exclusion of Indians from birthright citizenship was not repeated in the Fourteenth Amendment because it was considered unnecessary. Although Indians were at least partially subject to US jurisdiction, they owed allegiance to their tribes, not the United States. This reasoning—divided allegiance—applies equally to exclude the children of resident aliens, legal as well as illegal, from birthright citizenship. Indeed, today's regulations issued by the departments of Homeland Security and Justice stipulate:

"A person born in the United States to a foreign diplomatic officer accredited to the United States, as a matter of international law, is not subject to the jurisdiction of the United States. That person is not a United States citizen under the Fourteenth Amendment."

Senator Lyman Trumbull of Illinois was, Graglia writes, one of two "principal authors" of the citizenship clauses in [the] 1866 act and the Fourteenth Amendment." He said that "subject to the jurisdiction of the United States" meant subject to its "complete" jurisdiction, meaning "not owing allegiance to anybody else." Hence children whose Indian parents had tribal allegiances were excluded from birthright citizenship.

Appropriately, in 1884 the Supreme Court held that children born to Indian parents were not born "subject to" US jurisdiction because, among other reasons, the person so born could not change his status by his "own will without the action or assent of the United States." And "no one can become a citizen of a nation without its consent." Graglia says this decision "seemed to establish" that US citizenship is "a consensual relation, requiring the consent of the United States." So: "This would clearly settle the question of birthright citizenship for children of illegal aliens. There cannot be a more total or forceful denial of consent to a person's citizenship than to make the source of that person's presence in the nation illegal."

Congress has heard testimony estimating that more than two-thirds of all births in Los Angeles public hospitals, and more than half of all births in that city, and nearly 10% of all births in the nation in recent years, have been to mothers who are here illegally. Graglia seems to establish that there is no constitutional impediment to Congress ending the granting of birthright citizenship to those whose presence here is "not only without the government's consent but in violation of its law."

Meaning

1. Where does Will identify the intertwined problems he intends to address? What solution does he propose? Where does he state his thesis?
2. What does Will mean by "birthright citizenship"? How does he say the practice originated?
3. Why do you suppose Will emphasizes the citizenship status of American Indians in paragraphs 6–9? What does this have to do with immigration policy?
4. Some of the following words may be new to you. Try to guess their meanings from the context of Will's essay. Test your guesses in a dictionary, and then use each new word in a sentence of your own.

rolling (1)	inducement (3)	stipulate (6)
naturalized (2)	ratified (4, 5)	accredited (7)
jurisdiction (2, 6, 8, 9)	derived (6)	assent (9)
conferring (2)	allegiance (6, 8)	impediment (10)

Purpose and Audience

1. Will makes his purpose quite clear in the last paragraph: he wants Congress to put an end to the practice of granting automatic citizenship to the children of illegal immigrants. Can an essay like this one, published in a newspaper with a circulation in the millions, have an effect on national legislation? What would the intermediary steps have to be?
2. Who would Will's ideal readers be: immigrants? lawyers? members of Congress? average Americans? Why do you think so?
3. Whether you are a legal American citizen or not, you probably have some strong responses to this essay. What are your responses? Why? Do you think Will intended for at least some readers to respond the way you do? What in the essay supports your answer?

Method and Structure

1. Will's argument is primarily deductive. Express his reasoning in the form of a syllogism (see pp. 331–32). Do you detect any flaws in his logic? If so, what are they?
2. What kinds of evidence does the author provide? Where does it come from, and is it reliable and convincing? Why, or why not? (See pp. 387–88 for information on evaluating sources.)

3. Can you find any reference to opposing viewpoints in Will's essay? How, if at all, does his treatment of alternative perspectives on the issue affect the persuasiveness of his argument?
4. **OTHER METHODS** Will's argument is based on **division or analysis** (Chapter 8) of the wording of the Fourteenth Amendment. What does he interpret the text to mean?

Language

1. Explain the **metaphor** Will uses to introduce his argument. How does it help him express his reason for writing?
2. This essay includes several difficult words, many of which appear in the vocabulary list on the previous page. How does Will's **repetition** of legal terms relate to his subject, purpose, and audience?
3. What connotations do the words *illegal* and *welfare* have for you as a reader? Why do you suppose Will uses them?
4. What is the overall tone of Will's argument? Is it mainly impassioned or mainly reasoned?

Writing Topics

1. **JOURNAL TO ESSAY** In your journal entry (p. 362) you reflected on what American citizenship means to you. Now that you've read Will's argument against automatic citizenship for children of immigrants, write a response to his essay. You may find it helpful to do some **freewriting** first to work out what you think about the issue and why. And you may find it helpful to consider one or more of these questions: Do you see any weaknesses in Will's argument? Do you find that he backs up his claims with convincing and sufficient evidence? Does he overstate his case anywhere or neglect to address important points? Do you agree with certain parts of his argument but not others? Or are you in complete agreement with him? Support your response with details from Will's essay and examples from your own experience.
2. Examine Will's use of argumentative appeals—*ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*—and write a rhetorical analysis of his essay. Which elements are most effective, and why?
3. Choose a political, social, or other kind of problem you care about—it could be the difficulty of obtaining health insurance, overcrowding in public schools, violence in the media, child neglect, or anything else.

Describe the problem as you understand it, particularly how it affects people. Then discuss your solution to the problem or some part of it. Be sure to at least acknowledge opposing views.

4. **CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS** The United States is noteworthy among nations for the rights and protections it affords citizens and others suspected of breaking laws. In some other countries, for instance, law-enforcement officers may use almost any means deemed necessary to obtain evidence against a suspected wrongdoer, whereas in the United States not only the Constitution but also federal, state, and local laws protect the rights of individuals and ensure that these protections are enforced equally. Do you think the US system achieves an appropriate balance between fairness to individuals and effectiveness in deterring or stopping illegal activity, or does it lean too far one way or the other? Write an essay stating your opinion and supporting it with examples from your experience, observations, and reading. If you are familiar with individual rights and law-enforcement procedures in another country, you may want to use **comparison and contrast** (Chapter 11) to help make your point.
5. **CONNECTIONS** Unlike Will, Marie Myung-Ok Lee, the author of the next essay ("I Was an Anchor Baby"), is strongly in favor of birthright citizenship. On what major points do the authors agree and disagree? How do the tones of the two essays compare? Does either writer seem more convinced of being in the right? Which essay do you find more convincing, and why?

All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.

—Leo Tolstoy

You don't choose your family. They are God's gift to you, as you are to them.

—Desmond Tutu

We all grow up with the weight of history on us. Our ancestors dwell in the attics of our brains as they do in the spiraling chains of knowledge hidden in every cell of our bodies.

—Shirley Abbott

JOURNAL RESPONSE Everybody has a history. What is yours? In your journal, write some notes on your family's backstory based on what you know about your parents, your grandparents, or other relatives who have had an influence on you. Where do they come from, and where are they now? What obstacles have they overcome, and what have they achieved? What aspects of your past would you like to know more about?

Marie Myung-Ok Lee

Fiction writer Marie Myung-Ok Lee (born 1964) grew up the daughter of Korean refugees in the nearly all-white town of Hibbing, Minnesota. Best known for her novels for teenagers — *Finding My Voice* (1992), *Saying Goodbye* (1994), *Necessary Roughness* (1996), and *Somebody's Daughter* (2005) — Lee has explained that she endured bullying and racial taunts in school and writes “coming-of-age stories of people who, for some reason, feel different than those around them.” She has also written fiction for middle-school readers and regularly contributes short stories and essays to a wide range of publications, from *Slate* and the *New York Times* to the *Kenyon Review* and *TriQuarterly*. Lee is the winner of several literary prizes, including an O. Henry Award honorable mention for a story about Korean birth mothers of adopted children, adapted from a chapter in *Somebody's Daughter*. A graduate of Brown University (BA, 1986), a former fiction judge for the National Book Awards, and a founder of the Asian American Writer's Workshop, she currently teaches creative writing at Columbia University.

I Was an Anchor Baby

In the following essay published in the *Los Angeles Times* in 2010, Lee combines her family's story with a brief lesson in American history to counter arguments, like

those made by George F. Will in “Subject to Interpretation” (p. 362), that American children of illegal immigrants should not be granted citizenship at birth.

I was an “anchor baby.” According to family lore, the day I was born at Hibbing Memorial Hospital in Minnesota in the early 1960s was also the day my parents received their deportation papers. They had come to America from war-torn Korea on student visas that had run out. Laws at the time prohibited most Asians from immigrating, so they were told to leave, even with three American children.

The Fourteenth Amendment, with its guarantee that anyone born here is an American, protected my siblings and me from being country-less. Today, in the growing clamor over illegal immigration, there have been calls to repeal this amendment, with the pejorative “anchor baby” invoked as a call to arms. The words suggest that having a child in America confers some kind of legal protection on illegal parents, that it gives them a foothold here.

But in reality, merely having a baby on American soil doesn't change the parents' status. As a so-called anchor baby, my existence did nothing to resolve my parents' situation; if anything, it only added to their stress.

In Korea, my father was a talented physician who also happened to speak fluent English. These skills led to his appointment as a medical liaison officer with a MASH¹ unit during the Korean War. The assignment brought him to the attention of some American officers who, after the war ended, arranged for him and my mother to come to the US so my father could continue his education. He ended up training with Dr. C. Walton Lillehei, a pioneer of heart surgery; my father was one of the first anesthesiologists in the world capable of administering anesthesia during open-heart surgery.

Other wartime contacts led to his job as an anesthesiologist in Hibbing, a northern Minnesota town that, because of its isolation and bitter winters, had trouble attracting doctors. My father was the sole anesthesiologist for miles, which meant that he spent long hours at the hospital, where he met with each patient the night before their surgeries and wouldn't leave until he'd answered all their questions. At home, a phone call during dinner — announcing springtime chain-saw accidents, appendectomies, emergency C-sections — often sent him rushing back to the hospital.

It wasn't until years later, when he made friends with another anesthesiologist who could cover for him — a German immigrant in Duluth,

¹ Mobile Army Surgical Hospital. [Editors' note.]

seventy miles away—that we could finally take a family vacation; until then, my father even had to be careful about drinking a beer at a cookout in case the hospital should call with another emergency.

It was peculiar laws rather than criminal intent that made my parents outlaws at the time of my birth. For most of American history, our country has had an open-door policy on immigration, restricting only people employed in certain kinds of occupations (such as prostitution) and those with communicable diseases. Then, in 1882, Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act out of fear that Chinese immigrants would take American jobs.

In 1924, the Immigration and Naturalization Act established quotas that heavily favored “desirable” Western Europeans while banning immigration from Japan, Korea and other Asian countries. Had my father been from Germany—like his anesthesiologist friend in Duluth, also toiling away at a job American doctors eschewed—citizenship would have happened easily. The same if my father had been from Mexico, as the act placed no quota restrictions on immigration from countries in the Western Hemisphere.

Instead, my parents went through an awful period of uncertainty, instability and stress, which included being swindled by a number of “immigration lawyers.” In the end, self-interest won out. Not my parents’ self-interest (although they did want to stay in the US) but the interest of a town that needed its anesthesiologist.

Another friend of mine, also Korean American—an academic who has written groundbreaking books and nurtured a generation of scholars—mentioned to me that when her parents died, she opened a special box she’d always thought held secret, glittery treasures, only to find it stuffed with deportation warnings from the INS.² Many of my immigrant and second-generation friends share this secret shame festering underneath the foil seals on our college and graduate degrees and our taxpaying lives. Studies show that immigrants, legal and not, are more law-abiding than the rest of the populace, and possibly more patriotic.

As a writer, I receive letters from readers who tell me how my work has touched, even changed, their lives; as a child, I often heard my father’s patients expressing similar sentiments of gratitude. Even the most anti-immigrant citizens have probably been touched by an illegal alien and/or an anchor baby in ways they probably cannot fully fathom.

Our Minnesota town, where people prided themselves on following the law to the letter, did not rush to bring in the INS and run our illegal

² Immigration and Naturalization Service. [Editors’ note.]

family out on a rail. People were instead so fearful of losing my father and his skills that the entire town signed a petition to protest the deportation order. This petition was brought to Congress by our local representative and eventually signed into a law to “provide relief” for my mother and father—but only them.

And although they were legal, they still weren’t entitled to become citizens. This satisfied the townspeople, who were happy we were anchor babies—that we anchored my father to this place where his skills were so needed. But my parents, even as “permanent alien residents” with three (later four) American-born children, were still left in legal limbo, inhabiting an America that allowed them to stay, work, pay taxes, but not vote.

As an alien, my father worked at a job that other Americans did not want to do, and others like him have, too, harvesting crops, performing surgery, nurturing children, working in factories, making scientific discoveries, mopping floors.

In 1965, at the foot of the Statue of Liberty, President Lyndon Johnson signed a new immigration act to correct “a cruel and enduring wrong in the conduct of the American nation.” It meant my parents were no longer “aliens ineligible for citizenship.” They passed their citizenship tests with flying colors and received passports with blue covers and gilt eagles that matched their children’s. My father went on to work at Hibbing Memorial Hospital for three more decades. And finally, we were an American family.

Meaning

1. Where, if at all, does Lee state her thesis? What claim does she want readers to accept, and what does she want them to do or believe as a result of reading her essay?
2. What does an anesthesiologist do? Why, according to Lee, did most American doctors not want her father’s job?
3. Why did Lee’s parents immigrate to the United States? Why didn’t they become citizens until after she was born?
4. If you do not know any of the following words, try to determine their meanings from the context of Lee’s essay. Test your guesses in a dictionary, and then use each word in a sentence of your own.

visas (1) liaison (4) alien (13)
 clamor (2) eschewed (8) gilt (15)
 invoked (2) fathom (11)
 confers (2) entitled (13)

Purpose and Audience

1. To whom does Lee seem to be writing? What assumptions does Lee make about her readers' values?
2. Why do you believe Lee wrote this essay? To share a painful personal experience? To express her indignation? To argue for or against something? (If so, what?) For some other purpose? What evidence from the text supports your answer?

Method and Structure

1. What subclaims does Lee make to support her defense of birthright citizenship? Do you find her reasons convincing? Why, or why not?
2. Consider how Lee supports her argument. What kinds of evidence does she provide? How reliable is it, in your opinion?
3. How does Lee present and handle opposing arguments? Does she seem fair? Why, or why not?
4. **OTHER METHODS** Lee combines **narration** (Chapter 5) and **example** (Chapter 7) to develop her argument. Where in the essay does she tell her family's story? Where does she explain the "peculiar laws" that affected their immigration status? How does she overlap personal history with American history to make her point?

Language

1. What does "anchor baby" mean? If the term is "pejorative," or insulting, as Lee claims in paragraph 2, why does she use it?
2. How would you describe Lee's tone? How does she appeal to readers?

Writing Topics

1. **JOURNAL TO ESSAY** Starting with the notes you drafted in your journal entry (p. 368), and using Marie Myung-Ok Lee's essay as a model, write a brief history of your family. You may need to conduct some research to expand your knowledge and provide necessary information—perhaps by interviewing a few older family members, by digging through family documents and photographs, or by looking into the historical context, as Lee does. How does your family history align with events in American history? How have your relatives' experiences affected you and your sense of who you are?
2. How do you react to Lee's essay? Do you agree with her assessment of immigration laws and their impact on families? Or do you find her evalu-

ation of the issue one-sided, her examples and opinions too personal to form the basis of an argument? Write an essay that analyzes Lee's strategies and responds to her conclusions. Be sure to cite examples from her essay to support your analysis.

3. **CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS** The United States is a country of immigrants, and each group has made an indelible mark on American identity. For example, consider just foods: salsa outsells ketchup, tacos are offered everywhere, and cappuccino and sushi are everyday indulgences for many Americans who have no Italian or Japanese heritage. Write an essay about the effects of immigration on your daily life: the food you consume, the music you listen to, the clothing you prefer, and so forth. Include personal examples and historical information to bring your ideas to life, as Lee does.

4. **CONNECTIONS** Does the Fourteenth Amendment to the US Constitution really "guarantee that anyone born here is an American," as Lee claims in paragraph 2? George F. Will doesn't think so. Read or reread "Subject to Interpretation" (p. 362), and then locate the full text of the amendment as well as one or two competing interpretations of its meaning. In a short essay, paraphrase the first section of the amendment itself and summarize the controversy surrounding it. Based on the conflicting opinions and your own analyses, what do you interpret the amendment to mean?

CASEBOOK: IMMIGRATION

ON RACISM

Racism and class hatred are a learned activity, and as a kid I found myself in a society that was all too ready to teach it.

—Henry A. Giroux

Sometimes, I feel discriminated against, but it does not make me angry. It merely astonishes me. How can any deny themselves the pleasure of my company?

—Zora Neale Hurston

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

JOURNAL RESPONSE Prejudice is so pervasive in our society that it can be difficult to avoid. Think of a time when somebody made an assumption about you because of your membership in a group (as a racial, ethnic, religious, or sexual minority; as a science or humanities major; as a club member; as a woman or man; as a “jock,” “nerd,” or “townie,” and so on). Write a journal entry about the incident and how it made you feel.

Roberto Rodriguez

Born in Aguascalientes, Mexico, in 1954 and raised in Los Angeles, California, Roberto Cintli Rodriguez balances journalism with a professorship in the Department of Mexican American Studies at the University of Arizona. He began his career in 1972, writing for the student newsmagazine *La Gente* at the University of California, Los Angeles. His columns have since been syndicated in the *Los Angeles Times*, *USA Today*, the *Washington Post*, and a hundred other newspapers nationwide; Rodriguez has also written for the *Guardian*, *truth-out.org*, *Black Issues in Higher Education*, *La Opinion*, and several other publications in English and Spanish. He earned a PhD in mass communications from the University of Wisconsin at Madison in 2008; his current areas of research include the role of corn in traditional Mexican cultures, migrations, and oral narratives. Rodriguez has coproduced a documentary film and published several books, among them *Justice: A Question of Race* (1997) and *Our Sacred Maiz Is Our Mother: Indigeneity and Belonging in the Americas* (2014). In 2013, he received the Baker-Clarke Human Rights Award from the American Educational Research Association for his defense of ethnic studies in the college classroom.

The Border on Our Backs

For sixteen years, Rodriguez's syndicated *Column of the Americas* focused on issues of indigenous cultures and politics, human rights, and what he calls “anti-immigrant hysteria.” In this column, he lashes out at attitudes and policies that treat a large segment of the population as somehow less than human. At the time he wrote, Congress was debating the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2006, which proposed, among other things, increased border security, a path to legal status for some long-term immigrants, and special visas for guest workers. (The bill did not pass.)

Look up the word *Mexican* or *Central American* in any US political dictionary and you will find these definitions:

- 1) people who are illegal, or are treated as such, no matter how long they've been living in this country;
- 2) the nation's number one threat to homeland security;
- 3) people who do the jobs no Americans want and who threaten the American Way of Life;
- 4) as a result of extremist politicians, the nation's favorite scapegoats;
- and 5) people, who due to vicious anti-immigrant hysteria, are prone to become Democrats.

By next year, there may be two new entries: 6) peoples who carry the border on their backs, and 7) peoples not afraid to stand up for their rights.

Who could have predicted that millions of peoples would be taking to the streets nationwide to protest draconian immigration bills that call for the building of Berlin-style walls, more *migra*,¹ massive repatriations, the criminalization of human beings and the creation of a new anti-family apartheid-style Bracero² or Guest Worker program? Beyond the bills, the protests are actually about asserting the right—virtually a cry—to be treated as full human beings.

How long was this community supposed to remain in silence? Perhaps it is racial/cultural fatigue.

Let's not pretend that this hysteria is not about race, color and dehumanization. It's not even anti-immigrant or even anti-Latino/Hispanic bigotry. It's the exploitation of a deep-seated fear and loathing of Mexicans and Central Americans by shameless politicians. Why? Because of

¹Mexican shorthand for *política de inmigración*, meaning “immigration police” or border patrol. [Editors' note.]

²Spanish, meaning “farmer” or “migrant laborer.” [Editors' note.]

what our color represents. Otherwise, how and why do government agents single us out at lines, borders and internal checkpoints? Otherwise, why do dragnet immigrant raids always target brown peoples? Why is all the hate and vilification directed at brown peoples and the southern border? Otherwise, why are these politicians also not bothered by the millions of Canadians, Europeans or Russians who overstay their visas? (No one should hate them either.)

Just what does brown represent in this country? Shall we delude ourselves like the Census Bureau and pretend that we're actually White?

Or should we simply stop speaking our languages, stop eating our own foods . . . and stop identifying with our home countries of Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Peru, Colombia, et cetera? In other words, we're OK if we stop being who we are—if we culturally deport ourselves and conduct auto-ethnic cleansing campaigns (we're also OK if we fight their illegal permanent wars).

And yet, there's that small matter of our red-brown skin. Just what could it possibly represent? A reminder? Memory? Might it be our thousands-of-years-old indigenous cultures—the ones that were supposedly obliterated—the ones we were supposed to reject?

We deny the nopal³ no longer. We know full well we're not on foreign soil, but on Indian lands. (Were we supposed to forget that too?) So there's no going back. If anything, we are back. The whole continent, the whole earth—which our ancestors have traversed for thousands of years—is our mother. Meanwhile, we watch Congress and the president do a dance about not pardoning or not granting amnesty to those who've been remanded to live in shadows. *Sinvergüenzas!*⁴ Just who precisely needs to be pardoned? Those who are exploited and who've been here forever? Or those who've been complicit in our dehumanization?

Through all this, we've been baited into fighting with African Americans, American Indians, Asians, Mexican Americans, and poor and white middle-class workers—because Mexicans supposedly steal their jobs and are ruining the quality of life.

The truth is, American Indians, African Americans and Asians should be at the head of our protests—for it is they and their struggles against

³Literally a prickly pear cactus, a *nopal* is a symbol of traditional Mexican culture as well as Mexican slang for someone who rejects that culture. The word is shorthand for the saying "tienes un nopal en la frente," or "you have a cactus on your forehead"—a metaphoric observation that a person is clearly of Mexican heritage. [Editors' note.]

⁴Spanish, meaning "Scoundrels!" [Editors' note.]

dehumanization that we draw inspiration from. But in the end, it is those who allow extremists to speak in their name, who must also step forward and tell their representatives that a society divided into legal and illegal human beings is no longer acceptable.

Every cell in our bodies tells us this. And the unprecedented protests have created the consciousness that a two-tiered society—the definition of apartheid—is intolerable.

A flawed bill will pass—many bills will pass—yet some sectors of the population will continue to view and treat Mexicans/Central Americans as illegal, unwanted and subhuman.

But enough. Ya Bastal IKUALI!⁵ As is said at the rallies: Nosotros no somos ilegales ni inmigrantes. Somos de este continente.⁶ We are neither illegal nor even immigrants. Tojuan Titehuakkalo Panin Pacha Mama.⁷

Meaning

1. What does Rodríguez mean by "the border on our backs" (title)? To what is he alluding with this phrase?

2. Does this essay have a thesis? Where does Rodríguez stand on the issue of immigration reform? For instance, does he insist on amnesty for illegal immigrants, demand tighter borders, seek protections for migrant workers, or plead for equal rights for all? Where does he make his position clear?

3. Why does the author bring up the Berlin Wall in paragraph 2? Where else in the essay does he mention political divides in other parts of the world? What does he seem to be suggesting with these examples?

4. "We know full well we're not on foreign soil, but on Indian lands," Rodríguez writes in paragraph 9. What does he mean? What point is he making?

5. What groups does Rodríguez look to as models for immigrants from Mexico and Central America? Why? What does he think "brown peoples" (paragraph 5) can learn from these groups?

⁵Spanish and Nahuatl (Aztec), respectively, both meaning "Enough!" [Editors' note.]

⁶Spanish: "We are neither illegal nor even immigrants. We are from this continent." [Editors' note.]

⁷Nahuatl (Aztec) proverbial expression, meaning roughly "We are of this earth." [Editors' note.]

6. Some of the following words may be new to you. Try to guess their meanings from the context of the essay. Test your guesses in a dictionary, and then use each new word in a sentence of your own.

scapegoats (1)	exploitation (5)	amnesty (9)
prone (1)	vilification (5)	remanded (9)
draconian (2)	indigenous (8)	complicit (9)
reparations (2)	obliterated (8)	
apartheid (2)	traversed (9)	

Purpose and Audience

1. What do you think inspired Rodríguez to write this essay for his nationally syndicated newspaper column? Is he simply expressing his frustration? What else might he be trying to accomplish? What evidence from the text supports your opinion?
2. What effect does Rodríguez achieve with the frequent use of *we, us, and our*, as in “we’re OK if we stop being who we are—if we culturally deport ourselves” (paragraph 7)? What does this point of view suggest about his vision of his readers?
3. Rodríguez poses several questions in this essay, such as “How long was this community supposed to remain in silence?” (paragraph 3) and “Just what does brown represent in this country?” (6). What is the purpose of such questions?

Method and Structure

1. Does Rodríguez rely mainly on emotional appeal or logical reasoning? Does he offer sufficient evidence for his claims, in your view?
2. Against whom or what is Rodríguez arguing in this essay? How does he characterize his opponents? Do the characterizations seem fair?
3. Rodríguez suggests that objections to immigration are based on faulty reasoning. What logical fallacies does he implicitly or explicitly identify? Does Rodríguez lapse into any fallacies himself? If so, where?
4. **OTHER METHODS** Rodríguez opens the essay with seven definitions (Chapter 12) of *Mexican* and *Central American*. What purpose do these definitions serve? Does he intend for readers to take them literally? How can you tell?

Language

1. How would you characterize the tone of this essay? How does it affect you as a reader?

2. Rodríguez uses some strong words, such as *détumanization* (paragraphs 5, 9, 11), *criminalization* (2), and *exploitation* (5) to make his argument. What similar words capture your notice? What is the effect of such language?
3. Since he writes in English, Rodríguez is presumably addressing English-speaking readers. Why, then, does he occasionally use Spanish and Nahuatl words and phrases (such as *migra*, paragraph 2, and *ikualli*, 14) without translating them? What do these languages contribute to the essay?

Writing Topics

1. **JOURNAL TO ESSAY** Rodríguez writes about racial prejudices that frustrate him, and in your journal entry (p. 374) you recorded a personal experience of being prejudged for your membership in a group. Now write an essay in which you recount this experience in more detail. How were you perceived, and by whom? What about this perception was accurate? What was unfair? How did the experience affect you? Write for a reader who is not a member of the group in question, being sure to include enough detail to bring the experience to life.
2. Think of an issue you feel strongly about, with no hesitation about your point of view being the right one. Write an essay, based largely on emotional appeal, in which you argue your point of view on that issue and state as your thesis the action you think should be taken. Remember that *emotional* does not mean *irrational*: your reasoning must be sound even when you rely on readers’ feelings and beliefs, and your appeal must be appropriate to the subject and to the argument (see pp. 328–29).
3. **CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS** In paragraph 7, Rodríguez asks if Mexicans and Central Americans in the United States should “simply stop speaking our languages, stop eating our own foods, . . . and stop identifying with our home countries.” What do you think is his answer? Write an essay that identifies and analyzes Rodríguez’s position on the issue of cultural assimilation of immigrants to the United States, paying close attention to each of his examples and explaining how he reaches his conclusions.
4. **CONNECTIONS** Rodríguez, like Marie Myung-Ok Lee in “I Was an Anchor Baby” (p. 368), argues in favor of immigration and against those who would restrict it. Both Rodríguez and Lee take the issue personally, but where Lee calmly notes the “peculiar intent” of immigration laws and the impact they had on her Korean family, Rodríguez angrily emphasizes the “racial/cultural fatigue” and hostility toward Latinos implicit in such laws. George F. Will, in contrast, takes a distinctly academic, theoretical perspective to the issue in “Subject to Interpretation” (p. 362),

hoping to “drain some scalding steam” from a very heated debate. Which writer’s approach to argument in general do you find most effective, and why? Drawing on the three essays in this casebook for examples, write an essay that evaluates the respective roles of *ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos* in argument.

WRITING WITH THE METHOD

ARGUMENT AND PERSUASION

Choose one of the following statements, or any other statement they suggest, and support or refute it in an argumentative essay. The statement you decide on should concern a topic you care about so that argument is a means of convincing readers to accept an idea, not an end in itself.

Popular Culture

1. Reality television has a negative influence on society.
2. Targeted online advertising benefits individual consumers.
3. Web sites encouraging anorexia or similar pathologies should be shut down.
4. Football should be banned.
5. The inhumane treatment of circus animals must be stopped.

Health and Technology

6. American health care should be reformed to a single-payer system like that in Canada or Europe.
7. Terminally ill people should have the right to choose when to die.
8. Private automobiles should be restricted in cities.
9. Texting while driving should be illegal in every state.

Education

10. Students caught in any form of academic cheating should be expelled.
11. Public universities should offer free tuition for in-state students.
12. Like high school textbooks, college textbooks should be purchased by the school and loaned to students for the duration of a course.
13. College is not for everyone.

Social and Political Issues

14. Corporate executives are overpaid.
15. Feminism is dead.
16. Police officers who harm civilians should be held accountable for their actions.
17. Public libraries should provide free, unlimited access to the Internet.
18. Women in the military should be allowed to fight on the front lines.
19. When adopted children turn eighteen, they should have free access to information about their birth parents.

WRITING ABOUT THE THEME

DISCUSSING SOCIAL ISSUES

1. Several of the essays in this chapter discuss issues concerning young adults, yet the authors write from very different perspectives and with widely varied purposes. Jenny Price (p. 335), for instance, reminds readers that college neighborhoods are not immune to gun violence. Anna Quindlen (p. 343) takes an earnest tone in urging authority figures to do more to protect teenagers from harm, while teen offender Charlie Spence (p. 349) asks, "At what point do we brand a person for life for the worst thing he or she did as a child?" And Sherry Turkle (p. 356) expresses concern that young people expose too much of themselves online while neglecting their civic responsibilities. Think of a risky or illegal behavior typical of teenagers or young adults, and write an essay that argues your position on how authorities should respond to it. For instance, you might write about tagging, reckless driving, binge drinking, or pirating media. How harshly should such behavior be punished, if at all? In your essay, be sure to consider the potential consequences of both the behavior and the response and to support your opinion with plenty of evidence.
2. Many of the authors in this chapter disagree on the success and failure of incarceration in American society. Martin Luther King, Jr. (p. 335), advocating civil disobedience from his prison cell, suggests that incarceration is often unjust. Charlie Spence argues that lifelong prison terms for juvenile offenders are unreasonable, and Sherry Turkle likens Web users monitoring their own behaviors online to inmates keeping themselves in check under the watch of a prison guard. Write an essay in which you defend or propose a reform to the American penal system. Choose a prison program or policy that doesn't work, and explain what should change, how that change should be effected, and what the outcome might be if your reform were put into effect. (If you don't see a need for reform, write an essay explaining why reform advocates such as Spence and King are wrong to seek a change.)
3. The last three essays in this chapter tackle issues surrounding immigration. George F. Will (p. 362) argues that children born to immigrants do not have an inherent right to American citizenship, Marie Myung-Ok Lee (p. 368) asserts that merely having a child born in the United States does nothing to benefit immigrant parents' legal status, and Roberto Rodriguez (p. 374) denounces efforts at restricting immigration as morally wrong. Write an essay in which you establish your own position on the debate over immigra-

tion reform. Do you agree with Rodríguez that attempts to control American borders are racist and imperial, for instance, or do you take George F. Will's view that restricting immigration is necessary and right? Or does your opinion, like Marie Myung-Ok Lee's, fall somewhere between the two extremes? You may want to think broadly about the issue to start, but bring your essay down to earth by focusing on a specific aspect of immigration reform — quotas, amnesty, birthright citizenship, work visas, border security, and so forth — and be careful to support your argument with ample evidence and clear reasoning to explain the rationale for your position.