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STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

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# PORTAL

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## THANK YOU!

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*Andrew Pfrenger, English Coordinator*

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# CHRISTINA WILLIAMS

## FIRST PRIZE

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Being a part of what is known as the “melting pot”, it may seem that Americans, especially, are privileged to be indulged in such diversity. Unfortunately, with all the melting going on there is not nearly enough blending. The prime opposition to the blending within America is the presence of many stereotypes derived from social misinterpretations. According to Amy Tan’s essay, “The Language of Discretion” (Brunk, et al 661-669), this is regarded as “social contexts failing in translation” (662). Not to imply that the fault lies on one side of translation, Tan provides an example that introduces the stereotypes of both sides, more specifically between Americans and Chinese. One stereotype says that “Chinese people are so discreet and modest” (662) and another says “Americans...have no time to be polite” (662). While one might find it difficult to identify the source of these all too prominent stereotypes between the two cultures, Tan attributes them to the misunderstanding produced when language is translated. Not only does this cause confusion between the two cultures, the consistent reliance on stereotypes, generalizations, and false assumptions between language and character, affect how those who speak a different language translate each other.

The most common way a person gets to know someone is through verbal communication. When there is a barrier between the two individuals, such as a different language, it becomes more difficult for each to unmistakably receive the right impression of the other, and easier to make the wrong assumptions that tend to be generally applied to all who speak that language. When a language is translated into another one, it loses the implications with which it is spoken. Thus, the intended meaning of the sentence or phrase is lost between the two because each side perceives it differently. According to Tan, this is because “something enormous is always lost in translation” (662), with that “something” (662) being the very context. As Americans, there is a tendency to focus more on the words being used as opposed to their purpose. Therefore, when there are words “missing” in one language, when translated, it seems as if the meaning of what is being said contains holes as well. The substance of the conversation is hopelessly lost, and in an

attempt to fill in the blanks, Chinese for example, are referred to as being nice and “modest” (662).

Unfortunately, due to the lack of evidence to support this claim, Americans reason it to be so simply because “there aren’t even words for ‘yes’ and ‘no’” (662).

While the absence of the words “yes” and “no” may be unimportant to a person who speaks Chinese, for some reason it is a big factor in the way Americans see them. Like many others who try to translate or compare a different language, Americans tend to use English as the foundation, or the “standard” (665) by which other languages are translated. Often times one tries to translate a language “word for word” (665), assuming for some reason, that what they see and experience in their world is the same for others of different ethnicity, producing the expectation that all other languages and people are the same. However, though her explanation of the Sapir theory, “no two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality” (qtd in Tan 663), Tan disputes this. Being American, I too have made the same assumptions and generalizations, and have observed the same stereotypes. For example, as a child I used to ask a friend how to say various phrases in Spanish such as, “gemme some skin” or “keep it on the d-l”, not assessing the fact that those phrases did not mean the same to her as they did to me. Worse than that though, several times I would become upset when she was unable to produce what I asked her, exclaiming, “How you don’t know how to say it and you speak Spanish!” Not only was my implication that she did not know her language well unfair, my assumption that her world was just like mine was obviously incorrect. Even though, at the time, I was unaware that, returning to Tan’s reference of the Sapir theory, “the worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not the same world with different labels attached” (qtd in Tan 663). Unfortunately this is something many people do not take into consideration when translating languages and developing stereotypes.

Another mistake made when developing stereotypes is the common correlation between language and character. Many people believe that the character of a certain ethnicity is shaped by the language used. Tan regards this as “dangerous[ly]... compar[ing] both language and behavior *in translation*” (665). For example, seeing that the Chinese language does not contain the actual words “yes” and “no”, it is easy to generalize all Chinese as being “modest”(662), on the grounds that their language only permits them to be so.

It is the same in many other cases of those whose language does not seem to be up to par with that of Americans. While English is full of many different and simple words, phrases, and expressions, that allow us to answer someone without being “overemphatic” (662), we seem to be unable to get over the fact that not all languages share that same characteristic. The strong relationship between language and character is why Tan assessed her behavior as being of her “Chinese mind” (665) at one time, and “as American as apple pie” (664) at another. Here, I believe that Tan is being somewhat unfair to the qualities of being a human being, especially Americans. I feel that everyone has the ability to become upset and angry, or to be polite. Therefore, Tan should not label her polite actions as only Chinese and her rude actions as just being American. In doing this, not only does she seem to contradict her position that language does not limit, through behavior, the person speaking it, she falls prey to the very stereotypes she is trying to dismiss. For me the comparison of language and character is similar when I hear someone speaking Spanish. In my mind they speak too fast, causing me to generalize all those who speak Spanish as fast people who are always in a hurry. However, that is not true, and even foolish when taking into consideration that I talk fast too, even when I am not in hurry. Sadly, this shows how myself, like many other Americans, do not take the time to look at ourselves through the eyes of those we so quickly judge based on their language, and even more so on their attempt to speak ours. My friend, who is Puerto Rican, would later confirm this by her view that Americans are, “full of themselves” (personal interview).

On a much smaller scale, Tan discusses her troubles of being in a bicultural and bilingual family when she was small (664). Her parents would scold her for answering them with questions in English when they talked to her in Chinese (664). They told her it was not ““respectful”” to ““question [them] when [they] call”” (664), influencing her to speak, think, and act differently when interacting with different people. The same is and was true for me growing up. For example, after finishing a healthy breakfast I replied to my cousin, “Yo! Dem gritz wuz bangin!” However, had I been talking to my mother or any other adult, I would have simply told her that the grits were delicious. Even though I was basically saying the same thing when talking to my cousin, I realized when speaking to my mother, that she is not my equal, so I must respect her in acknowledging that and changing my expression.

Although I myself am not bilingual or bicultural, while attempting to learn Spanish I now see how it is difficult for someone who thinks with a Spanish mind, to understand English concepts and vice versa. For instance, in Spanish the sentence- I want to help them- can be said a number of different ways using the same words, in a different order. To be clearer, in Spanish one may choose to say, “*Yo quiero ayudarlos*” or “*Los quiero ayudar*”. The meaning does not change even though the word order does and one word is omitted. At first, I struggled with this concept for a while and would often form Spanish sentences along the same guidelines with which I formed English ones, until one day I told myself to stop. Why should I apply English rules to Spanish when I was clearly not speaking English? It was at that moment that the generalizations and stereotypes I had of people who spoke Spanish began to disappear. The biggest of them all being that everyone who speaks Spanish is Spanish. I realized how annoying it was for a Puerto Rican to be referred to as Spanish, or “the same thing”, by other individuals, just as Tan feels annoyed by the “limited-and limiting perspective” (667) that Chinese are kind and ultimately passive. Unlike other Chinese she is unwilling to accept this generalization that may become true if it is said “enough times-in *any* language” (667).

It is unfortunate that stereotypes and generalizations widely influence how people interpret and ultimately interact with one another. It raises the question of translating languages to be too difficult, or putting forth enough effort to be open minded to those different than you. What ever the case may be, it is vital to recognize and quickly put out these common false assumptions before coming to conclusions about anyone. When people can really look inside of the words being spoken, instead of how they are presented, the melting pot will contain the perfect blend.

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# Stacey Fierro

## Second Prize

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### Internet Slang

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Throughout the ages, the English language has made many transformations. From British English to American English, the language has been manipulated to satisfy different groups of people. As technology improves and the computer becomes a household necessity, the English language has once again been influenced. From jargon such as “Leetspeak,” or “Leet, and “Emoticons” the Internet has begun to develop its own language, mainly embraced by teenagers. This language is often stereotyped by adults, parents especially, and linguists who feel such slang will corrupt the English language. As Tan speaks of the stereotypes against the Chinese language, stereotypes are also used against Internet lingo.

Emoticons are faces that are made using letters and symbols to express emotion. The name “Emoticon” is derived from the word “emotion” and “icon” put together (Huffaker). Popular among teenagers, Emoticons have vastly grown from simple faces such as ==) used for happy to :\* to stand for a kiss. These little combinations are quick and easy to use when a person does not wish to go into depth about his or her feelings. A computer expert and researcher, Scott Fahlman, is credited to be the first to discover Emoticons in 1982. He made a suggestion in a newsgroup to use a smile face, :-), and a frown, :(, to “clarify the tone of their messages,” (Kharif). Through much searching the original post was found by the staff of Scott Fahlman’s homepage and is posted below:

```
-----  
19-Sep-82 11:44 Scott E Fahlman      :-)  
From: Scott E Fahlman <Fahlman at Cmu-20c>  
I propose that the following character sequence for joke markers:  
:-)  
Read it sideways. Actually, it is probably more economical to mark  
things that are NOT jokes, given current trends. For this, use
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:-(  
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(Fahlman).

Since that time, the use of Emoticons has grown to be the average answer to the question “how are you?”



The next major usage of Internet slang is “Leet.” Leet, or 1337, derives from the English word elite, meaning a form of superiority. It can also be spelt “Leetspeak” “l33t5p33k,” “133t,” “1337,” “31337,” or “l33t” (“Leet”, Wikipedia). Leet is the practice of writing words and sentences using numbers and symbols to replace as many letters as possible. Many different symbols and combinations can mean many different letters. For example, “hey, what’s new” could translate to “#3Y, \\/\| -|@+’\$ |\|3\|\/\| (“Leet”, Wikipedia). Gamers, or people who put much time and effort into Internet games, usually use Leet as a symbol of superiority in a game. However, the average person sometimes likes to participate in the usage of 1337. Most people find Leet to be too frustrating to continue use of.

The usage of Internet vernacular is often criticized as being a character flaw of laziness or a lack of education. Some people feel that the use of improper grammar, spelling, and acronyms will find its way out of the Internet and into everyday society; some may even feel that this usage will stunt the learning process of proper English. However, Tan’s insertion of the linguist Edward Sapir’s theories proves the harsh reality of the growing world. “Take any number of variations on the old language-and-reality theory stated years ago by Edward Sapir: ‘Human beings...are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium for their society.... The fact of the matter is that the ‘real world’ is to a large extent built up on the language habits of the group’” (662). This theory presents the fact that all languages will have to be dealt with. If somebody does not agree with a language does not matter because languages will continue to grow. When it comes down to a point, the opinions of the Chinese language were indifferent. Although those opinions affected Tan, those opinions could not have put an end to the Chinese language. Although some may criticize the vernacular used on the Internet, this slang will stay for a long time.

While critics make assumptions about Internet slang being unsuitable, improper spelling and acronyms are not as common as some linguists assume. Researcher Naomi Baron conducted an experiment in the spring of 2003 among college students. She took 23 instant message conversations, containing 2,185 transmissions, with nine between males, nine between females and five between males and females. Out of the 2,185 transmissions there were only 171 misspelled words and 90 acronyms used. Also, while the students were conversing through instant messaging, they were doing other things such as listening to music,

word processing, talking to someone in person, eating or drinking, watching television or talking on the telephone. The average conversations per person were 3 at one time. Multiple conversations helped to allow a student to talk to more than one person at once; this was beneficial because of the lack of time a student had (Philipkoski).

The opportunity to converse with more people in a limited period of time goes along with Tan's idea of the Chinese language being more "strategic." While the English language is more direct, Chinese is more subtle which some may feel is more intimate. As with the American business executive in "The Language of Discretion" who blatantly says, "Let's make a deal," the Chinese manager replies, "Is your son interested in learning about you widget business?" (666-667). This could be a useful strategy in business as it provides the impression that the Chinese manager cares about the person and his family while the American executive is only concerned about his money. The use of Internet slang and multiple conversations is strategic because the use of shorthand and multiple conversations saves on time and allows more knowledge to be gathered.

"Chinese people are so "discreet and modest," the article stated, there aren't even words for "yes" and "no" (662). Tan reads this quote in a New York Times Magazine article and feels that this is not true. Tan feels this is not true because despite of those two words missing from her language, the Chinese use other ways to accept or refuse. For example, when Tan asks her uncle and aunt if they like Japanese food they reply with "We can eat it," which can be translated to mean, "yes." This stereotype that the Chinese is always polite relates to the stereotype that all people who use Leet are hackers. The article "Leet" tells that in the beginning of the usage of Leet, hackers would use it to converse to each other without other people knowing what they were talking about. People who did not know of Leet would not be able to decipher the symbols into letters and words. Also, hackers could converse in public discussion forums without certain words being filtered out or reported. The filters would not recognize the symbols and therefore the symbols would not be filtered out ("Leet," Wikipedia). Since that time, the usage of Leet among hackers and in general has died down. Now mainly gamers use Leet as a status of superiority or by kids who find it humorous to mock Leet.

These stereotypes of Leet users and of all people of the Chinese culture being “discreet and modest” are flaws of society. It is prejudice that is put in use when people use stereotypes. Tan makes the remark, “That’s not true, I thought, although I can see why an outsider might think that” (662) in regard to the article from New York Times Magazine. “An outsider” is making a comment based on thoughts, not knowledge. These assumptions are used to judge the identity and personality of a person prior to conversation with him or her. Therefore, these judgments that all of the Chinese population is polite are prejudices. Judgments that users of Internet slang are lazy and inarticulate are prejudices. The person who uses Internet shorthand may be a best selling author as the polite Chinese salesman may be a murderer.

As Tan witnessed stereotypes against the Chinese, I have witnessed stereotypes against Internet slang. From Emoticons to Leet the language used on the Internet has been viewed by adults and linguists as being lazy and flawed. Just as Tan says, “Something enormous is always lost in translation,” (662) the use of Internet slang is always overlooked because of the stereotypes. As their “discreet and modest” (662) language hides the Chinese’s emotions, the strategy of Internet jargon is also hidden.

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# Kenny Chu

## Third Prize

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### **The Life of Two Generations**

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Growing up, my parents instilled values they learned into my brothers and I. As I got older, my beliefs started to differ from theirs. My parents believe hard work brings success, but to me, this is not always true. My parents say that I have to keep the family tradition, but how can I after I have lost a part of my language. As a first generation Chinese-American, I assimilated to America's westernized traditions rather than my traditional heritage. With the values they gave me, the beliefs of my parents are different from mine.

For me, my parents instilled values of hard work, pride, and dedication. They taught me to be a good person, to take care of your family, to work hard, and to be humble. For my dad, he spent much of his childhood with his aunt, and away from home. He had to be self sufficient and learned to do things on his own since his mother was busy with his other five siblings. He never had much love from his parents, and was very independent. He learned to do many things on his own. My dad left China at the age of sixteen, and worked long hours in restaurants as a bus-boy to pay off his debt he incurred for the journey.

My mom was the first daughter of my grandparents. Since she was the daughter after a first born son in China, she did not get much attention. In China, the daughter never measured up to the son so she had to take care of the household chores. When she came to America, she was put to work in factories. All the children worked in factories until child labor laws came into affect. When my parents got married, they first worked separately. My dad worked in his brothers' restaurant and my mom continued to work in factories. After they saved enough money, they purchased their own restaurant and have been working together for over twenty years. In an internet article about the history of Chinese immigration, they say, "For the Chinese immigrants, America serves as a symbol of something higher than monetary prosperity. It represents the hope of freedom from intolerance based upon one's particular views" (American Heritage Project 2000). My parents left China because they wanted a better life. They wanted to get away from the

Chinese government, and be able to start a family.

My parents believed that for my brothers and me, hard work and education are the most important values for us to succeed. After immigrating from China, a lot of my family members have gone on to college. My aunt, my uncle, and one of my cousins attended New York University. Another of my cousins attends SUNY-Binghamton. My older brother and I currently attend UCONN-Storrs. I remember the times when my dad would read his Chinese newspapers. There would be articles on child prodigies, and he would tell me about it. "You see this?" he asks. "This boy is thirteen years old and is going to Harvard. How come you are not going to Harvard?" I would reply by shrugging my shoulders, and just continue with whatever I was doing. He would then say, "You are not going to Harvard because you do not try. With all the time you watch television, you can be studying."

On long car rides with my parents, they would always give my brothers and me a speech. He would tell us to become doctors, lawyers, or become high business executives because they made a lot of money. "You should go into the medical field" my dad says. "You have to make lots of money so you can support us when we are old." My brothers and I would nod, and just continue to agree with what my father says. My brothers and I agree that we should take care of our parents when they are old, but not by doing what they tell us to.

As a child, I never understood why my parents worked all the time. As I grew up, I realized how hard it was to raise a family of three, and being an immigrant in America. They worked seven days a week, and about twelve hours each day. The only holiday that they took off was Thanksgiving. Not being able to take care of their children, my parents sent all my brothers and me to relatives. My older and younger brother grew up with my grandparents in New York. I was sent to China with my other grandparents. For the first five years of my life, I lived in China never knowing who my parents were.

Due to my parents' persistence on education, I usually did pretty well in school. In elementary school, I struggled at first because of my lack of English. I had just started kindergarten, and I did not know a single word of English. Without knowing the English language, it was hard for me to understand the teachers and my classmates. I had to work hard to learn the language, and by first grade, I was fluent in

English. As a kid, my parents always pushed me in education. They came to America to find a better life for them, and to make sure that their children have a better future than they did. They believed that doing well in school would bring success.

In elementary school and middle school, I was a high-honor student. While they were at work, they trusted their children to be good, and to take care of themselves. At home, my brothers and I would split the chores at home. Each week, our chores involved mopping the floors of the entire house, vacuuming all the carpets, doing dishes, laundry, and keeping the house clean. My dad would reward us with toys or movies as long as we did what was told. As I started becoming a teenager, my traditional language of Chinese started to disappear. Since my parents were rarely home, we barely spoke the language. My brothers and I would speak in English to one another, and slowly, our traditional heritage started to fade. Communication became harder with my parents. I could not talk to them about everyday life or about my feelings.

My knowledge of the Chinese language started to decrease when I began middle school. I started having a harder time saying phrases to my parents. For example, I could not say good morning or good bye in Chinese. As a little boy, I was able to say the alphabet and numbers in Chinese, but not anymore. When I talked to my parents, half of my sentence would be in Chinese and the other half would be in American. My grandparents would say, “How could you forget so much Chinese?” My grandparents and my parents expected me to keep the Chinese language alive in our family. Since I grew up in China, I knew the most Chinese out of all my brothers. Not being able to speak the Chinese language fluently to me was like losing a part of my family tradition.

Family tradition is very important to the Chinese. Coming from a big family, I am accustomed to the bond that we share with one another. Throughout the year, our family holds numerous events such as Thanksgiving and Chinese New Year, where many of our relatives get together, and have a good time. At these events, I see my grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins. During these celebrations, I can see the smiles and joy expressed by my relatives. For during these celebrations, it was their relief from their work, and the outside world. My family members always help each other out whenever one is in trouble. For example, if one of my family members is in debt, my parents will loan them some money. Whenever my parents are not able to take us to places, my aunt is the one who will be there to help us out. Family is what keeps our tradition going. In an article by Charles Talkoff, he interviewed the author Rosemary Gong who said, “There’s a tradition of new dynasties and the traditions keep being

recycled and changed, but somehow preserved” (Gong 2). As years pass, your traditions may change but a part of it will always be preserved. I know that I may not be able to keep the language of our heritage alive, but I can still keep the tradition of the family alive.

Sometimes though, I did not believe in our family tradition. My mom and grandmother always would tell me to “marry in the family.” Basically, they meant that they want me to only marry my own race. “You have to marry a Chinese girl so we can talk to each other. If you marry American girl, I will not be able to talk to her.” my mom tells me. I believe that only you can decide who you marry. Race should not matter if you are truly in love with someone.

In high school, I continued to work hard with education, but I did not do as well as I previously had. I took honors classes and the high levels of each class. I started playing sports like football, basketball, and track. My parents were not happy with these decisions because they believed that it interfered with schoolwork. “Asian people do not play sports. You will get killed.” my parents would say. The sports though, actually did affect my grades. As a freshman, my grade point average was a 3.3, and I slowly watched it decrease each year. Sometimes I did not do my chores or keep the house clean like my parents liked it. This caused more arguments at home with my parents.

I clearly saw the frustration of my parents during my junior year in high school. I broke my ankle in a football game, and my parents were disappointed and angry with me. They verbally assaulted me calling me “stupid” and saying that I was a disgrace to them. Even though I knew that they were disappointed, I also knew that they did not mean everything. In order for my parents to continue working, my grandparents came to take care of me while I was injured. While I was hurt, I saw my mother and my grandmother cry. This was the reason that they did not want me to do sports because they did not want me to get hurt. Even though I knew this, I wanted to do what I liked. I knew I would disappoint them by playing sports, but I could not stop doing what I loved to do. Back at school, I started to get behind because of the days I stayed home for my injuries. I made up all my schoolwork, but I began to care less about my schoolwork, and cared more about sports and my social life.

When I was little, I was not that social because of my language barrier. I was afraid to talk to people because I was afraid that they would laugh and taunt at me due to my accent. As I got older, I started to become more public and talked to more people. In high school, I started to go out more often, and came home late. My parents would get upset with me, and yell at me. “How come you stay out so late? Are you causing trouble?” my

mom would yell at me. As my parents started to yell at me for coming home late, I started to not tell them where I would go. At some nights, I would leave the house without calling them at work to tell them where I was going. I would come back before they got home from work. In a *Developmental Psychology* article, they say that, “As friendships take on greater importance relative to relationships with family in early adolescence, Chinese American children may begin to experience more strongly the conflicts between ideas from their parents’ native culture and the dominant American views” (Huntsinger, Jose, and Larson 755). As I became more social, I made more friends. My friends wanted me to do things that my parents normally would not approve of such as going to parties.

In Richard Rodriguez’s “Aria: A Memoir of a Bilingual Childhood” he says, “If I rehearse here the changes in my private life after my Americanization, it is finally to emphasize a public gain” (Rodriguez 230). I believe that social life is just as important as education. Joining sports has helped me to make new friends, and has taught me about teamwork, strength, courage, and other values that will remain with me for the rest of my life. Education and hard work is important, but not to the extent that my parents make it to be. With education and hard work, you can still end up being unsuccessful, and not be able to support your family. The only way to be prepared for the real world is with experience.

Even though, my parents and I have differences, I still believe in some of their values, but our beliefs are different from one another. I believe that hard work is necessary to accomplish your goals. I also believe in being a good person. My parents donated their hard earned money to charities and many fundraisers. Since my parents are Buddhist, they believe that if you are bad in this life, you will be punished in your after life, but if you are good then you will be rewarded. In Amy Tan’s “Jing-Mei Woo: Two Kinds”, she said, “For unlike my mother, I did not believe I could be anything I wanted to be. I could only be me” (Tan 885). My parents wanted me to be so many things that I did not want. I know that my parents want what is best for me, but I can only be myself. Only you can define who you are.



# Graciela Rivera

## Honorable Mention

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### **The Fantasy World of the Media**

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Women are an easy prey for the media. Television, commercials, and advertisements shape the idea that women are to be viewed as sex symbols; they portray women as extremely slim and tall. The media is sending out a message to all females on how they should look, act and dress. “Being extremely thin is “cute”, and “getting plastic surgery is your new hobby.” In spite of all the media’s influence on female conduct, to a greater extent, women should bear the responsibility for their actions. Some use the media as a scapegoat and others are easily influence because they are weak minded. They can not differentiate between fantasy and fiction, Women put a great emphasis on beauty as well as appearance, and the social pressure to fit the norms of a perfect body women are surrounded by is very strong.

Women don’t realize the media is a fantasy world which can lead you to self destruction when you get caught up in all the sex and drugs going on behind all the glamour that is seen. There is a world full of problems, and if women really knew what was behind all this they wouldn’t feel so insecure about the way they look. More than half of the women involved in the media are drug abusers, and do not live a happy life; they have as much problems as women who are not part of the media do. Who knows what some of these women had to do to become famous? Some had to even sell their bodies. I am warning all of the females out there don’t get caught up in the fantasy world of the media; the grass is not always greener on the other side.

Women are never happy with the way they look, and they will never be satisfied. The media has strongly encouraged women to get plastic surgery, especially “breast implants” since that is a new trend everyone is falling into. “Small breasted women in America say that they feel inferior or unfeminine in a culture where breast size is a major issue” (Facts.com). Are women so weak minded that they can’t judge fact from fiction, or do they believe that the most important thing in the world is satisfying the public, it doesn’t matter if you don’t fit the norms of what society defines as a perfect body as long as you are happy with your physical appearance.. It is not only the media who is building a huge amount of pressure on the way women

should look, culture is also very pressuring because modern culture is also abiding by the way women in the media look to base how women in the real world look. Once you start getting plastic surgery you can't stop and that becomes a problem. Some people have completely transformed their selves through the means of plastic surgery that when they wake up from this dream they don't even know who they are anymore, or they are not happy with their new image. When they see their selves in the mirror they look unrecognizable. Their own family members are traumatized, getting used to the "new" you is a long process. Teenagers are the main target of the media but women in general are greatly affected. The reality show on MTV called "I want a famous face", for example, shows how people especially women go through plastic surgery to look like their favorite artist some of the artist who have been imitated in this show are Jennifer Lopez, Pamela Anderson, and Brad Pitt, this show influences the viewers who are women to do the same to their selves, and the funny thing is by the time the show is over these people don't even look close to the famous face they were aiming for, so they end up disappointed. What is in a face anyway? Is your face you? No it is not because there are too many things that make up who you are and you can't sum up all these things in a face. These kinds of shows make women feel less and less happy about their selves and the longer they are exposed to them, the easier it is for them to commit the mistake of augmenting a part of their body to become accepted by the public who are also influenced by the media. Women don't realize that they will never be fully accepted into society just because of the way they look, there is more to that than just looks. I know that we all want to be accepted, but why is being accepted so important to us? Some people are just meant to stand out. Everyone is special in their own way. Would you rather be judge by how you look? What really matters is the inner you. There are a lot of famous people who are not happy with the way a part of their body looks, some change it and some learn to accept it. But if you do decide to change a apart of your body don't do it because Britney Spears did it. Do it because it will help you boost your self esteem.

Getting caught up in the fantasy of the media can lead to self destruction. You start to look at the people in the media say to your self "I wish I was that skinny". The next step is to get on a diet; most women don't get on a diet they start to obsessively fast, which leads you to either,

Become bulimic, described as binge eating, followed by self induced vomiting, or becoming Anorexic which is basically not eating for a couple of days.. Both are eating disorders that can actually lead to death if you don't become aware of them on time. Think to your self are you willing to risk your life just to look like someone you don't even know. There are a lot of cases of eating disorders in the United States especially among teenage women. An article in Facts.com stated the following "Adolescents particularly women are the main victims of eating disorders, seven million women and one million men suffer from eating disorders". What does this say about women? We are too caught up in the world of the media and we are weak minded for believing what the media says because fifty percent of the time the media is all a fantasy. Men are less vulnerable to fall in the corrupt world of the media because they don't base most of their life on physical attraction. Lots of people blame it on the media, because it has a very demanding image on how women should look, and most women should be extra skinny. But most of these beautiful models look sick instead of beautiful, and a lot of them have been in rehabs because of drugs that help them maintain their selves extremely skinny. It's sad to see how the rich and famous don't take advantage of everything they have in their hands. They have both money and power. Power because the famous can almost get away with everything as long as they have the money to do it. There are a lot of famous people who are not happy with the way a part of their body looks, some change it and some learn to accept it.

Some of the people in the media that you would've never thought were drug abusers are. Recently I read an article in an YM magazine about Kelly Osbourne, from the show "The Osbournes" on MTV. This article was actually an interview witched talked about how at age thirteen she started going to clubs, and became addicted to pain killers. When her parents found out they send her to rehabilitation. But she was not the only one in the family with this problem, her brother had to also be sent to rehab for the same reason. Kelly also confessed that there are a lot of other people in the media involved in the corrupted world of drugs but she didn't mention any name. Another sad but true story was the story of Whitney Houston's drug addiction. I was a fan of hers when I was growing up. I saw her as a beautiful and talented woman. Years later I found out that her and her husband are both drug addicts. Now if I ever see Whitney on television I feel very sorry for her physical condition she looks very skinny and unhealthy, definitely signs of drug use. Why

do women try to imitate the physical appearances of these artists when behind all that glamour there are more than just happy times going on? The media should be less fictional, and should relate to the world around us.

Modern society thinks that physical appearance is more important than a person's mind.

The media but not only the media tends to assume things about you based on the way you look. For example, People tend to think that extremely good looking people's mental capacity is very weak. Why? People believe you can't be gifted with both beauty and smarts. That's just a very ignorant opinion. Judging people by their looks is very unfair but it is also very common. For example, when you and another person are applying for a job and are both equally capable of being a great employee who ever looks better has a greater chance of getting the job. Not all of the employers judge people during job interviews on the way they look. This is also a way in which women are pressured to look a certain way. But they do not realize that no matter what you do to your self on the outside if you are not happy with your self on the inside you will never be happy with your self on the outside. A good suggestion would be start fixing your self from the inside out and maybe you'll realize that there is no need to alter your body because that doesn't define who you are. Look at it this way imagine yourself as one of the most beautiful people on the face of the earth but all the beauty in the world will never get you happiness, high self esteem, or being accepted, basically empty with no feelings, and lonely. Just try to be happy with who you are.

Being a woman puts us in a position in which we are pressured to fit the norms of the media, without realizing that not even the women in the media live a perfect life. Is it worth putting all of your time and energy into looking like some one whose life is worse than your own, and who probably feels the same way you do even though you don't seem to see why. But the media is the one main influence who shapes the minds of the ignorant to think that way. Like I had said before the grass isn't always greener on the other side. You see things one way from a distance, but when you get closer to it you realized things are not as good as they seem. Women are all beautiful in their own way. That's why they all come in different shapes and sizes. If all the women in the world looked exactly the same, life wouldn't be worth living because our differences it what make s the world. Without all of these different people the world wouldn't be a n interesting place to live in. Everyone has a different taste in everything. Not everyone likes the extremely thin, big breasted girl.

Some like people who look out of the ordinary. Like I had said before your physical attributes don't define you as a person it is all the things that make you who you are, don't let the media shape you into someone

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# Manuel Negrón

## Honorable Mention

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### **TV: The New Heroin?**

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In the essay, “TV Addiction,” by Marie Winn, TV is put in the category of heroin and alcohol as being a very addictive thing. Winn claims that being “...hooked on TV... falls in to the more serious category of destructive addiction,” (Winn, 581). My question is, should TV be put in the same category as drugs and alcohol; is TV really addictive? I think that TV is not addictive and should not be put in the same category as drugs and alcohol. It is ridiculous to even think that television is something that once a person starts watching, it would be difficult to stop.

Can you imagine what a TV junkie would be like? Every morning he would get up, eyes red from viewing television too much and too little sleep. He would skip showering, brushing his teeth, and eating breakfast, and head straight toward the television set. He would be shaking in anticipation of his next hit. Walking slowly in his t-shirt and boxers, his flip flops sliding across the floor. His hair a mess sticking this way and that way. His boney arm reaches toward the power button ready to turn it on. He pushes it. As the first images fill the screen he sits on the couch and gives a loud satisfied sigh while he gets comfortable to watch twenty three hours of TV.

The reality is that although many Americans do watch a lot of TV, it can't and should not be called an addiction. The scenario that I stated earlier is of course an exaggeration. Now here is a more realistic scenario of a TV watcher. He gets up from bed in the morning, takes a shower, brushes his teeth, eats breakfast and goes to work. After about eight hours of work, he comes home and either relaxes by sleeping or by watching at least two hours of TV, then he eats dinner. Maybe after that he watches a little more TV and then goes to sleep. Something like that doesn't sound like an addiction. Most people are too busy to watch more than six or seven hours of TV a day. Some people would ask, “What about the people without jobs? They must watch more TV.” Sure a person without a job is more likely to watch more television than some with a job, but I don't think it is enough to become addicted.

When Marie Winn talks about being addicted to TV, for some reason the image of rehab comes to my head. Picture me in rehab for TV addiction...

"Now the next person please stand up and tell us your name and your problem," says former addict.

"Hi, my name is Manuel..." I say.

"Hi Manuel!" says all the other addicts enthusiastically.

"...And I'm here because I'm a TV-holic," I continue sadly.

"Good, good, now remember the first step to recovery is to admit that you have a problem, and I'm so proud of you for admitting your addiction," says former addict. Then my detox will start. I will be going through withdrawal and will have to be subdued a number of times by the guards for my outbursts caused by not getting a hit. It would be a slow and painful process, but by the end of my rehab stint I will go home fresh and ready to begin my new life clean of TV. A couple of days after rehab I will call the rehab center again, crying on the phone while holding the remote control in my free hand, telling the former addict that I'm about to have a slip and I don't know what to do.

"Manuel, just put the remote control down, it's okay we're here to help you. Don't do this to yourself, you can't go back!" the former addict would say.

"I can't help it, I have to turn it on, I can't live without TV!" I would cry. Then I would turn on the TV, much to the dismay of the former addict.

"NO!" the former addict would yell.

"When is the soonest I can check in?" I would say more calmed now because I got my hit...

That scene shows just how ridiculous the idea of TV addiction can be. When you think about it and realize how stupid the thought is of someone going to rehab for being addicted to television, makes it comical. I will acknowledge that people can get sucked into watching TV a lot, but that is by their own choice. They are not watching a lot of TV because they are addicted and can't control themselves or turn it off; they are watching a lot of TV because they want to. Addiction is not a choice, it happens, watching TV is a choice.

Marie Winn exaggerates a lot in her essay, she claims,

“... it’s much easier to stop reading and return to reality than to stop watching television. The entry into another world offered by reading includes an easily accessible return ticket. The entry via television does not... more like drinking or taking drugs- once you start it’s hard to stop.” (Winn, 581-582).

Has she ever watched TV? Was it ever difficult for her to stop? Those are some questions that I have for Marie Winn. It’s not difficult to stop watching TV, just press the power button. There are no invisible forces keeping you watching. To say that it is almost impossible to stop watching TV and turn it off is wrong. In my whole seventeen and a half years of life I have always been able to turn off the TV without a problem, and I have never EVER met anyone who was so obsessed with television that it was almost impossible for them to stop watching.

To believe that TV addiction is a serious problem is ridiculous. If a person is worried about being addicted to television, then they shouldn’t watch, although I personally don’t see the harm in watching a little TV a day. I don’t want people to read essays and articles about TV addiction and get scared that they might be an addict. My essay is written to show how ridiculous this claim is. When I was younger I would watch hours of TV a day. Then when my now best friend moved next door to me, I stopped watching so much TV and started going outside more to hang out with him. My point is that it wasn’t hard for me to stop watching so much TV, after years of watching TV, hour after hour, so it won’t be hard for anyone else to stop. If it’s that easy to stop watching television, then it cannot and should not be classified as an addiction.

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# Sharelle Fequiere

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## Capital Punishment: Not the Answer to Justice

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I am against capital punishment and here are a few reasons that support my position. It goes against the eighth amendment, which states that this type of method should not be inflicted. Even though the amendment states this, the government still continues this unconstitutional practice. The Constitution also states, "The Eighth Amendment does not require strict proportionality between crime and sentence. Rather, it forbids only extreme sentences that are 'grossly disproportionate' to the crime." This means people are sentenced to death based on the courts' discretion. No matter what the crime is a person should never be sentenced to death under any circumstances. Giving someone the death penalty is premeditated murder and the government should not have the prerogative to make that decision. When a person is sentenced to death it costs millions of dollars to commit the procedure. This money is paid by the American citizens through tax dollars. Lethal injection is the most common method used, and electrocution is rarely practiced. George W. Bush feels that this practice lowers crime rates, where in fact this statement has not been proven. Also the death penalty is unjust, because it is determined by race and class.

When Bush was asked if he believes that the death penalty will lower crime rates, he responded by saying, "I do, that's the only reason to be for it. I don't think you should support the death penalty to seek revenge. I don't think that's right. I think the reason to support the death penalty is because it saves other people's lives." I learned that there is no supporting data that states the death penalty will lower crime rates like he claims. How can he argue this statement when as president, he already knows that these procedures do not reduce crime rates? According to FBI studies, printed on the CEDP (Campaign to End the Death Penalty) website, "From 1982 to 1991, the national crime rate rose by 5%. In the same period, the Texas crime rate rose by 24%, and the violent crime rate in Texas rose by nearly 46%." Also according to Elliot Jones who is a freelance communications consultant explains, "In New York, from 1907 to 1964, months immediately following an execution showed a net increase of two murders - an average over a 57-year period." These statistics show that the death penalty does not decrease crime rates, but actually increases

them. Texas and California are a part of the thirty two states in the U.S. that practice the death penalty. Therefore Bush's statement has been proven false, but why is the death penalty still continued?

Studies show that it costs more to put a person to death opposed to keeping them incarcerated. People who are in favor of the death penalty argue that it is unnecessary to keep the criminal living and wasting our tax dollars in maintaining their prison cell, but in actuality it costs a significant amount of money each time a person is put to death. There are many expensive steps that have to be taken in order to put someone to death. Attorneys have to be paid extra and it takes years for the process to fully finish. The court system in Tennessee did research and concluded that the death penalty is a costly process and well ineffective. "Death penalty trials cost an average of 48% more than the average cost of trials in which prosecutors seek life imprisonment" (DPIC). According to Phil Porter, the writer of *The Economics of Capital Punishment*, researched and concluded, "Studies in the US show that capital cases, from arrest to execution, cost between \$1 million and \$7 million. A case resulting in life imprisonment costs around \$500,000." Also, according to The National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, "Various state governments estimate that a single death penalty case, from the point of arrest to execution, ranges from \$1 million to \$3 million per case. Other studies have estimated the cost to be as high as \$7 million. Cases resulting in life imprisonment average around \$500,000 each, including incarceration cost." This evidence proves that keeping a criminal alive is less expensive than putting them to death. We as a society are squandering millions of dollars to put a person to death, and it's affecting the future leaders of America, our children. This money should be used to ameliorate the quality of our communities, on scientific research to find cures for diseases and support the less fortunate,

Also the practice of the death penalty is immoral and unjust. We were all created equal, and we all have the right to life. Who are we, as people to decide the fate of someone's life? What makes the government better than us citizens? Innocent people are being killed and the death penalty violates human rights. Everyone has the right to life regardless of the crime they commit. The death penalty targets African Americans and the poor. The Fort Worth Star Telegram published a yearlong investigation that found legal services so lacking for low-income death penalty defendants that Texas 'appears to provide a different

standard of justice for the poor.’ Also last week, the Texas Defender Service, which tries to defend the poor on death row, said it had found 84 cases where state officials or police presented false, misleading, or highly unreliable testimony. It found 121 cases of psychiatrist testimony based on no or extremely brief examinations of the defendant” (Globe Newspaper Company). The government does dirty deeds and violates the justice system when they deny a person a fair trial, due to their annual income. In 1999 a 17-year old boy named Ryan Matthews was sentenced to death, because hypothetically he murdered a white storeowner in his hometown. He remained innocent throughout the case, but was eventually sentenced to death. According to CEDP they state, “As with many death penalty cases, Ryan’s case was infused with racism. First, there was racism in the process of selecting the jury which led to a jury with 11 white members and one black member in spite of the fact that county of the trial was 30% minority.” Also several others have noted that the death penalty is a failure of the criminal justice system due to racism. “A sophisticated statistical study in Philadelphia found that for similar crimes committed by similar defendants, blacks received the death penalty at a 38% higher rate than all others” (The Death Penalty in Black and White – DPIC, 1998). Why does the death penalty target African Americans? What justice is done when an innocent African American is put to death? What kind of satisfaction does the government obtain?

Another example of how unjust the court system is during my research I found out that, “Leonel Torres Herrera was convicted and sentenced to death for the 1982 murders of two police officers. New evidence was brought forward which proved that Herrera's brother committed the murders. By Texas law, which states that any new evidence must be presented within 30 days of the conviction, this new revelation was irrelevant. The U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Texas ruling, arguing that Herrera's claim of ‘actual innocence’ was in itself not a constitutional claim for which judicial relief could be granted. Thus, though the court agreed he was innocent, Leonel was executed on May 12, 1993” (CEDP). The court is so concentrated on executing these individuals for their personal reasons, for example racism, that they ignored the facts. It’s unfair that innocent people are being put to death while the real criminals are roaming free. The Constitution states “justice for all”, but how can we as societies attain justice, if innocent lives are being taken, because the court refuses to accept the true evidence?

I believe there should be other alternative forms of punishment instead of the death penalty. I understand that victims and their families want the criminal executed, because they committed the act of murder and they feel that the offender should receive the highest punishment possible, but supporters of the death penalty argue that, they would feel safer knowing that there was one less murderer walking around. If there are thousands among us, what difference would one make? This system reminds me of the primeval phrase, “an eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth.” This is being practiced today in America. If you murder, then you will be murdered. The government doesn’t necessarily consider it murder, but just because it is legal, doesn’t mean it’s moral. For example, in the 1800’s African Americans were treated in an inhumane way. They were slaves and owned by white plantation owners. During the 1800’s, this kind of treatment towards African Americans was legal. Since the Civil War ending in the eradication of slavery, this particular practice has been considered an act of sadism, which is also deemed as illegal. Not only were they slaves they were also murdered by their slave masters and brutally punished if they refused to follow rules.

How are we any more right than the criminal when we kill? What evidence do we have that his practice brings justice towards the victim and their family? The executioners are just as dangerous as the criminals that commit these heinous crimes. If a person spends their lives witnessing and being responsible for putting a person to death, do you not think that it will psychologically damage them? They are even more capable of committing the crime than the accused criminal, because they have witnessed such a high magnitude of human cruelty, and they are the one responsible.

Furthermore, when an alleged criminal is finally executed and afterwards proven innocent, what kind of justice does the family of the executed receive? This creates even more conflict between the citizens and the government. Innocent people are being executed while the real criminal is roaming liberated. Both families are not getting the justice they deserve because the criminal is not detained and the innocent cannot receive any reparations, because they are deceased.

More than half of the countries around the world have abolished the death penalty. When will it be our turn? When will we finally realize that this method does not solve anything? Some of the countries that enforce the death penalty today are Malaysia, China, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Viet Nam, and Pakistan, but America

has the highest rate of juvenile executions. I feel that is wrong to execute a minor, because sometimes they are not psychologically fit to understand the crime that they committed. Also it's even more immoral to punish a child by death. "As of July 2004, around 70 juvenile offenders sat on death rows throughout the United States; this constitutes approximately 2% of the total death row population" (Amnesty International USA). It is already unjust that the death penalty is practiced, but when the government starts killing 16 and 17 year olds, where are the values and ethics that America was supposedly built on? What kind of message is our government sending to the world?

In conclusion I oppose the death penalty, because it is immoral. Someone's fate should not be decided by the government, for we are all humans and have the right to life. The government goes against its values when they state in the constitution that the death penalty is cruel and unusual punishment, but at the same time this method is greatly enforced in our society today. This practice has not been proven to reduce crime, but the president feels that it does, therefore he enforces this method as a way of punishment. He states that he checks every death penalty case, but what the public does not know is he briefly reads the cases for no longer than fifteen minutes. If he strongly believes in this method, why doesn't he take the time to thoroughly read the cases? Also African American and the poor are targeted when it comes to the death penalty, as well as people being wrongly accused for crimes they did not commit. "A review of death penalty judgments over a 23-year period found a national error rate of 68%." (ACLU Death Penalty Campaign statement). This is a high error rate; for the death penalty is supposed to be an effective form of punishment. With this error rate, the family of the wrongly accused receives no reparations for the government's mistakes, and is left not receiving the justice they deserve. Now, is this justice?

People argue that the death penalty is humane, because it's been practiced throughout the world for centuries, but just because the world enforces a particular practice, it does not mean it's moral. For example slavery, where millions of Africans were shipped to America to serve as slaves to white plantation owners, and the Trail of Tears where millions of Indians were forcibly removed out of North America in the late 1700's. The death penalty should be immediately abolished, because it's time for America to realize that this

practice is controversial in every aspect, and is racially bias. It has not been proven that it decreases crime rates, or improves our economic system. Capital punishment is the not the answer to justice.

# Tarunn Goberdhan

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## The Essence of Culture

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Reading “Green Cards” by Alberto Alvaro Rios, the idea of culture comes into play. Rios believes that when an individual moves from one country to another their culture changes. He is quoted saying that “Green stayed, and had a place in my family, but always as a memory.” I interpret this as him saying that when you move away your old culture becomes a memory. However, I disagree with this idea. When people move from one country to another they are not expected to change socially nor culturally to the new country’s standards. This is because of America, the country of hopes and opportunities. Specifically as Americans, people are not judged on where they come from but, on how they succeed because America is the country of hopes and opportunities.

Rios in his essay says “There for a second, but there absolutely: green shifts to blue, and it is done” (pg 219). What I think he’s trying to say that is once an immigrant reaches somewhere new we try to represent our home country and then slowly we fade to the new customs and cultures of our new host country. This is the exact opposite of what really happens. When moving into a new country people would like to know this new culture an immigrant brings. Americans don’t want to hear that we are natives when we are living in America. They want to know our background. How many times have the phrase “Where are you from?” been said? Culture defines us. When we have to identify someone, we often look at their culture and background. There’s always room to learn the ways of new cultures and how different parts of the world operate but, forgetting the culture of our home country is highly unlikely.

Even if a person moves from one place to another he still can keep his culture. Many people in America have family all over the world because of heritage. Though they might be American, they still hold values that are from their home country. For example, I am not a native of America; my mother and father are from Trinidad. Coming to this country at first was hard for my parents. They did not get all the breaks

and they had to work hard to succeed. Working hard in the end paid off because they managed to make something of themselves. America gave them this opportunity and they never lost sight of their heritage. Even though I am an American citizen, I hold my native country close to my heart. When I am with my family we act and talk like Trinidadians; the reason my family is able to do this is because of the American culture. We are not forbidden to talk or act how we feel; expressing our culture is accepted without a problem.

Religion keeps people different. When moving to a new country, adapting one's religion to fit the host country is not necessary. To prove my point, let's look at a Hindu person. Hindus don't eat beef because they believe the cow is sacred. If a Hindu is living in America, even though beef is sold and eaten naturally, still a Hindu person would not eat it. The reason I know this is because my family are Hindus. They do not eat beef. However, this does not phase how my family is treated because as an American, people do not judge me on what my family does. We do not have to be something we are not and we can express our religion without problems. The First Amendment gives us this right and even though I might not fit the standard religion of America, most people do not treat me differently. My family is not forced to eat beef, nor are they forced to change their religion.

Today in our society, representing the home country is actually something that takes place commonly. All the time, people are seen with flags in their car windows or on their house representing where they came from. A major example of this was 9/11, Americans from all over the world showed their support even if they didn't live in America. When a country has a problem, natives will not forget where they came from and what heritage they represent. Culture is what makes people interesting, so why forget customs if they can be shared with the world?

I have mentioned America in my essay; the reason is because of Americans great cultural background. America is a melting pot of all different types of countries and cultures. Everyone is different and unique but we all are united under one flag. Being an American citizen who is from Trinidad, I know well how great cultural backgrounds in America are. Culture is what makes the world fascinating and sharing



cultures with each other only broadens people's minds. Why try to adapt to a culture where everyone shares the same values when we can bring something new to the world.

When we think of culture, food is something that brings us back home. If culture had no place in our life there wouldn't be Chinese restaurants in Italy or Italian restaurants in France. Different dishes come from different parts of the world and people enjoy this concept. How dreary the world would be if everyone ate one type of food only. Human behavior tends to show that people like variety and they want a different assortment of things. Like an assortment of foods, people like to see an assortment of skin colors, background countries and values. Culture is not something that's just talked about. It is a lifestyle.

My culture: I am a native of Trinidad. Lived in America all my life, I am an American citizen. Want to know about Trinidad, I can tell you a lifetime of stories, or ask me about America, I hold the ethics of that country also. Seneca, the Roman philosopher, once said "As the soil; however rich it may be cannot be productive without cultivation, so the mind without culture can never produce good fruit." To me it's self explanatory. Without culture the world would slowly fade away. Culture is what keeps the world shining bright.

# Bryan Gonzalez

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## “Doctor Jack-o’-Lantern”

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Everyone plays different roles in life, whether it’s children in class or grown workers at an office. Each child usually plays a role in the class. Some are the smart ones, some are the teachers’ pets, some are the trouble makers, and some are the class clowns. Everyone in a class can already distinguish who falls in these categories. What if a new student suddenly moves to this classroom? No one knows this kid, just his name. The child himself has to be feeling awkward not knowing anyone, just a few things about the teacher. How does this kid adapt? Yates’ story, “Doctor Jack-o’-Lantern,” shows how people are obligated to take on different roles in an attempt to fit in.

As Vincent Sebella (Vinny) enters fourth grade in a different class, he is already looked upon as different. He is seen as a poor child from New York City. And of course, Vincent is scared of entering this class for the first time. Yates say, “This time they all swung around to stare at once, which caused him to duck his head slightly and shift his weight from one buttock to the other” (3). So already, Vincent is feeling the pressure of this new group of individuals. As they take a look at him some more, they get a feeling that he comes from a poor background because “his clothes would have giving him away: absurdly new corduroys, absurdly old sneakers and a yellow sweatshirt, much to small, with the shredded remains of a Mickey Mouse design stamped on its chest” (Yates 4). Yates uses characterization in order to show how poor this kid really is. He has no control over this. He is an orphan that lives with his aunt and uncle. So his background has much to do with how he feels when entering this room. All he can think of is fitting in with the students and the teacher.

As Vincent takes new roles, he just wants to feel welcomed in the class. He gets a good welcome by the teacher, Miss Price, but he’s not really introduced to the rest of the class. Already, Vincent is feeling the urge to do something to fit in. He decides to participate in a class report. Vinny tells a story about how his “parents” bought a new car and how his dad got shot and how he had to drive. Vinny decides to lie to the

whole class. He thinks he made this story seem interesting and heroic, but he really shocked everyone in a bad way. Here, Vinny is changing up his role to be a hero, but it actually back-fires. He chooses this role to try and impress others.

Another character which also is obligated to take on different roles is Miss Price. She is the teacher of the class. But she feels that she has to change when she gets Vinny in her class. She must know about his foster background and she most likely wants him to feel very welcome when entering the class. She is Vinny's teacher now, but during the story, she is obligated to become his friend. She feels that only being a teacher won't help a student become comfortable. When Miss Price says, "Well then, why couldn't you have told us about going to the store with your aunt, and buying the windbreaker, and whatever you did afterwards" (Yates 12), she feels that she has to brake out of her "teacher" role and jump into her "friend" role because Vincent was not comfortable after making that his report in front of the class. She wants to know more about his regular life. The students laughed at him and made him feel unwelcome. But Miss Price would defend Vinny buy saying things like "It's a *perfectly natural mistake!* There's no reason for any of you to be so rude" (Yates 10). Here, she is making an attempt to be become Vinny's friend, instead of just his teacher.

Other characters that are obligated to change their roles are Warren Berg, Bill Stringer and Arthur Cross. Warren and Bill were the boys that always made fun of Vincent. They also were in the scene when Vinny was writing the profane words on the wall, and know he was going to get in trouble for it. I think they are acting as the bully's of the class because of the way the act towards Vinny. But when Vinny gets into his bully role, Bill and Warren are forced out of their roles, and forced into curious role. When Vinny begins to lie about how Miss Price beat him with the ruler, they were fascinated and began to question him because they know he was really "tough". Yates says, "The *ruler?* Ya mean the *ruler* on ya? Their faces were stunned, either with disbelief or admiration, and it began to look more and more like admiration as they listened" (15). Here, the boys know that Vinny was way tougher then them, and began to look at him as a hero-type figure. They were forced into this fascinated role after listening to Vinnys incident with Miss Price. Arthur Cross is known as the biggest dope of the class. But now that Vinny is in his class, they are looking at him as a bigger dope. So Cross feels that he is obligated to join the class in making fun of Vinny, in order to chance his

“biggest dope” role and pass it on. These characters all started with their given roles in class, but then they were forced to change after Vinny came into their lives.

Vinny is a totally different person when he is with Miss Price. He sees her as an attractive woman. When he’s with her, he feels like getting up and hugging her. But if you look more closely, Miss Price can represent an attractive teacher, or a motherly-like figure; something that he desperately needs. He makes up this lie that “She let the ruler do her talkin’ for her” (Yates 15), as if she was punishing him like a mother does to her child. She counsels him too. But he also sees her as a sexual appearance because Vinny drew a picture of a woman with “great breasts with hard little nipples, a trim waist, a dot for a navel, wide hips and thighs that flared around a triangle of fiercely scribbled pubic hair” (Yates 17). He then naming the picture, “Miss Price.” In his mind, I think he only sees her as a sexy woman, but this woman treats him and cares for him like mother does for her own kid. Vinny jumps from a role of a student, to a role that he feels an attraction towards his teacher. But Miss Price’s role as a teacher will never change. This is one exception where a character isn’t forced to change the role.

At the end of the story, Vincent does not succeed. He doesn’t fit in at all. But why doesn’t he fit in? It is because of the type of person he is or is it because of the wrong roles he decides to choose? A combination of both is what many would argue is Vinny’s failure. For example, he chooses to be a bully to the kids in class. He thinks that he chooses this role on himself, but the students already see him as a tough boy. They see him like this because he’s a poor New Yorker and “had nothing whatever to do with skyscrapers” (Yates 4). Also, he takes the role of a liar. It is hard to distinguish if he is this type of person or he does it in order to get by. But it seems that he is forced into this role. Yates says, “For one thing it proved that he was a hopeless dope, and for another it proved that he was lying” (10). Again, he is forced to take this role if he wants the students to like him. When switching his roles, he seems to always break out. When he’s a bully, he tells these kids straight up by putting on “his Edward G. Robinson face in time” (Yates 15). This is his gangster face. When he’s a liar, he makes up the biggest lies either about Miss Price hitting him, or him driving with his “parents.” He always breaks out when he’s obligated to take a different role. The other characters in the story also have to change their roles, like Bill, Warren, and Miss Price. They feel obligated to

transfer to other roles as a result of Vinny influence. Knowing that Vinny doesn't succeed, we can say that none of the roles he had to change helped him fit into this classroom. Just because he was obligated to change his roles, it didn't help him become accepted. It was his attempts to fit in which made him change so much as a person.

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# Jonathan Jimmy

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## The Opposite of Peace

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Peace is something that is impossible and cannot be reached in life. There will always be confrontation and some kind of conflict in mankind. For everyone to be united, content with everything, no war, and no disagreements of any kind, would be a dream world. People often over-look the fact that the world we live in makes it impossible to reach peace, yet they still hope and believe in that utopia, the perfect world, and don't face reality. Therefore, the opposite of peace would be reality, the reality of our lives and the world as we know it. The opposite of peace is something that people experience everyday in their lives, it isn't a "dream world." This is demonstrated through the writings of Mohandas Gandhi and Douglas P. Lackey's interpretation of Gandhi's writing.

Mohandas Gandhi was a universal pacifist by definition according to the article of Varieties of Pacifism by Lackey. "Universal pacifists are morally opposed to all violence, not just killings," states Lackey. (158) So all violence would be personal and political violence that universal pacifists are against. There is no justification for any kind of violence according to those pacifists. Gandhi believed in this, but based on his doctrine or definition of peace and non-violence. Gandhi's doctrine is called the Ahimsa which states,

Literally speaking, Ahimsa means non-killing. But to me it has a world of meaning...it really means that you may not offend anybody; you may not harbor an uncharitable thought, even in connection with one who may consider himself to be your enemy. To one who follows this doctrine there is no room for an enemy...So it is held that we may not harbor an evil thought even in connection with such persons. (Gandhi 178)

First off, Gandhi acknowledges the fact that Ahimsa means "non-killing", but he adds on to that definition with his own meaning. Gandhi feels there is more to Ahimsa than not killing a person, you can't verbally hurt someone. Next he says you can't mentally think about violence at all no matter who it is. Then it states that you are not allowed to have an enemy due tot the fact that this is all about peace. "There will be no kind of evil from a person verbally, mentally, or physically to another person, in order to follow this doctrine."

(Jimmy 1) Honestly, is it possible for a human being to abide by this doctrine? I know I don't believe so

because how can a human prepare or train themselves mentally for such a task? A person cannot just block out certain things mentally, especially when they are provoked to become angry. So to not think something violent or evil, a person cannot become angered or enraged in some way.

How does a person stop having a natural emotion like that? It is part of our human nature, or as Gandhi says, “Man as an animal is violent but as spirit is nonviolent. The moment he awakes to the spirit he cannot remain violent...” (159) He basically says himself that humans are naturally violent, it is an instinct. So he figures the way to conquer it is spiritually. He feels the spirit is the non-violent part of man and once a person reaches that stage, peace in a way is achieved. There is no more violence from that person, “...he cannot remain violent.” (Gandhi 159) So how does a person stop being a human who is naturally violent and just become a soul that is non-violent? Gandhi just says, “The moment he awakes to the spirit...,” it doesn’t actually explain how a human can do so. The most logical answer to Gandhi not stating why, is because there is no way. This is impossible, which is the definition of peace. Then with Gandhi saying that a man is naturally violent, is reality. That is the way human nature is and the way life is, which is the opposite of peace.

This is why Gandhi’s doctrine of Ahimsa is an example how the opposite of peace is reality. Gandhi even says, “To follow out this doctrine you will have to do much more than burn the midnight oil. You will have to pass many a sleepless night, and go through many a mental torture, before you can even be within measurable distance of this goal.” (178) Gandhi indicates in this quote that in order to obtain peace, people will need to work-hard and be dedicated to reach the goal. Then he says the “hard-work and dedication a person has will only get them within a “measurable distance” of the goal.” (Jimmy 2) So they still won’t actually obtain the goal at that point. This shows how peace is not a goal and that it is a dream. Dreams aren’t realistic, it isn’t reality. If peace is a dream, then in fact it is something that is impossible. I say impossible because usually when people have a dream, it is something they wish for. It is something they want, but don’t have and usually will never have. Which brings me back to how peace is impossible and that the opposite of peace is reality.

There is no possible way of obtaining peace. It is only an ideal just like Gandhi’s doctrine. Gandhi himself even says, “This does not mean that we practice that doctrine in its entirety. Far from it. It is an ideal

which we have to reach, and it is an ideal to be reached even at this very moment, if we are capable of doing so.” (179) The major point here, is that Gandhi understands that his method of peace is an ideal or an utopia, “an impractical, idealistic scheme for social, political, and moral reform,” according to dictionary.com. This refers to the dream world that I was talking about in the first paragraph and about how peace is impossible. So Gandhi’s quote there shows how if people must reach that ideal in order to be at peace, then what state of being is everyone in now? It must be “not peace” or the reality of our world and how peace is something that people can basically only dream of because of the flaws and ways of humanity in this world. Gandhi also, in a way, questions if people would be able to achieve his ideal when he said, “If we are capable of doing so.” Using the word “if” causes his statement to be conditional. So why would Gandhi be uncertain of that statement? Why because the reality is that it is a dream, an ideal. If Gandhi would of said, “People can reach peace,” he would have been lying to himself and everyone else, it would have been an unrealistic statement to make. Therefore, Gandhi’s ideas and methods demonstrate the opposite of peace being reality and how having peace is an ideal that people think of.

Lackey’s interpretations indicate how Gandhi’s vision of peace is only a dream, it isn’t how it really is. Lackey says, “But none of this affects the validity of Gandhi’s arguments, which indicate how things ought to be, not how they are.” (161) First this quote shows how Gandhi wanted life to be like, a utopia. Then Lackey says, but it isn’t the way it is though. So he says that Gandhi’s way is not reality. Lackey also says, “The nonviolence alone did not and could not force the British to leave India, and that non-violent resistance to murderous tyrants like Hitler will only provoke the mass murder of the innocent.” (161) Gandhi’s method of peace does not really work. It also shows how Gandhi’s ways aren’t realistic again. His ways wouldn’t actually make the British leave India. It also shows how his method of trying to obtain peace would not necessarily work because people like Hitler would mass murder people. So Lackey shows how Gandhi is blinded by his dream of peace and not realizing his dream would not work in reality.

It wouldn’t work because reality is “not peace”. Gandhi’s ideas are not realistic because peace is not possible in reality. Another example of Lackey showing how not peace is reality is when he says, “His threat of self-



starvation brought enormous psychological pressure on the authorities, who among other things, feared the riots, would ensue should Gandhi die.” (162)

Gandhi believes his method would bring peace by him fasting. Well he is obviously wrong because if he would of died from that, there would have been riots. That wouldn't of brought peace for anyone, but just cause more suffering in the world. Gandhi thinking this way was not being realistic. There goes that dream world of his, his ideal. Gandhi's impractical scheme for political reform. All of Lackey's interpretations show how Gandhi was being unrealistic and believing in his dream world, his ideal of peace. It all refers back to peace not being possible, seen through Gandhi's ways, and how the opposite of peace is the reality of the world.

In conclusion, the opposite of peace is reality, life as it is in our world. Bringing peace to a reality is not possible due to human nature and the way life is. You can't change the way people think, feel, or behave because it is just the way it is. These are natural instincts of people and people have to come to a realization that peace will only be a utopia. Gandhi's writings were good examples of how peace is impossible and how peace is a dream for people. There are too many differences in the world and billions of individuals. To have peace, would be unrealistic. Not having peace is a reality and it always will be. No one is saying that you can't dream and believe in a perfect world, but sometimes you just have to have a reality check. Don't get caught up in a fantasy world and believe life can happen that way. People are not perfect, which causes peace to be impossible. Knowing people aren't perfect and that the world is not perfect is reality, which is the opposite of peace. Remember like Gandhi said, “...It is an ideal which we have to reach, and it is an ideal to be reached even at this very moment, if we are capable of doing so.” You can work hard and be dedicated to reaching this ideal but you still will only be within a “measurable distance” of this goal.

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# Porscha McLean

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## Oh No, Am I an Addict?

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An addiction is defined as compulsive physiological and psychological need for a habit-forming substance.

*(On-line Medical Dictionary)* We often associate an addiction with things such as drugs and alcohol. Barely do we notice the overindulging people in engage in watching television. Watching television is a pleasurable activity people often engage in to entertain themselves and learn about the world, but can it be an addiction? Marie Winn would certainly say so. People are led by a compassion that longs for pleasure, yet can be mistakably considered a compulsive addiction

The television experience allows people to blot out the real world and enter into a pleasurable and passive mental state. It becomes an addiction when it consumes the person. The person no longer has control over their psychological state, instead an electronic apparatus that receives electromagnetic waves and displays the reconverted images on a screen takes over the human brain. *(On-line Medical Dictionary.)* You become habitually or compulsively occupied with this device. Even though a single touch of the "power off" button on the remote control or television will stop the images from appearing, a human less device can still leave you helplessly irresistible to a square figure. The average American is known to have 2 televisions or more in their household. This makes us more susceptible to being drawn into a square box and becoming self confessed television addicts. Many people do not always notice that they are an addict. Some are in denial and refuse to accept their problem. I am one of these people, how can watching television be pleasurable but also unsatisfying at the same time. Marie Winn and Lawrence Kubie, makes this a justification to their reasons for "TV addiction, even though the words pleasurable and unsatisfying are opposite words" If television is so unsatisfying, and is the reason to why one watches it hour after hour and day by day wouldn't they turn it off? They wouldn't because the television makes them feel sapped, will-less and enervated. It takes the strength

out their arms so they will not have any power when trying to make an attempt to turn it off. This is usually the symptoms when becoming a TV addict.

Marie Winn explains in her essay that blotting out the real world and entering into a pleasurable and passive state of mind qualifies watching television as being an addiction, then isn't sleeping or eating an addiction? Of course it is!

Sleeping must be one of the most common addictions. The structure involves a periodic state of rest for the mind and body. The eyes usually close and consciousness is completely or partially lost, so that there is a decrease in bodily movement and responsiveness to external stimuli (*On-line Medical Dictionary*). It is unusually pleasurable if not interrupted and it blocks out the real world to give us relaxation. If this ever happens to you more than once or on a daily basis I'm afraid you might be a sleeping addict. When a person is sleeping their eyes are closed and their body is still. There are usually consistent respirations and sometimes harsh snoring sounds caused by vibrations of the soft palate. (*On-line Medical Dictionary*) Sleeping can occur almost anywhere. The most common places are in a bed, a couch, the floor, on a chair, or hammock. When you see a person sleeping immediately wake them up and explain to them that entering into a relaxing state of mind will lead them into becoming an addict. Make sure they do not go back to sleep, that way they will be irritable, cranky and unfocused when they are awake. These are the signs when you deprive your self from sleeping.

Newborn babies often suffer from this strange behavior.

They can sleep as many as 16 hours a day. (the Nemours Foundation.) You may want to fill your newborn's bottle with strong coffee to avoid such a thing from happening. This will keep them from becoming an addict at such a young age. Remaining awake for the entire day is the best solution when trying to avoid a sleep addiction.

According to Winn's definition of what an addiction is, eating could also cause a person to be an addict. If you often eat food for breakfast, lunch and dinner and it is enjoyable and satisfying to your hunger needs, you may be an extreme addict. Eating food that contains or consists of essential body nutrients, such

as carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins, or minerals, and ingesting it to produce energy, stimulate growth, and to survive, may lead you into a severe addiction. The next time you eat food that is so delicious; ask yourself, am I turning into an addict? If you are, you might want to starve yourself. This will help in an imbalance in nutrients. It will also help you to stay weak and sick and can also aid in speeding up your life expectancy.

Unlike drugs or alcohol, the television, sleeping and eating experience blocks out the real world and enter into a pleasurable and passive mental state. It is the reasons why it is so important to notice and be aware of natural addictions. It is evident that sleeping, eating, and watching television is entirely different from having an addiction and finding pleasure in something. It is important to know the difference between an addiction and a pleasure because it gives you reason to blame everything else as an addiction. I take pleasure in watching sports on ESPN or a chick flick on lifetime. I eat mama's fried chicken and baked macaroni and cheese with corn bread because its good and I want to survive, not because I'm an addict. I go to sleep when I am tired to rest my body, not because I have an addiction. Television, sleeping and eating experience may block out the real world in order to concentrate and lead you into a pleasurable and passive mental state, but it is NOT an addiction.

# James Murcia

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## American Compassion?

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Americans lack compassion and grief for those who are outside their national boundaries. Since gaining its independence the United States has looked upon other nations as inferior, and thus has not given any help to others. When a nation doesn't offer to help, it is a sign of not caring. A nation can be unsympathetic by becoming involved in too much of another country's affairs without considering its privacy. Throughout the last few years, the United States government has gained this reputation for both these actions that has presented the citizens long term effects while traveling outside the country.

A lack of compassion has been proven in various occasions such as World War I. Before the war, an "isolation policy" doctrine was instituted after gaining independence, which allowed the United States to be separate from all European, Middle Eastern, and Asian affairs. Germany breached that peace when it threatened to ally with Mexico to take over the United States through an intercepted telegram from the ambassadors of both parties called the Zimmerman letter. The Germans continued their hassle by setting up a policy of heavy submarine warfare that took down several American ships, including the *Louisiana* (*North Park University Chicago*). The American government avoided the fact that millions of Europeans were dying in a style of combat called trench warfare. Although there was no quarrel with the United States, we could not avoid the biggest war of that time. Many Americans had relations with nations who were being affected because they recently immigrated from there. Assistance was given, but only until a couple of years before the war was going to end. Many soldiers died when the United States could've intervened and possibly ended the war earlier. Afterwards, many European countries faced more financial problems trying to recover from destroyed land and huge debts. The Americans charged the United Kingdom and France for loans given throughout the war and reaped benefits for winning the war even though we only fought for a few years and had the fewest casualties. World War II was a similar case because the United States could've again intervened but waited for something awful to happen, such as Pearl Harbor. The Japanese Combined Fleet had attacked American naval base located at Oahu, Hawaii. The surprise attack lasted for two hours and ended with a

2,196 American death toll. A day later, United States announced a war against them and disregarded the Japanese civilians upon bombing Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It was the first atomic bomb and we knew the effects were going to be devastating. The casualty rates surpassed Pearl Harbor's by a wide margin, killing at least 120,000 instantly and triple the amount over time due to effects of radiation and injuries. These cold actions have symbolized the approach our leaders resort to. Our lack of involvement reflects in the character of our American government, who are the representatives we choose.

*We are always right and have to put our say in worldwide events* is a motto our government should think about adopting. The nation's quick rise to world power status has made Americans feel more confident and "cocky" towards others. This country is based on freedom and democracy. However we try to insert a democratic system onto other nations even if they don't want it. Although, it seems like we do this for the people's benefit, it has not always been the case. Vietnam had been a situation involving the government attempting to influence the Communist North's political stance. The initial confrontation had been between the northern and southern Vietnam but United States thought it could overpower this feeble, divided country. The plan backfired and many men lost their lives in the process. This is why many people had boycotted the war, including super boxing champion heavyweight Muhammad Ali. There was no concrete reason to initiate a war.

We face a similar dilemma today involving the conflict in the Middle East. Many people worldwide have disagreed with the American government's decision to invade Iraq, protesting that the Iraqis didn't want us to be there, there were no weapons of mass destruction, and we gained some of their oil because ours was running out. Without considering the consequences that might follow, we invaded this unfamiliar territory in the name of democracy.

Because of the daily and personal issues, the citizens don't have time to be preoccupied with others. The system that the United States is in makes it difficult for people to care about others. Everything in the United States is run on a time basis, or always being clocked. For example, UConn student support services members have to be in class by 8 a.m., followed by a math class at 11p.m. The day continues with a group discussion with one of our counselors at 3 p.m. There are also 2 hour intervals in which students must attend

dining halls in order to eat lunch and dinner. We have to be in by our dorms studying between 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. By 11 o'clock at night we have to be on our floors and at midnight we have to be in our dorms. The daily schedule has already been programmed. This makes the average American paranoid about arriving to meetings or locations on time. It will be harder for a college student in the fall with additional classes added besides the English and math classes. With such a frantic, fast-paced life that our society is corrupted with, it is impossible to be worried about other people's issues besides our own. Has a person ever gone a whole day without checking his or her watch? It is amazing at how much slower the day passes in other countries. For example, I went on a trip to Bolivia last summer while visiting some relatives. It felt as if the day extended because I wasn't as preoccupied with the time. Without any worries the time slows down, with no time restrictions. This lack of time doesn't allow the average American to worry about others. People in more slowly paced societies are more compassionate towards others, unlike the Americans.

Americans have been stereotyped as selfish, arrogant, bastards who take whatever they please. We travel into other countries and criticize their lifestyle because we are accustomed to our luxuries. Stereotypical sayings foreigners have about Americans as we enter new terrain could be "Oh it's too hot here" because we are used to air conditioned buildings or "There's no McDonald's" because we are used to a fast-food restaurant to be located around the corner. Although this is not true for every citizen our actions have spoken louder. It has affected us greatly and now we take drastic measures to ensure safety in international traveling. American citizens these days now carry a Canadian badge to pretend they're Canadian residents. When asked where they come from, travelers simply respond by pointing to their badge. It may seem an unpatriotic thing to do, but it may be the difference between getting good or awful service. Americans are hated in other parts of the world because of their lack of compassion for others.

Americans lack compassion and grief for those outside our national boundaries. Throughout history, our nation has proved to be distrustful and unconcerned for others. Today, we witness the American government disregard the protests of Iraqi citizens in their quest to obtain more oil. Also, the lack of time doesn't allow Americans to be worried about other issues besides their own. The effects of the American government's previous foreign affairs have made it difficult for its citizens to travel these days. If the

American government revised the way it approaches important situations, then peace could be made with all nations. They have to consider the thoughts of other foreign countries before undertaking the initiative move. This could give citizens better hope in traveling outside the national boundary. Perhaps if the American population dedicated less time towards unnecessities, we could increase foreign relations and improving in other areas such as education, where we fall behind many other countries in world ranking. As Samuel Dalembert, NBA basketball star who recently says, "People stay in one little box and think that's the way the world is. Especially guys in the NBA from the United States. They don't realize what they have. They don't know what hardship is. They don't know how to adapt." He makes a really valid point in how Americans approach world affairs. We really don't know fortunate we are. This is why we have such a disregard for others as others do to us for not realizing the opportunities we have.



# Jessica Perry

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## The Multiple Personalities of One Character

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In Mary E. Wilkins Freeman's short story, "The Revolt of 'Mother'," the main character's role in the story goes through a very significant change. The different roles a character has in a story may carry an empowering message to the audience because the difficulties a character may be having are the same difficulties a community. Sometimes the purpose with which an author writes his or her story is to help society realize its problems, and try to influence it to fix these problems. The main character in Freeman's short story, Mother, is dealing with the problem of the inequality between women and men, which is the same problem that was going on America during the late 1800s.

An 1886 letter to the United States House of Representatives states that a woman's role in society has cause for change:

Children, idiots, and convicted felons properly belong to the governed and not to the governing class, as they are intellectually or morally unfit to govern." It goes on to say, "To this governed class has been added woman, and we beg the House and the country to inquire 'why'. They are also 'people,' and we submit that they are neither moral nor intellectual incapables, and no necessity for their disfranchisement can be suggested; on the contrary, we believe that they are now entitled to immediate, sure, and absolute enfranchisement. (1886 Letter to Congress)

This has important significance to "The Revolt of 'Mother'" because the setting of the story is in 1891 America, which is same time period the letter to Congress was written. During this time period, the women's fight for gender equality was just beginning. Knowing this piece of information brings more importance to the story because it gives more meaning to the readers that read it in 1891, and to the people that read it in the present day.

In the beginning of "The Revolt of 'Mother,'" Mother's role in the story is determined by the society she lives in. She plays the role of a conservative mother that is expected to only care for the family. Father has made promises to Mother for forty years that he would build her a new house to replace the decrepit one they are living in. Mother asks Father, "...I want to know what them men are diggin' over in the field for, an' I'm goin' to know." Her husband finally responds to her constant heckling saying, "They're diggin' a cellar, I

s'pose, if you've got to know" (Freeman 547). Mother finds out, after a painstaking round of questions with her husband, that instead of building a new house, he is building another new barn. The problem that Mother is faced with in Freeman's story is the same problem that women were faced with in the late nineteenth-century.

After Father responds to Mother's questioning he sends her back into the house because she has no business being outside. In the late nineteenth-century, a woman was to be seen and not heard; meaning a woman's role in society was as a homemaker. The letter from a concerned group of citizens to the United States Congress states, "The history of woman is, for the most part, a history of wrong and outrage. Created the equal companion of man, she early became his slave, and still is in most parts of the world. In many so-called Christian nations of Europe she is to-day yoked with beasts..." She was expected to respect what men told her to do and not to question a man's authority. Mother is not able to break out of this role because she does not have enough confidence in herself to go against what most of society thinks is morally right. If she were to change her role she would face many hardships and turmoils within her family and the community she lives in.

The way mother refers to her husband as "Father", is symbolic of a woman's submission to a man. She never refers to her husband as Adoniram, or any other love endearing names. This is important to the mother's role because it proves that society did think of women as a lower standard to men. This also puts more importance on her role because it shows that she is conforming to society and not expressing the way she may truly feel. She fears what her community might do to her if she 'revolted' against the system. Father calls his wife Mother, which can mean that he does not really think of her as anything more than his "housemaid." Their society expects men to treat their wives as nothing more than a person that gives them children, cleans their house, and cooks the family's meals. The way Mother and Father refer to each other could mean that do not see each other as people any more, but rather as objects or things.

When Mother goes inside she asks her son, Sammy, and her daughter, Nanny, if they knew anything about their father building this new barn. Her daughter knows nothing about this new barn, but Sammy knew about his father's plans to build a "new" barn for three months. A woman's role in 1891 could be

compared to the role of a child. Even though Mother had been waiting for him to build her a new house, he was building another new barn instead. She does not question Father's doings, at first, because she does not have enough courage to confront him, and she knows she would be scolded and humiliated. She does what her husband tells her to do, and she does not question his authority. She is expected to look after the children, make sure the house is in order, and cook the meals.

The role of a character can be changed when the character decides to change. A character's role can also have cause to change because of influence from an outside source. Some of the outside sources that can cause a character's role to change are the setting, the society a character lives in, or a tragic event in the character's life. Mother finally makes the transition from a static character to a dynamic character because she is tired of being ignored.

By the end of "The Revolt of 'Mother,'" mother breaks free of her role because she is tired of submitting to her husband and his inconsideration of the ideas she offers to help him with the decisions he may make involving the family's welfare. "Now, father, look here...I'm goin' to talk real plain to you; I never have sence I married you, but I'm goin' I'm goin' to know. I ain't never complained, an' I ain't goin' to complain now, but I'm goin' to talk plain," (Freeman 551). Mother's character made this dynamic role change because she was tired of father's empty promises to build a new house.

Instead of waiting for her new house to be built mother has the idea to move all of the furniture from the house, into the new barn. She has Nanny and Sammy help her move into their new house. When all of the furniture is finally set up in the house she realizes that the barn is the perfect place for a new home. She converts the harness-room into a kitchen because it has a chimney and plenty of shelves, which makes for perfect kitchen accommodations. Word spreads through town about Sarah Penn's 'revolt' against her husband, and the local minister, Mr. Hershey, comes to visit her. He inquires about the reason why she moved out of her house and into the barn, without consulting her husband. She answers him, "There ain't no use talkin', Mr. Hersey...I've thought it all over an' over, an' I believe I'm doin' what's right. I've made it the subject of prayer, an' it's betwixt me an' the Lord an' Adoniram. There ain't no call for nobody else to worry about it," (Freeman 556). The community she lives in is in an uproar because mother's choice to revolt

against father is not what society is used to. In mother's community, a woman does not go against anything her husband requests her to do.

When Father returns home, he is greeted with the surprise of a new house, the barn. He does not know what to make of it. He has never been faced with the situation of his wife doing what she wants without consulting him. He is not able to talk to any of the men in his community because none of them has ever experienced a situation like this. He can not understand why Mother's character would have cause to make such a major role change. His beliefs and the beliefs of the community are put to the test. In the last line of Freeman's story, Father tells Mother, "Why, mother. I hadn't no idée you was so set on't as all this comes to" (Freeman 561). He just is not able to comprehend these significant changes.

This major role change was empowering to Mother because she breaks away from conformity, and what society thought was right, to stand up for what she believes in. Even though she may be shunned by society, it does not cause her to stop standing up for what she believes. In the end of "The Revolt of 'Mother,'" Mother is able to come out on top and prove that sometimes the beliefs of most of society is not the way the things should be run. Were other women in her community empowered by Mother's actions, and did they have the feeling for a cause to change? We will never know because the story ends after Father gives his reactions to the situation. Since the story was written during the time period when women had no rights in society, the significance of Freeman's short story was to empower the women to stand up and fight for equality amongst all Americans, and the letter to Congress proves that women were beginning to stand up for their rights to equality.

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# Heather Rodriguez

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## The Poison of Segregation

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Numerous battles were fought and many lives were lost in order to abolish the heinous acts of segregation of the 1900's. In present day society, we nationally celebrate the successful men and women that fought to end racism in order for all to live equally. We think that racism is no longer present in our society and feel that we can all live peacefully without feeling segregated by the color of our skin. Many are being fooled to believe that just because we celebrate these honorable men and women for their great successes; that the battle is over. However, many are unaware that it is still present in our society and that the scars of segregation in the past is continually being passed down to the younger generations. Society must make an effort to change the perspective of these young children. Society should not repeat its mistakes and the lies that minorities as well as Anglo- Americans have grown up believing. Minorities do not have to feel segregated for the simple fact that we are all human beings. Diversity is a beautiful thing and we must learn to accept that being different is not something negative. If one is fortunate enough to grow up where diversity is found, then one is blessed beyond measure. For they are not conformed to the lies of similarity but they are exposed to the beauty of variety. Since the fight for Independence, Americans have been lead to believe that segregation has been abolished. This essay will explore several aspects of segregation and will demonstrate that diversity is a possible solution to racial, class, and economic segregation.

I wasn't aware that segregation still existed until around this time last year. For most of my life I grew up in the city of Bridgeport, Connecticut. I felt that I was at a disadvantage because people viewed us as the "inner city" children. We were not as wealthy as the cities or towns surrounding us, such as Fairfield, Trumbull, and Stratford. Their schools were much more efficient and always funded. Where Bridgeport always struggled financially, these towns had way more than enough to get by. I always thought that I was getting less of an education or getting short of what I knew I deserved. Until I became a junior in high school, I was blinded by these misconceptions.

During my junior year of high school I had to change schools and attend Norwalk High School because of personal family circumstances. I thought that maybe because I was going into a wealthier environment, I would no longer be a disadvantaged child. The moment that I stepped into the school, I was in complete disbelief. Where I came from there was diversity, variety, and differences in the way the students acted as well as looked. This new surrounding consisted of nothing I was familiar with. Everyone looked the same, dressed the same, as well as acted the same. I tried to look at it in a positive perspective, as this being a learning experience. Months passed and I realized that no new bonds were formed with my fellow peers. I was an outcast because of my race and because of my financial situation. My family is nowhere near poor and we do have money, but obviously I didn't meet Norwalk's standards. This school consisted of "cliques". One group consisted of jocks; there were the preps, the freaks, the nerds, and lastly the minorities. Here and there you saw a few minorities in each of these groups, but most were predominately white. I dealt with this feeling of being an outsider for about four months before I was able to return to my place of comfort, my home.

I now have an entirely different perspective of Bridgeport, Connecticut. I have a total different outlook on my hometown to what I had thought prior to this eye opening experience. I appreciate the fact that I was brought up with the values that I now live by today. I was fortunate enough to grow up around people of different races, traditions, and values other than my own. Everyone is not the same in my hometown; there is much diversity. I love the fact that both of my best friends are not the same race or religion as I am. While I am Puerto Rican and Christian, one of them is Cambodian (Buddhist) and the other is Greek and Italian (Greek Orthodox). The beauty of our friendship is that we are not all the same, but that we are different. We love each other for our differences and not our similarities. Each of them is also different in their own unique and special ways. Kanha is known as the "grandma" of the group. Some days she would rather be grumpy and stay home alone in her room, and other days she is up for anything. I see her as my older sister yet my younger sister at the same time. She teaches me but also learns from me, and in that aspect no one can ever take her place. Vana on the other hand is known as the "Herk" of the group. Herk meaning Hercules, like the Greek god. She can sometimes be the strong and controlling. Other times she can be the most supportive and loving person ever. Regardless, she is always ready for a crazy night. I

can call her any time of the day and know she will be ready to have some fun. I wouldn't change anything about them and I love them for who they are and what they bring to our friendship. We learn from each other instead of staying stagnant in our beliefs.

Although my values will never change because of diversity, each day I gain knowledge of other values. Thus helping me to become a well-rounded individual. I am aware that I need to be open to every idea in order to prevent myself from becoming like the people I despise. The people that feel their way of life is the best and that if one does not live like them, then they are at a disadvantage. I am not trying to seem like a biased person, but I can now talk from experience, not just perception, on the issues of segregation.

One of my good friends Laura Young, who is white and of Irish and Italian decent, feels very similar to I do on the topic of segregation and diversity. She grew up in the city of Bridgeport as well and shares some of the same values as I do. She recently talked to me about her experience at the Fairfield University Freshman orientation. Laura was extremely bothered by the way these people interacted with one another. She said that most of the students were white and that there were few minorities. She said that she tried to form some type of friendship, but the end result was not successful. She was unable to form any type of friendship with these people. She talked of them being insipid as well as uneducated on topics of any significance. All they were concerned with was how they looked or how many guys turned their heads when they walked by. Their main concern in forming friendships was to be a part of a group not because they actually cared about each other as people. They did not want to feel like outcasts so making friends was their only solution. They formed a "group" basically for safety reasons. She realized that our relationship with our friends was characterized by something other than the desire to fit in. We genuinely love each other. We grow from experience together and are there for each other, much like a family. We saw characteristics in each other that intrigued us to become friends. Characteristics such as humor: which puts a smile on our face even through adversity, assiduousness, knowing that we will persevere, compassion, loving each other even when it seemed impossible and lastly commitment, realizing that our friendship has and will outlast the test of time. Through this time, it made her realize, like me that she feels appreciative of the fact that our

friendships do not lack substance, but we instead contain value. We do not segregate because of nationality but instead we embrace difference and find more meaningful relationships.

I am aware that UCONN is much like the town of Norwalk, Connecticut in the aspect that it is predominantly white. I do not mind it at all but hope this experience will be much different than the last. Segregation will always exist and I can never fully escape it. However, the only way to work against it is by reaching out. Showing them that difference is interesting, and if they don't accept it then they are the ones at the disadvantage. As long as I remember the values I have set for myself, and where I came from, my experience here will be truly amazing. Knowing that I do not judge whom I might befriend based on the color of their skin or how expensive their clothes might have cost, makes me proud. I look for friends I know I can confide in, trust, and love. Now that I have matured, I have learned that life undergoes an inevitable progression that one must accept. However, the only way to overcome this is by awaiting this inevitability open minded and prepared to deal with any circumstance that may come my way.



# David Spears

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## Freedom or Safety

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The United States is known as one of, if not the most free nation in the world. After hearing the statement one might wonder: Are we actually free? The answer is no. Many are unclear about what freedom actually is. Freedom is unlimited, but we as a nation are limited in many ways. To preserve our country, we must give up some of our freedom for National Security. We do so willingly because safety is of higher importance than freedom, as long as the freedoms we are giving up are reasonable.

Many are unclear or have a misconception about what freedom is. To be free is to be unrestricted. So to have true freedom people should be able to do whatever they wanted whenever they wanted. For a “free” government to work they will need to implement consequences, but do nothing to actually prevent undesired behaviors from happening. For example imagine a smoking restriction in a building. There is a man who searches people and takes cigarettes from them in front of the building as they walk in. To have true freedom they should be allowed to bring the cigarettes in and basically trusted not to smoke. True freedom is basically the honor system. The government makes consequences and trusts people not to break the rules.

Some people say our country is free because we have freedom of speech, to an extent. Because other countries are so restricted, the United States is perceived as being free. There are countries in which the people are not allowed to do anything without the governments consent, let alone say anything that might oppose the government’s beliefs in any way. Prior restraint is something that is practiced within America. It holds people liable for their own speech, which has consequences. Because these consequences exist, we Americans don’t have absolute freedom.

If our country did have absolute freedom it would not be a desirable place to live. It would be very unsafe. This is because freedom in its purest form is dangerous. For a government to be truly free they would have to basically follow the honor system. The problem is that not all people are honest. There are

people who believe certain actions are worth the consequences that are tied to them. A good example of this would be someone who is willing to kill a president. A person who is willing to commit such a crime is willing to accept the consequences. They do not think they will get away with it. There has never been a person in American history to assassinate a president and get away with it.

If we were truly free there would be nothing to stop us from assassinating a president except for the fear of facing the consequences afterward. In reality there is an entire organization devoted to the prevention of murder or harm to the president, one that limits our freedom of speech. Within a monitored system or program, such as the internet, it would be hard for someone to state a comment that is remotely threatening towards the president and not get in big trouble. People are not allowed to have a weapon within a distance of the White House let alone have one inside, but if our nation was truly free we would be allowed to. If we had absolute freedom crime rates would go up. People would not be searched or monitored, two things that are presently key to the prevention of many crimes. This is why we must give up some of our freedoms to be nationally secure.

There is no doubt that we are willing to sacrifice freedom for safety, but our willingness is limited to how reasonable the sacrifices are. Most people are not willing to sacrifice any freedom that is going to prevent them from doing what they would do normally. Monitoring, for example, limits one's freedom but still allows one to do what they have to get done. Having only some privacy is a type of freedom that some are willing to sacrifice. Censorship would be another example. Cass Sunstein states in her essay Media and Democracy: A "Daily Me" or a "Daily We"?, "Censorship is indeed a threat to democracy and freedom" (Sunstein 772). There isn't great opposition to censorship because it doesn't disrupt our daily lives. A type of freedom that many would consider unreasonable would be a curfew. Implementing curfews would be a good way of preventing misdeeds from taking place. They eliminate the opportunity for the unwanted act to occur. This example is proof that less freedom equals more safety. It is unreasonable because curfews not only eliminate the opportunity for bad acts, but innocent ones as well. It is easy to see how curfews disrupt the people's normal activity.

It has been argued that the government should not be allowed to take away our freedoms to better

ensure our security. It is almost impossible to know for sure that our government's efforts to take away freedom and strengthen security are actually working. Not until we have another terrorist attack. In contrast it is better to put the effort in than to nothing at all. The sacrifice of freedom at least makes one feel as if they are safe. For example, take into consideration that there are two airports. One checks everyone's luggage, but they aren't sure if they are preventing anyone from boarding with a weapon. The other does nothing to anyone boarding planes and allows complete freedom. Although the first airport isn't sure if they are preventing bad situations from happening on the plane, anyone with sense would choose the airport that checks luggage over the one that doesn't.

Security is very important to people. Abraham Maslow, a brilliant psychological behaviorist, developed a hierarchy of needs. It explained why humans do what they do. According to Maslow's hierarchy one need could not be fulfilled without the fulfillment of the needs before it. The need to feel safe was among the first needs that Maslow believed a person must fulfill before they can do anything else (Maslow). People will willingly sacrifice freedom as long as the sacrifices are reasonable. There are those who believe that freedom is a great and righteous thing, but they need to be careful what they wish for.

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# Ange St. Preux

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## William Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily"

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The most abundant aspect in William Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily" is Emily's reasons for poisoning Homer Barron. Throughout the short story Emily deals with a lot of emotional downfalls. In result to her father's death she is left alone without any ties to the rest of her family and the people in her town. She withdraws into her home until Homer Barron, a northerner comes into town. Eventually Emily forms a relationship with Homer that becomes the center of attention in the town. When it is revealed that Homer Barron is a homosexual, Emily continues to see him until one day he suddenly disappears. The motive that Emily has for killing Homer is to keep time from spinning out of her control.

Hal Blythe states in his article "Faulkner's A ROSE FOR EMILY" that "Faulkner hints that Miss Emily's beau ideal is homosexual and that she poisons him to save face." I disagree with this analysis because throughout the short story Emily battles to keep time moving at her own pace. Because she so desperately wants control of everything in her life she is taken by surprise when she discovers Homer Barron's true sexuality. Emily suddenly realizes that she can not have Homer and is not ready to let him go. Letting Homer Barron move on with his life means that Emily will have to recognize the fact that she has no control over what happens in her life, it also means that she will have to face the memories of her father's death and she's in no way ready for that. In result she poisons Homer Barron, not to save her name as Blythe states but to keep too many changes from occurring in her life.

"She carried her head high enough- even when we believed that she was fallen. It was as if she demanded more than ever the recognition of her dignity as the last Grierson" (Corbett 13). In this quote it is stated that Emily doesn't feel like her family's name is in anyway being question. She believes that she has nothing to prove to any of the townspeople. Because of this she has no need to kill Homer Barron to save face like Blythe states. Emily has always believed that she has the highest standard in town. For awhile she does, her father once lend the whole town money and that is one of the reasons why Emily demands more

recognition. Although the townspeople believe that Emily's family hold themselves up too high, they never say anything to them or Emily. They go around referring to Emily as "poor Emily"(Corbett 13) but not once is Emily in jeopardy of losing their respect. They use the phrase "poor Emily" because they feel sorry for her, she is left alone after her father's death with no family and no husband to care for her, besides feeling sorry for Emily the townspeople still looks up to her.

An example of this is in the way that the townspeople allow Emily to get away with things that ordinary people would not get away with. She refuses to pay taxes even when the town sends representatives over to her home to persuade her. Instead she tells them "see Colonel Sartoris. I have no taxes in Jefferson" (Corbett 10). In this quote it is definite that Emily is indeed living in her own time because later Faulkner reveals that Colonel Sartoris has been dead for almost ten years. The representatives know this and they don't say a word about it. She vanquishes them from her home and continues to pay no taxes.

The townspeople have a habit of letting Emily do what ever she wants even when it's breaking the law. This is clearly embodied in the way that the druggist sells Emily Arsenic.

'If that's what you want. But the law requires you to tell what you are going to use it for.' Miss Emily just stared at him, her head tilted back in order to look him eye for eye, until he looked away and went and got the arsenic and wrapped it up. (Corbett 13).

Emily goes to the drug store to buy poison, she doesn't even tell the druggist what she needs it for but he assumes that she wants it to kill rats. When she names the poison that she wants the druggist is hesitant to sell it to her. She just keeps telling him that she wants arsenic until he gives up and gives it to her knowing that there's a good chance that she would not use it on rats. The way in which Emily stares at the druggist is another reason as to why I deem that she has no reason to kill Homer Barron to save face as Blythe stated in his article "Faulkner's A ROSE FOR EMILY". Emily expresses a symbol of power when she looks at the druggist dead in the eyes. She looks him in the eyes until he backs away and gives her what she wants, if she didn't have any power over him he would not break the rules and supply her with a dangerous substance without knowing what she's going to do with it.

Emily has so much authority over the townspeople that they don't even investigate the horrible smell of decaying corpse that comes from her house. Even though the mayor receives complaints about the smell

from various people in the town, the issue was not taken care of in the right way. Faulkner uses this incident as a major hint to his readers to allow them to pick up on how the town looks the other way every time Emily does anything out of the ordinary. Instead of forcing Emily to reveal the source of the smell, they sneak around Emily's house late at night to spread lime all over the place; mind you lime is what is used on corpses to control the smell.

Throughout the short story Emily battles to keep time moving at her own pace. When her father was alive he controlled everything, Emily was not married because her father did not allow anyone to pursue a relationship with her because he considers them unworthy of being involved with a Grierson. "Being left alone, and a pauper, she had become humanized" (Corbett 12). Emily was left alone without anyone to tend to her needs, with her father gone and all the men that once shared an interest in her gone she discovers that her life was somewhat wasted. She is not ready for this awakening so she tries everything in her power to stop time from moving on to a direction that she is not anticipating.

Milinda Schwab states in her article "A watch for Emily", "She resists change because for her change will always involve loss." I agree with Schwab because before Emily developed a fetish for controlling time. Everyone that she was in her life left her, her father, the rest of her family because her father cut all ties with them and the kids that she teaches to paint leaves her.

Then the newer generation became the backbone and the sprit of the town and the painting pupils grew up and fell away and did not send their children to her with boxes of color and tedious brushes and pictures cut from the ladies' magazines (Corbett 15).

After her father dies the only thing that Emily has left is the students that she teaches how to paint but back then time was not standing still for Emily because the kids grows up. They have a family of their own and lose interest in painting so they neglect to send their children over to learn form Emily. After so many disappointments Emily becomes more engross in controlling the changes in her life.

In Schwab's article she states, "Time for Emily does not move forward; it merely drones on in endless repetition, like the absurdly loud tick, tick, tick, of her invisible watch." This statement is true because after Emily poisons Homer Barron, time indeed stand still for her. When Emily discovers Homer Barron's true sexuality it dawns upon her that he would not be with her as she anticipated when she got involved with

him. Knowing that he prefers men means that he would eventually leave her like everyone else does. That small fact is too much for Emily to bear. She finally feels ready to introduce a change in her life after her father dies only to again be left alone. In result Emily poisons Homer Barron, in that way he would never leave her and her feelings for him will always remain the same. “The body had apparently once lain in the attitude of an embrace, but now the long sleep that outlasts love, that conquers even the grimace of love, had cuckolded him”(Corbett 16). In this quote Faulkner reveals what I believe to be the mystery of Emily’s motive for killing Homer Barron. Positioning Homer’s dead body in a position of an embrace reveals intimacy. Emily has been cuddling up with Homer’s dead body. Everyone that she has ever had a connection with has left her, the only way she can get them to stay with her is by holding the good memories she has with them captive. With Homer Barron the only way she can make sure to have him be there to support and love her is to kill him. That way the love that she believes he shares for her will always be there.

One thing that Emily does not anticipate is what happens to the human body once it’s no longer living. “But now the long sleep that outlast love, that conquers even the grimace of love, had cuckolded him”(Corbett 16). Emily does not really have any control over time, she is just able to delude herself into thinking that she does. The fact that Homer Barron’s body decays over time is an example of time moving on without Emily. “The long sleep that over last love” this is simply stating that Emily’s suppose love for Homer Barron does not stay the same like she intends because it is outlasted by Homer Barron’s death because in death time still goes on.

Emily did not poison Homer Barron because she wants to save face like Blythe states in his article “Faulkner’s A ROSE FOR EMILY”. Even upon Emily’s death the townspeople still have respect for her.

And now Miss Emily had gone to join the representatives of those august names where they lay in the cedar-bemused cemetery among the ranked and anonymous graves of Union and Confederate soldiers who fell at the battle of Jefferson (Corbett 9).

After everything that happens with Emily, her behavior after her father’s death, the way she keeps to herself, and the way she refuse to adapt to the changes in the town. Upon her death they bury her in a cemetery among America’s heroes. The loss of Emily is like the loss of a soldier in battle. In a way Emily is a fallen soldier because she was in a battle against time only to lose upon her death.

# Jessica Vargas

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## Family Success in Enterprising

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Family to me means many things, for example: honesty and love, but when I began to question my own family values, I discovered their origin. Success in any family enterprise depends to a large extent on the family's accomplishments and achievements of certain values. These values are strong will, respect, and determination. My success in life depends greatly on the above values. In this paper I will play a role, as a product of this family, to the current success I have attained. In order to prove this argument, I will cite examples from personal life convictions and historical references. Ranging from my mother, grand-parents, and down the line towards my ancestors there was a trace of similarities. These similarities contributed to my outlook in life, and my success in life. Also, comparing myself to other Dominicans whom I am related to was an answer to my achievements. My relatives (i.e. aunts, uncles, cousins) as well have influenced my success because many tend to encompass the value of determination which lead to success.

Sources of actual facts help prove my argument, because statistics never lie. In the appendix of "The American Dream of Success" there was a discovery of facts that related to my point of view, family values that are attained such as determination, strong will, and respect lead to success. These statistics that I discovered were based upon many articles and stories that relate to successful people who acquire these values: strong will, respect, and determination. These statistics were found in "The Saturday Evening Post" and "Reader's Digest" between 1926-1929 (Chenoweth 179). The resources that one needs to succeed were: respectability, ambition, will power, and many of the success figures were business-oriented people (Chenoweth 180-181). As you can see, the values that I had acquired from my parents and some relatives was what guided me to success in life, whether it was school or work. These sacred "family values" revealed something to me that without them where would I be and what would I be doing? One answer to these questions would be no where because I would be lost in a world of failure. In The American Dream of Success it is quoted that family members contribute to our success. When we grow we tend to acquire values



that we are exposed to (Chenoweth 3). We are exposed to our family, their habits, and their values of a person. As a child, mimicking what my mother did and said was something I was used to, and desired to do. Every child wants to be like their mother or father because these are the people who you love and care for. Your parents, are your role models therefore you use them as tools to grow and succeed in life. Even though, poverty was my style of living, as a child I watched my mother and she was a content person. My mother was a strong individual, and made it possible for my success in education, and where ever else it was relevant. My mother prepared me for the future, she made sure I would follow her footsteps and be a strong person. Therefore I would be able to accomplish any difficult task and then succeed.

One of the values that I have encompassed from my mother is strong will and it will be further discussed momentarily. Being strong-willed means: “determined to prevail in the face of difficulty or opposition” (Encarta). My mother represents this family value which I embrace. From childhood to young adulthood, I watched my mother grow as a person. She basically did anything in her desire to live life happily and create an atmosphere of comfort for her family. April 27, 1995, there was the death of my younger sister, Jackie, which was the worst thing a parent could ever encounter. My mother was heart broken, devastated, and miserable. Even though losing a child was a tough situation, my mother had to be strong and move on in life, which she did. My mother proved to me that she was a strong person. When it came time to remember of her three other children she did it. Shortly after, my mother was back working in the grocery store and living the life she was living before. Jackie will always be remembered, but will not affect my mother’s personality, her most important value, being strong-willed. The worse is to come next, only two years after my sister’s death, my mother’s closest brother, Bienvenidos, passed away also. Without him, everything was a catastrophe, yet again my mother still maintained a fine head on her shoulders, and took over the responsibilities of the store they both owned. Years went by, and my mother’s father, Juan, passed away. Yet again, my mother, Maria, was able to live life serenely. Every few years it seems to me that my mother has lost a loved one, often perhaps a exceptionally close family member. Just thinking about what it would be like to come upon all these deaths of the people who you loved most is not any simple task to

overcome in life. My mother's value, strong-will, allowed her to succeed in her businesses (i.e. grocery store). This value portrayed that success is existent when one is able to conquer difficult responsibilities and duties.

An additional value that my relatives have is earning respect from others and this value will be explained intensely through the following examples. Respect is "a feeling or attitude of admiration and deference toward somebody or something" (Encarta). Through out my historical research I came about this novel, and it said in "The Costs of Success and Affluence" that hard work is essential to the creation of self-respect (Harrison 229). Now what is success? To my knowledge, it is believed to be a mixture of hard work, determination, strong will, and even respect. Having these values in mind, enable you to understand why respect ties into success. If one does not work hard then one will not gain any self-respect, and if one does not work hard one will also not be led into success. Therefore, one needs to work hard to succeed, and when one works hard one will also build a character of self-respect. When one is shown respect by several others, one is viewed as an exceedingly successful person. If one is not successful who would want to show one respect? My great-grandmother was well known and respected in her community due to her contributions and accomplishments. She was a very aggressive business woman and always ahead of her time. In the 1920's, in the Dominican Republic, women had very little rights. They had to behave in a very lady-like manner, but my great-grandmother, Mered, was different. She wore pants and rode horses like a man would and she always ran her own business. She was a very respected woman in her community, and anywhere she went. Till this day people in her hometown, Santiago, Dominican Republic, would still compliment Mered on her achievements, bravery, and her uniqueness compared to the other ladies in the community. Mered was a widow and raised her daughter, my grandmother, Luisa, with the same beliefs. When Luisa Ceballos, my grandmother, married my grand-father, Juan, she built a small store in front of her home for the town. Whatever useful products her husband gave to her she would resell them and soon enough this store was very profitable. All the customers respected Luisa, because she had earned it and respect was an element of her values. The female role models in my family, Maria, Mered, and Luisa, all contributed to my success in life. There was always proof of success when the small businesses in my family began to expand. The value

of respect is vital to the development of one's success in any kind of business, because one seeks the success in life.

Another central value is determination, which I will talk about in this essay and connect to my belief on how values lead to success. Determination is "firmness of purpose, will, or intention" (Encarta). When one is determined and ready to succeed one wishes to be strong-minded. In order for a person to be successful in the business field one must encompass several components: determination, strong will, and respect. It is evident that in my hometown, New Britain, and in other places as well, (i.e. New York, Massachusetts), the Dominicans in my family have their own businesses, where they are self-employed. Growing up in New York City surrounded by several relatives was inspiring and motivating because we all grew day by day and advanced in our business careers. Even though there were fewer of us here, it seemed to me that the relatives which resided in the United States were the majority that ran all the small businesses around town and succeeded in them. This value traces back in the time of Trujillo Molina; this was a time of suffering and limitation in the business world. Trujillo was a dictator that ruled the Dominican Republic from the 1930's through the 1960's and took over almost every private and public business (Rodriguez). There was no way of imagining how the Dominican people felt; these strong, determined, individuals had their prized possessions thieved from them. Ruled under this tyrant was difficult to succeed in self-owned businesses. Trujillo obligated these workers to pay a certain percentage of their salary to his political party (Rodriguez). Embezzling the money that belonged to the successful small business owners was not just. These were unfortunate events that influenced many Dominicans to over throw this communistic government. In order for this tyrant, Trujillo, to be over thrown it took many determined Dominicans to succeed in the process. Several reached out to neighboring countries for assistance, but some how he was assassinated before his time (Rodriguez). This historical reference portrays a value that many unique relatives of mine have, that is being determined and focused. They had to complete the task of overthrowing Trujillo in order to be successful and it was accomplished. Determination is a given factor when one must succeed in defeating a tyrant like Trujillo.

Opposing views may feel differently because they did not grow up with the closely knit family I encompassed. These significant others may believe that personal convictions and life experiences are what makes up for their values. According to others, family values are not the essential things one needs to succeed, but what I imagine is how could they not be? When one grows as a person one grows because one learns from others, not just oneself. These others are significant because one picks up on what they do and believe, maybe not every single thing, but this is the major impact on one's success in life. The majority of the people one learns ideas from are one's family members because one lives with them and one is always around them. A person who says that family values have nothing to do with one's success in life is misinformed, because family values are vital to one's growth in life as an individual. Many of my memories trace back to the time when I was five years old living in New York City, when I was neighbors with my older cousin Susy. Susy trained me to be who I am today, she was my role model not only because she was my older cousin and babysitter, but because she taught me how to be a successful person. Susy lectured me on how important education was, she also portrayed to me that it was imperative. Susy worked hard in school and at home as well, she was my babysitter too. During the time I spent with Susy, I impersonated her because I loved her, and wanted to be like her, successful. There was even a time when she lived with me in Connecticut, and this I will never forget because it was extremely hard for her to be away from her parents. But she did it, for my siblings and I. Now Susy is a grown woman, an adult, one who is working as an accountant and managing the co-workers. Susy, as well as my other relatives, represents the values of strong will, respect, and determination. These values have allowed her to be led into a successful business career as an accountant.

Assuming that success in any family enterprise depends on the values one encompasses is factual. These values which I have gained from my relatives have led me into victory, I have successfully completed many obstacles in life with the inclusion of these values: strong will, respect, and determination. According to factual evidence from statistics to history, people who contain these certain values: strong will, respect, and determination, have been led into success: impressive achievement, especially the attainment of fame, wealth, or power (Encarta). Extending down my family tree and observing the most common values which have led

many of us into success has inspired me to believe that this is the reason why my family has prospered in the business field.

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# Krystal Warren

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## The Inner Ring

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After reading “The Inner Ring” I have come to the conclusion that I agree with C.S. Lewis fully where he states that he described his inner ring badly. While reading the text I was very confused because of the fact that his “inner circle” was never really described as what he said it was. Not only that but this mysterious “ring” didn’t really have a definite name. I was often thrown off when he talked about it because of that. Fortunately, there were parts that I did comprehend and what I did manage to grasp was his quote “Some people are obviously in and some are obviously out but there are always several on the border-line”. After considering the quote I tried to relate it to our common class topic. I found that in some ways it does relate to peace, but just not in the most obvious of ways. I found out how it relates by comparing it to a specific section of discussion that was went over in class. It is one of those things that you have to break down and dissect in order to find a relation between the two.

When first looking at the text I found that the inner ring seemed less like a hierarchy and more like a club or secret society of some sort. That was one of the many things that threw me off. For example, Lewis states “there are no formal admissions or expulsions. People think they are in it after they in fact have been pushed out, or before they have been allowed in: this provides great amusement for those who are really in it” (Lewis 282). Lewis doesn’t really go into how it is defined as a hierarchy. Instead he describes how there are specific slang words, nicknames, enumerations and mannerisms used by those who are members compared to those who are not. Given those terms, would the word hierarchy pop into your mind? I would think not.

As I stated before there are certain ways that the inner ring can relate to peace. They are different on a general sense because no one speaks of peace in code like they do in the inner ring. What I do believe is that those who are truly at peace do carry themselves in a different manor then those who are not. When hearing that quote it once again brings me back to Douglas P. Lackey and his policy on pacifism. He constantly stresses that when you are against a certain action then not only do you refrain from doing that action but you encourage others to follow you. If you don’t then you are not really a pacifist. That relates to

part of Lewis' quote where it says that you are either obviously in or obviously out of the inner ring. Since we all know that pacifism can play a major role in peace I interpret that as pacifism being the ring. What different between the two is that there is no "gray" areas in Lackey's view of pacifism. You're either in it or you're not. In Lewis' quote he mentions people being in the "border-line" which means there is a mix of both where he is concerned. To me that means that some can not really be in the inner circle but their mannerisms and slang are originated from those who are so it is hard to tell with these people. It can be possible that you are not in total peace with yourself but you still act peaceful giving off an aura that is pleasant and positive. I use myself as an example for that. I believe that some violence is necessary in life but that doesn't mean that I come off as a belligerent person. I am what you would classify as one of the "border-line" people.

When comparing peace to the inner ring I don't agree with Lewis' quote "In all men's lives at certain periods, and in many men's lives at all periods between infancy and extreme old age, one of the most dominant elements is the desire to be inside the local Ring and the terror of being left outside" (Lewis 283). I don't agree with this quote because in this day and age I don't see a lot of people stressing over peace or worrying about how to be in the "inner ring" of pacifism. What I do see is people who accept the way things are and find a way to go around it without change. I can also say that I am one of those people. I think by just playing the cards the way they were dealt is the most effective way of finding peace or your inner ring. This can be another way of defining Lewis' border-line people.

In conclusion, I think that in relating Lewis' metaphor to peace I have gained a better understanding of the text in a sense of what the inner ring means. I still wish that he would give this ring a name so that the confusion about how it's represented is cleared up. The different ways of identifying it from those who were members and those who weren't members confused me because none were all that significant. All the ways they referred to it were just regular phrases used in everyday communication so it was still difficult telling who was in or out. On another note in comparing it to peace in the method of Lackey's definition of pacifism, I hope that you gained a better understanding as well if your problem was the same.

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# Sarah Watrous

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## Quote from the Reading

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The quote: “The emotion of fear and of hate is therefore sterile, unfertile.” (Woolf3) is taken from Virginia Woolf’s essay *Thoughts on Peace in an Air Raid*. This essay is written by Woolf while an air raid occurs close (literally over-head) to her home in England during the Nazi invasion of 1940. This quote is truly amazing and has taken quite a bit of time to decipher, however the time was well worth the effort if it meant figuring out what Woolf was thinking.

Upon reading this essay, this quote was indeed a mind twister. What could it possibly mean? When Woolf introduces the idea of fear and hate as being sterile and infertile, it instantly throws the reader off-guard for the reason that one would not typically describe fear or hate with either of these words. When one thinks of the term sterile or unfertile they often connect with childbirth, when in fact these words are often described by words such as: unimaginative, uninspired, and uninventive (<http://www.answers.com/topic/sterile-unimaginative-uninspired-uninventive>). In a sense, Woolf was stating that the emotions fear and/or hate lead to the one expressing these emotions to become unimaginative, uninspired, and/or uninventive.

This quote could hold a multitude of meanings for each person. However, it feels as if Woolf is attempting to convey the idea that fear and hate are the two emotions or contributions that lead to an uncreative mind. It is believed that she intends for this quote to mean this by stating:” But during those seconds of suspense all thinking stopped... Directly that fear passes, the mind reaches out and instinctively revives itself by trying to create.”(Woolf3). So, in a sense, fear and hate for the events those are occurring around her lead Woolf to believe that they are the cause for any moment of uncreative or sterile mind work.

This fact is present and observed in this time era as well. For example, when one gets into a confrontation with any person they often leave upset or scared and even though they leave the situation the mind continues to dwell on this confrontation. While the mind dwells deeper and deeper into what just occurred, the less the person thinks of other things. Personal example: I, just last night, got into a fight with my now ex-boyfriend. Even though it is a completely different day I am still reflecting on last nights events. This event still fills my head and is thus creating difficulties focusing on other things occurring around me. Even now as I type this paper. This is an example

of how fear and hate leads for one's mind to become sterile. The mind is sterile and unfertile, not in a sense of reproducing children, but rather in a sense of being unable to reproduce creativity, imagination, or inspiration. The mind stays more focused for longer periods of time on the things that bother someone than the things that do not.

Due to the fact the mind becomes sterile, unfertile when it is clouded with fear and/or hate; these emotions must therefore be sterile, unfertile. An emotion is any strong feeling and its expression through the person feeling them. The expression of happiness may lead to a smile, the expression of sadness may lead to a frown (ha-ha sounds like a poem), and the expression of sleepiness may lead to a yawn. Woolf suggests and gives adequate proof that the expression of fear and/hate could lead to a cloudy mind, a sterile mind, an unfertile mind. It is believed that this is the point that Woolf is attempting to relay when stating this quote.

**Work Cited:** "Thoughts on Peace in an Air Raid" 27 Jun.2005

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**Work Consulted:**

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<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/unfertile>

# Melissa Wortham

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## **I'll Have the Citizenship for Two Please**

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Moving from one country to another is a bigger challenge for a person than leaving his home. He is now leaving the security of his familiar country to part of another. An immigrant must also make it seem as if they belong there. When moving into another country immigrants lose track of their heritage and adopt a new culture. This happens knowingly because the sense of wanting to belong is more powerful than trying to remain the same. They change the way they look and the way they interact socially in order to fit in to that new surrounding set before them. Immigrants can change also because they are discriminated against by citizens when trying to express their culture outside their homes. Changing can also happen unknowingly when immigrants are surrounded by a different culture and take on that one instead. Immigrants change there ways of living to what appeals to them from that country and make it their own.

When a child is born in a different country than his parents, it's not hard for him to fit in to the surroundings. They immediately grow up in that culture and take on those customs. Everything that that child knows is about the country that they were born in. However for a parent coming from a place like Asia to India it would be hard for her to fit in as a citizen. In order to belong they might change their clothes and the way they style their hair. Or in order to fit in even more, a person might even change their accent in order to blend in more with the different culture, or to draw less attention to themselves. Everybody wants to belong and, in order to do that, it's easier to look like the group that they are trying to belong to. That is the case for ethnic groups. They get plastic surgery to look like a person of a different culture. Everything, from their speech to their clothes, to their values, will be altered to show how much work went into trying to belong. Children also change what they look like in order to fit into their surroundings. One of the more difficult things for a child being in school is finding friends who accept him and to do this immigrant children intentionally alter their appearance. After they change, they forget about their past. This situation is a dilemma for the child and his family. Families have to treat the new countries values the same as the old,

which is hard because each value will always put the pressure on them to choose, and either one they choose will be like turning their back on the other culture.

A reason why a person would also give up their culture is to be socially accepted. Different types of clothes and headwear is more than enough to single a person out in a crowd and even more of a reason to point out the type of culture a person doesn't like. So immigrants switch their clothes to something more socially acceptable and blend in to avoid comments of their not belonging there. As citizens we feel that immigrants have arrived here to give up what they left behind when really they give up their culture because they want to be accepted. Countries promote their traditions and holidays and they accept them so they won't be singled out. It's even worse for an immigrant to go to a country and be treated as if they are there to cause a problem.

While doing this, immigrants also can lose their sense of why they came to the country in the first place. They assume that by changing who they are it will in turn help them accomplish the goal that they have set before themselves. It's the same with children. Immigrant children have an even harder time being accepted into a new culture. In fact it's the children who change the most. We could become friends with a person and ten years later our culture could have rubbed off on him so much that we haven't any inclination of his previous background. Changing who a person is is easier than preserving their background. Especially if a person is discriminated against for what they look like everyday, switching who they are is the only way to survive. "Survival" is they reason for why immigrants would forget there heritage. They change in order to culturally "survive."

Being in a new country for a while, immigrants can not help but to adapt to the society around them. They want to make friends and they want to have jobs. Many times what they find in the new country is better that what they had in the old one and they chose the new customs over the old ones they left. Immigrants can't help but to pick up a few habits here in there. Take England, for example: if a person were to become a citizen of that country they could possibly pick up an accent. When someone is exposed to a situation over a period of time, that person could gain the same views on that situation because they have been exposed to it for so long.

Unknowingly, immigrants make new friends and start families and before long they don't know enough to tell their children about their heritage twenty years later. Children study the history of the country in school and read books that don't have anything to do with their background and because of this they lose a sense of who they are. Children of immigrants especially don't realize they have taken on a new culture because to them since they have spent most their lives in that country that place is their culture. We see it every day in America when students arrived here as babies and have parents who were born in another country but are so Americanized that we cannot tell where they are from. And when students do reports of their heritage it's a really hard thing to do, because they are not used to the traditions there. It's even worse because back home they probably wouldn't be accepted either.

Moving to another country is hard for both cultures that a person is trying to be a part of. Either they are too little of one or too much of the other. This causes new citizens to have to pick what they want to be a part of. Trying to belong is so important to them that they change who they are. The way they look and the way they talk, for example, are ways that they change. Being exposed to new surroundings causes immigrants to change without knowing. Immigrants, they also change in order to not be discriminated against. And as citizens in the country we assume this is what they came here for when they are just trying to fit in.

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