

## The Price of Silence

*Introduction  
(provides  
background)*

In his essay “‘What’s in a Name?’” Henry Louis Gates Jr. recalls an incident from his past in which his father encountered prejudice and did not speak up. Perhaps he kept silent because he was afraid or because he knew that nothing he said or did would change the racial situation in Piedmont, West Virginia. Although I have never encountered the kind of prejudice Gates describes, I did have an experience in high school where, like Gates’s father, I could have spoken out but did not. As I look back at the cheating incident that I witnessed, I realize that I have outgrown the immaturity and lack of confidence that made me keep silent.

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*Thesis statement*

*Narrative begins*

In my senior year in high school I, along with fifteen other students, took advanced placement chemistry. The course was very demanding and required hours of studying every night. As the semester dragged on, it became clear to me, as well as to the other students in the class, that passing the course was not something we could take for granted. Test after test came back with grades that were well below the As and Bs I was used to getting in the regular chemistry course I had taken in tenth grade. By the time we were ready to take the final exam, most of us were worried that we would fail the course — despite the teacher’s assurances that she would mark on a curve.

2

*Key incident occurs*

The final examination for advanced placement chemistry was given on a Friday morning between nine o’clock and noon. I had studied all that week, but, even so, I found the test difficult. I knew the material, but I had a hard time answering the long questions that were asked. As I struggled to balance a particularly complex equation, I noticed that the person sitting across from me was acting strangely. At first I thought I was imagining things, but as I stared I saw Jeff Servin, my friend and study partner, fumbling with his test booklet. About a minute passed before I realized that he was copying material

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from a paper he had taped to the inside of his shirt cuff. After a short time, I stopped watching him and finished my test.

*Narrative continues:  
reactions to the  
incident*

It was not until after the test that I began thinking about what I had seen. Surprisingly, when I mentioned the incident to others in the class, they all knew what Jeff had done. Some even thought that Jeff's actions were justified. "After all," one student said, "the test was hard." But the more I thought about Jeff's actions, the angrier I got. It seemed unfair that I had studied for weeks to memorize formulas and equations while all Jeff had done was copy them onto a cheat sheet. For a moment I considered going to the teacher, but I quickly rejected this idea. Cheating was nothing new to me or to others in my school. Many of my classmates cheated at one time or another. Most of us saw school as a war between us and the teachers, and cheating was just another weapon in our arsenal. The worst crime I could commit would be to turn Jeff in. As far as I was concerned, I had no choice. I fell in line with the values of my high school classmates and dismissed the incident as "no big deal."

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*Narrative ends*

*Analysis of key  
incident*

Now that I am in college, however, I see the situation differently. I find it hard to believe that I could ever have been so complacent about cheating. The issues that were simple in high school now seem complex — especially in light of the honor code that I follow in college. I now ask questions that never would have occurred to me in high school. What, for example, are the implications of cheating? What would happen to the educational system if cheating became the norm? What are my obligations to all those who are involved in education? Aren't teachers and students interested in achieving a common goal? The answers to these questions give me a sense of the far-reaching effects of my failure to act. If confronted with the same situation today, I know I would speak out regardless of the consequences.

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Jeff Servin is now a first-year student at the state university and, like me, was given credit for chemistry. I feel certain that by not turning him in, I failed not only myself but also Jeff. I gave in to peer pressure instead of doing what I knew to be right. The worst that would have happened to Jeff had I spoken up is that he would have had to repeat chemistry in summer school. By doing so, he would have proven to himself that he could, like the rest of us in the class, pass on his own. In the long run, this knowledge would have served him better than the knowledge that he could cheat whenever he faced a difficult situation.

6

*Conclusion  
(aftermath  
of incident)*

Interestingly, Jeff and I are no longer very close. Whenever I see him, I have the same reaction Henry Louis Gates Jr. had when he met Mr. Wilson after he had insulted his father: “I never again looked [him] in the eye’” (7).

7

#### Works Cited

Gates, Henry Louis, Jr. “‘What's in a Name?’” Patterns for College Writing. 11th ed. Ed. Laurie G. Kirszner and Stephen R. Mandell. New York: Bedford, 2010. 5–7.

## My Field of Dreams

### *Introduction*

When I was young, I was told that when I grew up I could be anything I wanted to be, and I always took for granted that this was true. I knew exactly what I was going to be, and I would spend hours dreaming about how wonderful my life would be when I grew up. One day, though, when I did grow up, I realized that things had not turned out the way I had always expected they would.

### *Thesis statement*

### *Narrative begins*

When I was little, I never played with baby dolls or Barbies. I wasn't like other little girls; I was a tomboy. I was the only girl in the neighborhood where I lived, so I always played with boys. We would play army or football or (my favorite) baseball.

Almost every summer afternoon, all the boys in my neighborhood and I would meet by the big oak tree to get a baseball game going. Surprisingly, I was always one of the first to be picked for a team. I was very fast, and (for my size) I could hit the ball far. I loved baseball more than anything, and I wouldn't miss a game for the world.

My dad played baseball too, and every Friday night I would go to the field with my mother to watch him play. It was just like the big leagues, with lots of people, a snack bar, and lights that shone so high and bright you could see them a mile away. I loved to go to my dad's games. When all the other kids would wander off and play, I would sit and cheer on my dad and his team. My attention was focused on the field, and my heart would jump with every pitch.

Even more exciting than my dad's games were the major league games. The Phillies were my favorite team, and I always looked forward to watching them on television. My dad would make popcorn, and we would sit and watch in anticipation of a Phillies victory. We would go wild, yelling and screaming at all the big plays. When the Phillies would win, I would be so

excited I couldn't sleep; when they would lose, I would go to bed angry, just like my dad.

*Key experience  
introduced  
(par. 6–7)*

It was when my dad took me to my first major league baseball game that I decided I wanted to be a major league baseball player. The excitement began when we pulled into the parking lot of the old Veterans Stadium. There were thousands of cars. As we walked from the car to the stadium, my dad told me to hold on to his hand and not to let go no matter what. When we gave the man our tickets and entered the stadium, I understood why. There were mobs of people everywhere. They were walking around the stadium and standing in long lines for hot dogs, beer, and souvenirs. It was the most wonderful thing I had ever seen. When we got to our seats, I looked down at the tiny baseball diamond below and felt as if I were on top of the world.

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The cheering of the crowd, the singing, and the chants were almost more than I could stand. I was bursting with enthusiasm. Then, in the bottom of the eighth inning, with the score tied and two outs, Mike Schmidt came up to bat and hit the game-winning home run. The crowd went crazy. Everyone in the whole stadium was standing, and I found myself yelling and screaming along with everyone else. When Mike Schmidt came out of the dugout to receive his standing ovation, I felt a lump in my throat and butterflies in my stomach. He was everyone's hero that night, and I could only imagine the pride he must have felt. I slept the whole way home and dreamed of what it would be like to be the hero of the game.

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*Narrative  
continues*

The next day, when I met with the boys at the oak tree, I told them that when I grew up, I was going to be a major league baseball player. They all laughed at me and said I could never be a baseball player because I was a girl. I told them that they were all wrong and that I would show them.

8

*Analysis of childhood  
experiences*

In the years to follow, I played girls' softball in a competitive fast-pitch league, and I was very good. I always wanted to play baseball with the boys, but there were no mixed leagues. After a few years, I realized that the boys from the oak tree were right: I was never going to be a major league baseball player. I realized that what I had been told when I was younger wasn't the whole truth. What no one had bothered to tell me was that I could be anything I wanted to be — as long as it was something that was appropriate for a girl to do.

9

*Conclusion*

In time, I would get over the loss of my dream. I found new dreams, acceptable for a young woman, and I moved on to other things. Still, every time I watch a baseball game and someone hits a home run, I get those same butterflies in my stomach and think, for just a minute, about what might have been.

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## Building and Learning

### *Introduction*

Throughout the United States, houses reflect not only the lives of the people who live in them but also the diversity of the American population. Some are large and ostentatious, others are modest but well maintained, and still others are in need of repair. Unfortunately, most college students know little about homes other than those in their own neighborhood. I too was fairly sheltered until I participated in a service-learning project for my sociology class. For this project, I, along with some classmates, added a deck to a trailer. We gained a great deal of satisfaction from this project by helping three elderly people in need.

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### *Thesis statement*

### *Description of area around the trailer*

The trailer we worked on was located at the end of a small dirt road about thirty minutes from campus. Patches of green and brown grass dotted the land around the trailer, and in the far right-hand corner of the property stood three tall poplar trees. Although the bushes in the front of the trailer were trimmed, the woods behind the trailer were beginning to overrun the property. (We were told that members of a local church came once a month to trim the hedges and cut back the trees.) Dominating the right front corner of the lawn was a circular concrete basin that looked like a large birdbath and that housed a white well pipe with a rusted blue cap. About thirty feet to the left of the concrete basin stood a telephone pole and a bright red metal mailbox.

2

### *General description of the trailer*

Like the property where it stood, the trailer was well maintained. It was approximately thirty-five feet long and seven feet high; it rested on cinderblocks, which raised it about three feet off the ground. Under the trailer was an overturned white plastic chair. The trailer itself was covered with sheets of white vinyl siding that ran horizontally, except for the bottom panels on the right side, which ran vertically. The vinyl panels

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closest to the roof were slightly discolored by dirt and green moss.

*Specific description  
of the trailer*

At the left end of the trailer was a small window — about two feet wide and one foot high. Next to the window was a dark red aluminum door that was outlined in green trim. It had one window at eye level that was divided by metal strips into four small sections. The number “24” in white plastic letters was glued to the door below this window. To the right of the door was a lightbulb in a black ceramic socket. Next to the light was a large window that was actually two vertical rows of three windows — each the same size as the small window on the left. Further to the right were two smaller windows. Each of these small windows tilted upward and was framed with silver metal strips. On either side of each of these windows was a pair of green metal shutters.

4

*Description of  
steps and walkway*

The deck we built replaced three wooden steps that had led up to the trailer. A white metal handrail stood on the right side of these steps. It had been newly painted and was connected to the body of the trailer by a heart-shaped piece of metal. In front of the steps, two worn gray wooden boards led to the road.

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*Description of  
new deck*

The finished deck provided a much better entranceway than the steps did and also gave the trailer a new look. The deck was not very large — ten feet by eight feet — but it extended from the doorway to the area underneath the windows immediately to the right of the door. We built the deck out of pressure-treated lumber so that it wouldn't rot or need painting. We also built three steps that led from the deck to the lawn, and we surrounded the deck with a wooden railing that ran down the right side of the steps. After we finished, we bought two white plastic chairs at a local thrift store and put them on the deck.

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Both the residents of the trailer and our class benefited from the service-learning project. The residents of the trailer were happy with the deck because it gave them a place to sit when the weather was good. They also liked their trailer's new look. Those of us who worked on the project learned how with just a little bit of work we could make a difference in other people's lives.

## The Valley of Windmills

### *Introduction*

In my native country of Burma, strange happenings and exotic scenery are not unusual, for Burma is a mysterious land that in some areas seems to have been ignored by time.

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### *Description (identifying the scene)*

Mountains stand jutting their rocky peaks into the clouds as they have for thousands of years. Jungles are so dense with exotic vegetation that human beings or large animals cannot even enter. But one of the most fascinating areas in Burma is the Valley of Windmills, nestled between the tall mountains near the fertile and beautiful city of Taungaleik. In this valley there is beautiful and breathtaking scenery, but there are also old, massive, and gloomy structures that can disturb a person deeply.

### *Description (moving toward the valley)*

The road to Taungaleik twists out of the coastal flatlands into those heaps of slag, shale, and limestone that are the Tenneserim Mountains in the southern part of Burma. The air grows rarer and cooler, and stones become grayer, the highway a little more precarious at its edges, until, ahead, standing in ghostly sentinel across the lip of a pass, is a line of squat forms. They straddle the road and stand at intervals up hillsides on either side. Are they boulders? Are they fortifications? Are they broken wooden crosses on graves in an abandoned cemetery?

2

### *Description (immediate view)*

These dark figures are windmills standing in the misty atmosphere. They are immensely old and distinctly evil, some merely turrets, some with remnants of arms hanging derelict from their snouts, and most of them covered with dark green moss. Their decayed but still massive forms seem to turn and sneer at visitors. Down the pass on the other side is a circular green plateau that lies like an arena below, where there are still more windmills. Massed in the plain behind them, as far as the eye can see, in every field, above every hut, stand ten thousand iron windmills, silent and sailless. They seem to await only a

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### *Description (more distant view)*

call from a watchman to clank, whirr, flap, and groan into action. Visitors suddenly feel cold. Perhaps it is a sense of loneliness, the cool air, the desolation, or the weirdness of the arcane windmills — but something chills them.

*Conclusion*

As you stand at the lip of the valley, contrasts rush as if to overwhelm you. Beyond, glittering on the mountainside like a solitary jewel, is Taungaleik in the territory once occupied by the Portuguese. Below, on rolling hillsides, are the dark windmills, still enveloped in morning mist. These ancient windmills can remind you of the impermanence of life and the mystery that still surrounds these hills. In a strange way, the scene in the valley can disturb you, but it also can give you an insight into the contrasts that seem to define our lives here in my country.

4

*Description (windmills contrasted with city)*

*Thesis statement*

1028 Geissinger Street  
Bethlehem, PA 18018  
September 7, 2008

Kim Goldstein  
Rolling Stone  
1290 Avenue of the Americas  
New York, NY 10104

Dear Ms. Goldstein:

*Introduction*

I am writing to apply for the editorial internship with Rolling Stone magazine that you posted on Moravian College's employment Web site. I believe that both my academic experience and my experience in publishing qualify me for the position you advertised.

1

*Thesis statement*

*Examples*

I am currently a senior at Moravian College, where I am majoring in English (with a concentration in creative writing) and music. Throughout my college career, I have maintained a 3.4 average. After I graduate in May, I would like to find a full-time job in publishing. For this reason, I am very interested in your internship. It would not only give me additional editorial and administrative experience, but it would also give me insight into a large-scale publishing operation. An internship at Rolling Stone would also enable me to read, edit, and possibly write articles about popular music — a subject I know a lot about.

2

*Examples*

Throughout college, I have been involved in writing and editing. I have served as both secretary and president of the Literary Society and have written, edited, and published its annual newsletter. I have also worked as a tutor in Moravian's Writing Center; as a literature editor for the Manuscript, Moravian's

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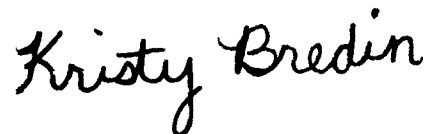
literary magazine; and as a features editor for the Comeneian, the student newspaper. In these jobs I have gained a good deal of practical experience in publishing as well as insight into dealing with people. In addition, I acquired professional editing experience this past semester when I worked as an intern for Taylor and Francis (Routledge) Publishing in New York.

*Conclusion*

I believe that my education and experience make me a good candidate for your position. As your ad requested, I have enclosed my résumé, three letters of reference, information on Moravian's internship program, and several writing samples for your consideration. You can contact me by phone at (484) 625-6731 or by e-mail at [stkab@moravian.edu](mailto:stkab@moravian.edu). I will be available for an interview anytime after September 23. I look forward to meeting with you to discuss my qualifications.

4

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristy Bredin". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of "Kristy" and "Bredin" being capitalized and prominent.

Kristy Bredin

## Midnight

### *Introduction*

It was eight o'clock, and I was staring at the television set wondering what kind of lesson Dr. Huxtable would teach his children next on a rerun of The Cosby Show. I was glued to the set like an average eleven-year-old couch potato while leisurely eating cold Chef Boyardee spaghetti out of the can. As I watched the show, I fell asleep on the floor fully clothed in a pair of jeans and a T-shirt, wondering when my parents would come home. Around midnight I woke up to a rustling noise: my parents had finally arrived from a long day at work. I could see in their tired faces the grief and hardship of working at a dry-cleaning plant.

1

### *Thesis statement*

### *Transitional paragraph provides background*

Although my parents lived in the most technologically advanced country in the world, their working conditions were like those of nineteenth-century factory workers. Because they were immigrants with little formal education and spoke broken English, they could get jobs only as laborers. Therefore, they worked at a dry-cleaning plant that was as big as a factory, a place where hundreds of small neighborhood cleaners sent their clothes to be processed. Like Bonnie Smith-Yackel's mother in the essay "My Mother Never Worked," my parents constantly "struggled to regain some competence and dignity and order" in their lives (116).

2

### *Quotation from essay in textbook*

### *Series of brief examples: physical demands*

At work, my parents had to meet certain quotas. Each day they had to clean and press several hundred garments — shirts, pants, and other clothing. By themselves, every day, they did the work of four laborers. The muscles of my mother's shoulders and arms grew hard as iron from working with the press, a difficult job even for a man. In addition to pressing, my father operated the washing machines. As a result, his work clothes always smelled of oil.

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### *Example: long hours*

Not only were my parents' jobs physically demanding, but they also required long hours. My parents went to work at five

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o'clock in the morning and came home between nine o'clock at night and midnight. Each day they worked over twelve hours at the dry-cleaning plant, where eight-hour workdays and labor unions did not exist. They were allowed to take only two ten- to twenty-minute breaks — one for lunch and one for dinner. They did not stop even when they were burned by a hot iron or by steam rising from a press. The scars on their arms made it obvious that they worked at a dry-cleaning plant. My parents' burned skin would blister and later peel off, exposing raw flesh. In time, these injuries would heal, but other burns would soon follow.

*Example: frequent burns*

In addition to having to work long hours and suffering painful injuries, my parents were paid below minimum wage. Together their paychecks were equal to that of a single unionized worker (even though they did the work of four). They used this money to feed and care for a household of five people.

*Example: low pay*

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As my parents silently entered our home around midnight, they did not have to complain about their jobs. I could see their anguish in their faces and their fatigue in the slow movements of their bodies. Even though they did not speak, their eyes said, "We hate our jobs, but we work so that our children will have better lives than we do."

*Conclusion*

6

*Restatement of thesis*

#### Works Cited

Smith-Yackel, Bonnie. "My Mother Never Worked." Patterns for College Writing. 11th ed. Ed. Laurie G. Kirszner and Stephen R. Mandell. New York: Bedford, 2010. 114.

## The Search

### *Introduction*

In the last four years, I have moved eight times, living in three dorm rooms, two summer sublets, and three apartments in three different cities. I would not recommend this experience to anyone. Finding an apartment is time consuming, stressful, and expensive, so the best advice is to stay where you are. However, if you must move, here are a few tips to help you survive the search.

1

### *Thesis statement*

### *First major stage of process: before the search*

### *First step: review your finances*

Before you begin your search, take some time to plan. First, figure out what you can afford. (Here's a hint — you can afford less than you think.) Most experts say you should spend no more than one-third of your net income on rent. Find a budgeting worksheet online, and see for yourself how car insurance, electricity, and cable can add up. Remember, your new landlord may charge a security deposit and the first month's rent, and there may be pet, parking, cleaning, or moving-in fees.

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### *Second step: check your credit history*

Next, consider your credit history. If you sometimes forget to pay bills, or if you have large student loans, you may have a problem. Landlords usually run a credit check on potential renters. If you are particularly concerned about your credit rating, order a credit report from one of the three main credit bureaus: TransUnion, Equifax, or Experian. If you find that your credit isn't perfect, don't panic. First, check your credit report for errors, and report any errors you find to the credit bureau. Second, adopt good financial habits immediately. Start paying bills on time, and try to consolidate any debts at a lower interest rate. If a landlord does question your credit, be prepared to explain any extenuating circumstances of the past and to point out your current good behavior.

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### *Third step: consider where to live*

After you know what you can afford, you need to figure out where you want to (and can afford to) live. Keep in mind important factors such as how close the apartment is to your

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school or workplace and how convenient the neighborhood is. Is public transportation located nearby? Is on-street parking available? Can you easily get to a supermarket, coffee shop, convenience store, and Laundromat? If possible, visit each potential neighborhood both during the day and at night. A business district may be bustling during the day but deserted (and even dangerous) at night. If you visit both early and late, you will get a more accurate impression of how safe the neighborhood feels.

*Fourth step:  
consider a  
roommate*

During this stage, consider whether or not you are willing to live with a roommate. You will sacrifice privacy, but you will be able to afford a better apartment. If you do decide to live with a roommate, the easiest way to proceed is to find a friend who also needs an apartment. If this isn't possible, try to find an apartment that comes with a roommate — one with one roommate moving out but the other roommate remaining in the apartment. The third option is to find another apartment seeker and go apartment hunting together. Some Web sites, such as [www.roommates.com](http://www.roommates.com), cater to this type of search, but, unfortunately, most require a fee. However, your school housing office might have a list of students looking for roommates.

5

*Transitional  
paragraph*

Now, you are ready to start looking. You can find the perfect apartment through a real estate agent, by checking your local newspaper or school's housing listings, by asking your friends and family, or by visiting Web sites such as [www.craigslist.org](http://www.craigslist.org).

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*Second major stage  
of process: during  
the search*

Each of these methods has pros and cons. A real estate agent might help you find your dream apartment quickly, but you will usually have to pay for this speedy service. As for newspaper listings, stick to your local paper; unless you are looking for a second vacation home in Maui, national newspapers are not your best bet. An even better idea is to check your school's housing listings, where you are likely to

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*First step: do  
research*

find fellow students in search of apartments in your price range.

*Second step: spread  
the word*

Meanwhile, spread the word. Tell everyone you know that you are apartment hunting. After all, your stepsister's uncle's mother-in-law may live in a building with a newly vacant apartment. This method isn't the most efficient, but the results can be amazing. As a bonus, you will receive practical advice about your neighborhood, such as what to watch out for and what problems other renters have had.

8

*Third step: try  
Craigslist*

Finally, if you are hunting in a major city, I have but one word: Craigslist. Craigslist.org has free apartment listings arranged by city and neighborhood. You can hunt for an apartment by price, by number of bedrooms, or by length of lease. If you are on a tight moving schedule and need a place immediately, this Web site is especially helpful because of the sheer volume of its listings. Craigslist also has the added benefit of providing a general price range for your ideal neighborhood.

9

*Fourth step: visit  
apartments*

Once you have identified some possibilities, it's time to visit the apartments. Get a good look at each one. Is it furnished or unfurnished? Look closely at the kitchen. Are all the appliances in good working order? How big is your bedroom? Will your bed fit? How much closet space will you have? Are there phone, cable, and Internet hookups? Is it a sunny apartment (south facing), or is it dark (north facing)? In the bathroom, turn on the faucets in the sink and shower; check for rust and poor water pressure. As you walk through the apartment, check the cell-phone reception (leaning out the window of your bathroom to talk on the phone is not fun). Most important, do not forget to take notes. After seeing fourteen apartments, you may confuse Apartment A, with the six pets and funny smell, with Apartment G, with the balcony and renovated kitchen.

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*Third major stage  
of process: after  
the search*

And now, at last, the search is over: you have found your apartment. Congratulations! Unfortunately, your work is not

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*First step: check  
your lease*

yet over. Now, it is time to read your lease. It will be long and boring, but it is a very important document. Among other things, your lease should specify the length of the lease, a rent due date, fees for late rent payments, the amount of the security deposit, and the conditions required for the return of the security deposit. If you have decided to live with a roommate, you might ask the landlord to divide the rent on your lease. This way, if your roommate moves to Brazil, you will not have to pay his share of the rent. Be sure to read your lease thoroughly and bring up any concerns with your landlord.

*Second step: get  
insurance and  
activate utilities*

Before you move in, you have a few more things to do: get renter's insurance to protect you from theft or damage to your possessions; arrange to get your utilities hooked up; submit a change-of-address form at the post office; and inform your bank or credit-card company about your future move. Finally, start packing!

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*Conclusion*

If you plan ahead and shop smart, you can find your perfect apartment. Remember to figure out what you can afford, check out the neighborhoods, consider a roommate, use multiple search methods, and take careful notes when you visit potential apartments. Yes, happy endings do occur. I am now in the third month of a two-year lease, and I have no plans to move anytime soon.

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## Medium Ash Brown

### *Introduction*

The beautiful chestnut-haired woman pictured on the box 1  
seemed to beckon to me. I reached for the box of Medium Ash  
Brown hair dye just as my friend Veronica grabbed the box  
labeled Sparkling Sherry. I can't remember our reasons for  
wanting to change our hair color, but they seemed to make  
sense at the time. Maybe we were just bored. I do remember  
that the idea of transforming our appearance came up  
unexpectedly. Impulsively, we decided to change our hair  
color — and, we hoped, ourselves — that very evening. The  
process that followed taught me that some impulses should  
definitely be resisted.

### *Thesis statement*

### *Materials assembled*

We decided to use my bathroom to dye our hair. Inside 2  
each box of hair color, we found two little bottles and a small  
tube wrapped in a page of instructions. Attached to the  
instruction page itself were two very large, one-size-fits-all  
plastic gloves, which looked and felt like plastic sandwich bags.  
The directions recommended having some old towels around to  
soak up any spills or drips that might occur. Under the sink we  
found some old, frayed towels that I figured my mom had  
forgotten about, and we spread them around the bathtub. After  
we put our gloves on, we began the actual dyeing process. First  
we poured the first bottle into the second, which was half-full  
of some odd-smelling liquid. The smell was not much better  
after we combined the two bottles. The directions advised us to  
cut off a small section of hair to use as a sample. For some  
reason, we decided to skip this step.

### *First stage of process: preparing the dye*

### *Second stage of process: applying the dye*

At this point, Veronica and I took turns leaning over the 3  
tub to wet our hair for the dye. The directions said to leave the  
dye on the hair for fifteen to twenty minutes, so we found a  
little timer and set it for fifteen minutes. Next, we applied the  
dye to our hair. Again, we took turns, squeezing the bottle in  
order to cover all our hair. We then wrapped the old towels

around our sour-smelling hair and went outside to get some fresh air.

*Third stage of process: rinsing*

After the fifteen minutes were up, we rinsed our hair. According to the directions, we were to add a little water and scrub as if we were shampooing our hair. The dye lathered up, and we rinsed our hair until the water ran clear. So far, so good.

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*Last stage of process: applying conditioner*

The last part of the process involved applying the small tube of conditioner to our hair (because dyed hair becomes brittle and easily damaged). We used the conditioner as directed, and then we dried our hair so that we could see the actual color. Even before I looked in the mirror, I heard Veronica's gasp.

5

*Outcome of process*

"Nice try," I said, assuming she was just trying to make me nervous, "but you're not funny."

6

"Mel," she said, "look in the mirror." Slowly, I turned around. My stomach turned into a lead ball when I saw my reflection. My hair was the putrid greenish-brown color of a winter lawn, dying in patches yet still a nice green in the shade.

7

The next day in school, I wore my hair tied back under a baseball cap. I told only my close friends what I had done. After they were finished laughing, they offered their deepest, most heartfelt condolences. They also offered many suggestions — none very helpful — on what to do to get my old hair color back.

8

*Conclusion*

It is now three months later, and I still have no idea what prompted me to dye my hair. My only consolation is that I resisted my first impulse — to dye my hair a wild color, like blue or fuchsia. Still, as I wait for my hair to grow out, and as I assemble a larger and larger collection of baseball caps, it is small consolation indeed.

9

## The Irish Famine, 1845-1849

### *Thesis statement*

The Irish famine, which brought hardship and tragedy to Ireland during the 1840s, was caused and prolonged by four basic factors: the failure of the potato crop, the landlord-tenant system, errors in government policy, and the long-standing prejudice of the British toward Ireland.

1

### *First cause*

The immediate cause of the famine was the failure of the potato crop. In 1845, potato disease struck the crop, and potatoes rotted in the ground. The 1846 crop also failed, and before long people were eating weeds. The 1847 crop was healthy, but there were not enough potatoes to go around, and in 1848 the blight struck again, leading to more and more evictions of tenants by landlords.

2

### *Second cause*

The tenants' position on the land had never been very secure. Most had no leases and could be turned out by their landlords at any time. If a tenant owed rent, he was evicted — or, worse, put in prison, leaving his family to starve. The threat of prison caused many tenants to leave their land; those who could leave Ireland did so, sometimes with money provided by their landlords. Some landlords did try to take care of their tenants, but most did not. Many were absentee landlords who spent their rent money abroad.

3

### *Third cause*

Government policy errors, although not an immediate cause of the famine, played an important role in creating an unstable economy and perpetuating starvation. In 1846, the government decided not to continue selling corn, as it had during the first year of the famine, claiming that low-cost purchases of corn by Ireland had paralyzed British trade by interfering with free enterprise. Therefore, 1846 saw a starving population, angry demonstrations, and panic; even those with money were unable to buy food. Still, the government insisted that if it sent food to Ireland, prices would rise in the rest of the United Kingdom and that this would be unfair to

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hardworking English and Scots. As a result, no food was sent. Throughout the years of the famine, the British government aggravated an already grave situation: they did nothing to improve agricultural operations, to help people adjust to another crop, to distribute seeds, or to reorder the landlord-tenant system that made the tenants' position so insecure.

*Fourth cause*

At the root of this poor government policy was the long-standing British prejudice against the Irish. Hostility between the two countries went back some six hundred years, and the British were simply not about to inconvenience themselves to save the Irish. When the Irish so desperately needed grain to replace the damaged potatoes, it was clear that grain had to be imported from England. This meant, however, that the Corn Laws, which had been enacted to keep the price of British corn high by taxing imported grain, had to be repealed. The British were unwilling to repeal the Corn Laws. Even when they did supply cornmeal, they made no attempt to explain to the Irish how to cook this unfamiliar food. Moreover, the British government was determined to make Ireland pay for its own poor, so it forced the collection of taxes. Since many landlords could not collect the tax money, they were forced to evict their tenants. The British government's callous and indifferent treatment of the Irish has been called genocide.

5

*Effects*

As a result of this devastating famine, the population of Ireland was reduced from about nine million to about six and one-half million. During the famine years, men roamed the streets looking for work, begging when they found none. Epidemics of "famine fever" and dysentery reduced the population drastically. The most important historical result of the famine, however, was the massive immigration to the United States, Canada, and Great Britain of poor, unskilled people who had to struggle to fit into a skilled economy and who brought with them a deep-seated hatred of the British. (This same

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hatred remained strong in Ireland itself — so strong that during World War II, Ireland, then independent, remained neutral rather than coming to England's aid.) Irish immigrants faced slums, fever epidemics, joblessness, and hostility — even anti-Catholic and anti-Irish riots — in Boston, New York, London, Glasgow, and Quebec. In Ireland itself, poverty and discontent continued, and by 1848 those emigrating from Ireland included a more highly skilled class of farmers, the ones Ireland needed to recover and to survive.

*Conclusion (includes restatement of thesis)*

The Irish famine, one of the great tragedies of the nineteenth century, was a natural disaster compounded by the insensitivity of the British government and the archaic agricultural system of Ireland. Although the deaths that resulted depleted Ireland's resources even more, the men and women who immigrated to other countries permanently enriched those nations.

7

## Brains versus Brawn

### *Introduction*

When people think about discrimination, they usually associate it with race or gender. But discrimination can take other forms. For example, a person can gain an unfair advantage at a job interview by being attractive, by knowing someone who works at the company, or by being able to talk about something (like sports) that has nothing to do with the job. Certainly, the people who do not get the job would claim that they were discriminated against, and to some extent they would be right. As a high school athlete, I experienced both sides of discrimination. When I was a sophomore, I benefited from discrimination. When I was a junior, however, I was penalized by it, treated as if there were no place for me in a classroom. As a result, I learned that discrimination, whether it helps you or hurts you, is wrong.

1

### *Thesis statement (emphasizing differences)*

### *First subject: Mark helped by discrimination*

At my high school, football was everything, and the entire town supported the local team. In the summer, merchants would run special football promotions. Adults would wear shirts with the team's logo, students would collect money to buy equipment, and everyone would go to the games and cheer the team on. Coming out of junior high school, I was considered an exceptional athlete who was eventually going to start as varsity quarterback. Because of my status, I was enthusiastically welcomed by the high school. Before I entered the school, the varsity coach visited my home, and the principal called my parents and told them how well I was going to do.

2

### *Status of football*

### *Treatment by teachers*

I knew that high school would be different from junior high, but I wasn't prepared for the treatment I received from my teachers. Many of them talked to me as if I were their friend, not their student. My math teacher used to keep me after class just to talk football; he would give me a note so I could be late for my next class. My biology teacher told me I could skip the afternoon labs so that I would have some time for myself before

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practice. Several of my teachers told me that during football season, I didn't have to hand in homework because it might distract me during practice. My Spanish teacher even told me that if I didn't do well on a test, I could take it over after the season. Everything I did seemed to be perfect.

*Mark's reaction to treatment*

Despite this favorable treatment, I continued to study hard. I knew that if I wanted to go to a good college, I would have to get good grades, and I resented the implication that the only way I could get good grades was by getting special treatment. I had always been a good student, and I had no intention of changing my study habits now that I was in high school. Each night after practice, I stayed up late outlining my notes and completing my class assignments. Any studying I couldn't do during the week, I would complete on the weekends. Of course my social life suffered, but I didn't care. I was proud that I never took advantage of the special treatment my teachers were offering me.

4

*Transitional paragraph: signals shift from one subject to another*

Then, one day, the unthinkable happened. The township redrew the school-district lines, and I suddenly found myself assigned to a new high school — one that was academically more demanding than the one I attended and, worse, one that had a weak football team. When my parents appealed to the school board to let me stay at my current school, they were told that if the board made an exception for me, it would have to make exceptions for others, and that would lead to chaos. My principal and my coach also tried to get the board to change its decision, but they got the same response. So, in my junior year, at the height of my career, I changed schools.

5

*Second subject: Mark hurt by discrimination*

Unlike the people at my old school, no one at my new school seemed to care much about high school football. Many of the students attended the games, but their primary focus was on getting into college. If they talked about football at all, they usually discussed the regional college teams. As a result, I

6

*Status of football*

didn't have the status I had when I attended my former school. When I met with the coach before school started, he told me the football team was weak. He also told me that his main goal was to make sure everyone on the team had a chance to play. So, even though I would start, I would have to share the quarterback position with two seniors. Later that day, I saw the principal, who told me that although sports were an important part of school, academic achievement was more important. He made it clear that I would play football only as long as my grades did not suffer.

*Treatment by teachers*

Unlike the teachers at my old school, the teachers at my new school did not give any special treatment to athletes. When I entered my new school, I was ready for the challenge. What I was not ready for was the hostility of most of my new teachers. From the first day, in just about every class, my teachers made it obvious that they had already made up their minds about what kind of student I was going to be. Some teachers told me I shouldn't expect any special consideration just because I was the team's quarterback. One even said in front of the class that I would have to study as hard as the other students if I expected to pass. I was hurt and embarrassed by these comments. I didn't expect anyone to give me anything, and I was ready to get the grades I deserved. After all, I had gotten good grades up to this point, and I had no reason to think that the situation would change. Even so, my teachers' preconceived ideas upset me.

*Mark's reaction to treatment*

Just as I had in my old school, I studied hard, but I didn't know how to deal with the prejudice I faced. At first, it really bothered me and even affected my performance on the football field. However, after awhile, I decided that the best way to show my teachers that I was not the stereotypical jock was to prove to them what kind of student I really was. In the long run, far from discouraging me, their treatment motivated me, and I

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decided to work as hard in the classroom as I did on the football field. By the end of high school, not only had the team won half of its games (a record season), but I had also proved to my teachers that I was a good student. (I still remember the surprised look on the face of my chemistry teacher when she handed my first exam back to me and told me that I had received the second highest grade in the class.)

*Conclusion*

Before I graduated, I talked to the teachers about how they had treated me during my junior year. Some admitted they had been harder on me than on the rest of the students, but others denied they had ever discriminated against me. Eventually, I realized that some of them would never understand what they had done. Even so, my experience did have some positive effects. I learned that you should judge people on their merits, not by your own set of assumptions. In addition, I learned that although some people are talented intellectually, others have special skills that should also be valued. And, as I found out, discriminatory treatment, whether it helps you or hurts you, is no substitute for fairness.

9

*Restatement of thesis*

## A Comparison of Two Web Sites on Attention Deficit Disorder

### *Introduction*

At first glance, the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) Web site on Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (nimh.nih.gov) and AdultADD.com — two Web sites on Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) — look a lot alike. Both have good designs, informative headings, and links to other Web sites. Because anyone can publish on the Internet, however, Web sites cannot be judged simply on how they look. Colorful graphics and an appealing layout can often hide shortcomings that make sites unsuitable for use as research sources. As a comparison of the NIMH and AdultADD.com Web sites shows, one site is definitely a more reliable source of information than the other.

1

### *Thesis statement (emphasizing differences)*

### *First point: comparing homepages*

#### *NIMH homepage*

The first difference between the two Web sites is the design of their homepages. The nimh.nih.gov homepage looks clear and professional. For example, the logos, tabs, links, search boxes, and text columns are placed carefully on the page (see fig. 1). Words are spelled correctly; tabs help users to navigate; and content is arranged topically, with headers such as “What is Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder?” and “Signs & Symptoms.” The text, set in columns, looks like a newspaper page. Throughout the Web site, links connect to a reference page that lists sources for articles, and footnotes document information. In addition, the nimh.nih.gov site contains links to other reliable Web sites, both governmental and academic. Finally, the site accommodates sight-disabled people by giving them the option of viewing enlarged text.

2

#### *Adult ADD homepage*

The AdultADD.com homepage looks more open than the NIMH homepage; it has less text and contains fewer design elements (see fig. 2). Even so, the arrangement of text on the page, the no-nonsense style, and the lack of misspellings indicate that it has been carefully designed. The homepage is straightforward and businesslike and looks like a PowerPoint

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Fig. 1. NIMH homepage

slide. It is easy to navigate and contains simple headings, such as “Find a Physician” and “Treatment for Adults.” Despite the clean, direct design, however, the layout raises a question: why isn’t this site linked to any other Web sites about ADD or ADHD? Unlike nimh.nih.gov, the AdultADD.com Web site has no reference page and no footnotes. In addition, it does not accommodate sight-disabled users.

*Second point: comparing sponsors*

Another difference between the two Web sites is who posted them. One look at the URL for the NIMH Web site indicates that it is a .gov — a Web site created by a branch of the United States government. The logo in the upper left-hand

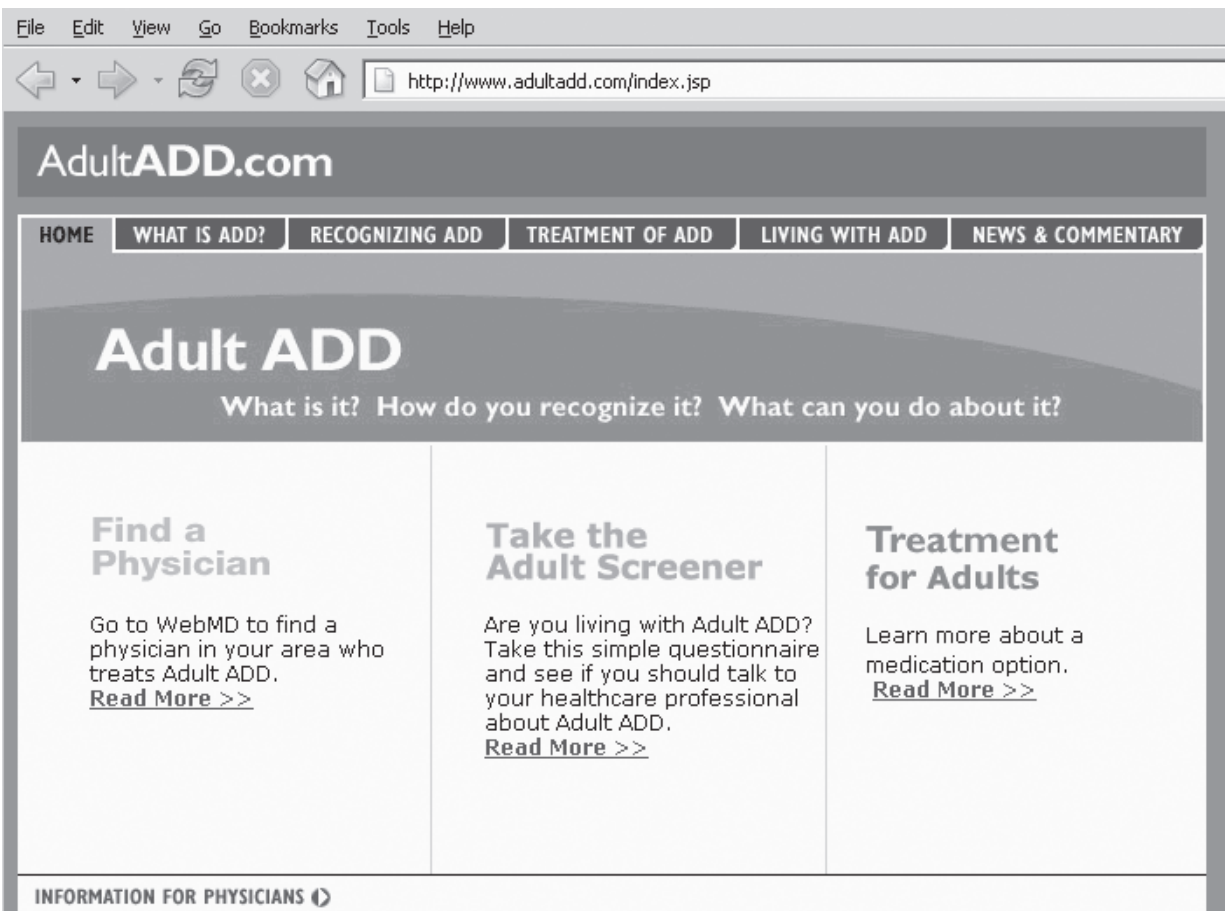


Fig. 2. Adult ADD homepage

*NIMH site sponsor*

corner of the homepage identifies the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) as the sponsor of the site. In addition, every article on the Web site has a listed author, so users know exactly who is responsible for the content. The “About NIMH” tab on the upper-right of the homepage takes users to a description of NIMH, as well as to contact information. Here visitors to the site find out that NIMH is part of the National Institutes of Health, which is, in turn, a part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Furthermore, NIMH is the “lead Federal agency for research on mental and behavioral disorders.” This description also makes clear the NIMH Web site’s purpose: to give the American public the latest information about ADHD. For this reason, the Web site lists all

the medications used to treat ADHD and evaluates the various treatment options available to patients.

*AdultADD site sponsor*

The URL for the AdultADD.com Web site ends with *.com*, indicating that it is a commercial site that promotes a product. It is not immediately clear, however, who (or what) sponsors the Web site. The home page has no corporate logo and no identifying information. Across the top of the homepage are a series of links — “What is ADD?” “Recognizing ADD,” and so on. Each of these links leads to a page that contains a video clip of a television commercial that promotes Strattera, a new drug manufactured by the Eli Lilly pharmaceutical company for the treatment of ADD. If you click on the links in the middle of the page, however, you never encounter this information. For this reason, there is a possibility that much of the information these links lead to is biased. In other words, Lilly could be highlighting treatments that involve its own product and disregarding treatments that involve products made by other pharmaceutical companies.

5

*Third point: comparing frequency of updates*

*NIMH updates*

A final difference between the two Web sites is how frequently they are updated. The NIMH Web site makes a point of staying up-to-date, presenting the most current information on its subject. The bottom left-hand corner of the NIMH homepage contains the exact date the site was last updated, and each page on the Web site has a different date, so it is clear when every article on the site was written and posted.

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*Adult ADD updates*

The AdultADD.com Web site, however, is less clear about updates. The date on the bottom of the homepage indicates only that the Web site was copyrighted in 2003; it does not indicate when the Web site itself was updated. This omission makes it very difficult for a visitor to the site to determine how current the information on the site actually is.

7

*Conclusion*

8

A comparison of the NIMH Web site and AdultADD.com Web site shows some clear differences between the two. The NIMH Web site makes it easy for users to find out who posted the site, who wrote material on it, and when the site was last updated. The AdultADD.com Web site, however, hides its commercial purpose and makes it difficult for visitors to the site to find out who posted the material and when it was last updated. For these reasons, the NIMH Web site is a more trustworthy source of information than the AdultADD.com Web site.

*Restatement  
of thesis*

## What I Learned (and Didn't Learn) in College

### *Introduction*

In "College Pressures," William Zinsser notes the disappearance of a time when college students "journeyed through college with a certain relaxation, sampling a wide variety of courses — music, art, philosophy, classics, anthropology, poetry, religion — that would send them out as liberally educated men and women" (464). The change in college students' focus is even more noticeable today than when Zinsser wrote his essay, and it represents a real loss for students. Taking a variety of different kinds of courses can educate students about a wide range of subjects, and it can also teach them about themselves.

1

### *Categories listed and explained*

Despite the variety of experiences that different students have with different courses, most college classes can be classified into one of four categories: ideal classes, worthless classes, disappointing classes, and unexpectedly valuable classes. First are courses that students love — ideal learning environments in which they enjoy both the subject matter and the professor-student interaction. Far from these ideal courses are those that students find completely worthless in terms of subject matter, atmosphere, and teaching style. Somewhere between these two extremes are two kinds of courses that can be classified into another pair of opposites: courses that students expect to enjoy and to learn much from but are disappointing and courses that students are initially not interested in but that exceed their expectations. Knowing that these four categories exist can help students accept the fact that one disappointing class is not a disaster and can encourage them to try classes with different kinds of subjects, class sizes, and instructors.

2

### *Thesis statement*

### *First category: ideal class*

One of the best courses I have taken so far as a college student was my Shakespeare class. The professor who taught

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it had a great sense of humor and was liberal in terms of what she allowed in her classroom — for example, controversial Shakespeare adaptations and virtually any discussion, relevant or irrelevant. The students in the class — English majors and non-English majors, those who were interested in the plays as theater and those who preferred to study them as literature — shared an enthusiasm for Shakespeare, and they were eager to engage in lively discussions. This class gave us a thorough knowledge of Shakespeare’s plays (tragedies, histories, comedies) as well as an understanding of his life. We also developed our analytical skills through our discussions of the plays and films, as well as through special projects — for example, a character profile presentation and an abstract art presentation relating a work of art to one of the plays. This class was an ideal learning environment not only because of the wealth of material we were exposed to but also because of the respect with which our professor treated us: we were her colleagues, and she was as willing to learn from us as we were to learn from her.

*Second category:  
worthless class*

In contrast to this ideal class, one of the most worthless courses I have taken in college was Movement Education. As an education major, I expected to like this class, and several other students who had taken it told me it was both easy and enjoyable. The class consisted of playing children’s games and learning what made certain activities appropriate and inappropriate for children of various ages. The only requirement for this class was that we had to write note cards explaining how to play each game so that we could use them for reference in our future teaching experiences. Unfortunately, I never really enjoyed the games we played, and I have long since discarded my note cards and forgotten how to play the games — or even what they were.

4

*Third category:  
disappointing class*

Although I looked forward to taking Introduction to Astronomy, I was very disappointed in this class. I had hoped to satisfy my curiosity about the universe outside our solar system, but the instructor devoted most of the semester to a detailed study of the earth and the other bodies in our own solar system. In addition, a large part of our work included charting orbits and processing distance equations — work that I found both difficult and boring. Furthermore, we spent little class time learning how to use a telescope and locate objects in the sky. In short, I gained little information from the class, learning only how to solve equations I would never confront again and how to chart orbits that had already been charted.

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*Fourth category:  
unexpectedly valuable  
class*

In direct contrast to my astronomy class, a religion class called Paul and the Early Church was much more rewarding than I had anticipated. Having attended Catholic school for thirteen years, I assumed this course would offer me little that was new to me. However, because the class took a historical approach to studying Paul's biblical texts, I found that I learned more about Christianity than I had in all my previous religion classes. We learned about the historical validity of Paul and other texts in the Bible and how they were derived from various sources and passed orally through several generations before being written down and translated into different languages. We approached the texts from a linguistic perspective, determining the significance of certain words and how various meanings can be derived from different translations of the same passage. This class was unlike any of my other religion classes in that it encouraged me to study the texts objectively, leaving me with a new and valuable understanding of material I had been exposed to for most of my life.

6

*Conclusion*

Although each student's learning experience in college will be different — because every student has a different learning style, is interested in different subjects, and takes

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*Summary of four  
categories*

courses at different schools taught by different professors — all college students' experiences are similar in one respect. All students will encounter the same kinds of courses: those that are ideal, those that are worthless, those that they learn little from despite their interest in the subject, and those that they learn from and become engaged in despite their low expectations. Understanding that these categories exist is important because it gives students the freedom and courage to try new things, as college students did years ago. After all, even if one course is a disappointment, another may be more interesting — or even exciting. For this reason, they should not be discouraged by a course they do not like; the best classes are almost certainly still in their future.

*Restatement of thesis*

#### Work Cited

Zinsser, William. "College Pressures." Patterns for College Writing: A Rhetorical Reader and Guide. 11th ed. Ed. Laurie G. Kirszner and Stephen R. Mandell. New York: Bedford, 2010. 462–70.

## The Untouchable

### *Introduction: background*

A word that is extremely common in India yet uncommon to the point of incomprehension in the West is the word untouchable. It is a word that has had extremely sinister connotations throughout India's history. A rigorously worked-out caste system has traditionally existed in Indian society. At the top of the social ladder sat the Brahmins, the clan of the priesthood. These people had renounced the material world for a spiritual one. Below them came the Kshatriyas, or the warrior caste. This caste included the kings and all their nobles along with their armies. Third on the social ladder were the Vaishyas, who were the merchants of the land. Trade was their only form of livelihood. Last came the Shudras — the menials. Shudras were employed by the prosperous as sweepers and laborers. Originally a person's caste was determined only by his profession. Thus, if the son of a merchant joined the army, he automatically converted from a Vaishya to a Kshatriya. However, the system soon became hereditary and rigid. Whatever one's occupation, one's caste was determined from birth according to the caste of one's father.

1

### *Formal definition Historical background*

Outside of this structure were a group of people, human beings treated worse than dogs and shunned far more than lepers, people who were not considered even human, people who defiled with their very touch. These were the Achhoots: the untouchables, one of whom is shown in Fig. 1. The word untouchable is commonly defined as "that which cannot or should not be touched." In India, however, it was taken to a far greater extreme. The untouchables of a village lived in a separate community downwind of the borders of the village. They had a separate water supply, for they would make the village water impure if they were to drink from it. When they walked, they were made to bang two sticks together continuously so that passersby could hear them coming and

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Fig. 1. Untouchable woman sweeping in front of her house in a village in Tamil Nadu, India. Sean Sprague. 2003. The Image Works. 4 Nov. 2008 <<http://www.theimageworks.com>>.

thus avoid an untouchable's shadow. Tied to their waists, trailing behind them, was a broom that would clean the ground they had walked on. The penalty for not following these or any other rules was death for the untouchable and, in many instances, for the entire untouchable community.

*Present situation*

One of the pioneers of the fight against untouchability was Mahatma Gandhi. Thanks to his efforts and those of many others, untouchability no longer presents anything like the horrific picture painted earlier. In India today, in fact, recognition of untouchability is punishable by law. Theoretically, there is no such thing as untouchability anymore.

But old traditions linger on, and such a deep-rooted fear passed down from generation to generation cannot disappear overnight. Even today, caste is an important factor in most marriages. Most Indian surnames reveal a person's caste immediately, so it is a difficult thing to hide. The shunning of the untouchable is more prevalent in South India, where people are much more devout, than in the North. Some people would rather starve than share food and water with an untouchable. This concept is very difficult to accept in the West, but it is true all the same.

*Example*

I remember an incident from my childhood. I could not have been more than eight or nine at the time. I was on a holiday staying at my family's house on the river Ganges. A festival was going on, and, as is customary, we were giving the servants small presents. I was handing them out when an old lady, bent with age, slowly hobbled into the room. She stood in the far corner of the room all alone, and no one so much as looked at her. When the entire line ended, she stepped hesitantly forward and stood in front of me, looking down at the ground. She then held a cloth stretched out in front of her. I was a little confused about how I was supposed to hand her her present, since both her hands were holding the cloth. Then, with the help of prompting from someone behind me, I learned that I was supposed to drop the gift into the cloth without touching the cloth itself. It was only later that I found out that she was an untouchable. This was the first time I had actually come face to face with such prejudice, and it felt like a slap in the face. That incident was burned into my memory, and I do not think I will ever forget it.

4

*Conclusion begins*

The word untouchable is not often used in the West, and when it is, it is generally used as a complimentary term. For example, an avid fan might say of an athlete, "He was absolutely untouchable. Nobody could even begin to compare

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with him.” It seems rather ironic that a word could be so favorable in one culture and so negative in another. Why does a word that gives happiness in one part of the world cause pain in another? Why does the same word have different meanings to different people around the globe? Why do certain words cause rifts and others forge bonds? I do not think anyone can tell me the answers to these questions.

*Conclusion continues*

No actual parallel can be found today that compares to the horrors of untouchability. For an untouchable, life itself was a crime. The day was spent just trying to stay alive. From the misery of the untouchables, the world should learn a lesson: isolating and punishing any group of people is dehumanizing and immoral.

*Thesis statement*

6

## An Argument against the Anna Todd Jennings Scholarship

### *Introduction*

### *Summary of controversy*

### *Thesis statement*

### *Argument (deductive)*

### *Argument (inductive)*

### *Evidence*

Recently, a dispute has arisen over the “Caucasian-restricted” Anna Todd Jennings scholarship.\* Anna Jennings died in 1955, and her will established a trust that granted a scholarship of up to \$15,000 for a deserving student. Unfortunately, Jennings, who had certain racist views, limited her scholarship to “Caucasian students.” After much debate with family and friends, I, a white, well-qualified, and definitely deserving student, have decided not to apply for the scholarship. It is my view that despite arguments to the contrary, applying for the Anna Todd Jennings scholarship furthers the racist ideas held by its founder.

Most people would agree that racism in any form is an evil that should be opposed. The Anna Todd Jennings scholarship is a subtle but nonetheless dangerous expression of racism. It explicitly discriminates against African Americans, Asians, Latinos, Native Americans, and others. By providing a scholarship for whites only, Anna Jennings frustrates the aspirations of groups who until recently had been virtually kept out of the educational mainstream. On this basis alone, students should refuse to apply and should actively work to encourage the school to challenge the racist provisions of Anna Todd Jennings’s will. According to one expert, such challenges have been upheld by the courts: the striking down of a similar clause in the will of the eighteenth-century financier Stephen Girard, which limited admission to white male orphans, is just one example.

The school itself must share some blame in this case. Students who applied for the Anna Todd Jennings scholarship were unaware of its restrictions. The director of the financial aid office has acknowledged that he knew about the racial restrictions

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\* EDS. NOTE — This essay discusses an actual situation, but the name of the scholarship has been changed here.

of the scholarship but thought that students should have the right to apply anyway. The materials distributed by the financial aid office also gave no indication that the award was limited to Caucasians. Students were required to fill out forms, submit financial statements, and forward transcripts. In addition to this material, all students were told to attach a recent photograph to their application. Little did the applicants know that the sole purpose of this innocuous little picture was to distinguish whites from nonwhites. By keeping secret the scholarship's restrictions, the school has put students in the position of unwittingly endorsing Anna Jennings's racism. Thus, both the school and the unsuspecting students have been in collusion with the administrators of the Anna Todd Jennings trust.

*Refutation of opposing argument*

The question students face is this: What is the best way to deal with the generosity of a racist? A recent edition of the school paper contained several letters saying that students should accept Anna Jennings's scholarship money. One student said, "If we do not take that money and use our education to topple the barriers of prejudice, we are giving the money to those who will use the money in the opposite fashion." This argument, although attractive, is flawed. If an individual accepts a scholarship with racial restrictions, then he or she is actually endorsing the principles behind it. If a student does not want to appear to endorse racism, then he or she should reject the scholarship, even if this action causes hardship or gives adversaries a momentary advantage. To do otherwise is to further the cause of the individual who set up the scholarship. The best way to register a protest is to work to change the requirement for the scholarship and to encourage others not to apply as long as the racial restrictions exist.

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*Refutation of opposing argument*

Another letter to this newspaper made the point that a number of other restricted scholarships are available at the

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school and no one seems to question them. For example, one is for the children of veterans, another is for women, and yet another is earmarked for African Americans. Even though these scholarships have restrictions, to assume that all restrictions are the same is to make a hasty generalization. Women, African Americans, and the children of veterans are groups that many believe deserve special treatment. Both women and African Americans have been discriminated against for years, and, as a result, educational opportunities have been denied them. Earmarking scholarships for them is simply a means of restoring some measure of equality. The children of veterans have been singled out because their parents have performed an extraordinary service for their country. Whites, however, do not fall into either of these categories. Special treatment for them is based solely on race and has nothing to do with any objective standard of need or merit.

*Conclusion*

I hope that by refusing to apply for the Anna Todd Jennings scholarship, I have encouraged other students to think about the issues involved in their own decisions. All of us have a responsibility to ourselves and to society. If we truly believe that racism in all its forms is evil, then we have to make a choice between sacrifice and hypocrisy. Faced with these options, our decision should be clear: accept the loss of funds as an opportunity to explore your values and fight for your principles; if you do, this opportunity is worth far more than any scholarship.

*Restatement of thesis*

*Concluding statement*

## The Park

### *Background*

My childhood did not really begin until I came to this country from the jungle of Vietnam. I can't really remember much from this period, and the things I do remember are vague images that I have no desire or intention to discuss. However, my childhood in the States was a lot different, especially after I met my friend James. While it lasted, it was paradise.

1

### *Thesis statement*

### *Narrative begins*

### *Description: effects of cold*

It was a cold wintry day in February after a big snowstorm — the first I'd ever seen. My lips were chapped, my hands were frozen stiff, and my cheeks were burning from the biting wind, and yet I loved it. I especially loved the snow. I had come from a country where the closest things to snow were white paint and cotton balls. But now I was in America. On that frosty afternoon, I was determined to build a snowman. I had seen them in books, and I had heard they could talk. I knew they could come alive, and I couldn't wait.

2

### *Comparison and contrast: U.S. vs. Vietnam*

### *Description: James*

"Eryyui roeow ierog," said a voice that came out of nowhere. I turned around, and right in my face was a short, red-faced (probably from the cold wind) Korean kid with a dirty, runny nose. I responded, "Wtefkjkr ruyjft gsdf" in my own tongue. We understood each other perfectly, and we expressed our understanding with a smile. Together, we built our first snowman. We were disappointed that evening when the snowman just stood there; however, I was happy because I had made my first friend.

3

### *Narration: the first day*

### *Analogies*

Ever since then we've been a team like Abbott and Costello (or, when my cousin joined us, The Three Stooges). The two of us were inseparable. We could've made the greatest Crazy Glue commercial ever.

4

### *Narration: what they did that summer*

The summer that followed the big snowstorm, from what I can recall, was awesome. We were free like comets in the heavens, and we did whatever our hearts wanted. For the most part, our desires were fulfilled in a little park across the street.

5

This park was ours; it was like our own planet guarded by our own robot army (disguised as trees). Together we fought against the bigger people who always tried to invade and take over our world. The enemy could never conquer our fortress because they would have to destroy our robots, penetrate our force field, and then defeat us; this last feat would be impossible.

*Narrative continues*

*Examples: what they banished*

This park was our fantasy land where everything we wished for came true and everything we hated was banished forever. We banished vegetables, cheese, bigger people, and — of course — girls. The land was enchanted, and we could be whatever we felt like. We were super ninjas one day and millionaires the next; we became the heroes we idolized and lived the lives we dreamed about. I had the strength of Bruce Lee and Superman; James possessed the power of Clint Eastwood and the Bionic Man. My weapons were the skills of Bruce and a cape. James, however, needed a real weapon for Clint, and the weapon he made was awesome. The Death Ray could destroy a building with one blast, and it even had a shield so that James was always protected. Even with all his mighty weapons and gadgets, though, he was still no match for Superman and Bruce Lee. Every day, we fought until death (or until our parents called us for dinner).

6

*Examples: superhero fantasies*

*Narrative continues*

*Examples: new worlds and planets*

When we became bored with our super powers, the park became a giant spaceship. We traveled all over the Universe, conquering and exploring strange new worlds and mysterious planets. Our ship was a top-secret indestructible space warship called the X-007. We went to Mars, Venus, Pluto, and other alien planets, destroying all the monsters we could find. When necessary, our spacecraft was transformed into a submarine for deep-sea adventures. We found lost cities, unearthed treasures, and saved Earth by destroying all the sea monsters that were plotting against us. We became heroes — just like Superman, Bruce Lee, the Bionic Man, and Clint Eastwood.

7

*Cause and effect:  
prospect of school  
leads to problems*

James and I had the time of our lives in the park that summer. It was great — until we heard about the horror of starting school. Shocked and terrified, we ran to our fortress to escape. For some reason, though, our magic kingdom had lost its powers. We fought hard that evening, trying to keep the bigger people out of our planet, but the battle was soon lost. Bruce Lee, Superman, the Bionic Man, and Clint Eastwood had all lost their special powers.

8

*Narrative continues*

School wasn't as bad as we'd thought it would be. The first day, James and I sat there with our hands folded. We didn't talk or move, and we didn't dare look at each other (we would've cracked up because we always made these goofy faces). Even though we had pens that could be transformed into weapons, we were still scared.

9

*Description: school*

Everyone was darker or lighter than we were, and the teacher was speaking a strange language (English). James and I giggled as she talked. We giggled softly when everyone else talked, and they laughed out loud when it was our turn to speak.

10

*Narrative continues*

The day dragged on, and all we wanted to do was go home and rebuild our fortress. Finally, after an eternity, it was almost three o'clock. James and I sat at the edge of our seats as we counted under our breath: "10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1." At last, the bell sounded. We dashed for the door and raced home and across the street — and then we stopped. We stood still in the middle of the street with our hearts pounding like the beats of a drum. The cool September wind began to pick up, and everything became silent. We stood there and watched the metal of the fence reflect the beautiful colors of the sun. It was beautiful, and yet we hated everything about it. The new metal fence separated us from our fortress, our planet, our spaceship, our submarine — and, most important of all, from our heroes and our dreams.

11

*Description: the fence*

We stood there for a long time. As the sun slowly turned red and sank beneath the ground, so did our dreams, heroes, and hearts. Darkness soon devoured the park, and after a while we walked home with only the memories of the summer that came after the big snowstorm.

12

Philip Lau  
 Professor Carroll  
 ENG 101  
 23 Nov. 2008

### The Limitations of Wikipedia

#### *Introduction*

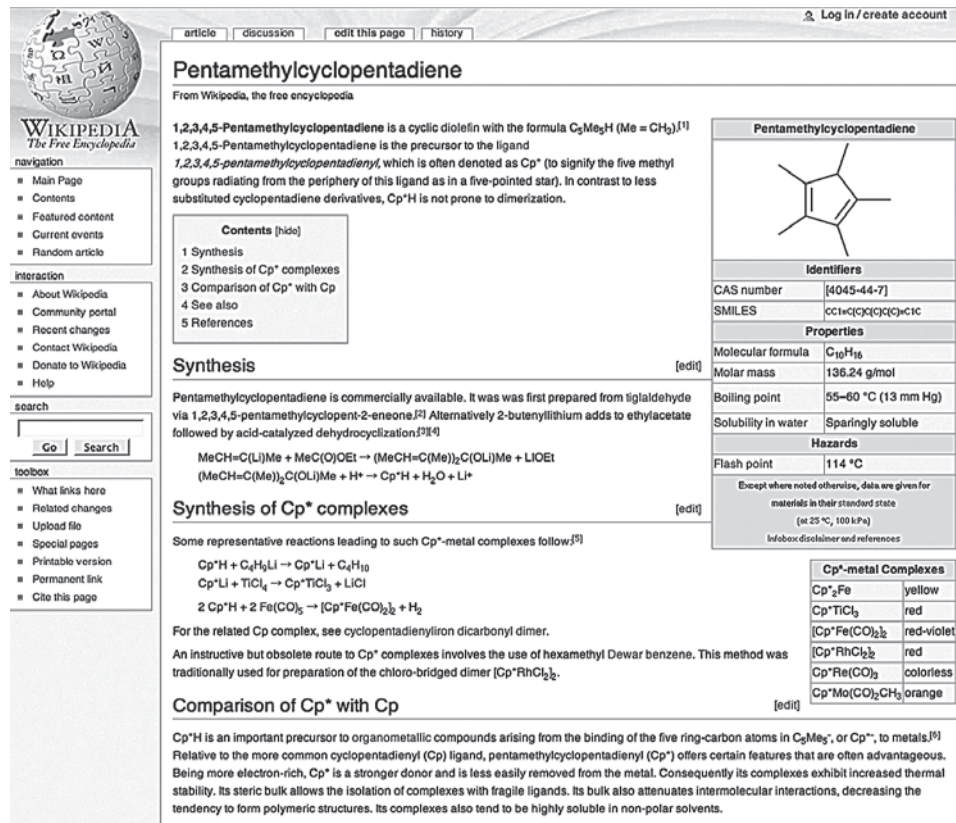
When they get a research assignment, many students immediately go to the Internet to find sources. Searching the Web, they may discover a useful Wikipedia article on their topic. But is Wikipedia a reliable reference source for a research paper? There is quite a controversy over the use of Wikipedia as a source, but the answer seems to be no. Although Wikipedia may be a good starting point for general information about a topic, college-level research papers should rely on more authoritative sources.

#### *Thesis statement*

A wiki is software that allows people to collaborate in forming the content of a Web site. With a wiki, anyone with a browser can edit, modify, rearrange, or delete the site content. It is not necessary to know HTML (hypertext mark-up language) or to work in HTML code. The word wiki comes from the word wikiwiki, which means “quick” or “fast” in Hawaiian. The most popular wiki is Wikipedia, a free, Internet-based encyclopedia that relies on the collaboration, consensus, openness, and trust of those who post and edit entries. Anyone can write a Wikipedia article by clicking on “How to write an article” or edit an entry by clicking on “Edit this entry.” All the revisions are visible to everyone who clicks on “history” (“Verifiability”). According to Katherine Mangu-Ward, the success of Wikipedia “springs largely from [its founder’s] willingness to trust large aggregations of human beings to produce good outcomes . . .” (26). This collaboration enables Wikipedia to publish a wide variety of entries on unusual, specialized topics (see Fig. 1). So far, there are over four million Wikipedia articles (Rothenberg).

*Paragraph combines factual information, found in more than one source, with quotations from “Verifiability” and Mangu-Ward, and a statistic from Rothenberg*

Wikipedia includes two kinds of content. The first kind of content is factual — that is, information that can be verified or



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## Pentamethylcyclopentadiene

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**1,2,3,4,5-Pentamethylcyclopentadiene** is a cyclic diolefin with the formula  $C_5Me_5H$  (Me =  $CH_3$ ).<sup>[1]</sup> 1,2,3,4,5-Pentamethylcyclopentadiene is the precursor to the ligand *1,2,3,4,5-pentamethylcyclopentadienyl*, which is often denoted as Cp\* (to signify the five methyl groups radiating from the periphery of this ligand as in a five-pointed star). In contrast to less substituted cyclopentadiene derivatives, Cp\*H is not prone to dimerization.

**Contents** [hide]

- Synthesis
- Synthesis of Cp\* complexes
- Comparison of Cp\* with Cp
- See also
- References

### Synthesis

Pentamethylcyclopentadiene is commercially available. It was first prepared from tiglaldehyde via 1,2,3,4,5-pentamethylcyclopent-2-eneone.<sup>[2]</sup> Alternatively 2-butenyllithium adds to ethylacetate followed by acid-catalyzed dehydrocyclization.<sup>[3][4]</sup>

$$MeCH=C(Li)Me + MeC(O)OEt \rightarrow (MeCH=C(Me))_2C(OLi)Me + LiOEt$$

$$(MeCH=C(Me))_2C(OLi)Me + H^+ \rightarrow Cp^*H + H_2O + Li^+$$

### Synthesis of Cp\* complexes

Some representative reactions leading to such Cp\*-metal complexes follow<sup>[5]</sup>

$$Cp^*H + C_4H_7Li \rightarrow Cp^*Li + C_4H_{10}$$

$$Cp^*Li + TiCl_4 \rightarrow Cp^*TiCl_3 + LiCl$$

$$2 Cp^*H + 2 Fe(CO)_5 \rightarrow [Cp^*Fe(CO)_2]_2 + H_2$$

For the related Cp complex, see cyclopentadienyliron dicarbonyl dimer.

An instructive but obsolete route to Cp\* complexes involves the use of hexamethyl Dewar benzene. This method was traditionally used for preparation of the chloro-bridged dimer  $[Cp^*RhCl_2]_2$ .

### Comparison of Cp\* with Cp

Cp\*H is an important precursor to organometallic compounds arising from the binding of the five ring-carbon atoms in  $C_5Me_5$ , or Cp\*, to metals.<sup>[6]</sup> Relative to the more common cyclopentadienyl (Cp) ligand, pentamethylcyclopentadienyl (Cp\*) offers certain features that are often advantageous. Being more electron-rich, Cp\* is a stronger donor and is less easily removed from the metal. Consequently its complexes exhibit increased thermal stability. Its steric bulk allows the isolation of complexes with fragile ligands. Its bulk also attenuates intermolecular interactions, decreasing the tendency to form polymeric structures. Its complexes also tend to be highly soluble in non-polar solvents.

Cp* <sub>2</sub> Fe	yellow
Cp*TiCl <sub>3</sub>	red
[Cp*Fe(CO) <sub>2</sub> ] <sub>2</sub>	red-violet
[Cp*RhCl <sub>2</sub> ] <sub>2</sub>	red
Cp*Re(CO) <sub>2</sub>	colorless
Cp*Mo(CO) <sub>2</sub> CH <sub>3</sub>	orange

Fig. 1. Wikipedia entry for a chemical compound. Reproduced under the terms of the GNU Free Document License.

*Paragraph combines Philip's own ideas with quotations and paraphrases from "Verifiability"*

proved true. Factual material from reliable sources is more trustworthy than material from other sources. In fact, Wikipedia's own site states, "In general, the most reliable sources are peer-reviewed journals and books published in university presses; university-level textbooks; magazines, journals, and books published by respected publishing houses; and mainstream newspapers" ("Verifiability"). Most reliable publications have someone whose job it is to check facts. However, because Wikipedia relies on a community of people to write articles, no single person or group of people is responsible for checking facts. The theory is that after enough people have worked on an article, any errors in fact will have been found and corrected. However, this assumption is not necessarily true.

The second kind of content consists of opinions. Because an opinion is a belief or judgment, opinions, by definition, tend to be one-sided. So, since Wikipedia entries are supposed to be objective, Wikipedia's policy statement says that entries for controversial topics should include opinions that reflect the various sides of the issue ("Verifiability"). In addition, Wikipedia warns users against believing everything they read, even what they read on its own site: "Anyone can create a website or pay to have a book published, then claim to be an expert . . ." ("Verifiability"). It also advises readers to examine sources carefully, especially when they present controversial opinions or make claims that contradict established academic views ("Verifiability"). However, it is all up to the users; no one checks to make sure that these guidelines are followed.

*Paragraph combines quotation and paraphrases from "Verifiability" with Philip's own ideas*

In spite of its stated policies, then, Wikipedia is open to certain kinds of errors. One of Wikipedia's problems comes from its assumption that the knowledge of the community is more valuable than the knowledge of acknowledged experts in a field. Larry Sanger, one of the founders of Wikipedia, who has since left the project, concedes that Wikipedia has a problem with "anti-elitism, or lack of respect for expertise"; in fact, he refers to its "horror of the traditional deference to experience," which he claims explains why acknowledged experts avoid writing or editing articles in Wikipedia. Those who criticize Wikipedia often point to its irrational trust in the knowledge of the community. According to Andrew Keen, Wikipedia is virtually "the blind leading the blind — infinite monkeys providing infinite information for infinite readers, perpetuating the cycle of misinformation and ignorance" (4). On Wikipedia, Keen complains, "the voice of a high school kid has equal value to that of an Ivy League scholar . . ." (42).

*Paragraph combines quotation and paraphrase from Sanger with a quotation from Keen*

Another problem with Wikipedia is the ease with which entries can be edited. Because the content of wikis can be altered by anyone, individuals can easily vandalize content by inserting incorrect information, obscene language, or even

*Paragraph contains a long quotation from Kirtley, Philip's summary of the Seigenthaler article, and facts that were found in several sources*

nonsense into articles. Writers who are more interested in presenting their personal opinions than presenting reliable information frequently target certain entries. For example, entries for controversial people, such as President George W. Bush, financier George Soros, or Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard, or for controversial subjects, such as abortion and the Holocaust, are routinely vandalized. Sometimes this vandalism can be extremely harmful. One notorious case of vandalism involved John Seigenthaler Sr., a journalist who was falsely accused in a Wikipedia entry of being involved in the assassinations of John Kennedy and Robert Kennedy. As Seigenthaler's son has reported, the false information stayed on the site for more than four months and also appeared on at least two other sites that had used Wikipedia as their source (Seigenthaler). This incident, as well as many others, has caused people to question the reliability of Wikipedia. According to Jane Kirtley, the issue of reliability poses a real problem for the users of Wikipedia:

It's hard to defend an anonymous poster who uploads a damaging falsehood about someone on a Web site that purports to provide facts from a "neutral point of view. . . ." Either accuracy matters, or it doesn't. If the denizens of cyberspace want to be taken seriously, they might want to be responsible for what they produce. (66)

*Paragraph contains paraphrases from "Examples" and Wales as well as Philip's own conclusions*

Bias is another problem for Wikipedia. Some critics have accused Wikipedia of having a liberal bias; in fact, a competitor, Conservapedia, lists many examples of liberal bias in Wikipedia entries. Accusing Wikipedia of being anti-American and anti-Christian ("Examples"), Conservapedia questions the true agenda of the Wikipedia community. In a Time article, Jimmy Wales, founder of Wikipedia, denies this liberal bias and accuses Conservapedia of having a conservative bias (6). Still, such accusations raise questions about the credibility of Wikipedia.

Wikipedia has tried to correct some of the problems that its critics have pointed out. In response to criticism of its policy of allowing writers and editors to remain anonymous, Jimmy Wales changed Wikipedia's policy. Now, writers and editors have to provide their user names and thus take responsibility for the content they contribute. In addition, Wikipedia has made it possible for administrators to block certain sites from those wishing to edit them and to prevent certain writers and editors from posting or changing information. In addition, users must now be registered with Wikipedia for four days before they can change certain controversial entries (Hafner). However, authorship is still a problem. Most readers have no idea who has written an article that they are reading or whether or not that person can be trusted. Given Wikipedia's basic philosophy, there is no way to solve this problem.

*Paragraph combines ideas found in several sources, a paraphrase from Hafner, and Philip's own ideas*

Of course, even traditional encyclopedias have shortcomings. For example, a study by the journal Nature found that although Wikipedia included errors, the Encyclopedia Britannica also did. Nevertheless, Robert McHenry, a former editor of Britannica, points out that Wikipedia articles often do not get better through editing; instead, they frequently get worse. He goes on to say that Wikipedia suffers because it lacks the oversight that only a good editor can provide: "skills, knowledge, experience, and maybe a touch of talent." McHenry observes that out of concern for Britannica's reputation, at least four people check every article for accuracy. He points out that professional editors do more than just check spelling and grammar; they also stand in "for the eventual reader in order to assure that what was written was clear, logical, and to the point." Since Wikipedia has no professional editors, its writing may be ungrammatical, stylistically awkward, or unclear.

*Paragraph combines ideas found in several sources with paraphrases and quotations from McHenry*

Supporters of Wikipedia defend the site against those charges, noting that more traditional sources, such as respected peer-reviewed journals, also have their problems. For example,

*Paragraph contains ideas found in several sources and Philip's own conclusions*

very new material is likely to be underrepresented or even omitted by a traditional print encyclopedia, which is published only every few years. In addition, some reviewers of articles that appear in peer-reviewed journals may have conflicts of interest. For example, a reviewer might reject an article that challenges his or her own work, or editors may favor certain authors over others. Also, it may be possible for reviewers to identify the work of a competitor, especially if the number of people working in a field is relatively small, and therefore let bias influence their evaluation of an article. Another problem is that it takes a long time for articles in peer-reviewed journals to get into print. Critics point out that by the time an article in a peer-reviewed journal gets into print, it may be outdated. As a result, peer-reviewed journals may not be as objective or as up-to-date as readers think they are.

*Conclusion*

Wikipedia is easy to access and easy to use. It includes information on just about any topic a researcher might want to explore. Still, it is not a reliable source for serious research. For one thing, many questions have been raised about the reliability of its articles. Also, librarians have complained that the continual editing of Wikipedia articles makes it impossible to document them correctly. As a result of these and other problems, many high schools and colleges do not allow students to cite Wikipedia as a source. Granted, there are times when Wikipedia can be useful. For example, visitors to the site can skim articles on a variety of topics, and this preliminary reading can help them find or narrow a research topic. In addition, students can often find general information on Wikipedia about very current topics that may not be treated anywhere else. Finally, the computer links that appear at the end of most Wikipedia articles can be a good starting point for research. In general, however, because of the questionable authorship of its entries and the lack of expertise and objectivity of some (if not many) of its contributors, Wikipedia is not a reliable source.

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