

<u>GRADE 7 -- NYS Engage Text Modules</u>		<i>Resource (copies)</i>	<i>TeachingBooks Link</i>
<u>7.1</u>	A Long Walk to Water / Linda Sue Park	SNAP (20 / Nooks 50)	http://www.teachingbooks.net/qlvx8dd
	Excerpted Section "Time Trip, Sudan's Civil War" from article "Life and Death in Darfur: Sudan's Refugee Crisis Continues"	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	Excerpts from article "Sudanese Tribes Confront Modern War"	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	Excerpts from article "Loss of Culturally Vital Cattle Leaves Dinka Tribe Adrift in Refugee Camps"	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	Water for South Sudan website	http://www.waterforsouthsudan.org/	
<u>7.2a</u>	Lyddie / Katherine Patterson	SNAP (26)	http://www.teachingbooks.net/qlregyr
	<i>(Recommended not required)</i> Mill Times / David Macaulay : DVD	SNAP (1)	
	Cesar Chavez, "Commonwealth Club Address" speech	PDF From Expeditionary Learning OR ELA Bits website with audio	
	<i>(Alternative to Commonwealth Club Address)</i> Cesar Chavez, "Statement at Pacific Lutheran University"	United Farm Workers	
	Cesar Chavez, "The Wrath of Grapes" speech	PDF From Expeditionary Learning OR Emerson Kent Site	
	Ethical Style: How Is My Shirt Made? / Kay Tabea	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	An Apparel Factory Defies Sweatshop Label, But Can It Survive? / Steven Greenhouse	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	Are Your Clothes Made in Sweatshops? / Oxfam Australia	PDF From Expeditionary Learning OR Oxfam Australia Site	
<u>7.2b</u>	Nadia's Hands / Karen English & Jonathan Weiner		http://www.teachingbooks.net/qlgwax9
	Pygmalion / George Bernard Shaw	SNAP (25)	http://www.teachingbooks.net/qlyiek5
	Team Players / Erika Packard	American Psychological Association	
	The Border / Cindy Morand (Red: Teenage Girls of America Write on What fires Up Their Lives Today	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	Why Couldn't Snow White be Chinese? / Lin Grace	http://www.gracelin.com/media/press/press_snowwhiteessay.pdf	
	Teen Slang: What's, like, so wring with like? / Denise Winterman	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	Generation Z Teens Sterotyped as "Lazy and Unaware:/ Julianne Micoleta	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	Is Money Affecting Your Social Status? / Reniqua Allen	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	Key Questions to Ask When Analyzing Media Messages	National Association for Media Literacy Education	
	Truth in Advertising? / Stephanie Clifford (New York Times Upfront, March 1, 2010 v. 142)	General One NOVEL Database in PDF format	
	Cover Girl Culture Exposes Media's Impact on Young Girls / Melanie Diziel	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	Men Are Becoming the Ad Target of the Gender Sneer / Courtney Kane	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	Guys and Dolls No more? / Elizabeth Sweet	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	

<u>GRADE 7 -- NYS Engage Text Modules (con't)</u>		<i>Resource (copies)</i>	<i>TeachingBooks Link</i>
<u>7.2b</u> <u>Con't</u>	Images of men in Advertising / Tom Yakanama	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	Geena Davis, Media Equalizer	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	Body Image and Eating Disorders	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	Study: Employment Ads Perpetuate Traditional Roles	Duke Today	
	Women and Urban Life in Victorian Britain / Lynda Nead	BBC	
<u>7.3a</u>	The People Could Fly: The Picture Book (Teacher Resource)	SNAP (25)	http://www.teachingbooks.net/ql37mog
	Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave / Frederick Douglass	SNAP (25 Audio 2) Gutenberg Project	http://www.teachingbooks.net/qlzqi5s
	Frederick Douglass: The Last Day of Slavery / William Miller		http://www.teachingbooks.net/ql5vuwe
<u>7.4A</u>	Teens and Decision making: What Brain Science Reveals	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	The Teen Brain: It's Just Not Grown Up Yet / Richard Knox	http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=124119468	
	What's Going On in Your Brain? / Linda Berstein	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	What You Should Know About Your Brain / Judy Willis	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	Insights into the Teen Brain (Video / Adriana Galvan	TEDx	
	The Child's Developing Brain / Tara Parker-Pope, Jon Huang, Mike Mason	The New York Times	
	Development of the Young Brain / Jay N. Giedd, M.D. (video)	National Institute of Mental Health	
	Students & Technology, Constant Companions / Joshua Brustein, Matt Richtel, Erik Olsen	The New York Times	
	The Digital Revolution and Adolescent Brain Evolution / Jay N. Giedd, M.D.	National Institute of Mental Health	
	Growing Up Digital / Matt Richtel	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	You Trouble / Justine O'Neill	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	Policy Statement: Children, Adolescents, and the Media / Victor C. Strasburger & Marjorie J. Hogan	Pediatrics AAP (PDF)	
	Beyond the Brain / David Brooks	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	Is Google Making Us Stupid? / Nicholas Carr and Peter Novig	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	The many Benefits, for Kids, of Playing Video Games / Peter Gray	Psychology Today	
Gaming Can make a Better World / Jane McGonigal (video)	Ted Talk		

<u>GRADE 7 -- NYS Engage Text Modules (con't)</u>		<i>Resource (copies)</i>	<i>TeachingBooks Link</i>
<u>7.4A</u>	Video Games Benefit Children, Study Finds	Medical Xpress	
	Why Facebook Could Actually Be Good For Your Mental Health / Sy Mukherjee	Think Progress	
	The ONLINE EDUCA Debate 2009 (part 2 of 10) (video)	You Tube	
	Attached to Technology and Paying a Price / Matt Richtel	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	Can you Unplug for 24 Hours? / Heidi St. Clair	Huffington Post	
	Guest Opinion: Step Away From the Screen / Margaret Desler, M.D.	Contra Costa Times	
	Nicholas Carr's The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains	PBS NewsHour	
<u>7.4b</u>	Water is Life / Barbara Kingsolver	National Geographic	
	The big Thirst: The Secret Life and Turbulent Future of Water / Charles Fishman	SNAP (25)	
	Wringing Dry / Weekly Reader Corporation	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	New York Bottled Water Ban (video) / CNN (video)	Riverkeeper	
	Beyond Thirst: The Global Water Crisis / Kathiann M. Kowalski	PDF From Expeditionary Learning	
	Why Care About Water? / National Geographic (video)	National Geographic	
	Charles Fishman: Why college Students Should Start paying Attention to Water / The Lavin Agency (video)	You Tube	
	Charles Fishman: The Water Crisis Isn't Global. It's Local / The Lavin Agency (video)	You Tube	
	The Future of Water / Landmark Media Inc. (video)	You Tube	
	Corporations Need to pay More Attention to Water: Charles Fishman / The Lavin Agency (video)	You Tube	
	Learning to Make Systematic Decisions / Daniel Edelson, Adam Tarnoff, Kathleen Schwille, Meredith Bruzas, and Ana Switzer	National Geographic Educaiton	
<u>Unit I: Reading Closely for Textual Details: At the Pole</u>			
<u>Unit II: Making Evidence-Based Claims Unit: Cesar Chavez</u>			
<u>Unit III: Researching to Deepen Understanding Unit: Water</u>			
<u>Unit IV: Building Evidence-Based Arguments Unit: Doping Can Be that Last 2 Percent</u>			



The current conflict in Sudan is only the latest chapter in the country's violent history. Apart from an 11-year peace from 1972 to 1983, Sudan has been entrenched in war since it became an independent nation in

1956. The Darfurian conflict erupted just as a long civil war between northern and southern Sudan was winding down. That war was fought between the mainly Muslim Arab north and the mostly non-Muslim, non-Arab south. It began in 1983 and was one of the longest-lasting and deadliest wars of the 20th century. About 2 million civilians were killed, and more than 4 million people were forced to flee their homes.

Some of those refugees are known as the Lost Boys of Sudan. Fleeing violence and the fear of being forced into war, thousands of boys fled by foot to Ethiopia. The 1,000-mile trek was grueling. They went days without food or water, eating leaves and berries and sucking liquid from mud to stay alive. Exhausted, some boys died of starvation or dehydration.

The boys who continued found shelter at a refugee camp in Ethiopia, but their safety was short-lived. Fighting erupted in Ethiopia in 1991, forcing them to flee again. As they ran, gunmen in tanks fired at them. To escape, the boys had to cross the crocodile-infested River Gilo. Thousands drowned, were eaten by crocodiles, or were shot.

By the time the boys arrived at a refugee camp in Kenya in 1992, only 10,000—fewer than half of the original 26,000—were still alive. After nine years at the camp, about 4,000 of the Lost Boys were brought by the U.S. government to cities in the United States to begin new lives.

Now some Lost Boys are returning home. A peace agreement signed on Jan. 9, 2005, officially ended Sudan's civil war. Though aid agencies recently reported that many communities in the south still lack food and water, some 500,000 Sudanese are expected to return home this year in what is one of the largest movements of people in recent history.

Excerpt from: "Life and Death in Darfur: Sudan's Refugee Crisis Continues," *Current Events*, April 7, 2006, 2. Copyright © 2006 by Scholastic Inc. Reprinted by permission of Scholastic Inc.



Sudanese Tribes Confront Modern War”

By Karl Vick, Washington Post Foreign Service Wednesday, July 7, 1999; Page A1



- Madut Atien is a member of the SPLA, which provided security for the peace conference. (Michael duCille, Washington Post)

EXCERPT 1:

1. They are the Dinka and the Nuer, the largest tribes in southern Sudan. Both greet the dawn by singing. Both live in square huts with round, uneven roofs. Both walk the roadless plain split by the White Nile. And both honor their scrawny, hump-backed cattle as the center of the temporal world, at once wealth on the hoof and a mystical link to the spiritual plane [level].

2. The Nuer word for “thousand” means “lost in the forest,” because that’s where your cattle would be if you had that many of them. Almost no one does, however—in no small part because Dinka and Nuer have been stealing cattle from each other for as long as anyone can remember. Cattle **raiding** is a **hoary** [old, ancient] tradition of **pastoralists** [farmers] throughout East Africa, as natural here as a young man’s hungering for enough cows to pay the bride price for a wife, as normal as a neighbor striking at the **intruders** he sees hogging prime grazing land.

- With a partner, reread paragraph 1 out loud. What does the word “both” refer to? Why does the author use the word “both” four times?
- In paragraph 1, what do you think the word temporal might mean?
- In paragraph 2, reread the last sentence, and explain it to your partner in your own words.
- In paragraph 3, what does the word phase mean? When did things begin to change?



<p>3. If people died in these raids, it was “maybe one, two or three,” said Madut. And the victims were almost always warriors, slain with the spears that were still the weapons of choice in southern Sudan in 1983, when the war against the Arab north entered its current phase. That year, the Khartoum government imposed [forced on others] Islamic law on the entire country, including the parts that were not Muslim, like the south, where people mostly adhere [stick to] to traditional beliefs or Christianity. Rebellious southerners formed the Sudanese People’s Liberation Army, and young Dinka and Nuer began to carry AK-47s.</p>		<p>STOP here for Lesson 10</p>
<p>EXCERPT 2:</p>		
<p>4. Until 1991, the guns were used mostly against northerners. But that August, there was a split in the rebel army. The fault line was tribal. A Nuer rebel officer, Riek Machar, tried to topple the rebels’ supreme commander, a Dinka named John Garang. When the coup failed, the rebel escaped with forces loyal to him, mostly Nuer. The war had entered a new phase. Southerners started killing each other.</p>		<p>e. Talk with a partner: In paragraph 4, how does the second sentence help you understand the phrase “the fault line was tribal”?</p>
<p>5. “I used to be living here,” said Peter Wakoich, a Nuer in Dinkaland. “The Dinka and Nuer were one. It all went bad overnight.” Shortly after the rebel leaders parted ways, the man from the next hut stole all of Wakoich’s cattle and slit the throats of four of his children.</p>		
<p>6. Children, women and the elderly used to be off-limits during raids, traditional set-piece battles in which women waited at the edge of the fight to tend the wounded and retrieve lost spears, said Sharon Hutchinson, a University of Wisconsin anthropologist who lived with the region for most of a decade. Now 110 were killed in a village attacked precisely while its young men had gathered elsewhere.</p>		



<p>7. Tradition in both tribes held that causing a death created “spiritual pollution.” A bit of the blood of any man a Nuer speared to death was thought to be in the slayer, and had to be bled out of the upper arm by an earth priest. To drink or eat before reaching the priest was to die.</p>		<p>f. Talk with a partner: In paragraph 12, the text says “The elders, however, could.” What could the elders do? (Hint: reread paragraph 11.)</p>
<p>8. But that was for a death by spear, pressed into victim by one’s own muscle and bone. What to do about death by bullets—“a gun’s calves,” as the word translated from Nuer? Rebel commanders argued to chiefs that a gun death carried no individual responsibility, that traditional belief did not apply in a “government war.”</p>		
<p>9 And the guerrillas came to see it the same way. “They believe, “The ghost of the deceased will not haunt me, because I did not kill with a spear,”” said Telar Deng, an American-educated Dinka judge.</p>		
<p>10. Once removed from its moral consequences, killing became easier. Jok Madut Jok, an assistant professor of history at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, returned to his native Dinkaland last summer to research the culture of violence. He found armed youths running roughshod in a society whose dysfunction paralleled that of inner cities 8,000 miles away: Arguments once settled by fighting with sticks were now being decided with assault weapons.</p>		
<p>11. The warriors, Jok said, were simply too young to remember any power but the kind that came from a gun.</p>		
<p>12. The elders, however, could.</p>		

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Loss of Culturally Vital Cattle Leaves Dinka Tribe Adrift in
Refugee Camps

By Stephen Buckley, *Washington Post* Foreign Service
Sunday, August 24, 1997; Page A1

EXCERPT 1:

The dancing begins at 7:25 a.m. as the thump of a drum splits the cool morning air in the Mangalatore camp for the displaced. A bull's horn wails. A swell of song fills the air. Young men run and leap, legs splayed, Jordanesque, heads rising above the hopping, singing, chanting, ululating crowd.

Hundreds of Dinka tribesmen and women have gathered at the Duk-Fuel family compound for a traditional dowry celebration. But the occasion is marred by what is missing: There will be no cattle given to the Duk-Fuel family today, historically the central transaction at this ritual.

The Duk-Fuels must settle instead for cautious promises. The family whose boy wants to marry a Duk-Fuel girl vows to give plenty of cattle when the four-decade-old war in this, Africa's largest country, someday ends. "We will honor our agreement," the boy's uncle says.

For all its joy, the dowry ritual reminds these Dinka families that the war has robbed them of a symbol central to their identity and culture—cattle.

Mabil Duk-Fuel sits in the family compound next to his niece Nyandier Duk-Fuel, 17. Joining them are Mabil's brother Mayar and another niece, Agot. Both girls will marry soon, although the next day's dowry ceremony is primarily for Nyandier.

The men say the absence of cattle has transformed the dowry process. Negotiations [agreements; discussions] used to be held in which the boy's family agreed to give cows, sometimes as many as 100, to the Dinka girl's relatives; several families would make such overtures [proposals; offers] toward a single girl, in a process akin to competitive bidding.

Nowadays the negotiations are still held, but they are about handshakes and pledges. There is no livestock available to change hands.

Holding the ceremony without cattle, Mabil says, reminds Dinkas that they have no property. "You cannot regain your land," he says through an interpreter. "That is the great loss. We hope our leaders are working hard to get us back our land."



Dinka bride-to-be Nyandier Duk-Fuel. (By Carol Guzy/Washington Post)



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EXCERPT 2:

Before the war caused institutions to collapse in southern Sudan, the Dinka were not only farmers and cowherds, but also high court judges and civil administrators and doctors. They were the south's richest and proudest tribe.

The cow has always been the focus of their culture. Cattle stood at the heart of virtually every important tradition and ceremony in Dinka life. Myths rose up around the animal. The Dinka wrote songs about it. They created dances to honor it.

Dinka see the animal as the highest form of wealth.

Today some Dinka retain their cattle, but many have lost their herds, which were killed in fighting or abandoned during the rush to camps for the displaced.

A Life Shattered

The loss has pierced the Dinka, so much so that they have altered their governing myths. Stories that once celebrated the tribe's greatness—they believed they were a people favored by God—now describe a people full of dismay and self-doubt. One story, about how the Dinka came to love cattle, has been turned into a tale of woe, in which God is punishing the tribe for devoting so much of itself to the animal.

“They have been shattered,” said Francis Deng, a Dinka who is a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution in Washington. “They see themselves in a negative light for the first time. You can see how the war has torn at their self-confidence, their sense of dignity.”



The Dinka of Mangalore camp for the displaced have lost all their cattle, a measure of their wealth, to the war. They now have been forced to cultivate the land instead. (By Carol Guzy/*Washington Post*)

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Commonwealth Club Address

San Francisco, November 9, 1984

Cesar Chavez

Thank you very much, Mr. Lee, Mrs. Black, ladies and gentlemen. P1

Twenty-one years ago, this last September, on a lonely stretch of railroad track P2
paralleling U.S. Highway 101 near Salinas, 32 Bracero farm workers lost their lives in a
tragic accident. The Braceros had been imported from Mexico to work on California farms.

- 5 They died when their bus, which was converted from a flatbed truck, drove in front of a freight train. Conversion of the bus had not been approved by any government agency. The driver had **tunnel vision**. Most of the bodies laid unidentified for days. No one, including the grower who employed the workers, even knew their names. Today, thousands of farm workers live under **savage** conditions, beneath trees and amid
- 10 garbage and human excrement near tomato fields in San Diego County; tomato fields, which use the most modern farm technology. Vicious rats gnaw at them as they sleep. They walk miles to buy food at inflated prices and they carry in water from irrigation ditches.

Child labor is still common in many farm areas. As much as 30 percent of Northern P3

- 15 California's garlic harvesters are underage children. Kids as young as six years old have voted in states, conducted union elections, since they qualified as workers. Some 800,000 underage children work with their families harvesting crops across America. Babies born to **migrant** workers suffer 25 percent higher infant **mortality** rates than the

tunnel vision: defective sight in which objects not in the center field of vision cannot be properly seen

savage: harsh

migrant: moving from place to place in search of work

mortality: death



rest of the population. Malnutrition among migrant workers' children is 10 times higher
 20 than the national rate. Farm workers' average life expectancy is still 49 years, compared to
 73 years for the average American.

All my life, I have been driven by one dream, one goal, one vision: to overthrow a P4
 farm labor system in this nation that treats farm workers as if they were not important
 human beings. Farm workers are not agricultural **implements**; they are not beasts of
 25 burden to be used and discarded. That dream was born in my youth, it was nurtured in
 my early days of organizing. It has flourished. It has been attacked.

I'm not very different from anyone else who has ever tried to accomplish something P5
 with his life. My motivation comes from my personal life, from watching what my
 mother and father went through when I was growing up, from what we experienced as
 30 migrant workers in California. That dream, that vision grew from my own experience with
 racism, with hope, with a desire to be treated fairly, and to see my people treated as
 human beings and not as **chattel**. It grew from anger and rage, emotions I felt 40 years
 ago when people of my color were denied the right to see a movie or eat at a restaurant in
 many parts of California. It grew from the frustration and humiliation I felt as a boy who
 35 couldn't understand how the growers could abuse and exploit farm workers when there
 were so many of us and so few of them.

Later in the 50s, I experienced a different kind of exploitation. In San Jose, in Los P6
 Angeles and in other urban communities, we, the Mexican-American people, were
 dominated by a majority that was **Anglo**. I began to realize what other minority people
 40 had discovered; that the only answer, the only hope was in organizing. More of us had to
 become citizens, we had to register to vote, and people like me had to develop the skills it
 would take to organize, to educate, to help empower the **Chicano** people.

implements: tools

chattel: property or personal possession

Anglo: a white American not of Hispanic
 descent

Chicano: an American of Mexican descent



I spent many years before we founded the **union** learning how to work with people. P7
We experienced some successes in voter registration, in politics, in battling racial
45 discrimination – successes in an era where Black Americans were just beginning to **assert**
their civil rights and when political awareness among Hispanics was almost non-existent.
But deep in my heart, I knew I could never be happy unless I tried organizing the farm
workers. I didn't know if I would succeed, but I had to try.

All Hispanics, urban and rural, young and old, are connected to the farm workers' P8
50 experience. We had all lived through the fields, or our parents had. We shared that
common humiliation. How could we progress as a people even if we lived in the cities,
while the farm workers, men and women of our color, were condemned to a life without
pride? How could we progress as a people while the farm workers, who symbolized our
55 history in this land, were denied self-respect? How could our people believe that their
children could become lawyers and doctors and judges and business people while this
shame, this injustice, was permitted to continue?

Those who attack our union often say it's not really a union. It's something else, a P9
social movement, a civil rights movement -- it's something dangerous. They're half
right. The United Farm Workers is first and foremost a union, a union like any other, a
60 union that either produces for its members on the bread-and-butter issues or doesn't
survive. But the UFW has always been something more than a union, although it's never
been dangerous, if you believe in the Bill of Rights. The UFW was the beginning. We
attacked that historical source of shame and infamy that our people in this country lived
with. We attacked that injustice, not by complaining, not by seeking handouts, not by
65 becoming soldiers in the war on poverty; we organized!

union: an organization of workers formed to
advance the interests of its members

assert: claim



Farm workers acknowledge we had allowed ourselves to become victims in a democratic society, a society where majority rules and collective bargaining are supposed to be more than academic theories and political rhetoric. And by addressing this historical problem, we created confidence and pride and hope in an entire people's ability to create the future. The UFW survival, its existence, were not in doubt in my mind when the time began to come. P10

After the union became visible, when Chicanos started entering college in greater numbers, when Hispanics began running for public office in greater numbers, when our people started asserting their rights on a broad range of issues and in many communities across this land. The union survival, its very existence, sent out a signal to all Hispanics that we were fighting for our dignity, that we were challenging and overcoming injustice, that we were empowering the least educated among us, the poorest among us. The message was clear. If it could happen in the fields, it could happen anywhere: in the cities, in the courts, in the city councils, in the state legislatures. I didn't really appreciate it at the time, but the coming of our union signaled the start of great changes among Hispanics that are only now beginning to be seen. P11

I've traveled through every part of this nation. I have met and spoken with thousands of Hispanics from every walk of life, from every social and economic class. And one thing I hear most often from Hispanics, regardless of age or position, and from many non-Hispanics as well, is that the farm workers gave them the hope that they could succeed and the inspiration to work for change. P12

From time to time, you will hear our opponents declare that the union is weak, that the union has no support, that the union has not grown fast enough. Our obituary has been written many times. How ironic it is that the same forces that argue so passionately that the union is not influential are the same forces that continue to fight us so hard. P13



The union's power in agriculture has nothing to do with the number of farm workers P14
on the union contract. It has nothing to do with the farm workers' ability to
contribute to democratic politicians. It doesn't even have much to do with our ability to
95 conduct successful boycotts. The very fact of our existence forces an entire industry,
unionized and non-unionized, to spend millions of dollars year after year on increased
wages, on improved working conditions, and on benefits for workers. If we were so weak
and unsuccessful, why do the growers continue to fight us with such passion? Because as
long as we continue to exist, farm workers will benefit from our existence, even if they
100 don't work under union contract. It doesn't really matter whether we have 100,000 or
500,000 members. In truth, hundreds of thousands of farm workers in California and in
other states are better off today because of our work. And Hispanics across California and
the nation who don't work in agriculture are better off today because of what the farm
workers taught people about organization, about pride and strength, about seizing
105 control over their own lives.

Tens of thousands of children and grandchildren of farm workers and the children P15
and grandchildren of poor Hispanics are moving out of the fields and out of the
barrios and into the professions and into business and into politics, and that movement
cannot be reversed. Our union will forever exist as an empowering force among Chicanos
110 in the Southwest. That means our power and our influence will grow and not diminish.

Two major trends give us hope and encouragement. First, our union has returned to P16
a tried and tested weapon in the farm workers non-violent arsenal: the **boycott**. After
the **Agricultural Labor Relations Act** became law in California in 1975, we **dismantled**
our boycott to work with the law. During the early and mid '70s millions of Americans
115 supported our boycotts. After 1975, we redirected our efforts from the boycott to

boycott: refusal by a group to buy goods or services to show support for a cause
dismantle: take apart

Agricultural Labor Relations Act: law enacted by the state of California in 1975 to protect, among other things, the right of farm workers to self-organize and negotiate the conditions of their employment



organizing and winning elections under the law. That law helped farm workers make progress in overcoming poverty and injustice.

At companies where farm workers are protected by union contracts, we have made progress in overcoming child labor, in overcoming miserable wages and working conditions, in overcoming sexual harassment of women workers, in overcoming discrimination in employment, in overcoming dangerous pesticides, which poison our people and poison the food we all eat. Where we have organized these injustices soon passed in history, but under Republican Governor George Deukmejian, the law that guarantees our right to organize no longer protects farm workers; it doesn't work anymore.

In 1982, corporate growers gave Deukmejian one million dollars to run for governor of California. Since he took office, Deukmejian has paid back his debt to the growers with the blood and sweat of California farm workers. Instead of enforcing the law as it was written against those who break it, Deukmejian invites growers who break the law to seek relief from governor's appointees. What does all this mean for farm workers? It means that the right to vote in free elections is a sham. It means the right to talk freely about the union among your fellow workers on the job is a cruel hoax. It means that the right to be free from threats and intimidation by growers is an empty promise. It means that the right to sit down and negotiate with your employer as equals across the bargaining table and not as peons in the fields is a fraud. It means that thousands of farm workers, who are owed millions of dollars in back pay because their employers broke the law, are still waiting for their checks. It means that 36,000 farm workers, who voted to be represented by the United Farm Workers in free elections, are still waiting for contracts from growers who refuse to bargain in good faith. It means that for farm workers child labor will continue. It means that infant mortality will continue. It means that malnutrition among children will continue. It means the short life expectancy and the inhuman living and working conditions will continue.



Are these make-believe threats? Are they exaggerations? Ask the farm workers who
are waiting for the money they lost because the growers broke the law. Ask the farm
145 workers who are still waiting for growers to bargain in good faith and sign contracts. Ask
the farm workers who have been fired from their jobs because they spoke out for the
union. Ask the farm workers who have been threatened with physical violence because
they support the UFW, and ask the family of Rene Lopez, the young farm worker from
Fresno who was shot to death last year because he supported the union as he came out of
150 a voting booth. Ask the farm workers who watch their children go hungry in this land of
wealth and promise. Ask the farm workers who see their lives eaten away by poverty and
suffering.

These tragic events force farm workers to declare a new international boycott of
California grapes, except the three percent of grapes produced under union contract.
155 That is why we are asking Americans, once again, to join the farm workers by boycotting
California grapes. The newest Harris Poll revealed that 17 million Americans boycotted
grapes. We are convinced that those people and that goodwill have not disappeared. That
segment of the population which makes the boycotts work are the Hispanics, the Blacks,
the other minorities, our friends in labor and the Church. But it is also an entire generation
160 of young Americans who matured politically and socially in the '60s and the '70s, millions
of people for whom boycotting grapes and other products became a socially accepted
pattern of behavior. If you were young, Anglo and/or near campers during the late '60s
and early '70s, chances are you supported farm workers.

15 years later, the men and women of that generation are alive and well. They are in
165 their mid 30s and 40s. They are pursuing professional careers, their **disposable**
incomes are relatively high, but they are still inclined to respond to an appeal from farm
workers. The union's mission still has meaning for them. Only today, we must translate the
importance of a union for farm workers into the language of the 1980s. Instead of talking

disposable: available



about the right to organize, we must talk about protection against sexual harassment in
170 the fields. We must speak about the right to quality food and food that is safe to eat. I can
tell you the new language is working, the 17 million are still there. They are responding
not to picket lines and leafleting alone, but to the high-tech boycott of today, a boycott
that uses computers and direct mail and advertising techniques, which has revolutionized
business and politics in recent years. We have achieved more success with a boycott in
175 the first 11 months of 1984 than we achieved in the last 14 years, since 1970.

The other trend that gives us hope is the monumental growth of Hispanic influence P22
in this country. And what that means is increased population, increased social and
economic clout and increased political influence. South of the Sacramento River,
Hispanics now make up now more than 25 percent of the population. That figure will top
180 30 percent by the year 2000. There are now 1.1 million Spanish-**surnamed** registered
voters in California. In 1975, there were 200 Hispanic elected officials at all levels of
government. In 1984, there are over 400 elected judges, city council members, mayors,
and legislators. In light of these trends, it's absurd to believe or to suggest that we are
going to go back in time as a union or as a people.

185 The growers often try to blame the union for their problems, to lay their sins off on P23
us, sins for which they only have themselves to blame. The growers only have
themselves to blame as they begin to reap the harvest of decades of environmental
damage they have brought upon the land: the pesticides, the herbicides, the soil
fumigants, the fertilizers, the salt deposits from thoughtless irrigation, the ravages of years
190 of unrestrained poisoning of our soil and water. Thousands of acres of land in California
have already been irrevocably damaged by this **wanton** abuse of nature. Thousands more
will be lost unless growers understand that dumping more and more poison from the soil
won't solve their problems on the short or on the long term.

surname: the family or last name

wanton: careless, undisciplined



Health authorities in many San Joaquin Valley towns already warn young children P24
195 and pregnant mothers not to drink the water, because of nitrates from fertilizers
which has poisoned the ground water. The growers have only themselves to blame for an
increasing demand by consumers for higher-quality food, food that isn't tainted by toxics,
food that doesn't result from plant mutations or chemicals that produce red luscious-
looking tomatoes that taste like alfalfa. The growers are making the same mistake
200 American automakers made in the '60s and '70s when they refused to produce small
economical cars and opened up the door to increased foreign competition.

Growers only have themselves to blame for increasing attacks on the publicly P25
financed handouts and government welfare: water **subsidies**, mechanization
research, huge subsidies for not growing crops. These special privileges came into being
205 before the Supreme Court's "one person, one vote" decision, at a time when rural
lawmakers dominated the legislature and the Congress. Soon, those handouts could be in
jeopardy as government searches for more revenue and as urban taxpayers take a closer
look at front programs and who they really benefit. The growers only have themselves to
blame for the humiliation they have brought upon succeeding waves of immigrant
210 groups that have sweated and sacrificed for a hundred years to make this industry rich.

For generations, they have **subjugated** entire races of dark-skinned farm workers. P26
These are the sins of growers, not the farm workers. We didn't poison the land. We
didn't open the door to imported produce. We didn't covet billions of dollars in
government handouts. We didn't abuse and exploit the people who work the land. Today
215 the growers are like a punch-drunk old boxer who doesn't know he's past his prime. The
times are changing; the political and social environment has changed. The chickens are
coming home to roost, and the time to account for past sins is approaching.

subsidies: money granted by the
government

subjugate: to control; to make submissive



- I am told these days farm workers should be discouraged and pessimistic. The
Republicans control the governor's office and the White House. There is a
- 220** conservative trend in the nation. Yet, we are filled with hope and encouragement. We
have looked into the future and the future is ours. History and inevitability are on our side.
The farm workers and their children and the Hispanics and their children are the future in
California, and corporate growers are the past. Those politicians who ally themselves with
the corporate growers and against farm workers and the Hispanics are in for a big
- 225** surprise. They want to make their careers in politics; they want to hold power 20 and 30
years from now. But 20 and 30 years from now, in Modesto, in Salinas, in Fresno, in
Bakersfield, in the Imperial Valley and in many of the great cities of California, those
communities will be dominated by farm workers and not by growers, by the children and
grandchildren of farm workers and not by the children and grandchildren of growers.
- 230** These trends are part of the forces of history which cannot be stopped. No person **P28**
and no organization can resist them for very long; they are inevitable. Once social
change begins it cannot be reversed. You cannot un-educate the person who has learned
to read. You cannot humiliate the person who feels pride. You cannot oppress the people
who are not afraid anymore. Our opponents must understand that it's not just the union
- 235** we have built -- unions like other institutions can come and go -- but we're more than
institutions. For nearly 20 years, our union has been on the cutting edge of a people's
cause, and you cannot do away with an entire people and you cannot stamp out a
people's cause. Regardless of what the future holds for the union, regardless of what the
future holds for farm workers, our accomplishments cannot be undone. *La causa*, our
- 240** cause, doesn't have to be experienced twice. The consciousness and pride that were
raised by our union are alive and thriving inside millions of young Hispanics who will
never work on a farm.



Like the other immigrant groups, the day will come when we win the economic and **P29**
political rewards, which are in keeping with our numbers in society. The day will
245 come when the politicians will do the right thing for our people out of political necessity
and not out of charity or idealism. That day may not come this year. That day may not
come during this decade, but it will come someday. And when that day comes, we shall
see the fulfillment of that passage from the Book of Matthew in the New Testament: "The
last shall be first, and the first shall be last." And on that day, our nation shall fulfill its
250 creed, and that fulfillment shall enrich us all. Thank you very much.



Wrath of Grapes Speech

César Chávez, May 1986 (excerpted)

SECTION A

P1. I am speaking to you about our Wrath of Grapes boycott.

P2. Because I believe our greatest court, the court of last resort, is the American people. And I believe that once you have taken a few moments to hear this message, you will **concur** in this verdict along with a million other North Americans who are already committed to the largest grape boycott in history.

P3. The worth of humans is involved here.

P4. I see us as one family. We cannot turn our backs on each other and our future. We farm workers are closest to food production. We were the first to recognize the serious health hazards of agriculture pesticides to both consumers and ourselves.

SECTION B

P5. Twenty years ago, over 17 million Americans united in a grape boycott campaign that transformed the simple act of refusing to buy grapes into a powerful and effective force against poverty and injustice. Through the combined strengths of a national boycott, California farm workers won many of the same rights as other workers—the right to organize and negotiate with growers.

P6. But we also won a critical battle for all Americans. Our first contracts banned the use of **DDT**, **DDE**, **Dieldrin** on crops, years before the federal government acted.

SECTION C

P7. Twenty years later, our contracts still seek to limit the spread of poison in our food and fields, but we need your help once again if we are to succeed.

P8. A powerful self-serving alliance between the California governor and the \$14 billion agricultural industry has resulted in a systematic and **reckless** poisoning of not only California farm workers but of grape consumers throughout our nation and Canada.

P9. The hard-won law **enacted** in 1975 has been trampled beneath the feet of self-interest. **Blatant** violations of California labor laws are constantly ignored. And worst of all, the **indiscriminate** and even illegal use of dangerous pesticides has radically increased in the last decade, causing illness, permanent disability, and even death.



“Ethical Style: How is My T-Shirt Made?”

(Source 1)

Name: _____

Date: _____

Directions: As you read, you will practice writing the ideas of the author in your own words, or paraphrasing. To avoid plagiarizing, it’s very important that you credit your source of information. Use these sentence stems to help you:

According to +	source	+paraphrased fact
Source +	writes illustrates notes observes states reports claims	+ paraphrased fact

Original Text	Paraphrase
<p>P1. The cotton T-shirt ... is a staple of the American wardrobe. Your T-shirt can be made any number of ways, but more likely than not, it isn’t made in the United States. In 2011, we imported more than \$17 billion worth of cotton tees into American closets. Let’s take a look at where they probably came from—and how we can improve on the process, step by step.</p>	
<p>P2. The T-shirt begins as an idea. A team of designers determines the color, fit, and—most relevant to our interests—the fabric of your top. The world’s cotton demand has doubled since the 1960s, with 90 percent of harvested cotton getting spun into apparel. The U.S. has the highest demand for the finished cotton garment, and also happens to be the world’s largest exporter of the raw material. It dominates global cotton production in tandem with China, India, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, and Brazil.</p>	



“Ethical Style: How is My T-Shirt Made?”

(Source 1)

Original Text	Paraphrase
<p>P3. Unfortunately, your T-shirt label won't tell you where that cotton came from. Still, there are a few truths about cotton that don't need a label. For one, child labor is a major reality in cotton harvesting. From Uzbekistan to Egypt, children are forced into picking and separating cotton for pennies, if anything. Cotton certified as Fair Trade and in compliance with the International Labor Organization are the only viable indicators of fair cotton harvested without child labor ...</p>	



“Ethical Style: How is My T-Shirt Made?”

(Source 1)

Original Text	Paraphrase
<p>P4. Even if your T-shirt’s material was harvested in accordance with U.S. labor laws, the crop poses other ethical concerns. As a general rule of thumb, cotton is terrible for the environment. Cotton is the largest water guzzler in the natural fiber family. Major ecological damage has already been done. The devastating shrinkage of the Aral Sea is largely attributed to cotton farming; what water is left is contaminated by pesticides and herbicides. Five of the top nine pesticides used in U.S. cotton farming are known to be carcinogenic. All of them contaminate fresh groundwater. These ecological concerns can be circumvented with a shift toward organic cotton, but even organic cotton needs to drink.</p>	
<p>P5. When material, prototype, and samples are set, the T-shirt is put into mass production.... The production segment of the T-shirt supply chain is the one most scrutinized in the public eye, and with good reason. The factory process is inefficient, wasteful, and often still abusive. Though the public outcry against sweatshops gained sudden momentum a decade ago, garment manufacturing is still rife with complications.</p>	
<p>P6. Experts speculate that in India, child labor makes up 20 percent of the nation’s GDP.... Many adult workers face immense pressures as well. Even as the price of cotton rises (which it has, dramatically, in recent years), the export price remains depressed. The only way to meet the bottom line is to shave the last remaining pennies off of the wages of spinners and sewers.</p>	
<p>P7. Changes are being made step-by-step. A T-shirt’s country of origin was once the definitive stamp of the working conditions under which it was made. But today, individual factories are being held increasingly accountable for the specifics.... Some corporations have responded by implementing their own codes of conduct, and inviting external audits to comment on the validity of their claims ...</p>	



“Ethical Style: How is My T-Shirt Made?”

(Source 1)

Original Text	Paraphrase
<p>P8. The bottom line: There is much to be done at all steps of the fashion supply chain. If end consumers like us can gain a better understanding of our T-shirt’s production cycle—the sustainability of its fabric and the working conditions of its farmers and sewers—we can put pressure on these corporations to help us make a more informed and conscious decision about our clothes. The more transparent the entire production process becomes, the more claims to “ethical” and “sustainable” practices will become sought-after attributes of the printed T-shirt we see on the shelves.</p>	
<p>Originally appeared on www.GOOD.is on February 9, 2012. Reprinted with permission from GOOD Worldwide.</p>	



An Apparel Factory Defies Sweatshop Label, but Can It Thrive?

(Source 2) By Steven Greenhouse

Sitting in her tiny living room here, Santa Castillo beams about the new house that she and her husband are building directly behind the wooden shack where they now live.

The new home will be four times bigger, with two bedrooms and an indoor bathroom; the couple and their three children now share a windowless bedroom and rely on an outhouse two doors away.

Ms. Castillo had long dreamed of a bigger, sturdier house, but three months ago something happened that finally made it possible: she landed a job at one of the world's most unusual garment factories. Industry experts say it is a pioneer in the developing world because it pays a "living wage"—in this case, three times the average pay of the country's apparel workers—and allows workers to join a union without a fight.

"We never had the opportunity to make wages like this before," says Ms. Castillo, a soft-spoken woman who earns \$500 a month. "I feel blessed."

The factory is a high-minded experiment, a response to appeals from myriad university officials and student activists that the garment industry stop using poverty-wage sweatshops. It has 120 employees and is owned by Knights Apparel, a privately held company based in Spartanburg, S.C., that is the leading supplier of college-logo apparel to American universities, according to the Collegiate Licensing Company.

For Knights, the factory is a risky proposition, even though it already has orders to make T-shirts and sweatshirts for bookstores at 400 American universities. The question is whether students, alumni and sports fans will be willing to pay \$18 for the factory's T-shirts—the same as premium brands like Nike and Adidas—to sustain the plant and its generous wages.

Joseph Bozich, the C.E.O. of Knights, is optimistic. "We're hoping to prove that doing good can be good business, that they're not mutually exclusive," he says.

Not everyone is so confident. "It's a noble effort, but it is an experiment," says Andrew Jassin, an industry consultant who says "fair labor" garments face a limited market unless deft promotion can snare consumers' attention—and conscience. "There are consumers who really care and will buy this apparel at a premium price," he says, "and then there are those who say they care, but then just want value."

Mr. Bozich says the plant's T-shirts and sweats should command a premium because the company uses high-quality fabric, design and printing

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An Apparel Factory Defies Sweatshop Label, but Can It Thrive?

(Source 2) By Steven Greenhouse

In the factory’s previous incarnation, a Korean-owned company, BJ&B, made baseball caps for Nike and Reebok before shutting it in 2007 and moving the operation to lower-wage countries. Today, the reborn factory is producing under a new label, Alta Gracia, named after this poverty-ridden town as well as the Virgin of Altagracia, revered as protector of the Dominicans. (Alta gracia translates to “exalted grace.”)

“This sometimes seems too good to be true,” says Jim Wilkerson, Duke University’s director of licensing and a leader of American universities’ fair-labor movement.

He said a few other apparel companies have tried to improve working conditions, like School House, which was founded by a 25-year-old Duke graduate and uses a factory in Sri Lanka. Worker advocates applaud these efforts, but many say Alta Gracia has gone further than others by embracing higher wages and unionization. A living wage is generally defined as the amount of money needed to adequately feed and shelter a family.

“What really counts is not what happens with this factory over the next six months,” Mr. Wilkerson says. “It’s what happens six years or 10 years from now. We want badly for this to live on.”

Santa Castillo agrees. She and many co-workers toiled at other factories for the minimum wage, currently \$147 a month in this country’s free-trade zones, where most apparel factories are located. That amount, worker after worker lamented in interviews for this article, falls woefully short of supporting a family.

The Alta Gracia factory has pledged to pay employees nearly three and a half times the prevailing minimum wage, based on a study done by a workers’ rights group that calculated the living costs for a family of four in the Dominican Republic.

While some critics view the living wage as do-gooder mumbo-jumbo, Ms. Castillo views it as a godsend. In her years earning the minimum wage, she said she felt stuck on a treadmill—never able to advance, often borrowing to buy necessities.

“A lot of times there was only enough for my kids, and I’d go to bed hungry,” she says. “But now I have money to buy meat, oatmeal and milk.”

With higher wages, she says, her family can move up in the world. She is now able to borrow \$1,000 to begin building her future home and feels able to fulfill her dreams of becoming a minister at her local evangelical church.



An Apparel Factory Defies Sweatshop Label, but Can It Thrive?

(Source 2) By Steven Greenhouse

“I hope God will continue to bless the people who brought this factory to our community,” she says.

In many ways, the factory owes its existence to an incident a decade ago, when Joe Bozich was attending his son’s high school basketball game. His vision suddenly became blurred, and he could hardly make out his son on the court. A day later, he couldn’t read.

A doctor told him the only thing that would cause his vision to deteriorate so rapidly was a brain tumor.

So he went in for an M.R.I. “My doctor said, “The good news is you don’t have a brain tumor, but the bad news is you have multiple sclerosis,”” he says.

For three days, he couldn’t see. He worried that he would be relegated to a wheelchair and ventilator and wouldn’t be able to support his family. At the same time, a close friend and his brother died, and then one of his children began suffering from anxiety.

“I thought of people who were going through the same thing as my child and me,” Mr. Bozich recalls. “Fortunately, we had the resources for medical help, and I thought of all the families that didn’t.”

“I started thinking that I wanted to do something more important with my business than worry just about winning market share,” he adds. “That seemed kind of empty after what I’ve been through. I wanted to find a way to use my business to impact people that it touched on a daily basis.”

He regained his full vision after three weeks and says he hasn’t suffered any further attacks. Shortly after Mr. Bozich recovered, Knights Apparel set up a charity, weKAre, that supports a home for orphans and abused children. But he says he wanted to do more.

A national collegiate bodybuilding champion at Vanderbilt, Mr. Bozich was hired by Gold’s Gym after graduation and later founded a unit in the company that sold Gold’s apparel to outside retailers. Building on that experience, Mr. Bozich started Knights Apparel in 2000.

Still solidly built at 47, he has made apparel deals with scores of universities, enabling Knights to surpass Nike as the No. 1 college supplier. Under Mr. Bozich, Knights cooperates closely with the Worker Rights Consortium, a group of 186 universities that press factories making college-logo apparel to treat workers fairly.



An Apparel Factory Defies Sweatshop Label, but Can It Thrive?

(Source 2) By Steven Greenhouse

Scott Nova, the consortium’s executive director, says Mr. Bozich seems far more committed than most other apparel executives to stamping out abuses—like failure to pay for overtime work. Knights contracts with 30 factories worldwide. At a meeting that the two men had in 2005 to address problems at a Philippines factory, Mr. Bozich floated the idea of opening a model factory.

Mr. Nova loved the idea. He was frustrated that most apparel factories worldwide still paid the minimum wage or only a fraction above—rarely enough to lift families out of poverty. (Minimum wages are 15 cents an hour in Bangladesh and around 85 cents in the Dominican Republic and many cities in China—the Alta Gracia factory pays \$2.83 an hour.)

Mr. Bozich first considered opening a factory in Haiti, but was dissuaded by the country’s poor infrastructure. Mr. Nova urged him to consider this depressed community, hoping that he would employ some of the 1,200 people thrown out of work when the Korean-owned cap factory closed.

Mr. Bozich turned to a longtime industry executive, Donnie Hodge, a former executive with J. P. Stevens, Milliken and Gerber Childrenswear. Overseeing a \$500,000 renovation of the factory, Mr. Hodge, now president of Knights, called for bright lighting, five sewing lines and pricey ergonomic chairs, which many seamstresses thought were for the managers.

“We could have given the community a check for \$25,000 or \$50,000 a year and felt good about that,” Mr. Hodge said. “But we wanted to make this a sustainable thing.”

The factory’s biggest hurdle is self-imposed: how to compete with other apparel makers when its wages are so much higher.

Mr. Bozich says the factory’s cost will be \$4.80 a T-shirt, 80 cents or 20 percent more than if it paid minimum wage. Knights will absorb a lower-than-usual profit margin, he said, without asking retailers to pay more at wholesale.

“Obviously we’ll have a higher cost,” Mr. Bozich said. “But we’re pricing the product such that we’re not asking the retailer or the consumer to sacrifice in order to support it.”

Knights plans to sell the T’s for \$8 wholesale, with most retailers marking them up to \$18.



An Apparel Factory Defies Sweatshop Label, but Can It Thrive?

(Source 2) By Steven Greenhouse

“We think it’s priced right and has a tremendous message, and it’s going to be marketed like crazy,” says Joel Friedman, vice president of general merchandise at Barnes & Noble College Booksellers. He says Barnes & Noble will at first have smaller-than-usual profit margins on the garments because it will spend heavily to promote them, through a Web campaign, large signs in its stores and other methods.

It helps to have many universities backing the project. Duke alone placed a \$250,000 order and will run full-page ads in the campus newspaper, put postcards in student mailboxes and hang promotional signs on light poles. Barnes & Noble plans to have Alta Gracia’s T’s and sweats at bookstores on 180 campuses by September and at 350 this winter, while Follett, the other giant college bookstore operator, plans to sell the T’s on 85 campuses this fall.

Still, this new, unknown brand could face problems being sold alongside Nike and Adidas gear. “They have to brand this well—simply, clearly and elegantly—so college students can understand it very fast,” says Kellie A. McElhaney, a professor of corporate social responsibility at the University of California, Berkeley. “A lot of college students would much rather pay for a brand that shows workers are treated well.”

Nike and Adidas officials said their companies have sought to improve workers’ welfare through increased wages and by belonging to the Fair Labor Association, a monitoring group that seeks to end sweatshop conditions. A Nike spokesman said his company would “watch with interest” the Knights initiative.

To promote its gear, Knights is preparing a video to be shown at bookstores and a Web documentary, both highlighting the improvements in workers’ lives. The T-shirts will have hanging tags with pictures of Alta Gracia employees and the message “Your purchase will change our lives.” The tags will also contain an endorsement from the Worker Rights Consortium, which has never before backed a brand.

In a highly unusual move, United Students Against Sweatshops, a nationwide college group that often lambastes apparel factories, plans to distribute fliers at college bookstores urging freshmen to buy the Alta Gracia shirts.

“We’re going to do everything we can to promote this,” says Casey Sweeney, a leader of the group at Cornell. “It’s incredible that I can wear a Cornell hoodie knowing the workers who made it are being paid well and being respected.”



An Apparel Factory Defies Sweatshop Label, but Can It Thrive?

(Source 2) By Steven Greenhouse

One such worker is Maritza Vargas. When BJ&B ran the factory, she was a stand-up-for-your-rights firebrand fighting for 20 union supporters who had been fired.

Student groups and the Worker Rights Consortium pressed Nike and other companies that used the factory to push BJ&B to recognize the union and rehire the fired workers. BJ&B relented. Today, Ms. Vargas is president of the union at the new plant and sings a very different tune. In interviews, she and other union leaders praised the Alta Gracia factory and said they would do their utmost to make it succeed and grow. Mireya Perez said the living wage would enable her to send her 16-year-old daughter to college, while Yolando Simon said she was able to pay off a \$300 debt to a grocer.

At other factories, workers said, managers sometimes yelled or slapped them. Several said they were not allowed to go home when sick, and sometimes had to work past midnight after beginning at 7:30 a.m.

Comparing this factory with other ones, Ms. Vargas said, “the difference is heaven and earth.”

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Assessment Text: Are Your Clothes Made
in Sweatshops? (Source 3)

If you're wearing anything from Nike, adidas, Puma, Fila, or even some of our well-loved Australian brands like Bonds or Just Jeans, then it's highly likely your clothes were made in places that most people would describe as sweatshops.

What is a sweatshop?

A sweatshop is a manufacturing facility where workers endure poor working conditions, long hours, low wages, and other violations of labor rights. Unfortunately, places known as sweatshops are particularly common in developing countries where labor laws are often not enforced. Other issues of concern are workers being exposed to toxic substances or using dangerous machinery without adequate protection.

Are sportswear and garment factories really sweatshops?

If confronted, many of the major supply factories would probably deny that they're sweatshops, as all are supposed to adhere to the codes of conduct of their clients. The problem is that in developing countries this is difficult to monitor, so the codes are generally not enforced.

And the sad fact is that many workers in the global sportswear industry are living in poverty even though they have paid jobs.

The workers producing for companies like Nike, adidas, Puma, Asics, FILA, Mizuno, New Balance, and Umbro, who are mostly young women (aged 17–24), often endure low wages and long hours in dangerous and hostile conditions.

Many of these workers do not like describing their workplaces as “sweatshops,” because they think it makes them sound like victims. But these workers know their wages and conditions are unacceptably low, and many of them organize protests to demand better wages and conditions, even though doing so can put their jobs at risk.

“Are Your Clothes Made in Sweatshops?” *Oxfam Australia*. N.p., n.d. Web. 29 May 2013.



“The Border”(1)

As an immigrant and a teenager, being ambitious, cultured, out-spoken, creative, enthusiastic, caring, and a self-starter has come at a very expensive price – tears and blood. Being Mexican in an American high school is difficult, as is going back and being so-called American in Mexico. What the two countries, maybe all countries, seem to have in common is that the person who’s different is an enormous threat to society. What you want to do is fit in; it’s just easier that way. It used to be like that in my little world, but not anymore. I want to be unique. Original. It will define my personality and make me successful. It will remind me what I’ve accomplished. I’m writing in a language I came very late to.

My story began on a rainy Friday in April when I was born, a little Mexican girl in Bellevue Hospital, New York City. Everyone in the hospital knew I was a different kind of child: I was the biggest newborn there, and my father had dark skin and was sixty-five years old, while my mother’s skin was light and she was only twenty-nine.

When I was two, my family decided to move from New York to Mexico, because my father was retired and feeling tired of the city. He also wanted his daughters, my older sister Micheleluce Oralia and me, to attend a private Catholic school and get the best education possible, one he wasn’t able to afford in the United States.

So, I grew up in an extremely wealthy society in Sahuayo, Michoacán, where I studied ethics, morals, and Catholicism. The school encouraged its students, the most privileged children in the city, to do community service: Our teachers explained that we as Catholics should always be kind and generous to those who aren’t as fortunate. When I was ten or twelve, I started realizing how much I enjoyed helping others and feeling the need to change the world. I always thought it was unfair that other kids had to work at my age. I also began to notice that individuals who didn’t have an education were paid a misery but worked twice as hard as people who were well schooled.

I became aware of the importance of getting an education, not only because it would help to provide a great income, but also because I did not want to be a human being who was ignorant and fooled by appearances.

My house in Mexico was luxurious, and we had many expensive objects. I counted shopping as a hobby, took vacations every six months to the nation’s most popular and beautiful regions. I learned to play the piano and the violin, to paint, to read literature, to recite poems. My father, an artist and musician, felt the need to show us the beauty of those things. He was also a lawyer, an engineer-electrician, a seaman, and a veteran of World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. He played golf and tennis. He spoke Spanish, English, French, and Patwa.



“The Border”(2)

In my eyes, my father was more than perfect, and I grew up being as ambitious and curious as he was. I graduated second in my class with a 3.9 GPA and all the signs of a rising star. I won several poetry competitions, I was president of my sixth-grade class, and I was chosen to join La Escolta, a group of students who would carry the Mexican flag at public events.

At home in my privileged neighborhood, though, I’d notice people staring at my extremely dark-skinned father. Most of our neighbors were of fairer European descent – and their ignorance made them assume that my father wasn’t educated or that he was some kind of evil man who was involved in illegal activities. Later on I realized that most Mexicans in my city were extremely racist. At times some of my neighbors weren’t allowed to play with me. The parents would OK me for their kids’ company only after they found out my father was French, which they took to mean wealth and sophistication. All of a sudden, plenty of racist Mexicans would feel the need to become my dad’s best friends.

When I was thirteen, my world collapsed. My family and I moved to New York City. My father, then seventy-eight, had been diagnosed with a cancerous tumor and was entitled to free veteran’s care in the United States. I arrived without knowing how to speak, read, or write English. I was played in regular-to-slow classes here instead of in ESL, which would have helped me learn the language and transition faster. I went from the honors track in Mexico into classes where I couldn’t comprehend a word, with students who refused to learn or care about their future. I was thrown in with kids who had spent time in juvenile prison, were pregnant, racist – and mean to me.

I never thought that being Mexican or coming proudly from both Aztec and Mayan heritage would create such problems.

Crying hysterically and feeling depressed were a part of my every day. I was broken. I had no real friends, and my grades and test scores were lower than I ever dreamed they could be. I would try to read and I wouldn’t understand. I felt like I was completely losing touch with myself and the world. To make matters worse, my grandfather, who was so close to me, passed away in Mexico; with my dad needing to be near the hospital I couldn’t go back for the funeral. Life was nothing but difficult and the pain was unbearable.



“The Border”(3)

The second semester of my sophomore year, two years after we'd moved, I hit rock bottom. I was destroyed, and I didn't even have my own room. (I had to share with my sister, and we had our differences and totally dissimilar taste in everything.) I wasn't used to living in a small, one-bathroom apartment; back in Mexico we had four bathrooms. My family didn't go on trips anymore, and no one seemed to care about me or my situation. I realized I was in denial – I couldn't admit that I would not be returning to Mexico, where life was full of promise and a bright future. I kept thinking about how ungrateful I used to be there, and it was excruciating how much I missed my friends who I'd known since I was three. Meanwhile, they were having the times of their lives. I wasn't there for their Quinceanera parties, after all the dreams we'd had about turning fifteen together. I wanted to see my grandfather. I wanted to be that honor-roll student I always was. But it seemed impossible. I was alone. I had support from no one.

One day, also in tenth grade, I was looking through old pictures and couldn't even recognize myself in Mexico. I was ashamed that I'd let two years pass in American feeling nothing but depressed. I'd lost sight of my dream, which was to help other people, make change, perhaps be a world leader. I was painfully slow at coming to it, but I had to accept that my life was happening in a different place, and I had to take action. I had to leave the big baby that I was in New York back at Bellevue. I started teaching myself English and signed up for more challenging courses that semester, including AP classes in U.S. history and Spanish literature.

I got involved with the YMCA's Global Teens, the Lower Eastside Girls Club, and the N.Y.P.D. Explorers. I started getting used to the New York City life; taking train and buses, using elevators, eating pizza, celebrating the 4th of July. I started appreciating the chance to meet people from all backgrounds, teens with different sexual preferences.

My father is doing well, the cancer in remission for years now, though he was recently diagnosed with Alzheimer's. My world has come to include tall buildings, gangs, and violence. It's all made me very open-minded, though. Because I understand what it is to suffer – to be on the other side of the community service equation – I'm even more strongly committed to working with people who need help, those who are sick and can't afford health care, oppressed indigenous populations, elders, students who are struggling, underprivileged children, immigrants. Gandhi said, “You must be the change you wish to see in the world.” For me to achieve this, the next challenge is to get the best education out of the rest of high school as I possibly can, then onto university. Because I don't want to be ignorant like some racist Mexicans or certain American teenagers.

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“Teen Slang: What’s, Like, So Wrong with Like?” (1)

By Denise Winterman, *BBC News Magazine*

(1) Actress Emma Thompson says young people make themselves sound stupid by speaking slang outside of school. But while the use of the word "like" might annoy her, it fulfills a useful role in everyday speech.

(2) "That's, like, so unfair."

(3) One response to Emma Thompson's comments likely to trigger a rush of steam from her ears.

(4) The Oscar winner has spoken out against the use of sloppy language. She says people who speak improperly make her feel "insane," and she criticizes teenagers for using words such as "like" and "innit."

(5) But is peppering one's sentences with "like" such a heinous crime against the English tongue?

(6) Language experts are more understanding of teen culture than Thompson, pointing out the word's many uses. It's the unconventional uses that are probably getting the actress hot under the collar. One of the most common is using "like" as a filler word in a conversation.

(7) But fillers are a way we all stall for time when speaking and historically always have. It has nothing to do with sloppiness, says John Ayto, editor of the *Oxford Dictionary of Modern Slang*.

(8) "It is not a lazy use of language; that is a common fallacy among non-linguists," he says. "We all use fillers because we can't keep up highly monitored, highly grammatical language all the time. We all have to pause and think.

(9) "We have always used words to plug gaps or make sentences run smoothly. They probably did in Anglo-Saxon times; it's nothing new."

(10) But crucially, we often use non-word fillers, such as "um" and "ah." The fact that "like" is an actual word could be why Thompson doesn't like it.



“Teen Slang: What’s, Like, So Wrong with Like?” (2)

(11) Using 'um' may seem more correct to Emma Thompson because using 'like' as a filler is not a feature of her language.”

(12) “When words break out from a specific use and become commonly used in a different way, people come down on them,” says Dr. Robert Groves, editor of the *Collins Dictionary of the English Language*.

(13) “Using 'um' may seem more correct to Emma Thompson because using 'like' as a filler is not a feature of the language she uses. The more disassociated you are from the group that uses a word in a different way, the more that use stands out. It will be invisible to teenagers.”

(14) Another common use of “like” by young people is as a quotative, which is a grammatical device to mark reported speech. For example: “She was like, ‘you aren’t using that word correctly’ and I was like, ‘yes I am.’”

(15) It is also commonly used to indicate a metaphor or exaggeration. “I, like, died of embarrassment when you told me to stop using slang.” Alternatively, it is employed to introduce a facial expression, gesture, or sound. A speaker may say, “I was like ...” and then hold their hands up, shrug, or roll their eyes.

(16) While certain uses of language— such as fillers—have probably always been around, the appropriation of “like” in this context can be traced to a familiar source of so much modern-day slang—California’s Valley Girls.

(17) “Many of these uses of ‘like’ originate in America,” says Dr. Groves. “They were probably introduced into British English through the media, like films and television.”

(18) Using “like” in this way is also about signaling membership of a club, says English language specialist Professor Clive Upton, from the University of Leeds.

(19) “If they [young people] do deploy the sort of language they’re using on the streets in formal settings, then it could well be a disadvantage to them, but at other times it’s quite clearly the way they get along, the way that they signal they belong in a group, the way that they fit in.



“Teen Slang: What’s, Like, So Wrong with Like?” (3)

(20)“And we all do that in our professional lives as well. We've got all our acronyms and our little words that we use that send a signal—I'm one of the club.”

(21)Thompson just isn't part of the "like" club.

Winterman, Denise. "Teen Slang: What's, Like, so Wrong with Like?" BBC News. BBC, 28 Sept. 2010. Web. 10 Feb. 2014. <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-11426737>>



“Generation Z Stereotyped ...”(1)

Generation Z Teens Stereotyped as 'Lazy and Unaware'

Gavin is a junior at Loyola Academy and a reporter for [The Mash](#), a weekly teen publication distributed to Chicagoland high schools.

(1) You may recognize them as your constantly connected, constantly moving peers, but to the rest of the world, they're Generation Z: the lazy, apathetic age group born between 1994 and 2004.

(2) Though they're characterized as multitasking whizzes, they're simultaneously garnering the reputation among older generations of being lazy, unaware and apathetic.

(3) Gen Z is often portrayed as less engaged in politics; they have short attention spans and don't care about the weighty issues that confront their generation and the nation; and they're more interested in technology and celebrity than staying active in their communities and schools.

(4) So what gives with Generation Lay-Z?

(5) “Unfortunately, I do think that our generation is somewhat guilty of that title,” Elk Grove junior Michelle Zerafin said. “I'm guilty of not being knowledgeable about the world, and I can name 10 other people right now that aren't either.

(6) The characterizations come from the parents of Generation Z and prior generations alike.

(7) “Compared to when I was growing up, I think that in some ways my daughter's generation is more unaware of what's going on the world,” Hellen Minev said, a parent of a Prospect student. “I don't think they're apathetic, though; I think they just have different priorities, like their cellphones and Facebook.”

(8) Like Minev, many adults say much of the blame lies with Gen Z's reliance on gadgets.



“Generation Z Stereotyped ...” (2)

(9)“You guys have all these devices like smartphones, touchscreens, iPhones, iPads, ‘iEverything,’” Elk Grove history teacher Dan Davisson said. “It’d be hard for you guys to spend your energy on things like volunteering if you have all these distractions.”

(10)Furthermore, sitting around watching videos, texting or playing video games can lead to negative health effects for teens who would rather stay indoors and use their electronics than be active outdoors. They’re leading a sedentary lifestyle that, when paired with a poor diet, can result in obesity, diabetes and other health problems.

(11)A 2009 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report found that approximately 17 percent of children and adolescents ages 2–19 are obese. Since 1980, obesity rates have nearly tripled, the report shows.

(12)“No one calls each other up and says, ‘Hey, want to go for a bike ride?’” Zerafin said. “And if they do, it’s rare. Now it’s more like, ‘Hey, want to come over and play some (‘Call of Duty’)?’”

(13)While some worry that Gen Z is lazy and unprepared for the real world, Elk Grove junior Kate DeMeulenaere believes that it’s just a matter of survival of the fittest.

(14)“I don’t think anyone is ever really prepared,” she said. “But I think (some) just adapt better than others and make more logical choices.”

(15)Elk Grove counselor Maria Mroz adds that making the right choices and having the right attitude from an early age is the way to beat the stigma of being apathetic.

(16)“If more teenagers realize the value of their education, they can beat those murmurs of being apathetic right here at school,” Mroz said.

(17)Huntley junior Christian Nunez tries to beat the label by keeping informed on current affairs and staying on top of his education.



“Generation Z Stereotyped ...”(3)

(18)“Although sometimes I tend to let my grades slip, I try to compensate by trying harder.... I also try to keep up with things that happen in other places,” he said.

(19)On the other hand, there are those like youth group pastor Jin Kim who believe that the lazy label isn’t really accurate.

(20)“I don’t think this generation is apathetic at all,” Kim said. “If they are, then every other generation, including my own, is apathetic as well. I have kids right in front me right now that spend their time and effort volunteering and being active in their community.

(21)“When I look at them, I don’t see lazy or inattentive kids. I see kids that are caring and hard-working, not apathetic.”

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Web.<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/03/06/apathetic-teens-generatio_n_1323577.html



“Is Money Affecting Your Social Status?” (1)

Is your family income affecting your friendships? *Teen Vogue* reports on class envy.

(1) Samantha*, 21, from Tacoma, always appeared to be one of the richest girls at her high school. She had stylish clothes, took violin lessons, and had lots of pals with fat wallets. But she was hiding a secret only a few of her close friends and teachers knew about—her mom was struggling to make ends meet after a nasty divorce. “People didn’t know my financial situation,” she says. “My sister shopped a lot, so I borrowed her clothes. It seemed like we had excess, but in the end it was my mom taking on a lot of burdens.” Samantha says blending in with her wealthy neighbors helped to increase her social status. “I think the pressure for students to fit in is a common thing. I had to act the part to keep people from thinking there was something about me that was different and so I was able to sit with the popular girls.”

(2) At a time when the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that more than 9 percent of Americans are unemployed, class divisions are widening, creating tough social situations for many teens. Though it’s not commonly talked about, how much cash your parents have can often have a huge effect on your allowance, popularity, and, more importantly, who your BFFs are.

(3) Eighteen-year-old Tiara, from Chicago, who considers herself middle-class, agrees with Samantha. “In my high school, clothes made you more popular. If you didn’t have the right clothes or the latest brands, people would tear you down.”

(4) “Sometimes in our society we equate success and popularity with high-priced items,” says Variny Yim Paladino, coauthor of *The Teen Girl’s Gotta-Have-It Guide to Money* (Watson-Guptill).

(5) Gossiping about who’s broke and who has bank can be a favorite topic of conversation among girls, many of whom say that items like smartphones, purses, and shoes are important status symbols.

(6) But it’s not just the have-nots who worry about money. Stephanie, a 20-year-old college student from San Antonio who lives in New York City, says her family is solidly upper-class—they pay for her college, trips abroad, and living expenses—but even she feels the stress. Friends who have more disposable incomes are regularly on her to go to pricey restaurants and clubs that leave her in the red. “When you have a friend who’s constantly wanting to go out for dinner every day, it puts more pressure on you,” she says. “Sometimes I’ll look at my credit card bill, and all those Frappuccinos and taxicab rides add up—and I’m like, I can’t do this again.”

(7) Being in a different income bracket from your friends can be tough. Lisa*, nineteen, from Fort Lauderdale, Florida, grew up lower-class. She remembers feeling envious when her best friend got \$600 from her uncle to spend just for fun. “I was like, Whoa, can you break me off? I wasn’t as fortunate as some of my friends. I’ve never spent more than \$20 on a pair of jeans. I wore Payless until I was fourteen. And my first bike came from a garage sale.”

“Is Money Affecting Your Social Status?”(2)

(8) In contrast, Ada*, 23, from York, Pennsylvania, hit it big when a company she started in high school was purchased by a larger organization. But her net worth doesn't make her worry-free. “Just because you have something doesn't mean you don't think about it,” she says. “After you get money, you have to maintain it.”

(9) Ada admits she's even embarrassed by her financial status at times. “I just don't talk about it. It is something that I wish a lot of people didn't know about, because they see me as different. I eat McDonald's. I drive a Toyota Camry. I usually stay home and cook. When people get to know me, they're like, ‘You're just a normal girl.’”

(10) Paladino says it's typical for jealousy to arise between pals with different-size bank accounts. “It is OK to feel a pang of envy when you see someone else has something that you want,” she says. “The key is trying to figure out where it stems from and learning how to manage it so that it doesn't take over your life.”

(11) “Transparency is really important in friendships and relationships,” adds Jessie H. O'Neill, author of *The Golden Ghetto: The Psychology of Affluence* (The Affluenza Project). “People respect honesty.” After Samantha told one of her superwealthy roommates that flaunting money made her uncomfortable, she says their friendship improved. “From then on she would split meals with me, and her parents flew me up to their house for Thanksgiving. It didn't feel like charity.”

(12) O'Neill says that maintaining harmony with your pals doesn't necessarily mean that a person with more money should always foot the bill—rather that BFFs should find common interests that don't require money, like going to the beach, bicycling, or taking walks.

(13) Most importantly, the experts stress being sensitive toward—and not judgmental of—others in different financial situations. Listening can be an integral way to understand what a friend is going through. “It is important to not assume that their experience of life is the same as yours,” says L.A.-based teen therapist Sandra Dupont. “To learn more about their situation, listen carefully to what they share and follow their lead. Try asking questions about what's important to them.”

(14) Many girls say that after they became more honest about their financial situation—with both themselves and their friends—life improved. “I would want to be richer,” Lisa admits. “If you don't have any money, you're not secure. But I still appreciate what I have.”

GRADE 7: MODULE 2B: UNIT 1: LESSON 9

“Is Money Affecting Your Social Status?”(3)

(15)Ada says since her money was earned through doing something she loves, she doesn't dwell on it. “I don't hang out with people based on what they have. It's not an issue. I'm focused on my business.”

(16)Though Samantha still worries about her cash flow now that she's at an Ivy League university, she's less concerned about whether or not people think she's rich or poor. “Now I'm surrounded by a new level of wealth: kids with trust funds and allowances every week. It was—and still is—very tough for me.” But, she says, she's less wrapped up in pretending to be something she isn't. “I've shared my true financial situation with a core set of friends. They're extraordinary people that I value, not just monetarily but for the trust and investment we have in our friendship.”

*Name has been changed.

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NYS Common Core ELA Curriculum • G7:M2B:U1:L9 • February 2014 •

MEDIA



HOW TRUTHFUL DO ADS HAVE TO BE—AND HOW MUCH SHOULD WE BELIEVE?

By Stephanie Clifford

Pizza Hut calls itself “America’s favorite pizza.” Bounty pitches its paper towels as the “quicker picker upper.” Clearasil promises that its new acne product “visibly reduces redness and pimple size in as little as four hours.”

Should you believe any of this?

A lot of advertising uses slogans that aren’t necessarily meant to be taken literally. But now even some companies are admitting you shouldn’t believe everything you see—at least in their competitors’ ads. In fact, using laws designed to protect consumers from deceptive advertising, an increasing number of companies are suing each other, claiming

that false advertising by a competitor is hurting their sales.

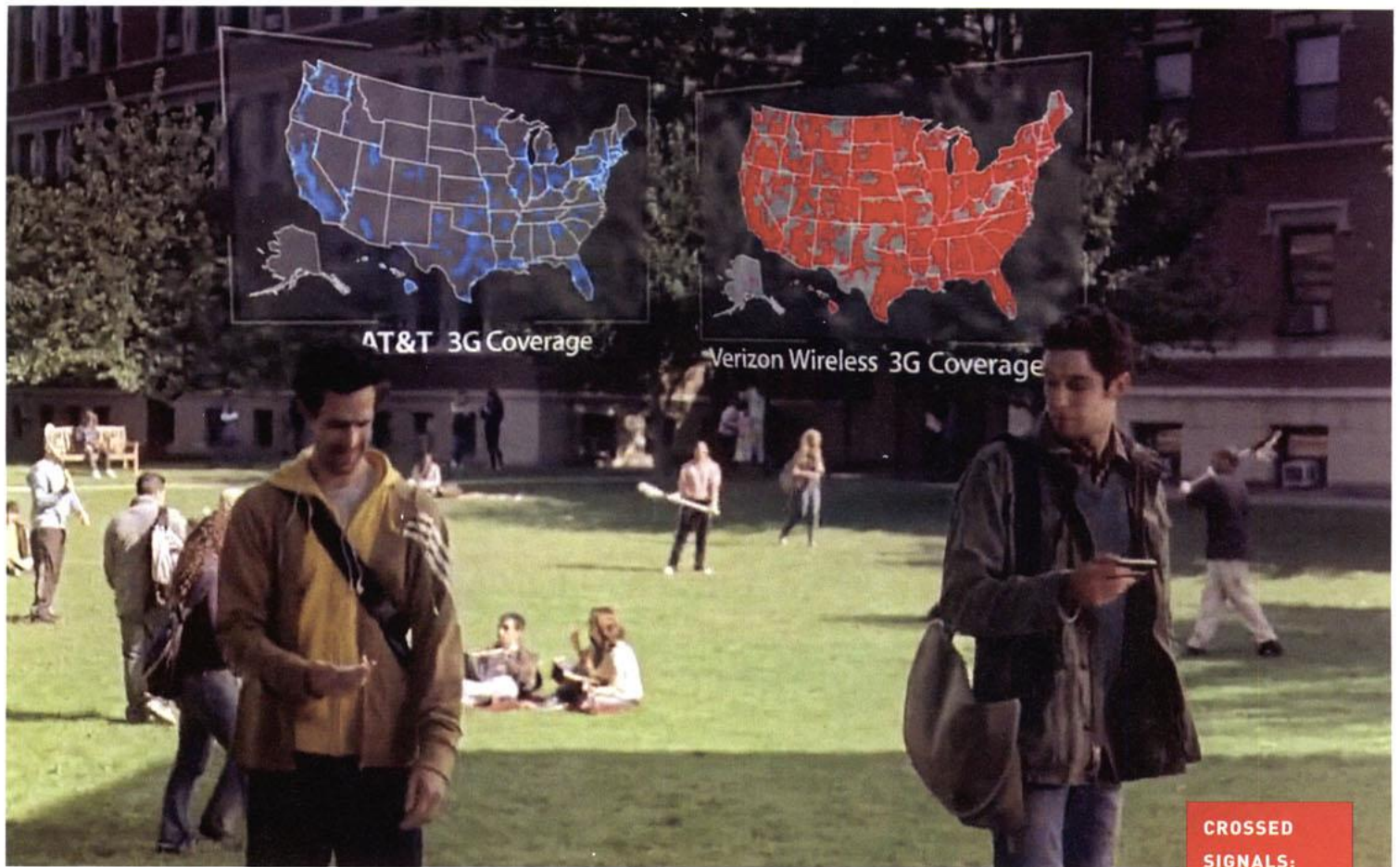
Longtime foes like AT&T and Verizon Wireless, Campbell’s Soup and Progresso, Dove and Pantene, and pet-food makers Science Diet and Iams have all wrestled over ads recently. Pantene has attacked Dove’s claim that its conditioner “repairs” hair better, and Iams has been challenged for saying that “No other dog food stacks up like Iams.”

“In this economy, where [profit] margins are a bit tighter, a lot of marketing departments have decided to become more aggressive,” says John E. Villafranco, a lawyer who specializes in advertising.

What exactly are advertisers allowed to say about their products? In legal terms, advertising is considered “commercial speech”—speech on behalf of a company or individual with the purpose of making a profit—and it’s treated differently than other kinds of speech.

“Commercial speech is sometimes called the stepchild of the First Amendment in that it receives *some* First Amendment protections but not as much as other types of speech,” says David Hudson of the First Amendment Center. With a few key exceptions, such as libel and incitement to violence, almost all non-commercial speech is constitutionally protected.

“False and misleading advertising is not protected at all,”



CROSSED SIGNALS:
AT&T objects to Verizon's cartography.

ADVERTISING?

Hudson adds. "That's where a lot of the court battles come into play, because there's heated disagreement as to what constitutes misleading commercial speech."

Truth-in-advertising laws are designed to protect consumers by requiring advertisers to be truthful and able to back up their claims. The Federal Trade Commission is responsible for enforcing these laws. But the agency doesn't actively search for inaccuracies; it only follows up on complaints.

CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?

"We've all had a pizza delivered to us with a box that says 'world's greatest pizza,'" says Robert Thompson, a professor of media at Syracuse University in New York. "It probably isn't, but there's no way to prove that."

But when there is a way to back up a claim, companies are insisting that their competitors do so.

In December, AT&T sued Verizon Wireless over, literally, empty space, when Verizon began comparing its third-generation wireless network to AT&T's in TV commercials (*see above*). AT&T isn't challenging the crux of the ad, which is that Verizon has more widespread wireless 3G coverage than AT&T. Rather, it's upset over the maps comparing the companies' networks.

"There are vast [blank] spaces . . . in the map that depicts AT&T's coverage," says Mark Siegel, a spokesman for AT&T. "It suggests to the viewer that not only is there no 3G coverage in that area, but there is no coverage at all."

U.P.S. stopped running ads saying it was the "most reliable" shipping company after FedEx sued in May, arguing that the claim was based on outdated information.

Last fall, Campbell's Soup started an ad campaign (*above, left*) that said its Select Harvest soups were "Made with TLC," while labeling rival Progresso soups as "Made with MSG"—monosodium glutamate. Progresso responded with its own campaign, and then both companies complained to the Council of Better Business Bureaus, which recommended withdrawal of some ads by both soup makers.

But Thompson, the media professor, says that though the regulations are designed to prevent bold-faced, inaccurate claims, they cannot prevent everything that's misleading. "Advertising has always been about hyperbole and illusion," he says. "That's what we signed up for as a capitalist, consumer society." ●

Stephanie Clifford covers advertising for The New York Times. Additional reporting by Patricia Smith.



“Cover Girl Culture” (1)
(Source 2)

“Cover Girl Culture” exposes media’s impact on young girls

By [Melanie Deziel](#)

“I didn’t eat yesterday/And I’m not gonna eat today/And I’m not gonna eat tomorrow/ Cause I’m gonna be a supermodel!/So beautiful!”

These are the lyrics to Jill Sobule’s song, “Supermodel,” which plays in the background of the film “Cover Girl Culture: Awakening the Media Generation,” a documentary about the impact of media images and messages from the media on the self-esteem of the young girls exposed to them.

The Women’s Center, room 421 in the Student Union, offered a free showing of this documentary last Thursday night as part of their “Thursday At The Movies” program. Students packed into the Women’s Center Program Room for the 6 p.m. screening of the film and to take part in the discussion that followed.

Krissy Dolce, a library assistant and program assistant at the Women’s Center, was pleased with the turnout and brought out additional seating for the group of students pouring into the room for the event.

“It’s a good topic. We see it all the time in the movies and in magazines, you know? It’s really in your face and that makes it an accessible topic,” said Dolce, an eighth-semester English major and women’s studies minor who has worked at the Women’s Center since she was a freshman and also works as a peer educator.

The film by former fashion model Nicole Clark relies on powerful media images carefully juxtaposed with interviews with dozens of individuals in the fashion industry as well as magazine executives, models, body images coaches, authors, doctors, and more. Perhaps the most moving interviews come from the teen and young girls themselves, some as young as six.

Six-year-old Megan tells the camera she wants to be a model when she grows up, “because I’d like to be kinda famous and make a lot of money.” Eleven-year-old Kailey, donning what appear to be fake nails with a fresh French manicure, admits to taking more than two hours to get ready each morning. Eleven-year-old Davanay looks at the ground and says, “If I was born naturally pretty then I’d want to be a model.”



“Cover Girl Culture” (2)
(Source 2)

These young girls get their ideas about what is beautiful, sexy, and healthy from magazines, television shows, music videos, commercials, and more. The images sent out by the media are unavoidable, and their impact on the self-esteem of millions of young girls is undeniable.

Images of emaciated models flashed across the screen. They showed advertisements with more sad faces than smiling ones. X-rays of women who had endured foot binding and worn corsets showed damages caused by the extreme desire for beauty throughout history.

“It’s shocking how much it’s hurting your body,” said Alexander Ashley, a sixth-semester pre-communications major.

The movie not only emphasized the messages being sent, but also exposed the deferral of blame that occurs within the various parts of the media. Interviews revealed modeling agents who blamed the demands of their clients, experts, and more. Everyone seemed to believe the problem was someone else’s responsibility.

“It’s not a modeling issue, it’s a societal evolution. It’s more for a women’s studies class to address than a fashion magazine,” said Jane Grenier, the associate publisher of “Teen Vogue.”

Kateryna Karayanidi, a second-semester undecided major, disagreed. “Everyone sees those images and not everyone can take a women’s studies class like that,” she said. “The class can’t teach everyone about [negative images] if everyone can’t take it.”

The young girls interviewed also addressed this deferral of blame and the claims of good intentions by magazine employees. Despite the appearance of one or two health articles, one of the girls said, “You don’t support us in our weight because the rest of your magazine is full of thin pin people.”

The ratio of advertisements to health articles is a legitimate concern. The filmmakers kept one year’s worth of “Teen Vogue” and laid out the pages on a basketball court—ads on one side and health-promoting articles on the other. The final results: more than 1,730 ads, less than 700 articles.

Another shocking scene showed an interview with a cosmetic surgeon who said that the problem for these young girls is low self-esteem, but that higher self-esteem would put him out of business. He immediately covers his face and says he’ll be kicked out of his professional society for saying that. He hoped that the clip wouldn’t be included in the documentary.



“Cover Girl Culture”(3)

(Source 2)

“The fact that he reacted the way he did made it more offensive,” said David Griggs, a sixth-semester communications major. “Overall, it’s kind of unfortunate because it’s a business. It’s obviously going to take some sort of massive change to get people to agree to make less money in order to help people’s confidence.”

“They are making a lot of money at the expense of our physical, emotional, and mental well-being,” says Misty Tripoli, a Nike Elite Athlete and body image coach. “But we control it. Until we say ‘I don’t need that [product] to be the amazing human being that I am,’ then it’s going to keep going.”

Deb Burgard, a licensed psychologist, stressed the impact that mothers have on their daughter’s self-image. She said mothers are always surprised to learn that projecting a positive self-image is vital to their daughters’ development to strong and confident women. “You’re the queen in her world. You’re the future. [Moms] need to feel entitled,” Burgard said.

Connie Sobczak, an author and body image coach, agreed. “We are all responsible. We are all taking part in how negative this is. I think parents have a huge responsibility to protect their children,” she said. The more a young girl can look to their parent as a positive role model, she said, “she can see that and choose that instead.”

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Men Are Becoming the Ad Target of the Gender Sneer (1)
(Suggested Text #1)

By COURTNEY KANE

Published: January 28, 2005

ARE today's men incompetent, bumbling idiots? Judging by portrayals in some advertising, the answer seems to be yes—much to the dismay of some men.

The portrayals began as a clever reversal of traditional gender roles in campaigns, prompted by the ire of women and feminist organizations over decades of ads using stereotyped imagery of an incompetent, bumbling housewife who needed to be told which coffee or cleanser to buy.

As those images disappeared, the pendulum swung, producing campaigns portraying men in general, and husbands and fathers in particular, as objects of ridicule, pity, or even scorn. Among them are ads for Bud Light, Domino's, Hummer, T-Mobile, and [Verizon](#).

The “man as a dope” imagery has gathered momentum over the last decade, and critics say that it has spiraled out of control. It is nearly impossible, they say, to watch commercials or read ads without seeing helpless, hapless men.

In the campaigns, which the critics consider misandry (the opposite of misogyny), men act like buffoons, ogling cars and women; are likened to dogs, especially in beer and pizza ads; and bungle every possible household task. Most marketers presenting incompetent, silly male characters say their campaigns provide a harmless comedic insight into the male mentality while also appealing to women. But men who describe themselves as rights activists are increasingly speaking out against the ads as a form of male-bashing, especially when the ads disparage the roles that fathers play in their children's lives.

“You can't routinely denigrate a given segment of the population mercilessly,” said Richard Smaglick, a founder of an organization known as the Society for the Prevention of Misandry in the Media, which runs [fathersandhusbands.org](#), a Web site. “We're trying to wake up the industry to get business leaders to recognize that this isn't the way to build relationships with their customers.”

Some critics label the campaigns a reaction to the political correctness that makes it no longer permissible to use stereotypes of women.

Paul Nathanson, who wrote “Spreading Misandry: The Teaching of Contempt for Men in Popular Culture,” with Katherine K. Young, said the issue was larger than just what was presented in advertising.



Men Are Becoming the Ad Target of the Gender Sneer (2)
(Suggested Text #1)

“Negative imagery in advertising is part of negative imagery in popular culture in general,” Dr. Nathanson said. “If you add up the way men are presented in popular culture, then it is a problem because the message is that that’s what men are.”

Then there are the longer-term effects, Dr. Nathanson said, asking, “How do boys form a healthy identity?” if they are constantly exposed to anti-male stereotypes.

Martyn Straw, chief strategy officer at BBDO Worldwide in New York, part of the [Omnicom Group](#), offered an explanation.

“In advertising and in general communications,” Mr. Straw said, “there is the notion that things that are ‘negative’ are always much funnier than ‘positive,’ which can get very schmaltzy.”

“In order to not cross over the line into denigration,” Mr. Straw said, the situation portrayed in an ad needs to be truthful and funny. If those elements are in place, he added, “it’s not really bashing, it’s just having a funny look at the way men work sometimes and the way they approach things.”

Critics have compiled lists of ads they deem offensive. One Web site, [Standyourground.com](#), in cooperation with the Men’s Activism News Network, lists 30 brands it asks men to avoid buying because of what they regard as male-bashing advertising; the list includes Budweiser, Hummer, [J. C. Penney](#), and Post-it notes.

One of the companies most cited is Verizon Communications, for a commercial for its Verizon DSL service created by McGarry Bowen in New York. The spot shows a computer-clueless father trying to help his Internet-savvy daughter with her homework online. Mom orders Dad to go wash the dog and leave their daughter alone; the girl flashes an exasperated look of contempt at him.

A Verizon spokesman, John Bonomo, said, “It was not our intention certainly to portray fathers as inessential to families.” The commercial has run its scheduled course, he added, and is no longer appearing.

In many ways, said Ann Simonton, coordinator of Media Watch in Santa Cruz, Calif., an organization that challenges what it considers to be racism, sexism, and violence in the media, such commercials play on stereotypes of both sexes. For instance, speaking of the Verizon spot, Ms. Simonton said, “One might be able to interpret the women as being very nagging.”



Men Are Becoming the Ad Target of the Gender Sneer (3)

(Suggested Text #1)

Summary

A new trend in advertising is to portray men as stupid, foolish, and clumsy. This new portrayal began as a reaction to criticism that women were often portrayed in ads as incompetent, and needing to be told what to do. Now, many people consider the “man as a dope” to be reverse sexism, a form of “male-bashing.” This is particularly troublesome to people who believe this view of men in ads makes a negative comment on men’s ability to be effective parents.

Marketers defend this portrayal of men as simply a way of adding humor to the advertisement. Others, however, wonder if young male viewers will be able to find positive role models in these kinds of ads. Many view it as a larger problem: the fact that negative stereotypes of both men and women dominate American advertising.

Vocabulary

ire: anger
pendulum: a metaphor for public opinion
momentum: movement
hapless: incompetent
misandry: hatred of men
misogyny: hatred of women
denigrate/denigration: to demean or put down
schmaltzy: sickeningly sweet

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Guys and Dolls No More? (1)
(Suggested Text #2)**By Elizabeth Sweet**

IMAGINE walking into the toy department and noticing several distinct aisles. In one, you find toys packaged in dark brown and black, which include the “Inner-City Street Corner” building set and a “Little Rapper” dress-up kit. In the next aisle, the toys are all in shades of brown and include farm-worker-themed play sets and a “Hotel Housekeeper” dress.

If toys were marketed solely according to racial and ethnic stereotypes, customers would be outraged, and rightfully so. Yet every day, people encounter toy departments that are rigidly segregated—not by race, but by gender. There are pink aisles, where toys revolve around beauty and domesticity, and blue aisles filled with toys related to building, action, and aggression.

Gender has always played a role in the world of toys. What’s surprising is that over the last generation, the gender segregation and stereotyping of toys have grown to unprecedented levels. We’ve made great strides toward gender equity over the past 50 years, but the world of toys looks a lot more like 1952 than 2012.

Gender was remarkably absent from the toy ads at the turn of the 20th century but played a much more prominent role in toy marketing during the pre- and post-World War II years. However, by the early 1970s, the split between “boys’ toys” and “girls’ toys” seemed to be eroding.

During my research into the role of gender in Sears catalog toy advertisements over the 20th century, I found that in 1975, very few toys were explicitly marketed according to gender, and nearly 70 percent showed no markings of gender whatsoever. In the 1970s, toy ads often defied gender stereotypes by showing girls building and playing airplane captain, and boys cooking in the kitchen.

But by 1995, the gendered advertising of toys had crept back to midcentury levels, and it’s even more extreme today. In fact, finding a toy that is not marketed either explicitly or subtly (through use of color, for example) by gender has become incredibly difficult.

There are several reasons gender-based marketing has become so prevalent. On a practical level, toy makers know that by segmenting the market into narrow demographic groups, they can sell more versions of the same toy. And nostalgia often drives parents and grandparents to give toys they remember from their own childhood.



Guys and Dolls No More?(2)
(Suggested Text #2)

Such marketing taps into the deeply held beliefs about gender that still operate in our culture; many parents argue that their daughters and sons like different things. This is particularly true for boys: parents tend to stick with gender-typed toys for boys, either because they understand that the social costs for boys who transgress into the “pink” zone are especially high in a homophobic culture or because of their own desire for gender conformity.

This becomes a self-reinforcing cycle: As toys have become more and more gender segregated, the social costs of boundary crossing and the peer pressure to stay within the lines are huge, for kids and parents alike.

But if parents are susceptible to the marketers’ message, their children are even more so. In a [study](#) on parental toy purchases led by the psychologist Donna Fisher-Thompson, researchers who interviewed parents leaving a toy store found that many bought gender-typed toys because their kids had asked for them, and parents were a bit less likely to choose gendered toys—at least for girls—on their own.

Moreover, expert opinion—including research by developmental and evolutionary psychologists—has fueled the development and marketing of gender-based toys. Over the past 20 years, there has been a growth of “brain science” research, which uses neuroimaging technology to try to explain how biological sex differences cause social phenomena like gendered toy preference.

That’s ridiculous, of course: It’s impossible to neatly disentangle the biological from the social, given that children are born into a culture laden with gender messages. But that hasn’t deterred marketers from embracing such research and even mimicking it with their own well-funded studies.

For example, last year the Lego Group, after two decades of marketing almost exclusively to boys, introduced the new “Friends” line for girls after extensive market research convinced the company that boys and girls have distinctive, sex-differentiated play needs.

Critics pointed out that the girls’ sets are more about beauty, domesticity, and nurturing than building—undermining the creative, constructive value that parents and children alike place in the toys. Nevertheless, Lego has claimed victory, stating that the line has been twice as successful as the company anticipated.

The ideas about gender roles embedded in toys and marketing reflect how little our beliefs have changed over time, even though they contradict modern reality: Over 70 percent of mothers are in the labor force, and in most families domestic responsibilities are shared more equitably than ever before. In an era of increasingly diverse family structures, these ideas push us back toward a more unequal past.



Guys and Dolls No More?(3)
(Suggested Text #2)

Summary

Toys in America are rigidly divided in how they are marketed between “boys” and “girls.” This division has not always been a problem, but since the 1970s, the market for “boy toys” versus “girl toys” has increased, and is now at levels we have never seen before.

There are several reasons why this is occurring. One is that marketers are aware that if they can market strictly to smaller groups such as “girls” and “boys,” they can sell more versions of the same toy.

In addition, marketers are also tapping into beliefs in America that are still strong about the differences between boys and girls. This results in a cycle: Families feel threatened if their boy or girl plays with toys that are not for “boys” or “girls”; they buy gender-specific toys; the marketers make more gender-specific toys; and so on. In fact, the children themselves are more likely to buy gender-specific toys than their parents are.

There has been a growth of research that scientists believe documents that difference in gender lies in the brain. Marketers have used this research to develop even more gender-specific toys, even though gender differences are both biological and social. The Lego Group, for example, recently developed a girl-specific line of Legos. Some people feel this line doesn’t allow girls to have the same constructive and creative relationship with Legos that boys do because of how the Legos are marketed.

The article makes the final point that in the home and in the workforce, the relationship between males and females is more equal than ever before. However, gendered toys push our ideas about gender equality backwards.

Vocabulary

domesticity: having to do with the home	conformity: fitting in
unprecedented: never seen before	susceptible: easily affected by
equity: equality	phenomena: events
prevalent: widespread	deferred: put off
demographic: having to do with human populations	distinctive: individual
nostalgia: a longing for the past	
transgress: to go beyond the set limits	
homophobic: afraid of homosexuality	

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“Images of Men in Advertising” (Source 3)
(Assessment Text)

Excerpts from an article

By Tom Nakayama

“What is a man?”

(1) This may seem like an odd question to be asking, but it’s one that’s answered all the time in print ads and television commercials. Ads and commercials, with their images of cowboys, successful businessmen, construction workers, sophisticate¹ in tuxedos, muscle men, and others, may seem to be flashing by casually. But they actually represent countless—if often unconscious²—decisions by writers, advertisers, producers, programmers, and others about what men look like, say, and even think.

(2) As each ad answers the questions: “What images of men will sell my product to men? To women?” they shape viewers’ images of men as well.... Advertising narrows the definition of what it means to be a man.

(3) According to the advertising archetypes³ presented, men are in charge, self-contained⁴, and often alone. When shown with other men, they seem ready to unleash their aggression at any moment. When shown with women, they must be dominant.... These images of men, from hard hats building dams to captains of industry rewarding themselves with the best whiskey, are powerful and disturbing. Only a few more recent ads focus on men in families, men with children, or men shown in partnership with women or other men.

(4) ... A few advertisers have begun to concentrate on another view of masculinity by portraying⁵ images of men who are gentle, caring, sensitive—even able to hold babies. Such images offer alternative⁶ social roles for men unwilling or unable to restrict themselves to the role of the strong, silent loner on horseback. Instead, they affirm⁷ the idea that men, like women, experience a broad range of feelings and emotions.

Nakayama, Tom. "Images of Men in Advertising." Center for Media Literacy. Web. 16 Feb. 2014. <http://www.medialit.org/reading-room/images-men-advertising>

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NYS Common Core ELA Curriculum • G7:M2B:U3:L7• February 2014 •

1 experienced, worldly wise

2 not realized

3 a perfect example

4 private; not revealing emotions

5 showing

6 different from the normal

7 support



Geena Davis, Media Equalizer

(Suggested Text #3)

When little girls and boys watch movies and TV, what ideas do they develop about girls and women? Actor Geena Davis didn't like what she saw, so she took action. She started the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media (seejane.org), which works to improve the images of girls and women in children's media. As an actor, Geena is known for playing strong female roles—check out the movie *A League of Their Own* (she's in an all-women baseball league), or the 2005–06 TV series “Commander In Chief,” in which she plays the first female U.S. president. Geena shared her activist inspiration with *Daughters*, a NMG sister publication that's now a website (daughters.com) with great advice for parents of girls and girl advocates.

“My eyes were really opened when I started watching preschool television with my daughter when she was about two years old. I noticed that there weren't nearly as many female characters as male characters. It seemed that on the majority of young children's programming, even on public television, my daughter and the other children watching didn't see a world like the real one, in which girls and women make up half of the population. And the female characters that did appear were too often covered with bows and jewelry and cared a great deal about their appearance.

“I kept watching, and got more and more frustrated. I saw that the majority of TV shows, videos, and movies designed specifically for children—whether the shows were animated, live-action, or puppets—are dominated by male characters and male stories. Studies have shown that in large part we learn our self-worth by seeing ourselves reflected in the culture. What message are we sending to girls and boys? It's just as important to me for my two boys to see girls playing vital roles in the stories they watch. My sons will most likely be husbands and fathers, and I want them to value women as much as I want my daughter to feel valued.”

Read these facts from the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media and do your own research as you watch family movies and TV. Don't forget to check animated animals: How many are girls? How many are boys? Ask questions about the roles girls play.

- Males outnumber females 3 to 1 in family films, even though females make up a little more than half of the population in the United States. This male-female ratio is the same as it was in 1946!
- Females are almost four times as likely as males to be shown in sexy attire and nearly twice as likely as males to be shown with a tiny waistline.
- Females also are underrepresented behind the camera. In a study of more than 1,500 content creators, only 7 percent of directors, 13 percent of writers, and 20 percent of producers were female.

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Body Image and Eating Disorders (1)
(Suggested Text #4)

Media and Marketing Promote Impossible Physical Standards

- A life-size Barbie doll would have a 16-inch waist.¹
- Action figures, such as G.I. Joes, have “bulked up” in recent years.² Boys today rate these new, more muscular figures as healthier than the old ones.³
- A study of 500 models found that almost half were malnourished, according to World Health Organization standards.⁴ The average American woman is 5' 4" tall and weighs 140 pounds. The average American model is 5' 11" tall and weighs 117 pounds.⁵

Increased Body Dissatisfaction

- An increasing number of reality TV shows such as ABC's *Extreme Makeover* glamorize dramatic changes to physical appearance and have been criticized for promoting unhealthy body image.⁶
- In one study, more than half of boys ages 11–17 chose as their physical ideal an image only possible to obtain using steroids.⁷
- Television shows continue to feature impossibly thin actors in lead roles.⁸
- Discontent with how we look starts young. About 42% of first- to third-grade girls want to be thinner⁹, and 81% of 10-year-olds are afraid of being fat.¹⁰

Dangerous Ideals

- Most magazines airbrush photos and use expensive computer technology to correct model's blemishes and hide their figure flaws.¹¹
- One out of every 150 girls between the ages of 14 and 16 years suffers from anorexia nervosa—bulimia is considered to be more common.¹²
- 55% of teenage girls and 25% of teenage boys reported dieting in the previous year.¹³
- Over one-half of teenage girls and nearly one-third of teenage boys use unhealthy weight control behaviors such as skipping meals, fasting, smoking cigarettes, vomiting, and taking laxatives.¹⁴



Body Image and Eating Disorders (2)
(Suggested Text #4)

Media and Marketing Are Linked to Body Dissatisfaction and Eating Disorders

- Adolescent girls' discontent about body image is directly correlated to how often they read fashion magazines.¹⁵
- Viewing television commercials leads to increased body dissatisfaction for both male and female adolescents.¹⁶
- After television was introduced in Fiji there was a significant increase in eating disorders among adolescent girls.¹⁷
- Research shows that ads featuring thin models increase women's negative feelings about themselves, but also increase the positive image of the brands being advertised. Women report being more likely to buy products from ads with skinny models than ads showing average models.¹⁸



Body Image and Eating Disorders (3)
(Suggested Text #4)

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Body Image and Eating Disorders (4)
(Suggested Text #4)

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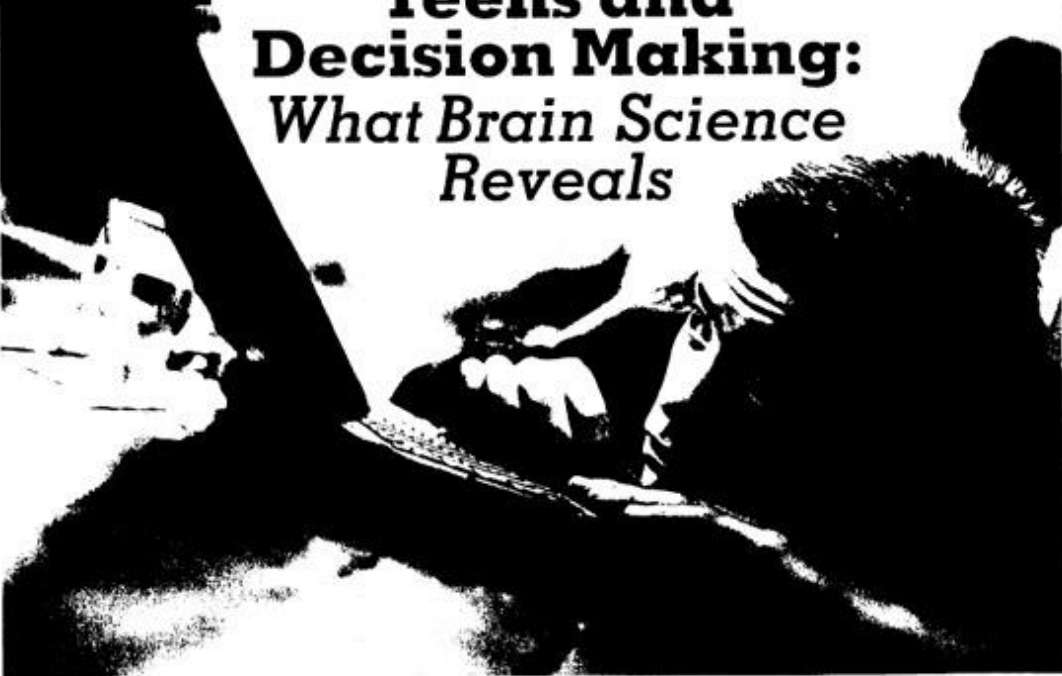
“Teens and Decision Making”

Teens and Decision Making: What Brain Science Reveals

Anonymous

New York Times Upfront; Apr 14, 2008; 140, 13; ProQuest Research Library
pg. 18

**HEADS UP
REAL NEWS
ABOUT DRUGS
AND YOUR BODY** A Message from Scholastic and The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)



Teens and Decision Making: What Brain Science Reveals

Do you ever act before thinking? Have you ever wondered why? Do you worry this might create problems? If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, read on.

Picture this: Your finger is poised on the *send* button, your eyes scanning an angry e-mail you’ve dashed off to a friend who has upset you. Some things you’ve written are a little harsh. In your brain a little red light goes off, but, what the heck, you’re steamed and your friend deserves it. You push the button.

Whether you’re aware or not, rushed decisions like this—acting before *thinking it through*—happen more often in teens than in adults. Recent discoveries in brain science may help explain why this is so.

First, a bit on how a brain makes decisions. Decisions don’t “just happen” automatically in your conscious mind. They stem from a series of events in the brain, which happen almost instantaneously. This involves a relay system in which different structures—made up of specialized cells called neurons—talk with each other by way of electrochemical impulses and chemical messengers, called neurotransmitters. Information flowing through this decision-making circuit is analyzed in the different structures. Then the network, as a whole,

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puts out a response. This output provides the basis for our behaviors and actions.

While this process is basically the same for teens and adults, the devil is in the details. Since the brain is not fully developed until the early 20s, the way in which a teen’s decision-making circuit integrates information may put him or her at a higher risk of making decisions the teen could later regret.

THE TEEN BRAIN: Under Construction

Not long ago, scientists thought the human brain was fully mature long before the teen years. While research shows that one’s brain reaches its maximum size between ages 12 and 14 (depending on whether you are a girl or a boy), it also shows that brain development is far from complete. Regions of the brain continue to mature all the way through a person’s early 20s.

A key brain region that matures late is the **prefrontal cortex**, located directly behind your forehead. The prefrontal cortex is very important as a control center for thinking ahead and sizing up risks and rewards. (This area is, in fact, the little red light that was trying to warn you about sending that e-mail.) Meanwhile, another part of the brain that matures earlier is the **limbic system**, which plays a central role in emotional responses.

Since the limbic system matures earlier, it is more likely to gain an upper hand in decision making. This relationship between the emotional center (limbic system) and control center (prefrontal cortex) helps to explain a teen’s inclination to rush decisions. In other words, when teens make choices in emotionally charged situations, those choices are often more weighted in *feelings* (the mature limbic system) over *logic* (the not-yet-mature prefrontal cortex).

This is also why teens are more likely to make “bad” choices, such as using drugs, alcohol, and tobacco—all of which pose a risk of serious

health consequences. “Most kids don’t really ‘plan’ to use drugs,” says Professor Laurence Steinberg of Temple University, “at least not the first time. They are more likely to experiment *on the spur of the moment*, particularly when influenced by others [peer pressure].”

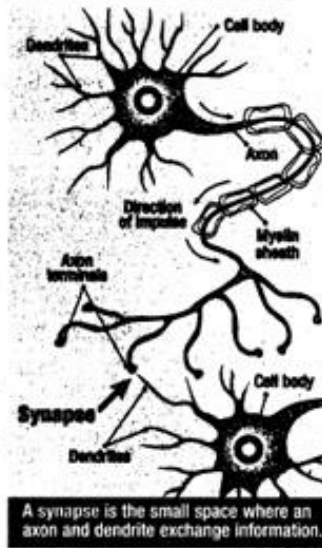
FINE-TUNING THE BRAIN

Like the rest of the body, the brain needs to mature in order to reach peak performance. This process involves slow changes—strongly influenced by brain activity—that have evolved to fine tune (or optimize)

how neural impulses flow throughout the brain, allowing it to process information faster and more reliably.

Inside the brain, information travels through a network of neurons, which have thread-like fibers called *axons* and branch-like structures called *dendrites*. Dendrites bring information into the neurons, while axons take it away and pass it along to the next neuron. Thus, neurons are assembled into circuits where the far end of an axon (its terminal) is positioned close to a dendrite. The small space between the two is called a **synapse**—where information is exchanged.

Throughout childhood and adolescence, the brain is busy fine-tuning itself through two key processes: myelination and synaptic pruning.



A synapse is the small space where an axon and dendrite exchange information.

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“Teens and Decision Making”

In **myelination**, axons wrap themselves in a fatty substance (myelin sheath), which works like the insulating plastic that surrounds electrical wires. This boosts the brain’s efficiency by increasing the speed with which a signal travels down the axon by up to 100 times. In **synaptic pruning**, synapses not used very often are removed, allowing the brain to redirect precious resources toward more active synapses. This strategic loss of weak synapses shapes the brain and makes it more efficient. This important pruning process molds the brain in response to a person’s experiences and activities.

This means that teens have the potential, through their choices and the behaviors they engage in, to shape their own brain development—



strengthening some circuits and getting rid of others. This makes the type of activities teens are involved in especially important. Skill-building activities, such as many physical, learning, and creative endeavors, not only provide stimulating challenges, but can simultaneously build strong brain pathways. When teens learn and repeat

appropriate behaviors, they are helping to shape their brains—and their futures.

WAIT A MINUTE!

Learning how your brain works can help explain why sometimes you behave like you do. With this knowledge, you can be better equipped to make smart choices.

One tip to follow is to *take a moment* before acting. When making a decision, something as simple as stopping to think can mean the difference between a positive and a negative outcome. By waiting a minute before acting, you allow yourself to:

- consider consequences;
- weigh harmful outcomes (e.g., harm to yourself or others) against short-term benefits (e.g., fitting in or feeling high);
- determine whether peer pressure is making you do something you’d otherwise not do;
- get information or advice, if you need it.

For more information about drugs and your body, visit <http://teens.drugabuse.gov> and www.scholastic.com/headsup.

To learn more about “pausing” to allow yourself to make smart choices, check out www.myspace.com/pause.

Vocabulary

Match each word in Column A to its meaning in Column B.

Column A

1. synapse
2. myelination
3. prefrontal cortex
4. limbic system
5. synaptic pruning

Column B

- A. brain area important for thinking ahead and sizing up risk and reward
- B. process in which axons become wrapped up in fatty myelin sheath
- C. brain system that plays a central role in emotional responses
- D. the small space between axons and dendrites where neurons exchange information
- E. cutting back the number of synapses

Photo © Fanny/News

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“What’s Going On in Your Brain?”

What's Going On in Your Brain?
Bernstein, Linda
Current Health 2; Feb 2006; 32, 6; ProQuest
pg. 20

YOUR BODY

What's Going On in Your Brain?

Your control center is in version 2.0.

By **Linda Bernstein**

Here's a good comeback the next time an adult complains that you're taking too many risks. Just say, "My brain made me do it."

Of course, in the real world, you can't use that excuse to cover reckless behavior. However, it's true that "the brain's inclination for sensation seeking becomes more intense during adolescence," Laurence Steinberg, a professor of psychology at Temple University and an expert on the teenage brain, told *Current Health 2*. At the same time, the brain mechanisms that regulate these desires are not yet fully developed. That's why teens want to do things like bungee jump or drive fast but often don't experience the fear or anxiety adults often associate with such risky activities.

Picture This

Your brain is a mass of cells contained inside your skull. It is, in fact, the boss of you. As the diagram at right shows, there are many parts to the brain, and each has a different function—bossy functions. In fact, the brain is the only organ that has *localization*, explains Dr. Nancy

L. Kuntz, a consultant in child and adolescent neurology at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn; one specific part controls movement, another helps decode vision, and so on.

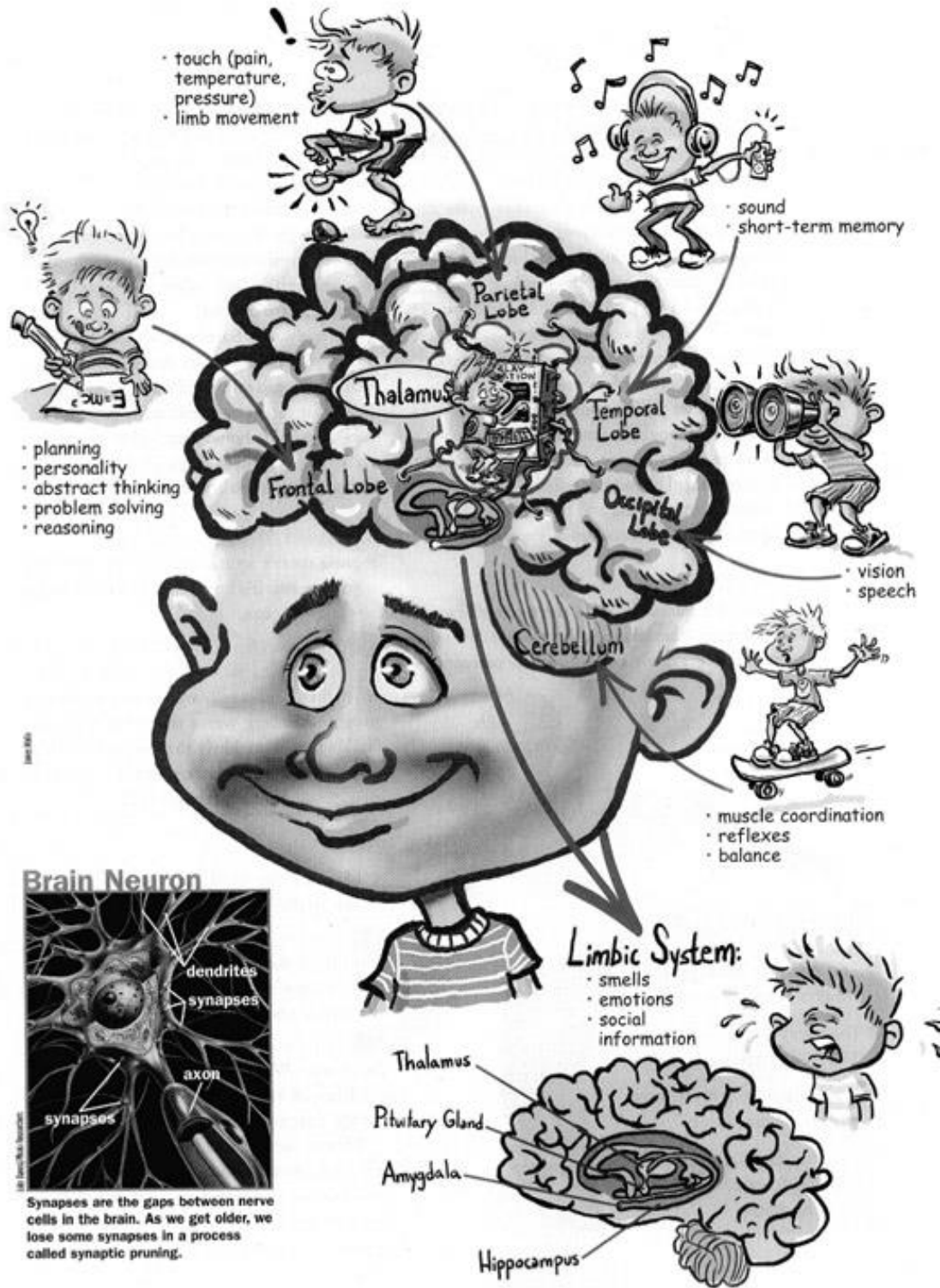
Especially important to the teen brain are synaptic pruning and myelin. In childhood, the brain produces many *synapses*—gaps between nerve cells connected by electrical impulses called *neurotransmitters*. As you grow, the brain starts to shed some of those synapses because you don't need them. As Steinberg explains, "the brain starts out like a road map with dirt roads. Those synapses that you need turn into highways, and those not used disappear." That process is *synaptic pruning*.

Pruning is a good thing because the synapses you use get stronger and work better. For instance, during adolescence, as some synapses drop away and others take hold, your thinking becomes clearer and more mature. You get better at planning and controlling impulses.

Everyone has about 99 percent of the same synapses, but that still leaves billions that can differ from one person to another, Steinberg says. For instance, if you play guitar every



“What’s Going On in Your Brain?”



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“What’s Going On in Your Brain?”

day, your brain will have more fine-motor synapses than if you spend a lot of time listening to Fall Out Boy on your MP3 player. (In that case, audio synapses would rule.) The cool thing, says Steinberg, is that brain cells can actually regenerate, so synapses that have been pruned can be re-formed if your life direction or interests change. Synaptic pruning peaks at about age 12 or 13 but continues until you’re about 24. So right now your brain chemistry is pretty active, preparing you to become an adult.

The production of *myelin*—the white matter that insulates the neurons—is as important as synaptic pruning. The amount of myelin in your brain increases during adolescence, according to Steinberg. The more myelin, the faster information is transmitted and the more adept, efficient, and mature your brain becomes.

Get Touchy-Feely

Amid this molecular stuff, the teenage brain is witnessing other changes. Deep inside the brain, the *limbic system* controls smell perceptions

and emotions, and processes social information, Steinberg says, and is one of the first to fully develop. Thus a teen experiences feelings more intensely than he or she did as a child and learns how to control emotions. Notice that you no longer have tantrums when your mom won’t buy you candy, but if a friend snubs you, you feel hurt, which when you were 6, you might not have noticed.

Strangely, says Steinberg, a teen’s *prefrontal cortex*—the brain’s smart part—is out of sync with limbic growth. That’s why you may do things that you know aren’t really good for you (such as coming home past curfew or eating a whole bag of potato chips all at once) while feeling that you just couldn’t help doing it.

Maintain Your Brain

Because there’s so much going on right now in your brain, it’s important to give it whatever help you can.

Stay away from harmful substances, such as illegal drugs, alcohol, and nicotine. They can harm sensitive cells and undermine natural growth. Steinberg warns that teens who start smoking are more likely to develop a life habit than those who start later, probably because of the synaptic pruning taking place.

Wear a helmet when you bike, skateboard, or ski, and wear seat belts in cars. A blow to the head, says Kuntz, may be a blow to the brain. So don’t take chances.

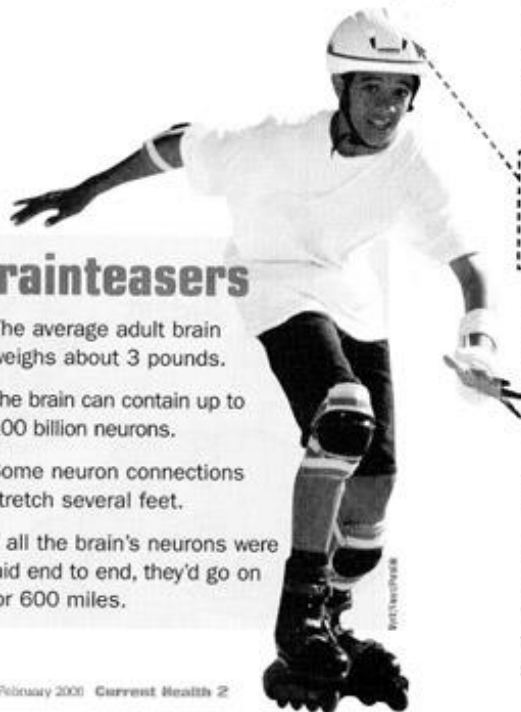
Exercise your mind. Do puzzles, read, think about the world or your life—such activities develop synapses you need and prune away those you don’t, Steinberg says.

Get a lot of sleep. Rest is important to the brain. While you snooze, your brain solidifies all the information it took in during the day, Steinberg says.

By now, having read this article, you might feel a little pumped because absorbing all this information has revved up your mind! Brain work is good for you, and it goes on every minute of every day, whether you think about it or not.

Brainteasers

- The average adult brain weighs about 3 pounds.
- The brain can contain up to 100 billion neurons.
- Some neuron connections stretch several feet.
- If all the brain’s neurons were laid end to end, they’d go on for 600 miles.



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“What You Should Know About Your Brain”

What You Should Know About Your BRAIN



Judy Willis

Although the brain is an amazing organ, it's not equipped to process the billions of bits of information that bombard it every second. Filters in your brain protect it from becoming overloaded. These filters control the information flow so that only approximately 2,000 bits of information per second enter the brain.

The Thinking Brain and the Reactive Brain

Once sensory information enters the brain, it's routed to one of two areas: (1) The *prefrontal cortex*, what we might call the thinking brain, which can consciously process and reflect on information; or (2) the lower, automatic brain, what we might call the reactive brain, which reacts to information instinctively rather than through thinking. The prefrontal cortex is actually only 17 percent of your brain; the rest makes up the reactive brain.

When you are not stressed by negative emotions, you can control what information makes it into your brain. By calming your brain, you can control which sensory data from your environment your brain lets in or keeps out—and influence which information gets admitted to your prefrontal cortex.

When your stress levels are down and your interest is high,

the most valuable information tends to pass into your thinking brain. When you are anxious, sad, frustrated, or bored, brain filters conduct sensory information from the world around you into your reactive brain. These reactive brain systems do one of three things with the information: ignore it; fight against it as a negative experience (sending signals that may cause you to act inappropriately); or avoid it (causing you to daydream). If information gets routed to this reactive brain, it's unlikely your brain will truly process the information or remember it.

Three major brain elements help control what information your brain takes in: the reticular activating system, the limbic system, and the transmitter dopamine. Let's look at how you can help each one work in your favor.

RAS: The Gatekeeper

The first filter that data passes through when entering your brain is the reticular activating system (RAS). Located at the lower back of your brain (your brain stem), the RAS receives input from sensory nerves that come from nerve endings in your eyes, ears, mouth, face, skin, muscles, and internal organs and meet at the top of your spinal cord. These sensory messages must pass through the RAS to gain entry to your higher, thinking brain.

You will learn more successfully if you keep the RAS filter



“What You Should Know About Your Brain”

open to the flow of information you want to enter your prefrontal cortex. If you build your power to focus your attention on the sensory input that is most valuable and important to attend to at the moment, the important input will make it into your thinking brain. If you feel overwhelmed, your reactive brain will take over. Then, what you experience, focus on, and remember will no longer be in your control. It's the difference between *reflecting on* and *reacting to* your world.

➡ **What You Can Do**

A key to making your brain work optimally, then, is to keep yourself physically healthy and well rested and to develop awareness of—and some control over—your emotions. Then you can approach learning calmly and with positive emotions.

Practice focusing and observing yourself, for example, by taking a short break from work to check in with your emotions. Just take a few minutes to think about what you're feeling. If it's a good feeling, take time to enjoy it and consider how your good emotional state affects your thinking. Do you understand more and get ideas about what you might do with the information you're learning? If you don't like the way you're feeling, think about times you've felt a similar negative emotion (like anxiety or loneliness). What has helped you return to a better mood in the past?

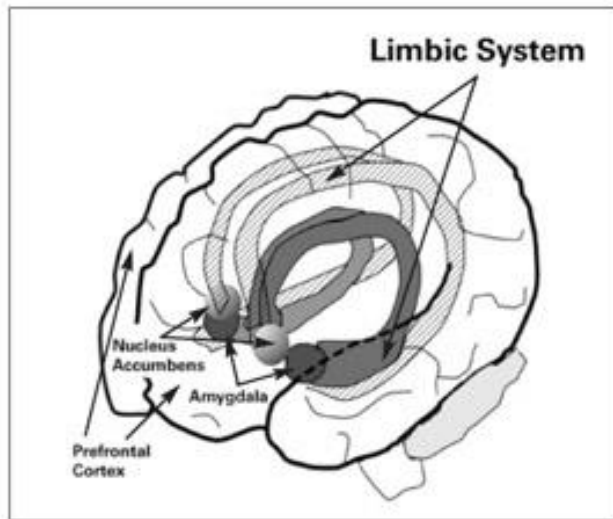
Even though you're not sleeping, you can think of such brain breaks as “syn-naps” because they let your brain replenish neurotransmitters like dopamine (which we'll discuss shortly). As you become aware of your emotions, you build brain networks that help you control your actions with your thinking brain. It also helps to do something active during a short break—such as toss a ball back and forth with a classmate, saying a word related to your lesson each time you catch the ball.

The Limbic System: Your Emotional Core

After the information coming in through your senses gets through the RAS, it travels to the sensory intake centers of your brain. New information that becomes memory is eventually stored in the *sensory cortex areas* located in brain lobes that are each specialized to analyze data from one of your five senses. These data must first pass through your brain's emotional core, the *limbic system*, where your *amygdala* and *hippocampus* evaluate whether this information is useful because it will help you physically survive or bring you pleasure.

The Amygdala

The amygdala is like a central train-routing station; it's a system for routing information based on your emotional state. When you experience negative emotions like fear, anxiety, or even boredom, your amygdala's filter takes up excessive amounts of your brain's available nutrients and oxygen. This



The shaded areas show major components of the limbic system deep within the brain.

puts your brain into survival mode, which blocks entry of any new information into your prefrontal cortex.

For example, suppose your day starts off badly. You overslept, had no time for breakfast, and have too many things to do before school. You're worried about whether your friends will sit with you at lunch and afraid that the mean kid in your class will say hurtful things to you.

It's not only your body that suffers on this kind of day: Your brain is also stressed. This stress closes off the pathways through the RAS and amygdala that direct information into your thinking brain and memory centers. Unless you restore a positive mood, you won't learn much on this particular school day. But if you can turn things around to become calm and focused, your amygdala will “decide” to send new information to your prefrontal cortex.

➡ **What You Can Do**

Slow down and take a moment to reflect instead of react when you take a test at school or face social conflicts with friends. You might take a deep breath and visualize yourself in a peaceful place. Another technique that helps you choose what to do with your emotions—something only humans can do—is to imagine you're directing yourself in a play. You are the director sitting in a balcony seat watching an actor (the emotional you) on stage below. What advice would you give the emotion-filled actor on the stage if he or she had been pushed by a classmate and wanted to hit back, for example? This technique helps you move away from using your reactive brain and tap your thinking brain, where memories that might help you are stored.

Your teachers play a role too. If your teachers set up lessons



“What You Should Know About Your Brain”

to include some fun activities so that you feel good during a lesson, your amygdala will add a neurochemical enhancement, like a memory chip, that strengthens the staying power of any information presented in the lesson. People actually remember more of what they hear and read if they are in a positive emotional state when they hear or read it.

The Hippocampus

Next to the amygdala is the *hippocampus*. Here, your brain links new sensory input to both memories of your past and knowledge already stored in your long-term memory to make new *relational memories*. These new memories are now ready for processing in your prefrontal cortex.

Your prefrontal cortex contains highly developed nerve communication networks that process new information through what are called *executive functions*, including judgment, analysis, organizing, problem solving, planning, and creativity. The executive function networks can convert short-term relational memories into long-term memories. When you are focused and in a positive or controlled emotional state, your executive functions can more successfully organize newly coded memories into long-term knowledge.

➡ **What You Can Do**

Reviewing and practicing something you've learned helps. Nerve cells (neurons) forge information into memories by sending messages to other neurons through branches—called axons and dendrites—that almost touch the branches of each neighboring neuron. It takes lots of connections between neurons to relate each neuron's tiny bit of information to that of other neurons so that all the bits add up to a complete memory. When you review or practice something you've learned, dendrites actually grow between nerve cells in the network that holds that memory.

Each time you review that knowledge, this mental manipulation increases activity along the connections between nerve cells. Repeated stimulation—for example, studying the times tables many times—makes the network stronger, just like muscles become stronger when you exercise them. And that makes the memory stay in your brain. Practice makes permanent.

When you review new learning through actions, using the knowledge to create something, solve problems, or apply it to another subject (such as using the times tables to measure the areas of paintings for framing them), this mental manipulation strengthens the neural pathways and your brain becomes even more efficiently wired.

Dopamine: Feeling Good Helps You Learn

Dopamine is one of the brain's most important *neurotransmitters*. Messages connected to new information travel from neuron to neuron as tiny electrical currents. Like electricity, these messages need wiring to carry them. But there are gaps, called *synapses*, between the branches that connect nerve cells and there's no wiring at these gaps. Chemical neurotransmitters like dopamine carry electrical messages across the gap from one neuron to another. This transmission is crucial to your brain's capacity to process new information.

Your brain releases extra dopamine when an experience is enjoyable. As positive emotions cause dopamine to travel to more parts of your brain, additional neurons are activated.

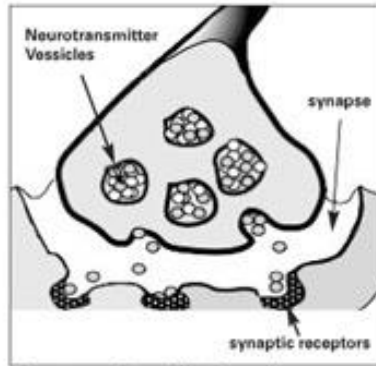
Thus a boost in dopamine not only increases your own sense of pleasure, but also increases other neurotransmitters, such as acetylcholine, that enhance alertness, memory, and executive functions in the prefrontal cortex.

➡ **What You Can Do**

Certain activities, such as interacting with friends, laughing, physical activity, listening to someone read to you, and acting kindly increase dopamine levels. You'll boost your learning if you get them into your day.

Experiencing pride at accomplishing something is also correlated with higher dopamine. It will increase your learning power if you pursue activities that give you a sense of accomplishment. Think about your personal strengths, such as artistic ability, leadership, helping classmates resolve conflicts, athletic skill, or even qualities like optimism, kindness, and empathy. Use these skills to do projects you want to do—and do them well—and you'll find you can use your brain power more successfully to make judgments and solve problems.

You now have the power to use your most powerful tool to achieve the goals you choose. Congratulations on the dendrites you've grown along the way!



Judy Willis, MD, practiced neurology for 20 years; she currently teaches at Santa Barbara Middle School in California and conducts professional development workshops. She is the author of *Teaching the Brain to Read: Strategies for Improving Fluency, Vocabulary, and Comprehension* (ASCD, 2008); www.RADTeach.com; jwillisneuro@aol.com.

This handout was created to accompany the article "How to Teach Students About the Brain," by Judy Willis, *Educational Leadership*, 67(4). Copyright © 2009 ASCD.



“Growing Up Digital”

By Matt Richtel

- (1) The day before the start of Vishal Singh’s senior year in high school, he faces a stark choice on his bedroom desk: book or computer?
- (2) Vishal, a bright 17-year-old Californian who spends most of his time on Facebook, YouTube, and making digital videos, has read just 43 pages of his summer reading assignment, Kurt Vonnegut’s *Cat’s Cradle*. Instead of picking up the book, he clicks to YouTube.
- (3) On YouTube, “you can get a whole story in six minutes,” he explains. “A book takes so long. I prefer the immediate gratification.”
- (4) Students have always faced distractions. But computers and cellphones, and the constant stream of stimuli they offer, are a new challenge to focusing and learning.
- (5) Researchers say the lure of these technologies is particularly powerful for young people. But because developing brains can get used to constantly switching tasks a lot more easily than adult brains, the risk is that today’s teenagers will be less able to stay focused on anything, not just schoolwork.
- (6) “Their brains are rewarded not for staying on task but for jumping to the next thing,” says Michael Rich, a professor at Harvard Medical School and head of the Center on Media and Child Health in Boston. “The worry is we’re raising a generation of kids in front of screens whose brains are going to be wired differently.”
- (7) But even as some educators express unease about students’ digital diets, they are increasingly using technology in the classroom, seeing it as a way to connect with students and give them the skills they need. Across the country, schools are equipping themselves with computers, Internet, and mobile devices.
- (8) It is a tension on vivid display at Vishal’s school, Woodside High School in Redwood City, California. Here, as elsewhere, it’s not uncommon for students to send hundreds of text messages a day or spend hours playing video games, and virtually everyone is on Facebook.



27,000 Texts a Month

(9) Allison Miller, 14, sends and receives 27,000 texts a month. She texts between classes, the moment soccer practice ends, while being driven to and from school, and often while studying. But it comes at a cost: She blames multitasking for the three B’s on her recent progress report.

(10) “I’ll be reading a book for homework and I’ll get a text message and pause my reading and put down the book, pick up the phone to reply to the text message, and then 20 minutes later realize, ‘Oh, I forgot to do my homework.’”

(11) Some shyer students do not socialize through technology—they recede into it. Ramon Ochoa-Lopez, 14, plays six hours of video games on weekdays and more on weekends, leaving homework to be done in the bathroom before school.

(12) Students say that their parents, worried about the distractions, try to police their computer time. But it’s trickier with cellphones, since a lot of parents want to be able to call their children at any time, so simply taking the phone away isn’t an option.

(13) Sam Crocker, Vishal’s closest friend, who has straight A’s but lower SAT scores than he would like, blames the Internet’s distractions for his inability to finish either of his two summer-reading books.

(14) “Facebook is amazing because it feels like you’re doing something and you’re not doing anything,” Sam says. “It’s the absence of doing something, but you feel gratified anyway.”

(15) He concludes: “My attention span is getting worse.”

No Downtime

(16) That’s what has doctors worried. “Downtime is to the brain what sleep is to the body,” says Dr. Rich of Harvard Medical School. “But kids are in a constant mode of stimulation.”

(17) Rich isn’t suggesting young people toss out their phones and computers, but that they take a more balanced approach to what he says are powerful tools necessary to compete and succeed in modern life.

(18) Vishal has mixed feelings about technology. “If it weren’t for the Internet, I’d focus more on school and be doing better academically,” he says. But thanks to the Internet, he says, he’s discovered and pursued his passion: filmmaking.



“Growing Up Digital”

(19) Vishal often spends hours working on music videos or film projects with sophisticated film editing software that he taught himself how to use—and then he’s focused in a way he rarely is when doing homework. He hopes colleges will be so impressed by his portfolio that they’ll overlook his school performance.

(20) Some teachers are alarmed by what they see. Marcia Blondel, a veteran English teacher, has resorted to having students read aloud in class because many lack the attention span to read assignments on their own.

(21) “You can’t become a good writer by watching YouTube, texting, and e-mailing a bunch of abbreviations,” says Blondel.

(22) By late October, Vishal’s grades began to slip. Vishal says he’s investing himself more in his filmmaking. But he is also using Facebook late at night and surfing for videos on YouTube. Evidence of the shift comes in a string of Facebook updates.

(23) Saturday, 11:55 p.m.: Editing, editing, editing.

(24) Sunday, 3:55 p.m.: 8+ hours of shooting, 8+ hours of editing. All for just a three-minute scene. Mind = Dead.

(25) Sunday, 11:00 p.m.: Fun day, finally got to spend a day relaxing ... now about that homework ...

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You Trouble

It might be funny to watch some guy jump off his roof onto a trampoline. But some say “stunt videos” encourage teens to take dangerous risks—and should be banned.

Do stunt videos make teens take crazy risks?

by Justin O’Neill

In 2009, a 15-year-old boy decided to become famous. His plan was to soak a basketball in gasoline, set it on fire, and sink a perfect three-pointer. He would film the glorious scene and post the video on YouTube. He dreamed of being an Internet celebrity.

Unfortunately, the plan didn’t work out quite as he imagined. As he took his shot, his clothing burst into flames. He was rushed to the hospital with second- and third-degree burns on his chest and legs.

He survived, but he’ll have the scars forever.

No Pain, No Gain

YouTube hosts countless clips of people, many of them young teens, attempting wild, dangerous, and downright *stupid* stunts. Many of the videos are inspired by shows like *Jackass* and *Fear Factor*, and they cover pretty much any risky activity you can imagine: playing with fire, “surfing” on top of moving cars, soaring off *flimsy* homemade ramps on bikes

ANTONIO BRUNO/GETTY IMAGES; JAMES HALL/ALAMY; JAMES SPINA, MARIO GARCIA/ALAMY GROUP VIA GETTY IMAGES; (TOP) DAVID HARRIS/ALAMY

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and skateboards, shooting people point-blank with paintball guns.

Stunt videos on YouTube get millions of hits. But according to some experts, they are far from harmless entertainment. These experts say that by hosting such videos, YouTube encourages young viewers to take potentially deadly risks.

Research by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows that more than 180,000 Americans die from accidental injuries every year. That works out to one person every three minutes. More than 14,000 of them are under the age of 19.

Is YouTube to blame?

Laughing at Violence

Daredevils—from the “human cannonballs” of the 1800s, to legendary stuntman Evel Knievel, to *Jackass*'s Johnny Knoxville—are nothing new. People have always found it entertaining to watch others attempt risky things, and also, sometimes, to watch them fail. Audiences love to see a good wipeout or blowup, at least as long as it's not too serious. In fact, viewers often shriek with laughter at stunts gone wrong.

Laughter may seem like an odd reaction to violence but, says family therapist Clair Mellenthin, “our tendency to laugh at people getting hurt goes back in human history



for centuries.”

She believes such laughter is a defense mechanism—a way

of coping with disturbing situations. “Even little babies laugh when they see people fall down,” she says.

Some of the earliest Greek comedies featured characters falling off the stage, being chased by wild animals, or smacking into walls. And now, in the age of the Internet, anyone with a camera and a YouTube account can create this kind of “entertainment.”

YouTube provides access to an audience of millions. Many of those viewers—particularly teenage viewers—are inspired by what they see and eager to try it for themselves. “YouTube has taken the one-upmanship of playing in the neighborhood to the global level,” says Mellenthin. “The peer pressure is greatly increased, because now we can see what others

are doing **literally** around the world.”

Don't Blame Me, Blame My Brain

There is another reason, beyond peer pressure, that many teens are willing to risk their safety and even their lives for the sake of a 30-second stunt video: Their brains are telling them to. During your teen years, the area of your brain that seeks pleasure and reward is well-developed. However, the area of your brain that controls judgment, the prefrontal cortex, is not. This fact, combined with the hormones that are surging through your body and your natural desire for new experiences, can lead to serious risk-taking: The voice in your head that tells you to do something exciting is a lot



What Do You Think?

Should YouTube allow dangerous stunt videos?

FIND AN
ACTIVITY
ONLINE

Do you think YouTube should do more to stop people from posting stunt videos? Go back to the article and find evidence to support each side of this debate. Then write your own opinion.

BY PETERLIN/ISTOCK/ALAMY; PHOTOS: JIM WELLS; BRAD LAMBERT/GETTY IMAGES



louder than the one that tells you why you shouldn't.

This doesn't mean risk-taking teens aren't thinking. Often, they can see quite clearly how dangerous a certain activity is. They just do it anyway.

"A lot of [teens'] risk-taking is not **impulsive**," says Valerie Reyna, a psychology professor at Cornell University. After carefully considering a risk, teens are likely to decide it's worth it for the thrill. Adults are more likely to skip this weighing of pros and cons and automatically rule out high-risk activities.

It's true that the odds of being killed while leaping from your bedroom window into your swimming pool may be relatively small. But there's a problem with this logic that most teens don't quite get. That is, no matter how small the risk, the worst possible thing *can* happen to you. And as Reyna says, when trying something risky, "it only takes once" to be killed.

Not Worth It

Fully developed brains or no, Reyna believes, teens do have the ability to take precautions and behave sensibly. Most know that no matter how exciting or hilarious something they saw in a video might be, they shouldn't do it if it's



obviously dangerous.

Defenders of YouTube's right to display stunt videos argue that it's not YouTube's responsibility to censor its content. Instead, they say, it's parents who must **ensure** that their teenage kids are behaving safely and responsibly.

It's not as if YouTube isn't making an effort, though. According to its official Community Guidelines, the site "draw[s] the line at content that's intended to . . . encourage dangerous, illegal activities that have an **inherent** risk of serious physical harm or death." YouTube staff members comb through the website 24 hours a day, looking for videos that violate their policies—but are they doing enough?

Whether or not you believe YouTube should have stricter rules, here's a piece of advice: Never light a basketball on fire.

That's just stupid.



You Safe

Millions of teens are injured in accidents every year—even those not looking for YouTube fame. Here are five ways to lower your risk of getting hurt.

- 1 WEAR A SEAT BELT**
In the U.S., car accidents are the leading cause of death and injury to teens. Wearing a seat belt cuts the risk of serious injury by 50 percent.
- 2 WEAR A HELMET**
Whether you're biking, skiing, or skateboarding, wearing a helmet can reduce the chance of serious head injury by 40 percent and death by 27 percent.
- 3 TAKE THE CLASS**
Boating might look easy. So might driving a car. But kids who take even short training programs dramatically reduce their chances of getting hurt. Studies show that driver-education programs can reduce fatal car crashes by 40 percent.
- 4 FOLLOW THE RULES**
It sounds obvious, but many accidents can be avoided simply by obeying laws and guidelines. Ninety-two percent of ATV-related deaths are associated with warned-against behaviors, such as driving at excessive speeds or carrying too many passengers.
- 5 DON'T GET BURNED**
Stay far away from fireworks, no matter how cool they look. More than 9,300 people in the U.S. are seriously injured by fireworks each year, and 45 percent are under the age of 14.

Sources: 1. National Organizations for Youth Safety; 2. Study: "Bicycle helmets and injury prevention: A formal review" (Attwell, Rcbyn, et al.); 3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 4. Special Vehicle Institute of America; 5. FEMA

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Beyond the Brain
By David Brooks

1. It's a pattern as old as time. Somebody makes an important scientific breakthrough, which explains a piece of the world. But then people get caught up in the excitement of this breakthrough and try to use it to explain everything.
2. This is what's happening right now with neuroscience. The field is obviously incredibly important and exciting. From personal experience, I can tell you that you get captivated by it and sometimes go off to extremes, as if understanding the brain is the solution to understanding all thought and behavior.
3. This is happening at two levels. At the lowbrow level, there are the conference circuit neuro-mappers. These are people who take pretty brain-scan images and claim they can use them to predict what product somebody will buy, what party they will vote for, whether they are lying or not, or whether a criminal should be held responsible for his crime.
4. At the highbrow end, there are scholars and theorists that some have called the "nothing buttists." Human beings are nothing but neurons, they assert. Once we understand the brain well enough, we will be able to understand behavior. We will see the chain of physical causations that determine actions. We will see that many behaviors like addiction are nothing more than brain diseases. We will see that people don't really possess free will; their actions are caused by material processes emerging directly out of nature. Neuroscience will replace psychology and other fields as the way to understand action.
5. These two forms of extremism are refuted by the same reality. The brain is not the mind. It is probably impossible to look at a map of brain activity and predict or even understand the emotions, reactions, hopes and desires of the mind.
6. The first basic problem is that regions of the brain handle a wide variety of different tasks. As Sally Satel and Scott O. Lilienfeld explained in their compelling and highly readable book, "Brainwashed: The Seductive Appeal of Mindless Neuroscience," you put somebody in an fMRI machine and see that the amygdala or the insula lights up during certain activities. But the amygdala lights up during fear, happiness, novelty, anger or sexual arousal (at least in women). The insula plays a role in processing trust, insight, empathy, aversion and disbelief. So what are you really looking at?



Beyond the Brain
By David Brooks

7. Then there is the problem that one activity is usually distributed over many different places in the brain. In his book, “Brain Imaging,” the Yale biophysicist Robert Shulman notes that we have this useful concept, “working memory,” but the activity described by this concept is widely distributed across at least 30 regions of the brain. Furthermore, there appears to be no dispersed pattern of activation that we can look at and say, “That person is experiencing hatred.”
8. Then there is the problem that one action can arise out of many different brain states and the same event can trigger many different brain reactions. As the eminent psychologist Jerome Kagan has argued, you may order the same salad, but your brain activity will look different, depending on whether you are drunk or sober, alert or tired.
9. Then, as Kagan also notes, there is the problem of meaning. A glass of water may be more meaningful to you when you are dying of thirst than when you are not. Your lover means more than your friend. It’s as hard to study neurons and understand the flavors of meaning as it is to study Shakespeare’s spelling and understand the passions aroused by Macbeth.
10. Finally, there is the problem of agency, the problem that bedevils all methods that mimic physics to predict human behavior. People are smokers one day but quit the next. People can change their brains in unique and unpredictable ways by shifting the patterns of their attention.
11. What Satel and Lilienfeld call “neurocentrism” is an effort to take the indeterminacy of life and reduce it to measurable, scientific categories.
12. Right now we are compelled to rely on different disciplines to try to understand behavior on multiple levels, with inherent tensions between them. Some people want to reduce that ambiguity by making one discipline all-explaining. They want to eliminate the confusing ambiguity of human freedom by reducing everything to material determinism.
13. But that is the form of intellectual utopianism that always leads to error. An important task these days is to harvest the exciting gains made by science and data while understanding the limits of science and data. The next time somebody tells you what a brain scan says, be a little skeptical. The brain is not the mind.

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“Is Google Making Us Stupid?”

YES: Nicholas Carr, author of *The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains*

Who doesn't love Google? In the blink of an eye, the search engine delivers useful information about pretty much any subject imaginable. I use it all the time, and I'm guessing you do too. But I worry about what Google is doing to our brains. What really makes us intelligent isn't our ability to find lots of information quickly. It's our ability to think deeply about that information. And deep thinking, brain scientists have discovered, happens only when our minds are calm and attentive. The greater our concentration, the richer our thoughts. If we're distracted, we understand less, remember less, and learn less.

That's the problem with Google—and with the Internet in general. When we use our computers and our cellphones all the time, we're always distracted. The Net bombards us with messages and other bits of data, and every one of those interruptions breaks our train of thought. We end up scatterbrained. The fact is, you'll never think deeply if you're always Googling, texting, and surfing.

Google doesn't want us to slow down. The faster we zip across the Web, clicking links and skimming words and pictures, the more ads Google is able to show us and the more money it makes. So even as Google is giving us all that useful information, it's also encouraging us to think superficially. It's making us shallow.

If you're really interested in developing your mind, you should turn off your computer and your cellphone—and start thinking. Really thinking. You can Google all the facts you want, but you'll never Google your way to brilliance.



“Is Google Making Us Stupid?”

NO: Peter Norvig, director of research, Google Inc.

Any new information technology has both advocates and critics. More than 2,000 years ago, the classical Greek philosopher Socrates complained that the new technology of writing "will create forgetfulness in the learners' souls because they will not use their memories."

Today, Google is the new technology. The Internet contains the world's best writing, images, and ideas; Google lets us find the relevant pieces instantly.

Suppose I'm interested in the guidance computers on Apollo spacecraft in the 1960s. My local library has no books on that specific subject—just 18 books about the Apollo missions in general. I could hunt through those or turn to Google, which returns 45,000 pages, including a definitive encyclopedia article and instructions for building a unit.

Just as a car allows us to move faster and a telescope lets us see farther, access to the Internet's information lets us think better and faster. By considering a wide range of information, we can arrive at more creative and informed solutions. Internet users are more likely to be exposed to a diversity of ideas. In politics, for example, they are likely to see ideas from left and right, and see how news is reported in other countries.

There's no doubt the Internet can create distractions. But 81 percent of experts polled by the Pew Internet Research Project say the opportunities outweigh the distractions. Socrates was wrong to fear the coming of the written word: Writing has improved our law, science, arts, culture, and our memory. When the history of our current age is written, it will say that Google has made us smarter—both individually and collectively—because we have ready and free access to information.

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Attached to Technology and Paying the Price

By Matt Richtel

SAN FRANCISCO—When one of the most important e-mail messages of his life landed in his in-box a few years ago, Kord Campbell overlooked it.

Not just for a day or two, but 12 days. He finally saw it while sifting through old messages: a big company wanted to buy his Internet start-up.

“I stood up from my desk and said, ‘Oh my God, oh my God, oh my God,’” Mr. Campbell said. “It’s kind of hard to miss an e-mail like that, but I did.”

The message had slipped by him amid an electronic flood: two computer screens alive with e-mail, instant messages, online chats, a Web browser and the computer code he was writing. (While he managed to salvage the \$1.3 million deal after apologizing to his suitor, Mr. Campbell continues to struggle with the effects of the deluge of data. Even after he unplugs, he craves the stimulation he gets from his electronic gadgets. He forgets things like dinner plans, and he has trouble focusing on his family.

His wife, Brenda, complains, “It seems like he can no longer be fully in the moment.”

This is your brain on computers.

Scientists say juggling e-mail, phone calls and other incoming information can change how people think and behave. They say our ability to focus is being undermined by bursts of information.

These play to a primitive impulse to respond to immediate opportunities and threats. The stimulation provokes excitement—a dopamine squirt—that researchers say can be addictive. In its absence, people feel bored.

The resulting distractions can have deadly consequences, as when cellphone-wielding drivers and train engineers cause wrecks. And for millions of people like Mr. Campbell, these urges can inflict nicks and cuts on creativity and deep thought, interrupting work and family life.

While many people say multitasking makes them more productive, research shows otherwise. Heavy multitaskers actually have more trouble focusing and shutting out irrelevant information, scientists say, and they experience more stress.



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And scientists are discovering that even after the multitasking ends, fractured thinking and lack of focus persist. In other words, this is also your brain *off* computers.

“The technology is rewiring our brains,” said Nora Volkow, director of the National Institute of Drug Abuse and one of the world’s leading brain scientists. She and other researchers compare the lure of digital stimulation less to that of drugs and alcohol than to food and sex, which are essential but counterproductive in excess.

Technology use can benefit the brain in some ways, researchers say. Imaging studies show the brains of Internet users become more efficient at finding information. And players of some video games develop better visual acuity.

More broadly, cellphones and computers have transformed life. They let people escape their cubicles and work anywhere. They shrink distances and handle countless mundane tasks, freeing up time for more exciting pursuits.

For better or worse, the consumption of media, as varied as e-mail and TV, has exploded. In 2008, people consumed three times as much information each day as they did in 1960. And they are constantly shifting their attention. Computer users at work change windows or check e-mail or other programs nearly 37 times an hour, new research shows.

The nonstop interactivity is one of the most significant shifts ever in the human environment, said Adam Gazzaley, a neuroscientist at the University of California, San Francisco.

“We are exposing our brains to an environment and asking them to do things we weren’t necessarily evolved to do,” he said. “We know already there are consequences.”

Mr. Campbell, 43, came of age with the personal computer, and he is a heavier user of technology than most. But researchers say the habits and struggles of Mr. Campbell and his family typify what many experience—and what many more will, if trends continue.

For him, the tensions feel increasingly acute, and the effects harder to shake.



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The Campbells recently moved to California from Oklahoma to start a software venture. Mr. Campbell's life revolves around computers. (He goes to sleep with a laptop or iPhone on his chest, and when he wakes, he goes online. He and Mrs. Campbell, 39, head to the tidy kitchen in their four-bedroom hillside rental in Orinda, an affluent suburb of San Francisco, where she makes breakfast and watches a TV news feed in the corner of the computer screen while he uses the rest of the monitor to check his e-mail.

Major spats have arisen because Mr. Campbell escapes into video games during tough emotional stretches. On family vacations, he has trouble putting down his devices. When he rides the subway to San Francisco, he knows he will be offline 221 seconds as the train goes through a tunnel.

Their 16-year-old son, Connor, tall and polite like his father, recently received his first C's, which his family blames on distraction from his gadgets. Their 8-year-old daughter, Lily, like her mother, playfully tells her father that he favors technology over family.

"I would love for him to totally unplug, to be totally engaged," says Mrs. Campbell, who adds that he becomes "crotchety until he gets his fix." But she would not try to force a change.

"He loves it. Technology is part of the fabric of who he is," she says. "If I hated technology, I'd be hating him, and a part of who my son is too."

Always On

Mr. Campbell, whose given name is Thomas, had an early start with technology in Oklahoma City. When he was in third grade, his parents bought him Pong, a video game. Then came a string of game consoles and PCs, which he learned to program.

In high school, he balanced computers, basketball and a romance with Brenda, a cheerleader with a gorgeous singing voice. He studied too, with focus, uninterrupted by e-mail. "I did my homework because I needed to get it done," he said. "I didn't have anything else to do."

He left college to help with a family business, then set up a lawn mowing service. At night he would read, play video games, hang out with Brenda and, as she remembers it, "talk a lot more."

In 1996, he started a successful Internet provider. Then he built the start-up that he sold for \$1.3 million in 2003 to LookSmart, a search engine.



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Mr. Campbell loves the rush of modern life and keeping up with the latest information. “I want to be the first to hear when the aliens land,” he said, laughing. But other times, he fantasizes about living in pioneer days when things moved more slowly: “I can’t keep everything in my head.”

No wonder. As he came of age, so did a new era of data and communication.

At home, people consume 12 hours of media a day on average, when an hour spent with, say, the Internet and TV simultaneously counts as two hours. That compares with five hours in 1960, say researchers at the University of California, San Diego. Computer users visit an average of 40 Web sites a day, according to research by RescueTime, which offers time-management tools.

As computers have changed, so has the understanding of the human brain. Until 15 years ago, scientists thought the brain stopped developing after childhood. Now they understand that its neural networks continue to develop, influenced by things like learning skills.

So not long after Eyal Ophir arrived at Stanford in 2004, he wondered whether heavy multitasking might be leading to changes in a characteristic of the brain long thought immutable: that humans can process only a single stream of information at a time.

Going back a half-century, tests had shown that the brain could barely process two streams, and could not simultaneously make decisions about them. But Mr. Ophir, a student-turned-researcher, thought multitaskers might be rewiring themselves to handle the load.

His passion was personal. He had spent seven years in Israeli intelligence after being weeded out of the air force—partly, he felt, because he was not a good multitasker. Could his brain be retrained?

Mr. Ophir, like others around the country studying how technology bent the brain, was startled by what he discovered.

The Myth of Multitasking

The test subjects were divided into two groups: those classified as heavy multitaskers based on their answers to questions about how they used technology, and those who were not.



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In a test created by Mr. Ophir and his colleagues, subjects at a computer were briefly shown an image of red rectangles. Then they saw a similar image and were asked whether any of the rectangles had moved. It was a simple task until the addition of a twist: blue rectangles were added, and the subjects were told to ignore them. (The multitaskers then did a significantly worse job than the non-multitaskers at recognizing whether red rectangles had changed position. In other words, they had trouble filtering out the blue ones—the irrelevant information.

So, too, the multitaskers took longer than non-multitaskers to switch among tasks, like differentiating vowels from consonants and then odd from even numbers. The multitaskers were shown to be less efficient at juggling problems. (

Other tests at Stanford, an important center for research in this fast-growing field, showed multitaskers tended to search for new information rather than accept a reward for putting older, more valuable information to work.

Researchers say these findings point to an interesting dynamic: multitaskers seem more sensitive than non-multitaskers to incoming information.

The results also illustrate an age-old conflict in the brain, one that technology may be intensifying. A portion of the brain acts as a control tower, helping a person focus and set priorities. More primitive parts of the brain, like those that process sight and sound, demand that it pay attention to new information, bombarding the control tower when they are stimulated.

Researchers say there is an evolutionary rationale for the pressure this barrage puts on the brain. The lower-brain functions alert humans to danger, like a nearby lion, overriding goals like building a hut. In the modern world, the chime of incoming e-mail can override the goal of writing a business plan or playing catch with the children.

“Throughout evolutionary history, a big surprise would get everyone’s brain thinking,” said Clifford Nass, a communications professor at Stanford. “But we’ve got a large and growing group of people who think the slightest hint that something interesting might be going on is like catnip. They can’t ignore it.”

Mr. Nass says the Stanford studies are important because they show multitasking’s lingering effects: “The scary part for guys like Kord is, they can’t shut off their multitasking tendencies when they’re not multitasking.”



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Melina Uncapher, a neurobiologist on the Stanford team, said she and other researchers were unsure whether the muddled multitaskers were simply prone to distraction and would have had trouble focusing in any era. But she added that the idea that information overload causes distraction was supported by more and more research.

A study at the University of California, Irvine, found that people interrupted by e-mail reported significantly increased stress compared with those left to focus. Stress hormones have been shown to reduce short-term memory, said Gary Small, a psychiatrist at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Preliminary research shows some people can more easily juggle multiple information streams. These “supertaskers” represent less than 3 percent of the population, according to scientists at the University of Utah.

Other research shows computer use has neurological advantages. In imaging studies, Dr. Small observed that Internet users showed greater brain activity than nonusers, suggesting they were growing their neural circuitry.

At the University of Rochester, researchers found that players of some fast-paced video games can track the movement of a third more objects on a screen than nonplayers. They say the games can improve reaction and the ability to pick out details amid clutter.

“In a sense, those games have a very strong both rehabilitative and educational power,” said the lead researcher, Daphne Bavelier, who is working with others in the field to channel these changes into real-world benefits like safer driving.

There is a vibrant debate among scientists over whether technology’s influence on behavior and the brain is good or bad, and how significant it is.

“The bottom line is, the brain is wired to adapt,” said Steven Yantis, a professor of brain sciences at Johns Hopkins University. “There’s no question that rewiring goes on all the time,” he added. But he said it was too early to say whether the changes caused by technology were materially different from others in the past.

Mr. Ophir is loath to call the cognitive changes bad or good, though the impact on analysis and creativity worries him.



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He is not just worried about other people. Shortly after he came to Stanford, a professor thanked him for being the one student in class paying full attention and not using a computer or phone. But he recently began using an iPhone and noticed a change; he felt its pull, even when playing with his daughter.

“The media is changing me,” he said. “I hear this internal ping that says: check e-mail and voice mail.”

“I have to work to suppress it.”

Kord Campbell does not bother to suppress it, or no longer can.

Interrupted by a Corpse

It is a Wednesday in April, and in 10 minutes, Mr. Campbell has an online conference call that could determine the fate of his new venture, called Loggly. It makes software that helps companies understand the clicking and buying patterns of their online customers.

Mr. Campbell and his colleagues, each working from a home office, are frantically trying to set up a program that will let them share images with executives at their prospective partner.

But at the moment when Mr. Campbell most needs to focus on that urgent task, something else competes for his attention: “Man Found Dead Inside His Business.”

That is the tweet that appears on the left-most of Mr. Campbell’s array of monitors, which he has expanded to three screens, at times adding a laptop and an iPad.

On the left screen, Mr. Campbell follows the tweets of 1,100 people, along with instant messages and group chats. The middle monitor displays a dark field filled with computer code, along with Skype, a service that allows Mr. Campbell to talk to his colleagues, sometimes using video. The monitor on the right keeps e-mail, a calendar, a Web browser and a music player.

Even with the meeting fast approaching, Mr. Campbell cannot resist the tweet about the corpse. He clicks on the link in it, glances at the article and dismisses it. “It’s some article about something somewhere,” he says, annoyed by the ads for jeans popping up.

The program gets fixed, and the meeting turns out to be fruitful: the partners are ready to do business. A colleague says via instant message: “YES.”



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Other times, Mr. Campbell's information juggling has taken a more serious toll. A few weeks earlier, he once again overlooked an e-mail message from a prospective investor. Another time, Mr. Campbell signed the company up for the wrong type of business account on Amazon.com, costing \$300 a month for six months before he got around to correcting it. He has burned hamburgers on the grill, forgotten to pick up the children and lingered in the bathroom playing video games on an iPhone.

Mr. Campbell can be unaware of his own habits. In a two-and-a-half hour stretch one recent morning, he switched rapidly between e-mail and several other programs, according to data from RescueTime, which monitored his computer use with his permission. But when asked later what he was doing in that period, Mr. Campbell said he had been on a long Skype call, and "may have pulled up an e-mail or two."

The kind of disconnection Mr. Campbell experiences is not an entirely new problem, of course. As they did in earlier eras, people can become so lost in work, hobbies or TV that they fail to pay attention to family.

Mr. Campbell concedes that, even without technology, he may work or play obsessively, just as his father immersed himself in crossword puzzles. But he says this era is different because he can multitask anyplace, anytime.

"It's a mixed blessing," he said. "If you're not careful, your marriage can fall apart or your kids can be ready to play and you'll get distracted."

The Toll on Children

Father and son sit in armchairs. Controllers in hand, they engage in a fierce video game battle, displayed on the nearby flat-panel TV, as Lily watches.

They are playing Super Smash Bros. Brawl, a cartoonish animated fight between characters that battle using anvils, explosives and other weapons.

"Kill him, Dad," Lily screams. To no avail. Connor regularly beats his father, prompting expletives and, once, a thrown pillow. But there is bonding and mutual respect.

"He's a lot more tactical," says Connor. "But I'm really good at quick reflexes."



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Screens big and small are central to the Campbell family's leisure time. Connor and his mother relax while watching TV shows like "Heroes." Lily has an iPod Touch, a portable DVD player and her own laptop, which she uses to watch videos, listen to music and play games.

Lily, a second-grader, is allowed only an hour a day of unstructured time, which she often spends with her devices. The laptop can consume her.

"When she's on it, you can holler her name all day and she won't hear," Mrs. Campbell said.

Researchers worry that constant digital stimulation like this creates attention problems for children with brains that are still developing, who already struggle to set priorities and resist impulses.

Connor's troubles started late last year. He could not focus on homework. No wonder, perhaps. On his bedroom desk sit two monitors, one with his music collection, one with Facebook and Reddit, a social site with news links that he and his father love. His iPhone availed him to relentless texting with his girlfriend.

When he studied, "a little voice would be saying, 'Look up' at the computer, and I'd look up," Connor said. "Normally, I'd say I want to only read for a few minutes, but I'd search every corner of Reddit and then check Facebook."

His Web browsing informs him. "He's a fact hound," Mr. Campbell brags. "Connor is, other than programming, extremely technical. He's 100 percent Internet savvy."

But the parents worry too. "Connor is obsessed," his mother said. "Kord says we have to teach him balance."

So in January, they held a family meeting. Study time now takes place in a group setting at the dinner table after everyone has finished eating. It feels, Mr. Campbell says, like togetherness.

No Vacations

For spring break, the family rented a cottage in Carmel, Calif. Mrs. Campbell hoped everyone would unplug.



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But the day before they left, the iPad from Apple came out, and Mr. Campbell snapped one up. The next night, their first on vacation, “We didn’t go out to dinner,” Mrs. Campbell mourned. “We just sat there on our devices.”

She rallied the troops the next day to the aquarium. Her husband joined them for a bit but then begged out to do e-mail on his phone.

Later she found him playing video games.

The trip came as Mr. Campbell was trying to raise several million dollars for his new venture, a goal that he achieved. Brenda said she understood that his pursuit required intensity but was less understanding of the accompanying surge in video game use.

His behavior brought about a discussion between them. Mrs. Campbell said he told her that he was capable of logging off, citing a trip to Hawaii several years ago that they called their second honeymoon.

“What trip are you thinking about?” she said she asked him. She recalled that he had spent two hours a day online in the hotel’s business center.

On Thursday, their fourth day in Carmel, Mr. Campbell spent the day at the beach with his family. They flew a kite and played whiffle ball.

Connor unplugged too. “It changes the mood of everything when everybody is present,” Mrs. Campbell said.

The next day, the family drove home, and Mr. Campbell disappeared into his office.

Technology use is growing for Mrs. Campbell as well. She divides her time between keeping the books of her husband’s company, homemaking and working at the school library. She checks e-mail 25 times a day, sends texts and uses Facebook.

Recently, she was baking peanut butter cookies for Teacher Appreciation Day when her phone chimed in the living room. She answered a text, then became lost in Facebook, forgot about the cookies and burned them. She started a new batch, but heard the phone again, got lost in messaging, and burned those too. Out of ingredients and shamed, she bought cookies at the store.



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She feels less focused and has trouble completing projects. Some days, she promises herself she will ignore her device. “It’s like a diet—you have good intentions in the morning and then you’re like, “There went that,” she said.

Mr. Nass at Stanford thinks the ultimate risk of heavy technology use is that it diminishes empathy by limiting how much people engage with one another, even in the same room.

“The way we become more human is by paying attention to each other,” he said. “It shows how much you care.”

That empathy, Mr. Nass said, is essential to the human condition. “We are at an inflection point,” he said. “A significant fraction of people’s experiences are now fragmented.”

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Wringing Dry

Ready to give up long showers, water parks, and unlimited water gushing out of your faucets? Well, you don't have to just yet, unless world leaders can't resolve the world's worsening water shortage. The oceans are full, of course. But the liquid most important to human life--fresh, clean water for drinking and watering crops--is in short supply in many parts of the world. Rivers are running low, lakes are shrinking, streams have stopped flowing, and groundwater is being pumped dry.

Drought conditions are spreading in Africa, causing crop failures, malnutrition, and starvation.

Millions of people in Africa and Asia have turned to drinking and washing with contaminated water, leading to the spread of diseases. Infectious water-borne diseases, such as typhus and cholera, are now responsible for 80 percent of illnesses and deaths in poor countries. Many of those affected are children. If the trends continue, one-third of the world population will face a severe water shortage by 2025.

World Water Forum

That's part of a sobering assessment by the World Water Forum, which meets every three years. This year, 25,000 delegates from 100 countries convened in Istanbul, Turkey, to figure out a solution to solve the world's water crisis.

"There are several rivers that don't reach the sea anymore," Mark Smith, head of the water program for the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, told the BBC. "The Yellow River [Huang River in China] is one, the Murray-Darling [river system in Australia] is nearly another--they have to dredge the mouth of the river every year to make sure it doesn't dry up. The Aral Sea [in west-central Asia] and Lake Chad [in Africa] have shrunk because the rivers that feed them have been largely dried out."

Smith says small streams and rivers, especially in Africa, are drying up for at least part of the year, leading to even less usable water for small communities.

When streams and lakes dry up, people look underground. In parts of Africa and Asia, deep tube wells have replaced streams and rivers for farm irrigation and for drinking water. But because of the need to produce more and more crops, even the deepest wells are going dry. In rural western India, says Fred Pearce, author of *When the Rivers Run Dry*, "half the traditional wells and millions of tube wells have dried up."



Wringing Dry

"For nearly 3 billion people, access to a [water and] sanitation system comparable to that of ancient Rome would be a significant improvement," scientist Peter Gleick told *Public Works* magazine.

In 2008, lack of water led China to try to lease or purchase land in southern Africa to grow crops to help feed China's population. South Korea, which is experiencing its own drought, is looking to lease land in Madagascar, an island nation off eastern Africa, to grow food. Other countries in Asia, including Saudi Arabia, are considering similar moves.

"In general, we see drying...from southern Europe across to Kazakhstan and from north Africa to Iran," Martin Parry, of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, told the BBC. "And the drying extends westward into Central America [as well as into southern Africa and Australia]." Since 2002, Australia has been in the grip of its worst drought in history.

The United States also has been hit hard. In 2007, Lake Superior, one of the world's largest freshwater lakes, dropped to its lowest level in 80 years. California has a 20-year supply of freshwater left. New Mexico has 10 years' worth. Since 2000, the Colorado River, which provides water for seven U.S. states, has carried less water than at any time in its known history. Experts say those problems represent more than a temporary drought. In fact, the Environmental Protection Agency warns that if current water use continues unchecked, 36 states will suffer water shortages within the next five years.

Causes and Solutions

What is causing the crisis? Experts say it is a complex combination of climate change and rapid population growth. Areas that once received a lot of rain now get less rain; areas that got little rain now get more rain. When areas experience less or no rain, and rivers, streams, and lakes dry up, crops fail and hunger increases. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the area of Earth's land that is classified as "very dry" has doubled since 1970, and the trend is expected to grow.

The world population today is about 6.7 billion people, and it is expected to grow to more than 9 billion by 2050, according to United Nations projections. Much of the growth is expected to take place in countries that are already water poor, putting further stress on a dwindling water supply.



Wringing Dry

One partial answer to the world water shortage, at least for countries near the sea, is to build more desalination plants that convert seawater to freshwater. A new desalination plant has been built in drought-struck Australia, and several are planned for California. Another suggested solution is for water-rich countries, such as Canada, to sell water to water-poor countries. A third suggestion is for countries to adopt ways of increasing the freshwater supply, such as teaching farmers in Africa methods of capturing clean rainwater.

Delegates to last month's Istanbul conference discussed those and other ways to help solve the water crisis. Nearly everyone agreed that the amount of water on our planet can't be changed, but the way we use it can be if more people realized the problem.

"We're waking up," Gleick told Time magazine about the growing awareness of the world water shortage. "But not fast enough."

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Beyond Thirst: The Global Water Crisis

Most of us think nothing about grabbing a cold glass of water. In 2008, though, flooding caused a drinking water shortage in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Meanwhile, North Carolina, Georgia, and California suffered serious droughts. Yet these problems seem small compared to the world's water crisis.

Every day, 1.2 billion people don't get enough safe drinking water for their basic needs. That's nearly one-sixth of the world's people. More than a third--roughly 2.6 billion people--lack safe sanitation. Left unchecked, the crisis will only worsen.

A Scarce Resource

While water covers 70 percent of Earth's surface, 97 percent is undrinkable seawater. With two-thirds of all fresh water locked in polar ice caps, only 1 percent of the world's water is potentially available for people.

"Water is a precious, vital resource," stresses Meena Palaniappan at the Pacific Institute in California.

When poor sanitation and other practices pollute water, less is available for basic needs.

"Climate change is going to have a dramatic impact on water resources," adds Palaniappan. For many areas, rainfall will occur in a shorter period of time. Meanwhile, drought periods will lengthen.

Population growth will further stress water resources.

The World Health Organization (WHO) says each person needs at least 20 liters (a little more than 5 gallons) per day. But not everyone has equal access, especially in developing countries. When well-to-do people have water pumped into their homes, they get water at low per-unit costs. However, poor people in the same cities may pay up to 10 times as much per liter for water from tank trucks. Rural people may have to fetch water themselves. "It's a huge inequity," says Palaniappan.

Disease, Poverty, and Other Problems

Lack of safe water and sanitation is deadly. Contaminated water kills 1.8 million children every year with diarrhea. Parasites, bacteria, and viruses cause many other illnesses. At any moment, nearly half the people in developing countries suffer from some water-related sickness.

"These people have no choice," notes Sally Edwards at the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization. "They know it leads to disease, but there is no other water."



Beyond Thirst: The Global Water Crisis

Girls and women suffer most. "Many girls who would otherwise be in school are spending hours each day walking to distant sources to collect water," notes Nicole Wickenhauser at WaterPartners International in Missouri.

Girls who do attend school often drop out as teens if schools lack separate toilets. Outside school, girls and women may risk attack just by going to the bathroom.

Adults can't earn as much when they spend hours fetching water of questionable quality. Water-related sickness makes them miss more work. As a result, families can't escape a cycle of disease and poverty.

Water shortages affect food supplies, too. According to WHO, growing one day's food for a family of four can take as much water as an Olympic-size swimming pool. Insecurity about water can also cause political and economic conflicts--both within countries and internationally.

In short, addressing the water crisis won't just improve health. It will let people build better, more secure lives.

Addressing the Crisis

In 2000, the United Nations announced a Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of halving the proportion of people without safe drinking water by 2015. While we are still far from that goal, progress is occurring.

"The technology exists to provide water and sanitation to all," stresses Edwards. The most successful water and sanitation projects involve communities in decision-making. They also teach people about hygiene and system upkeep, so safe water supplies are sustainable.

Technologies vary based on geography, but they don't need to be elaborate. One area might use a rainwater harvesting system. Another community might benefit from a deep borehole well.

"All of our projects use as simple a technology as possible, and we use local materials," says Wickenhauser. "It's easier to operate and maintain."

Solving the global water crisis will cost billions of dollars. Yet WHO says meeting its MDG for safe water would cost less than five days' worth of global military spending. On a smaller scale, WaterPartners International says \$25 can bring safe water to someone for life. Just \$ 1 50 can meet a whole family's water needs.



Beyond Thirst: The Global Water Crisis

What Can You Do?

Start by saving water at home and elsewhere. Ask others to protect this precious resource, too. Recent water shortages in the United States show that we shouldn't waste water. Conservation can also help the environment.

Beyond this, spread the word about the world's water crisis. Some schools have hand-raisers to educate people and raise money for water projects. Speak out to elected officials, too. Tell them you want the world to have safe drinking water and sanitation for everyone.

"We know how to bring people safe water," stresses Wickenhauser. "It's a problem we can solve together."