

**Instructor's Manual**  
to accompany

**SOCIOLOGY IN ACTION**  
Cases for Critical and Sociological Thinking

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## I. Introduction

In this Instructor's Manual I share some of my ideas on how to use *Sociology in Action* to introduce students to sociology. The ideas in this Manual are drawn from my experiences using decision cases in a variety of courses, the growing literature on the case method of teaching, and workshops I have attended on case teaching and learning. Included in this Manual are the following materials:

- *Sample Course Outline*: Information on how you could structure a discussion-based course using *Sociology in Action*.
- *Alternative Uses of Cases*: Suggestions for alternative uses of decision cases such as in large classes, in writing-intensive courses, and in examinations.
- *Teaching with Cases*: Ideas on how to prepare for and lead discussions of decision cases.
- *Turning Case Ideas into Cases*: Ideas on how to write interesting cases.
- *Teaching Notes*: Detailed notes on each case included in *Sociology in Action*. Each note contains a brief overview of the case, analysis ideas, teaching ideas, and critical thinking questions.
- *Case Teaching Resources*: Information on both sources of additional decision cases and material on how to teach with cases.

## II. Sample Course Outline: Discussion-Based Course

The preferred way in which to use *Sociology in Action* and the decision cases contained in it is by using class sessions to discuss and analyze cases. This active learning method allows students to learn sociology by doing sociology. Through class discussions of cases, students develop their skill at analyzing real-life situations using the sociological ideas, theories, and concepts discussed in *Sociology in Action*. The following course outline is designed for a course in which instructors focus class sessions around the discussion of the decision cases. The outline is meant to be illustrative, not definitive. It has suited my desire to introduce students to sociology by getting them to use those ideas to read and understand situations that they could face. It also provides a solid foundation for students who want to take additional sociology courses. Most important, the course engages students in their own learning.

### *Introduction and Objectives*

This course introduces students to sociology by helping them learn how to use sociology to read and analyze situations. This skill at analyzing situations sociologically is developed by having students practice using this skill by analyzing decision cases, that is short, problem-centered narratives that promote critical thinking. The ability to analyze situations is developed incrementally through five stages in which students learn how to:

- See situations sociologically by identifying and describing four important social connectors: social relationships, groups, organizations, and networks.
- Use sociological theories to reframe and develop multiple perspectives on social connections.
- Think about situations from the point of view of insiders by decoding culture.
- Uncover inequalities by analyzing differences in power.
- Imagine futures by taking into account changes that could result from three important driving forces: demography, technology and collectives actions.

### *Required Text*

David Hachen      *Sociology in Action: Cases for Critical and Sociological Thinking*,  
Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, 2001

### *Course Grades*

Given that the objective of the course is to enhance students' ability to analyze real situations sociologically, assessment of student learning is based on evaluating their ability to analyze cases in a variety of contexts:

- *Class Participation*: Student participation is encouraged and is assessed in terms of the ability of a student to articulate their views, use sociological ideas, and respond to other student's ideas. (20%)
- *Case Analyses*: Students are required to submit four 2-page analyses of cases. Students choose which cases to analyze. Papers are submitted prior to the class session in which the case is discussed and are evaluated in terms of the student's ability to argue for a position and their use of sociological ideas in the analysis. (20%)
- *Case Reaction Papers*: Students are required to submit five 1-page reaction papers, one for each of the cases at the beginning of each chapter in *Sociology in Action*. These papers are evaluated in terms of whether the student conveys an interesting reaction to the case. They are not intended to be analyses using sociological ideas. Instead, they help students express their initial reactions prior to considering the case sociologically. (10%)
- *Mid-Term Essay Examination*: An examination in which students write short essays on a case. The case is given to students ahead of time, but the questions are not. Alternative formats are to ask questions about a case which has already been discussed in class, or to ask students to compare two of the cases that have been already discussed. (25%)
- *Final Essay Examination*: An examination in which students write a full-fledged case analysis of a case. The case is given to students ahead of time. Students can bring notes and an outline, but must write the essay in class. (25%)

### **Course Outline**

The course is divided into five modules corresponding to the five chapters in *Sociology in Action*.

### **Unit 1: Seeing Society**

#### **Objectives:**

- Recognize the key social actors, the central issues, and the crucial problem or dilemma in a situation.
- Identify and describe the important social connections (social relationships, groups, networks and organizations).
- Use knowledge of social connections to understand what has happened and what social actors could consider doing in order to solve the problems they face.

#### **Readings:**

*Sociology in Action* - Chapter 1: Seeing Society

#### **Cases:**

Separate but Safer (Chapter 1)

Why Can't Things Stay as They Are? (Chapter 1)

Off to College (Case 6)

Lisa's Hidden Identity (Case 9)

Tossin' and Turnin' (Case 3)

## **Unit 2: Using Theory**

### **Objectives:**

- Move from describing to explaining situations.
- Use five images of social connections to see situations from different theoretical perspectives.
- Become cognizant of your own theoretical assumptions and be able to reframe by analyzing situations using different assumptions.

### **Readings:**

*Sociology in Action* - Chapter 2: Using Theory

### **Cases:**

The Towering Dilemma (Chapter 2)

Changing a Hospital's Culture (Chapter 2)

The Worth of a Sparrow (Case 1)

Conflict at Riverside (Case 2)

## **Unit 3: Decoding Culture**

### **Objectives:**

- Learn how to see situations from the point of view of insiders by recognizing and describing cultural symbols, rituals, stories and worldviews.
- Explore the relationship between social connections and culture.
- Use different images and theories of culture to examine the various ways in which cultural factors affect a situation.

### **Readings:**

*Sociology in Action* - Chapter 3: Decoding Culture

### **Cases:**

Perfection or Bust! (Chapter 3)

Linda Gorman (Chapter 3)

Lucy Allman (Case 4)

**Unit 4: Uncovering Inequalities and Power****Objectives:**

- Explore differences among social actors in their ability to realize their interests.
- See and understand social divisions and inequalities based on social class, race and ethnicity, and sex and gender.
- Use theories of inequality and discrimination to develop explanations for observed inequalities and differences in power.

**Readings:**

*Sociology in Action* - Chapter 4: Uncovering Inequalities and Power

**Cases:**

The MPA Program at Southeastern State University (Chapter 4)

Robert Lopez (Chapter 4)

Lisa's Hidden Identity (Case 9)

What's So Scary About the Truth? (Case 7)

People Like You (Case 8)

Conflict at Riverside (Case 2)

Lucy Allman (Case 4)

**Unit 5: Imagining Futures****Objectives:**

- Shift attention when analyzing situations from the social actors and their connections to the background conditions.
- Construct scenarios about the future based upon analysis of driving forces.
- Use knowledge of three driving forces—demographics, technology and collective action—to imagine possible futures.

**Readings:**

*Sociology in Action* - Chapter 5: Imagining Futures

**Cases:**

Where Have All the Salmon Gone? (Chapter 5)

Deaf President Now! (Chapter 5)

In the Eye of the Beholder (Case 5)

Conflict at Riverside (Case 2)

People Like You (Case 8)

### III. Alternative Uses Of Cases

The preferred way to use decision cases is in a course in which class sessions are devoted primarily to discussing the cases. Such classes are usually relatively small (15-40), though experienced case instructors have been known to use this method successfully in much larger classes. The materials in this Instructor's Manual are primarily designed to help instructors use the discussion cases in *Sociology in Action* as the basis for in-class discussions. But cases can and have been used in other ways. Here are some ideas about alternative ways to use decision cases.

#### *Large Classes*

Large classes, at first, don't seem amenable to using cases. Large classes often imply lecturing and students passively absorbing what they are hearing. But cases can be used in a variety of ways in large classes.

- The instructor could use a case to illustrate sociological concepts that she is lecturing about. An analysis of the case with those sociological concepts can show students the utility of the concepts.
- During lectures, instructors can take time out from the lecture and ask students who have read a case ahead of time to jot down some ideas about how they could analyze the case with the ideas that the instructor has been presenting. Ideas students have written down can be shared by having students discuss them with their neighbor. Then instructors can ask students to tell the class about their ideas. "Papers" can then be handed in and scanned by the instructor or TAs.
- Cases can be discussed during TA-led discussion sections. While class sessions are devoted to lectures, discussion sections are used to help students learn how to use sociological ideas. TAs can be trained to lead case discussions with materials that have been written about leading case discussions (see Resource Section of this Manual). Because of the way cases are written, TAs find it relatively easy to stimulate interesting discussions among students in discussion sections.
- Papers and other writing assignments can be based on cases. Students can be given a case and asked to analyze it using specific concepts that have been introduced in class.

#### *Writing Intensive Course*

I have used decision cases in writing intensive courses with a great deal of success. Here are some writing assignments that involve cases:

- *Case Analysis Papers*: Students are required to write a set number of case analysis papers. Usually I allow them to choose which cases they want to write about. Papers are completed before class, allowing me to read them before the discussion and anticipate directions the discussion could take.

With my comments and the class discussion as a basis, students then revise their case analysis.

- *Reaction Papers:* Students are required to write a number of very short reaction papers. These help students think through their ideas before the class discussion session. I usually assign five of these corresponding to the five cases at the beginning of each chapter.
- *Writing Cases:* Writing cases can be very educational and fun. I usually have students write two cases, one on their own and one with a small group of students. The case writing process has a number of stages. First, students write up an idea for a case based either on a personal experience or on a story they have heard about or read. I then read these over. Students also are placed in peer feedback groups, and the members of the group comment on their ideas. Second, students write a research case in which they lay out the characters, the events, the action, and the issues. Doing this requires some research on the events, either through reading about them or through short interviews. Again, these research cases are read by me and those in their peer group. Third, students write a draft of the case, taking the material in the research case and turning it into a decision case by making it a narrative with drama and action. After receiving comments on these drafts, students revise them to produce completed decision cases. Completed cases also include discussion questions and short teaching notes describing how the case could be used to discuss some sociological idea, concept, or issue. The really good cases are then used at the end of the semester to lead a class discussion.

The second case is a collaborative effort. It is similar to the individual case writing project except that students work together to develop and write the case. The case packet that students submit includes not only the decision case and discussion questions, but a more detailed teaching note that analyzes the case and discusses how it could be used in an introduction to sociology course.

For more information on how to help students write cases see Section V, "Turning Case Ideas Into Cases." References to articles on writing cases can be found there as well.

### *Assessing Student Learning With Cases*

Because the objective of a case-based course is for students to increase their competency at analyzing sociologically real-life situations, assessments of student learning require assessing a student's ability to analyze situations. This can be done in a number of ways. Assessment of in-class verbal participation is an important component. But cases can also be used to assess a student's ability to analyze a case through writing. This can be done either through a paper format as discussed above and/or through an examination format.

*Take-Home Examinations:* Examination with cases are usually essay examinations with a strong "take-home" component. Because analysis of cases requires critical thinking, it is unreasonable to expect students to read a case,

think about it, and write an essay in an hour or even an hour and a half time period. Some form of a take-home examination is, therefore, needed. There are two alternatives. One method is to give full-fledged take-home exams in which students are given a case and questions about the case that they are to answer through an essay that they write outside of class. Alternatively, you can give an "in-class take-home" examination in which students are given the case and the questions in advance, but have to write the essay in class. They can bring the case, notes, and an outline to class.

*In-Class Essay Examinations:* You can give in-class essay examinations that ask students to write about cases that have already been discussed in class. Students can be asked to use specific concepts or ideas to analyze a specific part of a case, or they can be asked to develop and contrast two different analyses of the case. Students can also be asked to compare and contrast two different cases along a variety of dimensions.

*Short-Answer and Multiple-Choice Examinations:* Usually such tests are designed to see if students can recall information, definitions, or distinctions, and not to assess whether they can use that information in analysis. Nevertheless, you can assess students' ability to recall specific sociological concepts and theories, as well as specific analyses of cases. If you find that students are having difficulty analyzing cases sociologically, you will need to assess whether this is because students do not understand the sociological ideas and/or because they are having difficulty using them to analyze situations. Short "quizzes" about the content of specific chapters may help you assess where the problem is.

## IV. Teaching With Cases

The case teaching method is an active learning pedagogy designed to involve students in their own learning. The method entails having students *use* the subject matter's concepts, theories, accumulated knowledge and ideas to *analyze* the events and actions in a real life decision case. Through this method, students not only learn about a subject matter's core ideas, but, most important, they learn how to use those ideas to analyze real situations.

In order to implement the case teaching method, you need the following:

- *Decision Cases*: Relatively short written narratives of some real-life situation in which a person, group of people, organization, or community faces a problem or dilemma. *Sociology in Action* includes 19 decision cases. The "Resources on Cases" section of this manual lists other places where you can find decision cases.
- *Textual Material*: Material that conveys to students ideas, concepts, theories, and past research findings about the subject matter of the course. The five chapters in *Sociology in Action* contain such material. This material is not intended to cover every sociological subject. Instead, core ideas, theories, and concepts are presented. You can supplement this material with articles and excerpts from books on specific topics that you want the class to explore in greater detail.
- *Case Discussions*: Lively student discussions led by the instructor in which students analyze a decision case using the ideas contained in the textual material. This is the "heart" of the case teaching method. Through case discussions, students learn how to use the course material to analyze real situations.

The remainder of this essay discusses how to prepare and lead case discussions. Case discussions can be an exhilarating learning experience for both you and your students. But the skills needed to guide a case discussion are quite different from the skills used in preparing and giving a lecture. In case discussions, the instructor's primary role does not involve transmitting to students the subject matter's ideas, theories, concepts, and research findings. Instead, the role of an instructor in a case discussion is to *guide* students through an analysis of a case. From time to time, this requires bringing up and clarifying sociological ideas that students have read about in the text or in other supporting materials. But the purpose in doing so is to better enable students to use those ideas in the case discussion that is taking place.

When case discussions work, it is an amazing thing. Students talk, not just with the instructor, but to and with other students. Divergent ideas, arguments, and counter-arguments are bandied about. Students develop positions only to have them challenged by other students. Questions are raised, new avenues are explored, and conventional ways of thinking are questioned. Students leave the class thinking about the issues that were raised, while instructors are astounded at what has been accomplished.

What makes case discussions like this possible are good decision cases. Such cases are realistic and relevant. This realism draws students into the case and the discussion. Students can identify with the actors in the case, which helps students think about things from the actor's perspective. Ambiguities and uncertainties in the case prevent students from thinking there is one right answer that they somehow have to guess. Instead, students are encouraged to consider multiple approaches to understanding the case. Finally, most cases end without telling what happened or even what decision was finally made. This open-ended character of cases creates drama and provides the opportunity for students to imagine different endings. All of these aspects of cases—their realism, ambiguities, and open-endedness—draw students into discussions of them and make it possible to have discussions that are real learning experiences.

But in order for cases to generate lively discussions, preparation on the part of both students and the instructor is needed.

### *Student Preparation*

In order for case discussions to work, students need to be prepared. There are a number of things you can do to help students be prepared:

- Students need to read the case. Usually this is not a problem. Because of the story-like character of cases and the fact that most are relatively short, students usually like reading cases.
- Students need to have read and thought about the textual material. You need to be clear with students what textual material will be most relevant for the case discussion. One way to help students to do this is to point to the most relevant section of the “Sociology Eye Analysis Guide” at the end of the chapter. As they read the case, they can use the questions in that part of the *Guide* to think about the case. In order to use the *Guide* in this manner, students will have to read or review the sections of the chapter that correspond to the parts of the *Guide* that you have pointed out.
- Students need to have thought about the case so they are prepared to present their views during the case discussion. There are numerous ways in which you can help students think about the case prior to the discussion:
  1. *Study Questions*: Sometimes cases end with a few study questions that ask students to think about specific things. Instead of placing these questions at the end of the case, I have included them in the teaching notes contained in this manual. Select a few of these questions and give them to students (in writing or verbally). As you will see, these questions are arranged from lower-order questions asking students to describe what happened, to higher-order questions asking them to explain events, compare situations, or answer what-if types of questions.
  2. *Sociological Eye Analysis Guide*: Ask students to think about the case using the *Guide* at the end of the chapter.

3. *Small Groups*: Some teachers have students meet outside of class in small study groups prior to the in-class discussion. This allows students to have a pre-discussion in which they bandy about ideas that they may want to bring up in the class discussion.
4. *Short Writing Assignments*: Ask students to write a 1-page paper on the case prior to class. You can use one of the critical thinking questions in the Teaching Note as the writing assignment. You can also have students write reaction papers in which they state what they think the central actor in the case should have done.
5. *In-Class Writing Assignments*: At the beginning of class, ask students to jot down their ideas about the case. You can use a fill-in-the-blank assignment ("This is a case of . . . ") or word association assignment ("When I think of Tom, the main character in the case, I think of . . . "). Have students share their responses. These assignments allow students to collect their thoughts about the case prior to the full case discussion.

### ***Instructor Preparation***

Being well-prepared for a case discussion pays off. Besides being familiar with the case and the sociological ideas and concepts that you want students to be able to use, there are things you can do prior to the discussion that will help you guide it. The major challenges in leading a case discussion are:

- To create an environment conducive to student participation
- To have as many students as is possible participate in the discussion
- To stimulate student critical thinking
- To allow for and encourage divergent thinking
- To help students express their ideas and to challenge them so that they develop their positions
- To be flexible, allowing the discussion to go in directions you may not have fully anticipated
- To help students get beyond their initial "gut" reactions to the case and develop in-depth analyses
- To provide transitions from one subject to another
- To reach some sort of closure so that students leave the class recognizing what they have learned through the discussion and what they can now do that they couldn't do very well before.

To meet these challenges case discussion leaders need to be prepared to play the following roles:

- *Questioner*: This is the most important role. Case discussion leaders spend a good deal of their time posing questions, posing follow-up questions, probing, and thinking about the questions they want to ask. For an excellent article on questioning and the different types of questions, see

"The Discussion Teacher in Action: Questioning, Listening, and Response" (Christensen 1991).

- *Recorder*: Discussion leaders also spend a good deal of their time recording the responses of students, usually on a blackboard or whiteboard. Recording also occurs verbally as you clarify what someone has said or ask them to clarify their arguments.
- *Listener and Observer*: This is probably the most difficult role. Case discussion leaders need to listen carefully to what students are saying and to be aware of the direction the discussion is going. They also need to encourage listening among their students. Being the director of the discussion while observing it at the same time is very difficult. As the director, you are trying to figure out what questions to ask next based on the response you are currently receiving and your plans for the discussion. But you also need to obtain a sense of where the conversation is heading, what you are doing, and whom you are involving in the discussion. Through observation and listening, you will be able to detect patterns of participation, some of which you will want to change and others that you will want to reinforce and encourage. Two excellent articles on how to observe while leading a discussion are "With Open Ears: Listening and the Art of Discussion Leading" (Leonard 1991) and "Patterns of Participation" (Hertenstein 1991).

To be able to perform these tasks and meet these challenges, it helps to be prepared. But the preparation for a case discussion is quite different from the preparation required to give a good lecture. The following sections discuss the "documents" that you can prepare before class and then use in class as aides.

### **Conceptual Outline**

This outline contains your class objectives for the session (usually 2-4 items) *and* an outline of the topics, concepts, theories, ideas, and research findings that you want the class to use when analyzing the case. In a way, the conceptual outline is similar to the outline lecturers use when giving their lectures. But in the case of case discussions, you do *not* directly use this outline to guide the discussion. Rather, the conceptual outline helps you develop the Question Outline (discussed below). It also contains definitions, distinctions, ideas, facts, and maybe even references, that you can turn to at crucial points in the discussion. The Conceptual Outline is more for you. It helps you clarify what you hope to accomplish by outlining the material you want students to learn how to use through the discussion.

### **Question Outline**

This is the most important outline because it is what you use to guide the discussion. The Question Outline should match the Concept Outline. However, while the questions you choose to pose are based on the concepts you want students to use, the content of the questions refers to specific events, actions, and people described in the case. Questions are designed to stimulate discussion about the case. They should be posed in a way that invites students to analyze

the case using sociological ideas and concepts. Questions, therefore, should not be of the form that makes it appear as if there is a right answer. They should be open-ended and inviting. A Question Outline usually contains 3-4 sets of questions. Within each set there is a general or beginning question, followed by probes or follow-up questions. In creating this outline, you will see the places where you will need to make transitions. You will need to think about how to make these transitions. Often, specific student responses to prior questions provide good transitions into the next battery of questions, so you need to listen for these responses and think ahead of time about what responses could provide a good transition.

Ideas for questions can be obtained from the Critical Thinking Questions in the Teaching Notes for each case that appear later in this Manual. You can also use relevant questions from the Sociological Eye Analysis Guides that appear at the end of each chapter in *Sociology in Action*.

Questioning should begin with simpler questions and move to more complex ones. The Critical Thinking Questions in each Teaching Note do this. The initial questions you pose should ask students to clarify what happened in the case by asking them to describe, characterize, identify, and list things. The next level of questions should ask students to analyze and understand the case by examining, classifying, comparing, and explaining things. Finally, the higher-order questions should ask students to synthesize and evaluate by combining, imagining, generalizing, formulating, recommending, supporting, concluding, assessing, and thinking about what-ifs. The objective of these types of questions is to draw out the implications of the analysis for what actors could do. Therefore, a case analysis typically goes from understanding what occurred (which may be debated), to explaining what happened (of which there may be multiple explanations), to drawing out the implications of the analysis for action (problem-solving). Case analyses, however, do not always follow this linear path. Sometimes it is interesting to begin with the "what should be done" questions, then explore the explanations of events that correspond to different action plans, reassessing answers to the "what should be done" questions based on the discussion of why things happened the way in which they did happen.

### **Board Outline**

It is important to think ahead of time about how you plan to use the board during the discussion. What do you think the board will look like at the end of the class? The board is an important tool for recording the student discussion and showing students what their contributions have been. New contributions can be added to the board, and prior contributions that have been recorded earlier can be circled, checked, or connected to other contributions as the conversation proceeds. Think about how you want to organize the board. Do you want to create lists? Will your placement of an idea on a list be used to categorize and draw distinctions between different types of things? Do you want to use the board to connect ideas or convey the steps in an argument? Do you want to use the board to help students compare and contrast two or more things? Could you use a table to facilitate making the comparisons? What will the rows and columns of the table represent? Finally, the completed board is an excellent tool

for summarizing the conversation and reaching some sort of closure by noting what has been accomplished and what is still up in the air.

### **Discussion Process Outline**

Preparing this document allows you to think ahead of time about how you want the discussion to proceed. You can typically include three things in this outline:

1. *Discussion Techniques*: What techniques do you plan to use and how will you make transitions between them? Example of techniques include small-group (3-5 students) discussions, whole-class discussions, turn-to-neighbor (2-person) discussions, paired reading in which "neighbors" read a short text to each other, and short in-class writing assignments (possibly shared with a person's neighbor). When considering these techniques, you need to decide how much time to allot to each of them and to think through logistical matters such as how students will be assigned to groups and how the classroom will be rearranged. You also need to consider transitions between techniques. Will each small group report on the outcome of its discussion? When thinking about the various techniques you want to use, remember that the goal is to use the technique to advance a discussion of the case.
2. *Discussion Agenda*: As the course proceeds, you will get an idea of which characteristics of the discussions you want to reinforce and which you want to change. It is a good idea to keep track of the way in which different students are participating, and then make notes about how you could work to change specific patterns. Maybe you want to get certain people who haven't been talking to do so. Or maybe you will find that you need to help some students expand upon their ideas. You may find that certain people dominate the discussion, and you may want to figure out how to change this. Or you may try to figure out how to encourage cross-talking, that is, students talking and questioning each other instead of talking to each other through the instructor.
3. *Contingencies*: It is very important to be prepared for the unexpected. With your Conceptual Outline and Question Outlines you stipulate how you want the discussion to go. But rarely will case discussions go the way you planned. This can be a very good thing. You want students to direct the discussion and to analyze the case. You need, therefore, to be flexible. The tendency, however, will be to feel caught off guard when the unexpected happens. Then you will try to redirect the conversation back to the subjects you planned to discuss. To counter this tendency and allow yourself to remain flexible, you need to anticipate the ways in which the conversation could go. How do you think students will react to the case? What are the different types of arguments they may give? In the Teaching Notes for specific cases contained in this Manual, I list some ideas students came up with during past discussions. These ideas may help you anticipate student responses. In general, spend some time listing possible directions in which students could take the discussion and how you will respond if this occurs. One way to get some idea of where the conversation could head is to ask students prior to the

class to send you, via email, their brief reactions to the case. Of course, this will require that these emails get to you on time and that you have the time to look at them before class.

### **Physical Space Preparation**

Finally, preparing for case discussions requires preparing the physical layout of the classroom. Ideally, what you need is a set-up that allows students to see each other so that they can talk to each other. This is important because you want to encourage student-student exchanges and decrease student-teacher-student exchanges in which students go through you to talk to other students. An arrangement with you at the front of the room and students in rows facing you will discourage student-student exchanges.

You also need a set-up in which all students can see the board. Rooms that have movable chairs and desks make it easier for students to work in small groups.

The ideal set-up, therefore, is a U-shaped arrangement of tables and chairs, with you in the middle of the U, and the blackboard behind you. The U-shape allows students to see you, the board, and other students. It also allows you to move toward a student who is speaking, and then away from him or her toward other students who want to respond. This movement helps to create cross-talking among students. Students will feel more comfortable about you walking toward them if they are seated behind a table. But chairs with attached writing surfaces can also work if arranged in a U-shape.

Often the ideal set-up is not possible and you will have to work with what you have. But try as best you can to have a room in which chairs can be rearranged. If you can, avoid "box-shaped" rooms in which everything is arranged in rows and where it is difficult for students to see each other and for you to move among the students.

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## V. Turning Case Ideas Into Cases

The development of a case usually begins when someone hears about or experiences an interesting event. Taking that case idea and developing it into an engaging case requires a good deal of thought, writing, rewriting, and editing. As a guideline, here are some characteristics of good cases.

### *Problems and Conflicts*

A good case is centered around a problem or conflict. Problems and conflicts in a case create controversy in a case discussion, and controversy engages students and makes them think through their positions. Sometimes a case appears to have a conflict, but on closer inspection there isn't much disagreement and choices are limited. Always ask yourself: Is this an issue about which reasonable people could disagree?

### *Decision Points*

Good cases build to decision points. The characters in a case face a problem that requires a solution; there is a conflict that needs to be resolved. Events occur which bring this problem to the fore and push the characters to act. Characters mull over possible solutions, strategies, alternative courses of action, and tradeoffs. The action of the case is decision forcing. Often the decision made by the central character is not revealed in the case, allowing students to imagine what they would do if they were this character.

Not all cases are decision forcing and prospective. Some cases are retrospective, describing the events leading up to a decision and possibly discussing the results of the decision. Case discussions can then focus on imagining how the case could have ended differently and how different actors will react to the outcome. My personal preference is for prospective, decision-forcing cases, but good cases can also be imaginative retrospective accounts.

### *Brevity*

A good case is brief and to the point. Enough information is presented so that students know the situation and the parameters. Presenting too many idiosyncratic facts can lead to discussions about the particulars of the case, impeding case analysis. Good cases contain ambiguities, forcing students to "fill in the blanks." so to speak. Try not to overwrite your case. One way to develop brief cases is to first write a "research case" as a retrospective account of the events. Then abridge and cut the "research case" at crucial decisions points to create one or more teaching cases.

### *Style*

A case is also a work of art that engages, is accessible, evokes both thought and emotion, and can lead to feelings of wonderment. The artistic qualities of a

case are enhanced by writing the case as a believable narrative, a real story. If readers feel that this could happen to them, they will be more engaged by the case. Narratives can be written in either the first or third person. Narratives have a setting, characters, and a plot (which has dramatic moments and maybe even suspense). Here are some ideas on how to enhance the artistic qualities of a case:

- *Opening*: Begin your case with action. This will seize your reader's attention, drawing him or her into the story. Avoid beginning a case slowly with description of the setting and the characters. After beginning in the action mode, you can go back and present the setting and context as background information.
- *Dialogue*: Conversations between actors will help make your case come alive by increasing the extent to which interaction, not just action, is portrayed in your case.
- *Description*: Tell readers not only what happened, but also what they would see, hear, feel, smell, or taste if they were there. Use all five senses when writing up your case. Do this for the setting as well as the characters. What time of year is it? Is it cold or warm, rainy or sunny? What shape and color are the buildings? Don't just tell what characters do. Also describe the sound of their voice, their appearance, their body language (frowns, smiles), and other aspects of their behavior that convey meaning.
- *Emotion*: Detail people's emotional reactions to events: fear, laughter, disengagement, crying, boredom, nervousness, confidence, aggressiveness, timidity. Readers care about the people, not events. So breathe life into your characters by allowing them to express emotions.
- *Confiding Conversations*: Sometimes cases have conversations between the main character and a confidant or friend (often during a meal or over a drink). These conversations create an opportunity for the main character to reflect on past events and formulate strategies and possible courses of action. Confiding conversations can even provide a means for introducing factual information as a person recounts events. Diaries can also serve this purpose. You can also have a character "think out loud."

The process of developing artistic, succinct, decision-forcing cases with dilemmas is facilitated by having a "big idea" that guides your case writing. Without a big idea, case writers have a tendency to merely describe a series of events. A big idea will help you focus your story. So ask yourself:

- Why are you writing this case?
- What is the central issue that your case opens up for examination?
- What do you hope readers will learn through reading and discussing this case?

With your big idea, your educational objective, you will find yourself building your case around events of consequence, events that are meaningful. All case writers realize that there are many events that they could write about and include in their case. Why choose some events and ignore others? Your big idea

can serve as your guide. If you don't have a big idea when you begin developing your case, don't worry. If you recognize the importance of having a big idea, then one will emerge as you develop your case.

In general, be imaginative and creative! Use your big idea to guide you in your creative endeavor. But be careful. Don't turn your case into a "morality story." Even though you have a clear idea about what your case is about, avoid interpreting events and making judgments in order to show students what they are supposed to learn. **Don't analyze** and **don't editorialize**. You are not writing an analytical paper. The task of analysis belongs to students. As a case writer, your job is to give students an engaging case that they can discuss and analyze.

Ideas for this document were culled from the following sources:

Hansen, Abby. 1987. "Reflections of a Casewriter: Writing Teaching Cases." Pp. 264-70 in *Teaching and the Case Method*, edited by C. Christensen and A. Hansen. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Kleinfeld, Judith. 1994. "Our Hero Come of Age: What Students Learn From Case Writing in Student Teaching." Unpublished manuscript.

Ortmayer, Louis L. 1994. "Decisions and Dilemmas: Writing Case Studies in International Affairs." *International Studies Notes*, Vol. 19, No. 2:28-33

Robyn, Dorothy. 1986. "What Makes a Good Case?" Case Note N15-86-673, Kennedy School of Government

Wasserman, Selma. 1994. "Writing Your Own Case." Pp. 39-58 in *Introduction to Case Method Teaching: A Guide to the Galaxy*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Wrage, Stephen D. 1994. "Best Case Analysis: What Makes a Good Case and Where to Find the One You Need." *International Studies Notes*, Vol. 19, No. 2:21-27.

## VI. Teaching Notes

### *Introduction to Teaching Notes*

These teaching notes are designed to help you lead interesting discussions of the 19 decision cases included in *Sociology in Action*. Each note contains a brief overview of the case, an analysis of the case, teaching ideas about how you could use the case to lead a discussion, and critical thinking questions. In these notes you will find ideas about how you can use the textual material in Chapters 1-5 of *Sociology in Action* and the *Sociological Eye Analysis Guides* at the ends of those chapters to lead an interesting discussion of a case. I hope these notes stimulate your thinking about how you could use the case in your class. After reading a teaching note you are likely to develop your own analysis and teaching ideas, and after teaching a case your experiences will help you to formulate new ways of teaching the case. So use these Teaching Notes as a point of departure in your journey of using decision cases to teach students how to put sociology into action.

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### *Separate But Safer (Chapter 1)*

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#### **Overview**

Peter Heywood, the new director of the Youth Resources Bureau that works with juvenile delinquents, hears about a junior high school policy of having separate lunchroom and recess areas for boys and girls. Believing this to be unfair and maybe even illegal, he helps students draw up a petition, meets with the principal, talks with his board of directors, and consults with lawyers. But at a meeting of the school board in a crowded auditorium, the board decides to continue with the separation policy after the principal argues that changing it would require lengthening the school day and could endanger the safety of girls during recess. The next day an editorial appears in the local paper. After reading the editorial, Peter ponders what he could have done differently.

#### **Analysis**

This is an excellent case for helping students to see “society” in a social situation and to begin analyzing situations sociologically. This case is discussed extensively in the text. As noted there, this case can be used to help students understand why it is important to look at social relationships, groups, networks, and organizations. Here are some additional ideas to consider when analyzing the case:

1. *Issues:* There are really three issues in this case: (1) the separation policy (2) why Peter was not successful and (3) what Peter could have done differently. Students are likely to focus on the second and third issues, but it is important to also explore the first issue.
2. *Separation and Segregation:* A sociological discussion of the school policy needs to draw attention to how the separation of boys and girls could be reinforcing

gender roles and stereotypes, and what the benefits of boys and girls eating and playing together could be.

3. *Organizational Analysis*: The arguments of the principal about efficiency and safety can be examined by looking at the school as an organization and at the problems those who run the school face. Are the claims about efficiency and safety the real reasons for resistance to changes in the school policy?
4. *Sociological Eye*: Students will want to discuss why Peter was unsuccessful and what he could have done differently. In class discussions, students note a number of things that Peter did wrong, such as pursuing the issue with only a few signatures on the petition, confronting the principal, or even getting directly involved in the first place. However, identifying Peter's mistakes is only the first step. It is also important to analyze why he did what he did. Was he just naïve, too gung-ho, unaware that there could be much resistance, or what? Ironically, although Peter was trained as a sociologist, he does not look at the situation sociologically. He thinks that because his cause is right he can successfully persuade those in positions of authority to change the policy. If Peter had looked at the situation with a sociological eye, what would he have seen?
5. *Action Plan*: Based on a sociological reading of the case, there appears to be two things Peter could have done differently. First, Peter needed to realize that he only had a limited number of social connections to those who are directly affected or involved with the separate lunchrooms policy. Peter needed to expand his connections by forming other social relationships and expanding his networks. In addition, Peter doesn't even use the social connections he already has to teachers and some parents. Second, Peter should have thought twice when only 72 students signed the petition. Without a strong base of support among students, it would be difficult to change the school policy. Peter needed to help students in their attempt to change the policy instead of being the lead person demanding change.

### Teaching Ideas

This case can be taught over two class sessions. For the first session, ask students to read the case but *not* the chapter material. The first session can be devoted to comparing student reactions to the various issues presented in the case. These reactions will vary quite a bit, and it is useful for students to see the difference. Then have students read the entire chapter. In the second session, help students to reexamine their initial reactions in light of the sociological ideas about social connections presented in Chapter 1. Use the Sociological Eye Analysis Guide at the end of the chapter to do this. Here are some things you could highlight from the *Guide*:

1. *Issues*: Help students to see that there are at least three issues in this case:
  - The Separation Policy: Should the separation policy be challenged? What is wrong with this policy?

- Peter's Failure: Why wasn't Peter successful in getting the board to change the policy? Why did Peter challenge the policy in the way in which he did?
  - Solutions: What could Peter have done differently? What should he do now?
2. *Socialization*: You can highlight that schools are also socialization institutions and explore what roles students are socialized into in schools. Ask students to reflect on their socialization experiences in school.
  3. *Stereotypes*: The case provides an opportunity to discuss stereotypes, not only about boys and girls but also about juvenile delinquents and outsiders.
  4. *Identities*: You can have an interesting discussion of gender identities, how salient they are, and how they are reinforced.
  5. *Networks*: This case provides an opportunity for exploring how the absence of connections (in this case between Peter and parents, teachers, and administrators) is just as important as the presence of connections in understanding what is going on in a situation.
  6. *Organizations*: This case can be used to discuss why organizations resist change, and how means to an end, in this case the rules stipulating separate lunchrooms, can become ends in themselves. If the goal of schools is to educate students, how does separate lunchrooms help to do this?

**Critical Thinking Questions:**

1. What do you see as the central issues in this case? What are the various problems that specific people or groups face on these issues?
2. How would you describe Peter Heywood?
3. There seems to be a number of people who have biased views. What are the biases that are evident in this case and who has them?
4. What are the professed advantages and the disadvantages of having separate lunchrooms and recess areas for boys and girls? What do you think of this school's separation policy?
5. What are your views on the reasons the principal gave for this policy? Do you think his reasons are valid reasons for continuing this policy? Explain your position on this issue.
6. Why do you think Peter was not successful in his attempt to convince the school board to change the separation policy?
7. Peter seems to have made a number of mistakes. What do you think Peter did wrong? Why do you think he did these things?
8. If you had been Peter, what would you have done differently and why would you have done those things?

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## *Why Can't Things Stay as They Are? (Chapter 1)*

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### Overview

A school board approves a school restructuring plan designed to better prepare children to live as educated citizens in the 21st century through classroom activities that stress active participation, discussion, and critical thinking. During a faculty meeting on the restructuring, an elementary school principal encounters resistance from some teachers to this initiative. The case focuses on two of the teachers, one a veteran kindergarten teacher, Effie, the other a recent graduate, Ruth Anne. Effie believes that this is just another reform that will soon die out, while Ruth Anne thinks that she is doing what the new policy wants teachers to do. The principal, Claus, however, sees their resistance as originating in their teaching methods that are traditional and controlling. The case documents the discrepancy between what Ruth Anne thinks she is doing and what she is actually doing. The case concludes with the principal wondering what he could do in order to get teachers like Ruth Anne to change their teaching practices.

### Analysis

This is an excellent case for helping students to see and understand social relationships. Two social relationships figure prominently in the case: the teacher-student relationship and the principal-teacher relationship. The case can be used to help students see the difference between the people who occupy positions within a relationship and the positions themselves.

1. *Teacher-Student Relationship*: The school reform can be seen as an attempt to change the teacher role by stating the new behaviors that are expected. Comparison of the traditional and the new teacher roles highlights the changes that are desired. It is important to also compare the new student role that is being proposed and how the changes in the teacher role correspond to changes in the student role that the reform involves.
2. *Role Ambiguity*: When roles undergo change, people may be unclear about what is now expected of them. This case can be used to examine the extent to which teachers understand what they are expected to do.
3. *Behavior and Expectations*: The problem in this case can be viewed as a situation in which a person's behaviors in a role do not conform to the expected behaviors of that role. The gap between what is expected of Ruth Anne and her actual behaviors provides an opportunity to explore various ways the gap could be closed, for example, by using positive and negative sanctions, socialization, and teacher training.
4. *Resistance*: This is an excellent case for exploring the sources of resistance by people to requests for changes in their behavior. The veteran teacher, Effie, doesn't accept the new expectations for the teacher role; she doesn't believe they will work. The new teacher, Ruth Anne, doesn't believe there is any gap between what is expected of her and what she is doing in her classroom.

Exploring why each holds these views can lead to interesting class discussions.

5. *Principal-Student Relationship*: The other relationship in this case is also very important. Though the focus is on proposed changes in the ways teachers teach, the case is also about how principals manage teachers and implement changes. This case can be used to explore the principal's role, linking it to the need to close the gap among teachers between what is expected of them and what they are actually doing.
6. *Action Plans*: This case can be used to explore the connection between case analysis and proposed action plans. Based on an analysis that highlights the problem of role compliance, a number of "solutions" can be entertained: rewarding desired behavior, punishing unwanted behaviors (including firing teachers), hiring new teachers, training programs, other socialization endeavors, and modeling desired behaviors (e.g., by calling attention to exemplary teachers).
7. *Issues*: This case also provides a good opportunity for demonstrating why it is important to clarify what a case is about. There are really three issues in this case:
  - The issue of why some of the teachers are resisting the proposed changes
  - The issue of what the principal should do in order to get teachers to change, i.e. the issue of implementation
  - The issue of the proposed change itself and whether it is really needed

Because the case ends by highlighting the second issue, students usually want to begin by debating what the principal could do. But ideas about solutions can't be fully addressed without first considering teacher resistance and its causes. Finally, the problems in this case would never have arisen if the school board had not decided to restructure the schools. Some students see this as the central issue and want to debate whether this change is what is really needed in order to improve schools.

8. *Other Social Connections*: The case also provides an opportunity to examine other social connections, especially organizations such as the school and the large school system. The school board's decision to restructure the schools is an organizational change, both in terms of the goals of schooling and in terms of the means (pedagogical techniques) that are used. It is interesting to note that this change seems to come from above. We do not know how involved teachers were in the committee that made the recommendations, but their reactions suggest that it was probably minimal. Groups and networks figure less prominently in this case even though they too are present.
9. *Teaching and Learning*: Finally, the case provides an opportunity for students to reflect on the ways in which they learn and the teaching methods that they find useful. Do they think that in order for them to be prepared for the 21st century that they need to know how to do different things than students twenty and maybe even ten years ago had to know? Do they think that the

school reforms are warranted? Have they had experiences of learning in classrooms that are structured in the way that is being proposed?

### Teaching Ideas

1. Because this is one of the first cases that students will analyze, it is important to begin by discussing who the social actors are, what the issues are, and what problems various people face. This can be done fairly quickly, and the basic information can be written on the board. I usually tell students that we will begin with the issue of teacher resistance and return to the other issues they noted later.
2. The first part of the class can be devoted to using the concept of social relationships to understand the teacher role (and to some extent the student role). Students can work in small groups listing the expected behaviors contained in the traditional teacher role *and* the proposed contemporary teacher role. Remind students that they can obtain some idea of expectations by thinking about actual behaviors of real teachers. Emphasize that they should focus on what teachers are expected to *do*, not on abstract characterizations of behaviors. For example, instead of noting that teachers should be fair, ask them to list the qualities of tests and grading that indicate that a teacher is fair. On the board, you can list in separate columns the role characteristics of *traditional* and *contemporary* teachers. Once you have put the list on the board, you can compare and contrast the traits in order to lead into a discussion of role ambiguity, that is, the extent to which the teachers understand what is now expected of them. You can also ask students whether they have ever been in situations where there was role ambiguity or situations where the characteristics of the role were changing.
3. Now that it is clear what teachers are expected to do and what some teachers are unwilling to do, you can explore the reasons for the resistance. A discussion of the differences between Ruth Anne and Effie works very well. The discussion will bring out the idea that Effie doesn't believe that the teacher role should change, while Ruth Anne doesn't think she will have to change because she believes that she is already doing what is expected of her.
4. Once you have identified the problem, the discussion can shift to what the principal could do. It is helpful to see this as an issue having to do with the principal-teacher relationship. Have students explore the role of a principal. In their own words, students will point out that this case focuses on the principal's role in getting teachers to do what is expected of them. This observation can lead into an interesting discussion of what the principal could do to close the gap between expectations and actual behavior, especially in the case of Ruth Anne. You can explore the pros and cons of the various strategies that students propose and discuss why the principal has not yet proceeded along these tracks. Students will also note that the way in which the principal has tried to implement the changes so far has been very ineffective, providing an opportunity to compare the strategy he has been using with the alternative strategies proposed by the students. You may even

get into a discussion of how in this case the principal's actual behavior does not conform to what is expected of him.

5. At some point it is a good idea to ask students to shift perspective. Instead of looking at what the principal could do, you can redirect attention to Ruth Anne. Ask students to imagine that they are Ruth Anne. What help would she have liked to receive?
6. Finally, it is helpful to have students step back and think about the larger issues addressed by this case. Ask them why they think teachers are being asked to change, and why the school system is proposing these changes. Is this just another curriculum fad? Is there really a need for school restructuring along these lines? Has the world changed in such a way to require these new educational objectives, and, if so, what has changed?

### **Critical Thinking Questions:**

1. What do you see as the significant issues in this case?
2. What are the problems or dilemmas faced by Claus, the principal, and the two teachers, Ruth Anne and Effie? How are their problems related to the central issues of the case?
3. What is your impression of Ruth Anne Potter? Why do you think that she teaches the way she teaches?
4. The school restructuring policy asks teachers to change the way in which they teach. What is expected of teachers now that was not expected before? What are teachers not supposed to do that they used to do?
5. How would you describe Claus Braverman's role as the elementary school principal? If you were in Claus Braverman's position, how would you deal with teachers who are unwilling to change?
6. If you were in Ruth Anne's place—that is, being asked to change how you teach in your classroom—what kinds of help would you like to have?
7. What do you think of the new school policies being implemented in this school district? Do you think these changes are needed? Do you think they will work?

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## *The Towering Dilemma (Chapter 2)*

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### **Overview**

This case is about a conflict between rock climbers and American Indians over the use of Devils Tower, a National Monument in northeastern Wyoming. For rock climbers, the Tower is one of the premier climbing places in North America. Indians, however, see it is a very spiritual place. The religious ceremonies and pilgrimages that they hold there are sometimes disturbed by the actions of the rock climbers. Naturalists are also concerned about how the overuse of Devils Tower could be affecting plant and animal life. After holding public hearings on a Draft Climbing Management Plan, Deborah Liggett,

superintendent of the Monument, has to decide how to reconcile these conflicting uses and demands.

### **Analysis**

As discussed in the text, this case can be used to demonstrate the value of analyzing situations from multiple theoretical perspectives and the implications different perspectives have for what should be done.

1. *Reframing*: Analyses of situations requires comparing and contrasting different ways of explaining what occurred. It is important, therefore, when analyzing this case, to use different theoretical perspectives to explain the situation and develop a more complete understanding of the case.
2. *Central Actor*: At first glance, this case seems to be about two conflicting parties, the rock climbers and the American Indians. But it is also important to consider the role the National Park Service and its relationship to the other social actors. The NPS plays the role of regulator, regulating the uses of the Park. It also plays the role of mediator as Deborah tries to mediate the conflicting uses and come up with a plan.
3. *Issue*: The central issues and questions in this case are (1) Why are there conflicts between climbers and Indians and (2) What should be done to decrease these conflicts? As noted in the text, five theories can be used to come up with different answers to the first question, and different explanations of the conflict lead to different ideas about how the conflict could be resolved.
4. *Bonds*: As discussed more in the text, the case can be viewed as a situation of strong bonds within each group and weak bonds between groups. More generally, from this perspective this is a case about *pluralism*, that is, situations in which there are multiple interest groups that from time to time have competing and conflicting interests. The case highlights one of the problems of pluralism: What holds things together when there are lots of groups with high levels of internal solidarity?
5. *Integrators*: This theoretical perspective focuses attention on the National Park Service as a whole social system that in order to survive must perform various functions. The most important function is providing access to those who want to use the park. In order to do this, rules and regulations are created. The problem is that from this perspective, some *functions* (uses) impede other functions, so the challenge is how to integrate the whole so that all functions (uses) can occur.
6. *Tug-of-War*: From this perspective, the conflict is over "ownership" of a valuable resource, the Tower. Although technically the government owns this land, the NPS must decide who has a right to use it. At issue then is an apparent inequality. Indians are aggrieved. Under the current system they are worse off because of what climbers are allowed to do. Most of the proposals attempt to *redistribute* "ownership" rights in order to create a more egalitarian situation in which Indians are better off but climbers still are able to use the Tower.

7. *Exchange*: The way the case is written leads many people to use this theoretical perspective when they first analyze the situation. From this perspective, the problem is seen as one of finding a *compromise* in which every party ends up with a net benefit. In order for this to happen, there will have to be some give and take. To find such a compromise, the costs and benefits of various alternatives have to be analyzed for each party, and an exchange needs to occur in which each gives up something it wants in exchange for the benefit of being able to use the Tower for its purposes. Listing various alternative plans is a way to focus attention on which plan is the best compromise for all parties.
8. *Webs*: From this perspective, the conflict is seen as socially constructed through the views of those who are in conflict. Climbers view Indians as making silly claims about the spiritual value of the Tower. Indians see climbers as selfish, narcissistic people who have little respect for others and the land. Misperceptions and misunderstandings between the groups, built up over time, prevent the groups from "living together." If the conflicting parties don't begin to understand each other, any solution will eventually unravel.

### Teaching Ideas

This case can be taught over two sessions. During the first session, I use the case to review the material in Chapter 1 and to get out initial reactions to the case. In the second session, I use the *Guide* to lead a discussion of how the case could be analyzed with the five sociological perspectives. Here are some ideas for how to conduct the first session:

1. Begin by asking students to jot down on a piece of paper what they think this case is about. Ask them to fill in the blank "This is a case of . . ." Note that you do not want them to tell you what the central issue is or what decision has to be made. Rather, you want them to convey their reaction to the case. I then have students share their answers with their neighbor and then with the whole class. Write the various reactions on the board.
2. After getting out different reactions, you can shift gears and ask students to think about this case sociologically by attempting to see society in the case. You can have them either jot down or just verbally convey what they saw as the important social connections in the case: social relationships, groups, networks, organizations. Then note how their different reactions concern different social connections. Some reactions highlight a specific group, others highlight social relationships between people, while others focus on the NPS as an organization.
3. You can then lead a discussion of what could be done to solve the problem in this case. The purpose of this discussion is to get out the assumptions different students make with their preferred solutions, assumptions that usually reference one of the five theoretical perspectives. For example, some students will talk about communication between Indians and climbers, assuming that the problem is one of misperceptions and ignorance of each other's views and needs. Other students will focus on a plan that they think is

the best compromise, assuming that the conflict can be decreased through some sort of exchange or trade-off.

4. Finally, it is important to highlight some of the big issues about conflicts in society:
  - Pluralism, tolerance, respect: Conflict is heightened when people with specific interests do not respect and tolerate those with different interests.
  - Compromise: Conflict continues until a compromise can be found.
  - Perceptions of others: Conflicts are exacerbated by stereotypes that people have of others.
  - The role of the NPS: Governments and governmental agencies can attempt to regulate interactions so that conflicts are minimized.
  - Segregation as a solution: Sometimes separating the conflicting parties appears to be the only solution. For example, in this case, preventing Indians and climbers from being on the rock at the same time by having separate use time periods would lead to decreased interaction between groups. What are the pros and cons of such a “radical” solution to conflicts?

### **Critical Thinking Questions**

1. How would you contrast the views of American Indians, rock climbers, and naturalists concerning Devils Tower? From each group's point of view, what is so special about this place?
2. Why is the use of the Tower such a contentious issue for American Indians and rock climbers?
3. How would you characterize the role of the National Park Service and the park's superintendent, Deborah Liggett, in this case? In attempting to develop a management plan, what do you think should be the objectives of the NPS?
4. How would you adjudicate between the competing claims over whose “rights” to the Tower are more important? Do you think religious usage should have precedence over sport usage? Do you think that those who have been using the Tower longer should be given priority? Do you think this is a legal issue?
5. If you were Deborah Liggett, what would you do to decrease the conflict over the use of Devils Tower?

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## ***Changing a Hospital's Culture (Chapter 2)***

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### **Overview**

Carl Fisher, the executive director of the Medical College of Virginia Hospitals (MCV), implements a guest relations program as part of his plan to increase the financial viability of the hospital by attracting “well-insured

patients. “ But nurses, who are the main target of the plan, have some problems with it. Doctors, whom nurses think are often part of the guest relations problem, are not required to attend the 3 1/2 hour sessions that nurses must go to. In addition, some nurses feel that there are other more important things that need improving, such as housekeeping services, security, and their pay. They also worry that the hospital is creating a “two-tier” system of care: one for well-to-do patients, and another for indigent care.

### **Analysis**

This is an excellent case for reviewing the material in Chapter 1 and then using different theoretical perspectives to understand what is going on at this hospital.

1. *Social Connections*: The case is full of a variety of social connections. There are the nurse-doctor, nurse-patient, and patient-doctor social relationships. The case is about three groups: nurses, doctors, and administrators. Networks are evident as well. The hospital is part of a resource network connecting governments, insurance companies, patients, and hospitals. An important information network is the referral network through which doctors refer patients to specific hospitals. Fisher is trying to position his hospital to be more central in these referral networks. Finally, there are two unconnected authority networks: one for the nurses and one for the doctors. Because doctors are not under the authority of Fisher and the hospital administrators, Fisher has little authority over them. In terms of organizations as a social connector, obviously the hospital is very important. It has many of the qualities of a bureaucracy. It clearly faces uncertainty problems about its future financial viability, legitimation problems about how the hospital is perceived, and coordination problems especially between departments and between the hospital and the college.
2. *Problems*: It is very instructive to list the problems that the hospital is experiencing. A careful reading of the case shows that there are lots of problems, including the following:
  - Financial problems resulting from competition and the fact that a large proportion of revenues are fixed
  - Customer service problems such as billing errors, long waits, elusive doctors, inadequate parking, and fear of MCV because it is big, located in a less safe area of town, and serves indigents
  - Coordination problems such as lack of good services from support departments and the behaviors of doctors
  - Personnel problems, such as nurses' concerns about safety, pay issues, and stress
3. *Explanations*: Sociological theories can be used to develop explanations for why the hospital has these problems and which problems are the most important. Each of the five theories generates a different perspective on MCV's problems:

- *Bonds*: With this image the focus is on weak ties. The Guest Relations Program can be viewed as an attempt to strengthen the nurse-patient bond and to a lesser extent the doctor-patient bond so that patients are more satisfied with the services they receive. But it can be questioned whether it is these bonds which are the most problematic. There are indications that the doctor-nurse bond is weak.
  - *Integration*: With this image the problem is that there is an imbalance in the hospital system. To remain viable, the hospital needs patients and it needs to provide good medical services. It also needs to attract resources and coordinate the wide range of activities. Fisher sees the future imbalance as resulting from declining resources which in turn is the result of the hospital's inability to attract paying patients. But you could also see the problem as one of inadequate coordination or doctor indifference.
  - *Tug-of-War*: This perspective focuses on the inequalities in this case, such as the doctors not having to attend the sessions and the two-tier patient system. The privileges that the doctors have indicate that they are in control, and one of the problems is that it is difficult to control those who are in control.
  - *Exchanges*: There are three types of exchanges occurring in this case. Patients are receiving medical services in exchange for payment (either directly from them or through some third party). These exchanges take place within this hospital's *product market*, which consists of potential patients and the other hospitals that are MCV's competitors. Nurses are providing medical services by being employed in exchange for pay and benefits. These exchanges occur within the hospital's *labor market*. And within work there are exchanges between employees who assist one another and between departments which provide services to each other. A number of these exchanges are highlighted in this case, the most important of which has to do with the nursing shortage at the hospital. The focus on exchanges leads to discussion of the fairness of the current exchanges and whether the parties to these exchanges would like to change the terms of the exchanges.
  - *Webs*: From this perspective the problem is that service providers, both nurses and doctors, have fallen into a rut. How they see and interact with patients is the result of past interactions hardened by problematic cases and the pressures of work. Solving these problems will require a new orientation on the part of the staff.
4. *Solutions*: Based on this type of analysis, the question is whether the Guest Relations Program is the solution to the problems this hospital faces. While it addresses some of the problems highlighted in the case, it doesn't address others. Furthermore, Guest Relations seems more appropriate when the case is viewed in terms either of weak bonds with patients or webs of interaction between service providers and patients. Other issues such as retaining good nurses, providing adequate support services, and changing the ways in which doctors interact with others are highlighted by other perspectives as being more crucial.

## Teaching Ideas

The case can be used to help students to learn how to move from describing a situation sociologically to explaining it using sociological theories. There are two ways in which the case can be described: (1) in terms of the social connections and (2) in terms of the problems that are occurring at the hospital.

1. *Social Connections*: Begin by asking students to identify all the various social relationships, groups, networks, and organizations. Students may need help thinking about networks. If so, refer them to the section on networks in Chapter 1 and have them think about the various things in this case that could be flowing through networks. Spend some time looking at the hospital as an organization and discussing the uncertainty, legitimation, and coordination problems it is having. This provides a good transition into a discussion of the specific problems at the hospital that are noted in the case.
2. *Problems*: Have students work in small groups identifying the various problems, and then work as a whole class to develop a big list, noting the various groupings of problems (e.g., financial, customer satisfaction, personnel).
3. *Explanations*: Once the class has described the situation, shift the discussion to developing explanations for why the hospital has the problems it does have, showing how different explanations focus on different social connections. There are two ways to proceed here—inductively or deductively. Deductively, you can use the *Guide* at the end of the chapter and go through each theory. Inductively, you can ask students for their explanations and then explore how they reference specific theories. Either way, you will end up examining different explanations and demonstrating the value of using theories to shift perspective.
4. *Action Plan*: Ask students whether, based on the analysis, they think the Guest Relations Program will solve this hospital's problems. Because their answers to this question depend on their explanation of the problem, students will see, through the ensuing discussion, the practical implications of various theoretically derived explanations.
5. *Big Issue*: This case can also be used to explore organizations and markets. Two different markets are prominent in the case: the product and the labor market. Fisher focuses on the product market. He is concerned about losing business to his competitors and wants to attract away their paying patients. But this hospital's labor market is also important given the nurse shortage and the competition for nurses. Exploring how the Guest Relations Program impacts MCV's position in both its product and labor market can lead to an interesting discussion.

## Critical Thinking Questions

1. How would you describe the Medical College of Virginia Hospital? What are this hospital's most attractive features? What are its most problematic traits?

2. From Carl Fisher's perspective, what are the major issues that the hospital is facing? Why do you think he believes that these issues are the most important ones that need to be addressed?
3. From the point of view of the nursing staff, what are the most pressing problems at MCV?
4. How would you characterize the relationship between doctors and nurses at this hospital?
5. What do you think of Fisher's claim that patient-centered care and not market share is the emphasis of the Guest Relations program?
6. How would you have dealt with the doctors' resistance to attending the Guest Relations Program sessions?
7. If you had been a nurse at this hospital would you have continued to work there? If so, why? If not, why not?

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### *Perfection or Bust! (Chapter 3)*

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#### **Overview**

Bill Klee, founder/owner of Design Inc., wanted to create a commercial art studio that was not just a business, but also an academy where talented artists and designers could perfect their skills. At first Klee is successful in creating a culture that stresses quality work and in finding artists who are enthusiastic about his vision. But problems occur after the top layout artist leaves and the company is unable to hire a replacement. As Klee takes on more and more responsibilities, the training mission falls by the wayside. Though the business continues to be financially successful, by the end of the case Klee and his workers wonder what went wrong.

#### **Analysis**

As discussed in the text, this is an excellent case for exploring what a culture is and what it does. Decoding the culture can be achieved by examining the symbols, mottoes, and worldviews of this corporate culture. To critically analyze the case and explain how and why the culture collapsed, it is instructive to use the five images of culture to explore different theories of culture.

1. *Decoding Culture*: Symbols abound in this case, especially the prominent sign reading "Perfection or Bust!" and the austere furniture and spatial layout of the facility. Mottoes such as "no compromise with mediocrity" remind the graphic artists what is of value in this culture—perfection and learning. The Klee story—he is everywhere and always involved—conveys Klee's vision of an academy. The culture is complex. It stresses not only perfection but also learning. While these two cultural values can go hand in hand, the constant striving for perfection can inhibit learning. As the learning aspect of this culture becomes less important, the perfection value is upheld by stressing the superiority of those who work at Design Inc. and their work. This elitist culture makes it difficult for Klee to find a replacement for the layout artist

who has quit, and it leads to a close-mindedness on the part of all those who are part of this culture.

2. *Cultural Explanations*: To understand what went wrong it is useful to use different theories of culture to explore what this corporate culture was doing.
  - *Culture as a Glue*: From this perspective the symbols, mottoes, stories, and vision create a social group that is too tight-knit. The cultural glue did strengthen the bonds among the graphic artists and cemented their commitment to Design Inc. But the glue become more like flypaper, stifling their ability to act and change.
  - *Culture as an Umbrella*: Design Inc. would not have been a unified whole, a group of people who all worked together, had there not been a common standard according to which everyone's contributions were evaluated. But this standard—perfection—was too much. Instead of providing the legitimacy for working hard, it dominated the organizational climate and stifled creativity and learning.
  - *Culture as a Mask*: Klee's business would not have been successful unless his employees bought into his vision and worked very hard. Klee benefits by their willingness to work long hours at pay levels that are below his competitors. This occurs because his artists believe in his vision of Design Inc. as an academy. But the reality is that Design Inc. is not an academy, so the ideology hides the reality while maintaining the commitment of the graphic artists to Klee.
  - *Culture as a Current*: What motivated artists at Design Inc. was the sense that they had a mission, a purpose, that was informing their work—to be the best graphic arts studio. As is noted at the end of this case, the absence of this underlying current leads workers to be less certain of their mission and the future.
  - *Culture as a Toolbox*: Design Inc.'s culture provides tools in the form of scripts and recipes for attaining excellence and working toward perfection. But this cultural toolbox does not contain tools that can help Klee to solve the problems he faces, such as hiring new employees and delegating responsibility.
3. *Dilemmas*: Students often have difficulty seeing what the dilemmas are in this case. In contrast to other cases, this case does not end with someone needing to make a decision. Yet decisions are being made. The artists working at Design Inc. are deciding whether to leave or stay. Klee is deciding whether to totally give up the idea of Design Inc. as an academy. He also has to decide whether he should continue to be both an artist and a manager, or whether he should give up doing the work. These dilemmas, while not explicitly discussed in this case, are very real ones. Whether workers stay or leave will depend in part on how much they continue to believe in the culture at Design Inc. Whether Klee gives up on the academy idea will depend, in part, on how crucial that element of this culture is to Design Inc.'s success.
4. *Elitism*: One of the interesting aspects of this case is the expressed elitism of those at Design Inc. who think that their firm and their work are superior to

that of other design firms. Where does this elitism come from? On the one hand, you could argue that all cultures see themselves as superior and that elitism is just an expression of the belief held by those within a culture that their way of doing things is superior. On the other hand, the elitism at Design Inc. could be a result of a cultural breakdown. When the training mission is still an important part of this culture, perfection is valued because it legitimates critically examining one's work, and through critique people identify and correct mistakes and thereby learn. In the absence of the training mission, the view that they are superior—that is, their elitism—justifies striving for perfection.

### Teaching Ideas

1. *Problems:* One way to begin a discussion of this case is to have students list the problems that are apparent at Design Inc., problems that indicate that something isn't working at this organization. You can either have students work in small groups on this task or develop a list with the whole class. Students are likely to note such things as Klee's being everywhere, the inability to hire a layout artist, workers having no social life, the requirement that everyone must agree on hiring new people, standards that are too high, that Design Inc. is no longer functioning like an academy, and that workers are receiving less pay than their colleagues in this industry. The objective then is to develop explanations for why Design Inc. is having these problems.
2. *Cultural Explanations:* Steer the discussion towards cultural explanations of these problems by having students discuss how the symbols, mottoes, stories, and visions expressed by Klee could be the cause. To do this you will need to briefly review what the culture of Design Inc. is as outlined in the text, showing how looking at the different layers of culture can be informative. You can proceed to have students come up with different cultural explanations for Design Inc.'s problems by using each of the five images. Note how different images of culture call attention to different problems. For example, the culture as a bond image focuses on the problem of workers leaving purportedly because the bonds holding them there have weakened, maybe because they were too strong to begin with. In contrast, the culture as a tool kit image focuses on the inability of those at Design Inc. to hire a new person because this culture provides no clues on how to do this—its focus is solely on motivating artists to do their work.
3. *Culture or Cult:* Sometimes students ask whether this culture is really a cult, leading into an interesting discussion of what cults are and when a culture becomes too much. It is interesting to hear student views on what a cult is. Some will emphasize that what is a cult is relative—a cult is just what others outside a culture label another culture that they do not like. Others will emphasize people being forced to do things they would not otherwise do, while still others will highlight the blind following of a leader. Some will direct the classes attention towards the exploitative nature of a cult, that is, the fact that a leader benefits while the followers are harmed. Using these ideas, you can explore whether Design Inc. is a cult.

4. *Culture and Society*: When using this case to introduce students to the importance of culture, two things should be highlighted. First, analyzing culture allows you to see things from the point of view of insiders. Second, culture should not be equated with society. To get at the first point, ask students if they have even been in a situation in which they were clueless or in which they were a foreigner in a different culture. Then explore how they felt, why they felt that way, and what they did about it. To get at the second point, talk about the difference between cultural phenomena (symbols, stories, beliefs, and worldviews) and social phenomena (social connections). Note that while these two things are interconnected and it is hard to imagine social connections without their cultural counterparts, analytically the distinction must be made in order to explore the relationship between culture and social connections.

### Critical Thinking Questions

1. In what ways is Design Inc. different from other commercial art studios?
2. How did Klee convince artists to come to work for him?
3. Why do you think the artists who worked at Design Inc. continued to work there?
4. Why was Klee unable to hire a layout artist to replace the one who had left?
5. If you had been a design artist at Design Inc., would you have continued to work there? What are your reasons for your views on this matter?
6. Do you think Design Inc. will continue to be in business in five years? If not, why do you think it will no longer be in business? If you think it will still be in business, will it be similar to or different from the way it is at the end of the case?

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### *Linda Gorman (Chapter 3)*

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#### Overview

This is a case about the clash between two cultures: Linda Gorman's modern medicine culture, and Mrs. Saeto's *lu Mien* culture of traditional cures. Mrs. Saeto, an immigrant from Laos, brings her six-month-old daughter, Marie, to a medical clinic for her immunization shots. During the routine examination, Linda Gorman, a public health nurse who has befriended Mrs. Saeto, discovers burns on the child's abdomen. She learns from Mrs. Saeto that they were the result of a *Mien* cure. Appalled by this practice, Linda wonders whether she should report this to the authorities as a case of child abuse or whether she is overreacting and being culturally insensitive.

#### Analysis

This is an interesting case for examining cultural differences and exploring the ideas of cultural relativity and ethnocentrism. Because the very health and possibly the life of Marie are at risk, readers tend to side with the medical culture

and to judge the *Mien* cultural practices as harmful. However, a sociological analysis will help students see that the case is more complex and that answering the question "What should Linda do?" requires understanding the *Mien* culture and what it means to Mrs. Saeto.

1. *Decoding Two Cultures*: Though the focus is on the *Mien* culture, it is important to recognize that this case is about two cultures: the *Mien* culture and Linda's culture of science and medicine. Decoding cultures in this case requires, therefore, comparing and contrasting these two cultures. The case, however, doesn't show us in very much detail what the symbols, stories, and worldviews of the two cultures are. The cure used in the *Mien* culture is a ceremony, and the objects used have symbolic value. The story about transferring the pain to the wall conveys the idea that non-material things such as pain can be physically moved from one place to another. Lying at the heart of *Mien* culture is *animism*, the view that the world is inhabited by spirits that reside in things, including people. More information on the *lu Mien* culture can be obtained at the web site: [http://mekongexpress.com/laos/articles/dc\\_0995\\_thelumien.htm](http://mekongexpress.com/laos/articles/dc_0995_thelumien.htm). See also information on animistic religions in various references at [Britanica.com](http://Britanica.com). Linda's culture of medicine also has its symbols (white walls, sterile places, various tools), rituals (the examination) and worldviews (science and the scientific method).
2. *What Culture Does*: It is very instructive to explore what these two cultures do in this case and how important they are to Linda and Mrs. Saeto. While all five cultural perspectives generate insights, probably the views of culture as a glue and as a toolbox are the most useful in this case.
  - *Culture as a Glue*: The strongest bonds in this case are within the Laotian community and, in particular, between Mrs. Saeto and others in her ethnic group. But this wasn't always the case. After arriving in the United States at the age of 14, Mrs. Saeto rebelled against her native culture because she wanted to fit in to the American culture. But after the father of her child abandoned her, she returned to her community, where she received support and felt that she belonged.
  - *Culture as an Umbrella*: It is hard to view this case as one of culture uniting people with diverse views through some common values or standards. In fact, this is really a case where there are no common standards by which everyone is evaluated. Within American culture what was done to Maria is clearly wrong, but within *Mien* culture it is considered useful and good. This case therefore brings to the fore the idea of *cultural relativity*, that is, the view that practices and behaviors can be judged only by the cultural standards of the culture in which those practices occur. Rejecting cultural relativity implies that there are universal standards by which the practices in all cultures can be evaluated. The problem with this position is that often when people claim there are such universal standards, it turns out that those standards are just the standards of their culture. The result then is *ethnocentrism*, the view that one's own culture is the superior culture and therefore its standards are the "universal" ones that should be used to judge behaviors in all cultures.

- *Culture as a Mask*: From this perspective, what is important are discrepancies between what people believe and what is really going on. Some people may view the *Mien* curing practices as an ideology that misleads and mystifies those who practice such cures. From this perspective Mrs. Saeto's belief that the burning ritual really cured Maria is a false idea, a belief in magic. But to outsiders, cultural practices that are foreign often seem mystifying, while for insiders they are revealing and instructive. Also, modern medical practices can also be seen as sometimes distorting reality. For example, commercials for new drugs and medicines often exaggerate the benefits while trying to hide the negative side-effects.
  - *Culture as a Current*: It is clear that both cultures provide meanings and purposes for Mrs. Saeto and Linda Gorman respectively. Mrs. Saeto's beliefs about spirits probably orient her behaviors, especially when she encounters problems. Linda's belief in science and medicine motivates her to use her knowledge to help people and prevent illness.
  - *Culture as a Toolbox*: It is instructive to examine to whom Mrs. Saeto turned when she needed to figure out what to do. She turned to her mother-in-law and the traditional cures of the *Mien* culture. Why? Because these are the ways with which she is familiar. These are the cultural tools that she has at her disposal. And with these cultural tools, Mrs. Saeto will continue to understand problems and find solutions through the *lu Mien* culture. She believes that with these cultural tools she is helping her child. She has no intention of harming Maria.
3. *Cultural Clash*: Linda's dilemma is the direct result of the clash between her culture of medicine and Mrs. Saeto's *Mien* culture. These two cultures are at odds over whether the burning "cure" hurts or harms the child. Given this cultural conflict Linda goes back and forth about what she should do:
- *Cultural Insensitivity*: Initially Linda wonders whether she is being culturally insensitive. She is wondering whether she should look at the *Mien* culture practices not from an American perspective but from the perspective of an insider, that is from the point of view of the *Mien* culture itself. Doing so would lead her to respect that culture and maybe even tolerate its practices.
  - *Reflection*: At one point Linda reflects on her own cultural assumptions by noting that she too inflicts pain on patients during treatment. Here Linda is looking at her cultural practices from the point of view of the *Mien* or some other culture. She is wondering whether an outsider looking at what she does would have the same reaction that she initially had when she learned what Mrs. Saeto had done.
  - *Abuse*: When Linda thinks about the law and those who think that this is a case of abuse, she is thinking about a position where the "normal" practices of another culture, in this case the *Mien* culture, are judged by her culture, the American culture's standards.

- It is interesting that in this case there are no situations that reflect Mrs. Saeto judging American cultural practices by *Mien* standards, though there are probably situations where she made such judgments.
4. *Linda's Dilemma*: Given this analysis, it is clear why Linda faces a dilemma. She realizes that this is in fact a cultural problem. If she had thought that Mrs. Saeto had intentionally harmed Maria, or neglected her in ways that she should have known would harm her, then Linda would have had no qualms about turning her in. However, this is not her assessment. Rather, because Mrs. Saeto has told her about the *Mien* culture and her past, she knows that the traditional cure comes from Mrs. Saeto's culture and is seen by those in that culture as helpful and not harmful. As a nurse who works with many different types of people, she has learned that it is important to respect cultural differences. Linda does not see Mrs. Saeto as someone who is being swept away by false ideas. Linda probably believes that Mrs. Saeto's culture has a great deal of value for her. Linda also knows that if she openly rejects something that Mrs. Saeto finds to be of great value, Mrs. Saeto may never return to the clinic. Then Linda will have lost her ability to prevent Mrs. Saeto from using these and other potentially harmful cures on Marie. The dilemma is, therefore, whether Linda can find a way to get Mrs. Saeto to not use cultural practices that could seriously harm her and her children without Mrs. Saeto believing that Linda rejects her entire culture and way of life.
  5. *Mrs. Saeto's Dilemma*: It is instructive to also consider the dilemmas that Mrs. Saeto could face. She could be asked to give up her culture. She is in American, and when in Rome you must do what the Romans do, so the saying goes. But the *Mien* culture is the culture through which she has found support and meaning. Will the need to assimilate force her to give up what she values? She has already done this once and with negative results. Mrs. Saeto could also be asked to give up just some of her cultural practices. But can she give up just some of them. Rituals, practices, and symbols convey the meanings that lie at the core of the culture. Can she give up some of them without also giving up the core beliefs and worldviews of the *Mien* culture? And if she is asked to give up some, where will the line be drawn? Should she also give up her cultural practices having to do with child rearing? Should she give up the way she prays? Should she give up using the language?

### Teaching Ideas

It is very important when teaching this case to challenge students to see both sides of the issue. Because Mrs. Saeto's practices result in burns on Marie, most students are initially appalled by this "cure" and view it as barbarian. But the case does highlight cultural differences and raises issues of how to understand situations in which there is a cultural conflict.

1. *Decode Culture*: Begin by asking students about the symbols, stories and worldviews discussed in this case. This quickly leads to the observation that there are two cultures in the case: the *Mien* culture and the American culture. Also, it becomes evident that there is not a great deal of information about each of these cultures. More information of *Mien* cultural rituals and

worldviews can be found at [http://mekongexpress.com/laos/articles/dc\\_0995\\_thelumien.htm](http://mekongexpress.com/laos/articles/dc_0995_thelumien.htm) and brought up during class. Students need to learn a bit about animistic views. Students are familiar with American culture and, in particular, the culture of science and medicine. Discuss how symbolic and scripted doctor visits can be. It is important to stress how science is a core value. Ask students what it means to have science at the center of a cultural system. They will probably note that it implies using scientific methods to identify causes of diseases and then devising interventions that either eliminate or counteract the discovered causes.

2. *Cultural Theories*: You can use the *Guide* to explore how each cultural theory could be used to understand this situation better. Some of the specific questions in the *Guide* are more relevant than others. Have students discuss which bonds are the strongest, whether there are standards according to which everyone is evaluated, whether there is a discrepancy between what people believe and what is really going on, what meanings lie behind the actions, and to what or to whom people turn to when trying to figure out what to do.
3. *Assimilation*: This case provides an opportunity to discuss assimilation processes among immigrants, a topic that is also discussed in Chapter 4. Ask students about Mrs. Saeto's history. Why did she have a difficult time at first? Why did she initially feel like an outcast in high school? Why did she rebel? Why did she return to her cultural roots? You can use this case to explore the pros and cons of assimilation and the reasons why, within many ethnic groups, there are at times periods of ethnic renewal.
4. *Cultural Relativity and Ethnocentrism*: This case also provides an opportunity to explore the problem of judging cultural practices. Because in this case the actors, Linda and Mrs. Saeto, do not come from the same culture, there is disagreement over whether the burning cure is good or bad. You can raise the idea of cultural relativity and the idea that practices can be judged only by the standards of their culture. You can debate whether this is true or whether there are universal standards that can be used to judge all cultures. This can lead into a discussion of ethnocentrism, the view that one's own culture is the ultimate standard, and the problems with making such claims.
5. *Linda's Dilemma*: Based on the cultural analysis, discuss why Linda is uncertain about what she should do. Students will bring up the relevance of the law, the fact that Mrs. Saeto did not intend to harm Maria, Linda's desire to maintain a connection with Mrs. Saeto and her daughter, and Linda's respect for other cultures. It is also instructive to have students think about this from Mrs. Saeto's perspective. If Linda asked her to stop using these and other potentially harmful practices, what would Mrs. Saeto think? Could she give up some of them without giving up all of them? Would the strength of her ties to her community lead her to ignore Linda's request and to sever her relationship to Linda?

### Critical Thinking Questions

1. How would you describe the social relationship between Linda Gorman and Mrs. Saeto?
2. According to the case, Mrs. Saeto's first years in the United States were very difficult. What do you think were some of the difficulties she encountered during this period?
3. After the difficult first years, Mrs. Saeto rebelled against her native culture. Why do you think she rebelled against it? Why did she eventually return to the *Mien* culture?
4. After telling Linda about the cure that Mrs. Saeto's mother-in-law administered, Mrs. Saeto notes that it could be dangerous. But Linda soon realizes that she and Mrs. Saeto have quite different views about the danger of this cure. What do these different views tell you about the differences between Linda's and Mrs. Saeto's cultures?
5. At one point Linda wonders whether the pain she routinely inflicts on children shows that she is no more civilized than Mrs. Saeto and her mother-in-law. What do you think of Linda's conjecture?
6. If you were Linda Gorman, what would you do, now that you know about how Marie received the burns on her abdomen?

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### *The MPA Program at Southeastern University (Chapter 4)*

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#### Overview

The admissions committee chaired by Alex Quill, a professor and the director of a Masters of Public Administration (MPA) program at a large state university, decides not to admit Brenda Neville into the program because of her low GPA and low GRE scores. Quill, to his surprise, finds that this decision is questioned by the provost. During a meeting with him, Quill learns that Ms. Neville's father, Sid Neville, is a wealthy alumnus and donor to the university. After questioning Quill about the use of GPA and GRE scores to determine who is admitted, the provost informs Quill that he would like a successful resolution of the situation in the next few days.

#### Analysis

This is an excellent case for exploring issues of social class, power, and social inequalities. Figuring out what Quill could do requires understanding his power and the power of the other important actors in this case. A class analysis of the situation can help students understand Quill's dilemma and the actions of the Provost.

1. *Social Class:* As the text discusses, Quill is in a contradictory class location. He neither runs the university nor is he just an ordinary employee. Quill has some power because his skills, knowledge, and middle-level management position as director of the MPA program give him the ability to make

important decisions about that program. The provost, Stern, occupies an upper-level managerial position analogous to a corporate executive. He has power because he occupies a position with a great deal of authority. But his power is also constrained by the power of those above him—the president and major donors like Sid Neville. These contributors, as well as the heads of the state government who make budget decisions about the university, are the “owners” of the university. They control strategic monetary resources that the university needs in order to operate.

2. *Class Interests*: Based on their class position, the central actors in this case have class interests. Sid Neville's interest is in passing on the advantages of his class to his children. In particular, he wants to get his daughter into the MPA program. Stern and the president have an interest in their university's growth. Quill wants to have a credible and well-regarded MPA program. He wishes to maintain the autonomy of the program from forces that could “dilute” it.
3. *Quill's Dilemma*: As discussed in the text, what Quill decides to do depends on his assessment of his ability to pursue his interests in maintaining a credible MPA program. To the extent he needs resources from the central administration, he may be forced to change his mind and admit Brenda. Though Quill's decision is the focus of the case, there are two other decisions that need to be understood: Stern's decision to question Quill's original decision and Sid Neville's decision to use his influence.
4. *Stern's Decision*: Stern's questioning of Quill indicates that as a manager his interests are tied to the actions of those with strategic resources that allow him, as a top manager, to do the things he wants to do with his organization.
5. *Neville's Decision*: Sid Neville's desire to get his daughter into the program and to use his influence to make that happen is indicative of a mechanism through which inheritance of privilege sometimes works. Instead of directly giving his resources to his daughter, Sid uses them indirectly to increase her ability to acquire valuable resources, in this case an MPA credential.
6. *Social Inequalities*: The big issue addressed by this case concerns the criteria that are used to allocate valued resources and opportunities. Quill's use of GPA and GRE scores to decide who to admit into the program is an attempt to use achieved traits to allocate an opportunity. Though GPA and GRE measures are fallible, Quill's intention is to base admittance on what students have done and learned, not whom they know or who their parents are. To the extent that Sid Neville is able to use his influence to get his daughter into the MPA program, an ascribed trait—family background—will have become an important factor in allocating an opportunity. This analysis shows how important it is to examine the relationship between class background, education, and social inequalities. Class background can affect inequalities in attainment directly through inheritance of a business and wealth. But it can also influence attainment indirectly to the extent that background influences the ability to obtain an education (which in turn affects attainment). Quill is purportedly trying to minimize the effect of background on education by using “objective” criteria in deciding who to admit into the MPA program.

Sid Neville, on the other hand, is trying to strengthen the background-education nexus by helping his daughter get into the MPA program.

**Teaching Ideas**

1. *Class Analysis:* I usually begin a discussion of this case by reviewing social class differences using Table 4.1 in the text and then having students help me construct the following table about each of the major actors in this case:

<i>Actor</i>	<i>Social Class</i>	<i>Relation to Others</i>	<i>Interests</i>
<i>Sid Neville</i>	Capitalist/ Owner	Donor	Getting daughter into MPA program
<i>Stern, Provost</i>	Upper Manager/ Corp. exec.	Boss & Fund-Raiser	University growth
<i>Quill, Professor</i>	Expert & Manager	Both Indebted & Constrained	Autonomy and legitimacy of the MPA program
<i>MPA Students</i>	Workers	Subservient	Get ahead, get credential

Using this table, I explore the class relations in this case by examining who has power over whom, why, and how their interests are related to their class position. Why does Sid have power over Stern? How does Neville use his power to advance his interests in getting his daughter into the MPA program? Why does Stern have power over Quill? How does Stern use his power and how is that use in Stern's class interest? Quill has power over his students. What gives him this power and what could undermine the power that he does have? In sum, exploring the power relationships can be used to help understand why Sid wants to get his daughter into the MPA program and why the provost questions Quill's decision not to admit her.

2. *Quill's Dilemma:* Using the class analysis as a basis, you can lead an interesting discussion about whether Quill should reconsider his decision given his class position and interests. This will lead into a discussion of what Quill's interests really are and how admitting or not admitting Brenda could affect those interests.
3. *Quill's Class Position:* You can advance the discussion by asking students to consider how Quill could realize his interests in this case. Given Quill's

current position, he seems to be in a no-win situation. If he admits Brenda, he will undermine to some extent his MPA program's credibility. If he doesn't admit her, he could lose some of the funding he needs to make his program a good one. Ask students how Quill could get out of this no-win situation and how he could increase his power and decrease the power that others have over him. Remind students that power has a lot to do with control over strategic resources.

4. *Education:* Finally, it is important to put this case in the larger context of social inequalities and the intergenerational passing on of privileges. This is also a case about the role of education in society. You can have an interesting discussion about why education is so valued. That discussion can then serve as the basis for discussing how education could decrease inequalities by giving those from poorer social backgrounds the opportunity to obtain valuable resources that they can use to get ahead. But for this to occur there needs to be equal opportunity for getting an education. Exploring how opportunities for education can be created for those from poorer backgrounds can lead to interesting discussions. Students will note that there are often unequal opportunities because well-off parents can use their resources to help their children get a good education. This leads back into the events of the case that highlight the pressures educational institutions face, which in turn push them to favor those who come from more privileged families.

### **Critical Thinking Questions**

1. How would you describe the various social connections Alex Quill has with others at this university? How would you characterize Alex Quill's position at this university?
2. How would you describe the conversation between Stern, the provost, and Alex Quill? What do you think this conversation reveals about their social relationship?
3. What do you think of the criteria Quill and his committee use to admit students into the MPA program? Do you think they are fair and valid criteria for determining admittance? What do you think of Stern's questioning Quill about using these criteria?
4. At the end of the case, the narrator notes that Quill had learned something about the values and priorities of the provost and president. What do you think he learned?
5. Based on your reading of this case, what do you think Quill should do about admitting Brenda Neville?
6. Quill seems very interested in maintaining and even expanding the MPA program. How do you think his decision on admitting Brenda Neville will affect the MPA program? What could Quill do to insure that his MPA program grows and is respected?

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*Robert Lopez (Chapter 4)*

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**Overview**

Robert Lopez, a Mexican American graduate student in sociology at a large university, has a summer job through the school's Opportunity Program as a teaching assistant for minority students. Having experienced racism both as a student and through his family, he is proud to be working in a program that could help and empower minority students. During a class session on race in the introduction to sociology class for which he is the TA, two students next to him make racist remarks to each other and draw racist images in their notes. Robert angrily confronts them, recalling experiences when he had felt violated by racist behaviors. Later Robert is upset at how he handled the situation and wonders if he should have acted differently.

**Analysis**

This case provides a superb platform for discussing race, racism, and race relations. Though the case ends by focusing on whether Robert should have acted differently, there are many other issues that can and should be discussed.

1. *Racism*: It is important to begin the analysis by examining racism and Robert's experiences of it. This case contains examples of the different types of discrimination (isolate, small-group, institutional) discussed in Chapter 4. Through his family Robert experienced the racism his father felt in being "ghettoized" within the firm for which he worked. His brother's placement in remedial programs, his nickname "Taco," and the use of derogatory terms like "nigger" and "greaser" by frat boys while Robert was a night security guard are other experiences that have affected how Robert feels about himself and racial issues. This case also gives other examples of racism such as the stereotyping of Asian Americans as science and math wizards, the painting of swastikas on a church, and Juan Cortez's father's placement in remedial classes, an example of institutional racism. Finally, there is the racism expressed by the two young men in Robert's class. Each of these events is an action by members of a dominant majority that hurts or harms members of a minority. It is important to identify all these examples of racism and discrimination because they can help us understand why Robert is so upset when he encounters racism in the classroom.
2. *Race as a Social Construction*: The examples of racism, prejudice, and discrimination in this case clearly show that race is a social construct. In each case, other people use a racial distinction to either treat people differently or draw some distinction. So it is how race is used that is important in this case.
3. *Prejudice and Discrimination*: What makes this case interesting and also in some ways difficult to analyze is that the actions of the two young men, while clearly conveying racist attitudes, are not intended to harm anyone; they are, therefore, examples of prejudice without intentional discrimination. Yet their actions, because Robert witnesses them, do harm someone – Robert. Robert feels violated. So even though the two young men's prejudice was not used to

discriminate on this occasion, it did in fact discriminate because Robert, a member of a minority, was harmed by the action. Furthermore, it is likely that with these prejudices these young will intentionally discriminate in the future.

4. *Sources of Prejudice:* Though we don't know much about why these two people hold these prejudicial views, it would be important to explore the role that the fraternity and sorority culture plays in perpetuating stereotypes and racist ideas. It would also be important to explore how people from different racial and ethnic groups interact on this campus. Is the campus highly segregated, and if so, how? Are there times and places in which those from different racial groups cooperate? Are their highly competitive forms of interaction?
5. *Theories of Discrimination:* The various theories of discrimination discussed in Chapter 4 can be used to understand the examples of racism discussed in the case. The events concerning the two boys are very much informed by prejudicial attitudes, an important cause of discrimination. Robert's and Juan's personal stories are stories about marginalization and exclusion. Statistical discrimination could have been working with the placement of Robert's brother in remedial classes. Robert's father's experience is a story of a person desiring to assimilate, but instead being marginalized. So the "backdrop" of this case is racial inequalities caused by a variety of factors.
6. *Robert's Dilemma:* Though Robert seems quite justified in being upset at the two fraternity boys for their racist remarks, Robert is also upset at his own reaction. Robert appears to be torn between the need to express his anger at feeling violated by racism and his desire as a TA and teacher to do things that will help the two boys see why their actions are racist and hopefully change their ways. Robert probably feels that his actions, while allowing him to express his anger, did little to change the two guys. Thus the question is what Robert could have done that would have challenged the two young men to think about their racism.
7. *Solutions:* What Robert could have done differently depends upon how we explain racism. The two young men state that they were only joking, implying that they would never act upon their racist ideas and that they do not even believe them. But is this really the case? It is probably the case that their expression of these views and their hearing others express racist ideas have increased the credence they give to racist views and made them more likely to discriminate on the basis of such views. Overcoming discrimination based on prejudice is a complicated process, and much has been written on this. As noted in Chapter 1, stereotypes tend to be overcome when people from different groups interact with each other in a cooperative situation. The segregation that fraternity systems create can, therefore, exacerbate racism by decreasing cooperative interaction across racial divisions. In addition, it is likely that these two young men have no understanding of how hurt Robert is by their remarks. They don't realize that prejudice does in fact harm minority group members, even when it is expressed verbally but not intentionally used to differentially treat people.

8. *Affirmative Action*: The case also provides an opportunity to discuss affirmative action in education. As Robert and Juan recall, their family members have experienced institutional discrimination within educational institutions. The special program for minority students is in part a response to this institutional discrimination. Giving minority students additional support and educational resources is designed to help those from disadvantaged background overcome their disadvantages. It is therefore important to look at both how those in minority groups have been marginalized and what can be and is being done to counteract the results of such discrimination. The case highlights the positive aspects of affirmative action. The special TA gives those from minority groups an increased chance to be successful and creates the opportunity for minority students to learn from each other. On the other hand, the case highlights some of the problems with affirmative action. In this situation, the teacher decides to conceal the existence of a special TA because she worries that other students will consider this unfair.

### Teaching Ideas

There is so much going on in this case that there are many ways you can use the case to discuss race, racism, and race relations. Here are some ideas:

1. *Racism and Discrimination*: Ask students to look for and categorize all the examples of racism and discrimination discussed in the case. With this list you can clarify the distinction between isolate, small-group, and institutional discrimination. The developed list can also help to clarify the distinction between prejudice and discrimination. Though the case highlights discrimination caused by prejudice, there are examples in the case of discrimination that do not directly result from the prejudicial actions of individuals. Emphasize how the examples of racism show that race is a social construct. What is important in this case is how people use race, not the existence of people with different physical traits. Finally draw attention to the relational character of race. While we usually think of race in terms of social categories, race also has a great deal to do with race relations between majority and minority members. Many of the examples of racism in this case have this relational quality with members of the majority relating in racist and discriminatory ways to minority group members.
2. *Racial Inequalities*: With this list you can explore how racism and discrimination create inequalities by making those in the minority worse off in some way. Ask students how racial inequalities are created. Students are likely to focus initially on differential treatment, but with some probing they will also discuss how put-downs can lead people to feel inferior and how stereotypes can stigmatize. With more probing you can get them to think of more systematic forms of discrimination such as institutionalized systems that discriminate and segregate.
3. *Robert's Reaction*: With this background, you can lead a discussion a Robert's reaction and why he was so upset. Was it that this experience recalled other experiences? Why did Robert feel personally violated? It is interesting to speculate whether Robert's dad would have been as upset as Robert if he had

been in the same situation. Did Robert think that racism has subsided and did this experience therefore make him wonder whether it really has?

4. *Alternative Actions:* A discussion of what Robert could have done differently will lead into a discussion of what students think of the two young men who expressed the racist views. Some students may agree with their claim that they were just joking and will argue that Robert made too much of the incident. Others will see their behaviors as a sign of immaturity. Still others will try to trace the racism to the young men's background. Finally, some will attempt to link fraternity life with prejudice. As students discuss these different views, have them draw out the implications for what Robert could have done differently.
5. *Affirmative Action:* This case also provides an opportunity for discussing affirmative action in education. Ask students what they think of the Opportunity Program and the use of a special TA for minority students. If they had been the sociology professor, would they have used another TA for the other students? Would they have told the class about the special TA?
6. *Race Relations in America:* This case is a great way to get students to think about race relations and racism in America. Many younger students think that, compared to prior generations, they and their peers are less prejudiced. You can ask them if they think this, and if so, why. Also ask them whether they think racism may be re-emerging in America, and if they do, why they think it could be on the rise.

### **Critical Thinking Questions**

1. Why do you think Robert Lopez is so enthusiastic about being the teaching assistant for the freshman minority scholar students?
2. What do you think are the important experiences Robert had while growing up and while in school that shape the way in which he thinks about his heritage and race relations?
3. What do you think of the use of a special TA in this sociology class? If you had been the instructor in this class, would you have had another TA for the other students? Would you have let the other students know about the special TA?
4. Robert says that he felt "dejected and violated" by the incident described in the case. Why do you think Robert felt that way and reacted the way he did?
5. The two young men claim that they were joking and tell Robert that they are sorry. Do you think Robert believes them? Do you believe them?
6. At the end of the case Robert notes that he is ambivalent about how he handled the situation. Why does he feel ambivalent? What do you think he will do if and when he encounters a similar situation?

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## *Where Have All the Salmon Gone? (Chapter 5)*

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### Overview

Cy Wiggins, a commercial fisherman, has for years not believed the signs that salmon populations were declining. Viewing reports of declining fish stocks as false alarms by radical environmentalists, Cy kept fishing. But after a season in which he barely caught enough fish to pay the bills and the packing company to which he sold his catch went into receivership, Cy decides to give up commercial fishing and to sell his expensive boat and equipment. Breaking the news to his son, Chad, is very difficult because Chad had intended to go into the fishing business. Now both he and his father will have to find other ways to support themselves.

### Analysis

As discussed in the text, this case is an excellent vehicle for thinking about social change and learning how to construct scenarios about the future. While the analysis could focus on what this family should now do after leaving fishing, this is not the central issue of this case, and there is little information upon which to construct scenarios about this family's future. Instead, analysis can focus on how the Wiggins family came to be in this predicament. How could they have let this happen to themselves? To answer such questions, it helps to imagine this family and their community five years ago. If we went back to that that point in time, could we have constructed scenarios by examining the driving forces at work?

1. *Background Conditions:* Five years ago, what were some of the things that made commercial fishing of salmon feasible and profitable? As discussed in the text, these background factors include consumer demand for salmon, infrastructure facilities, distribution and supply networks, labor supply, lending institutions, and various community institutions. But the most important background condition was the supply of salmon, which at that time seemed unlimited. Constructing scenarios about the future requires imagining how these background conditions, which are assumed to be constants, could change as a result of various driving forces.
2. *Demographic Forces:* Population changes could affect the labor supply if children decided to migrate from fishing communities to urban areas. This has historically been a problem in farming and other primary sector communities. In this case there seem to be forces at work that keep Chad attached to this community. The larger demographic forces are growth in the size of the population that desires and can afford fresh salmon. The growing demand for salmon has increased the price those in the fishing industry receive for their catches, attracting new fishermen into the industry and leading fisherman to expand their capacity to catch fish.
3. *Technological Forces:* The use of high-tech fishing equipment has increased fishing capacity, allowing fisherman to catch more fish per trip and per season. The result in the short run is higher incomes for fisherman (as well as greater expenses for financing the equipment). But in the long run the result

is overfishing and depletion of fishing stocks. Besides changes in fishing technology, there are other technologies that have pollution externalities. Because the pollution created by various businesses does not cost polluters anything, they have no incentive to control it. But now the costs of their pollution are being borne by others, especially those in the fishing industry, because pollution has led to declining fish populations.

4. *Collective Action Forces*: In this case it is the *absence* of collective actions designed to stop pollution and overfishing that are relevant, not the presence of collective actions. As noted in the text, the absence of collective actions when people have grievances is more the rule than the exception. Analyzing why Cy and those within the fishing industry did not try to collectively change their situation is essential if one is to imagine scenarios in which collective actions propel change. The absence of collective action could be the result of the fact that fishermen were not aggrieved until recently, and now it is too late to act. But there were warning signs of problems earlier, so the question is, why did people ignore the warning signs? The fishing culture could have had something to do with this. As expressed by Chad, there seems to be an unquestioned belief in progress and a limitless future. Other reasons for the absence of collective action could be free riding. Fish supplies are a public good. Fisherman did not think that through their individual actions they could deplete this public good. There are lots of fish out there. But the combination of many individual actions did deplete the public good. Because each fisherman has an incentive to continue fishing, the result is a collective failure as all fishermen continue fishing and exhaust the supply of fish.
5. *Scenarios*: Based on these analyses, various scenarios could have been constructed five years ago.
  - Do-Nothing Scenario: This is the scenario that came to fruition as fishermen allowed the various driving forces to play themselves out.
  - Environmentalism: In this scenario environmental groups, allied with producers (like fisherman) and governments, control pollution, and salmon populations begin to increase in size.
  - Collective Controls: Under this scenario the fishing industry devises controls to regulate itself and prevent overfishing. Programs are worked out to compensate individual fisherman for declining catches and to provide incentives for some of those in the fishing industry to leave fishing.

### Teaching Ideas

Teaching this case requires shifting attention from what the Wiggins family will do now that they have left fishing, to what they could have done to prevent this from happening. One way to shift attention is to ask students to imagine this situation five years earlier.

1. *Social Connections*: Ask students how they would have described this fishing community five years ago. What would have been the important social connections? How would they have characterized the culture? What is it like

to live in a sparsely populated rural area in which the main activities are in the primary sector (i.e., farming, extraction, fishing)?

2. *Background Conditions:* Then turn to the background conditions that made that way of life possible in this community five years ago. These are discussed in the text, but students may have some other ideas, and you can explore the ones in the text in more detail.
3. *Driving Forces:* Have students consider how the three driving forces could have changed the situation. Discuss how the local demography could affect fishing, as well as how the character of and changes in the U.S. population could affect the demand for salmon. Discuss the use of high-tech fishing equipment and its impact, as well as the impact of polluting technologies on fish stocks. The most interesting discussion is like to occur about collective action.
4. *Collective Action:* Five years ago it was the absence of any type of collective action that defined the situation, so constructing scenarios must deal with why collective actions were absent and what could have changed to activate them. Did fisherman have grievances? Did the decline of populations of salmon come on so quickly that people were not aggrieved for very long? Or did they discount their complaints, thinking that it was not a trend but just a one-time problem? Why didn't fisherman mobilize to stop actions that were leading to declining fish populations? There appears to be a good deal of organization—that is, “catness” and “netness” as discussed in Chapter 5. Why didn't the organization overcome free-rider problems? Focus attention on two sorts of collective action, one that would be designed to decrease pollution, and one that would regulate the fishing industry and prevent overfishing. Why did it seem that it was in individual fisherman's interest to not participate in these collective action? What would have had to change in order to convince fisherman to accept restrictions on their fishing?
5. *Scenarios:* Based on the class discussion, ask students to construct three or four scenarios. You can either do this as a whole class, or you can begin with a whole class discussion in order to get out three or four scenarios and then have small groups work on mapping out one scenerio apiece.

### **Critical Thinking Questions**

1. If you had visited this fishing community five years prior to the events that occur in this case, how would you have described it after your visit? What important social connections and cultural items do you think you would have seen?
2. How would you describe the technology that Cy Wiggins uses to catch salmon? How do Cy Wiggins and his family make money by using these technologies?
3. How is it that fish, once abundant, are now in short supply? What, in your view, have been the contributing factors? What data support your ideas?
4. Why do you think Cy Wiggins at first did not believe the reports in the newspapers about declining supplies of salmon?

5. To what extent is it possible to turn this situation around? What would have to change if this situation were to turn around? What actions would Cy and other fisherman have to take to bring about these changes? Why haven't they taken these actions yet?
6. Cy Wiggins feels responsible for the way in which his son's future is about to be compromised. Where do you stand on the issue of responsibility for the decline of fish?

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### *Deaf President Now! (Chapter 5)*

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#### **Overview**

Deaf students at Gallaudet University carry out a series of protests challenging the board of trustees' decision to appoint a hearing person as the university's next president. After shutting down the campus for a few days, the board reconsiders its decision. The newly appointed president resigns, as does the chairperson of the board. Deaf persons are appointed as president and as the chairperson of the board.

#### **Analysis**

This case is about a series of collective actions that are successful in overturning the decision of a board of trustees. More information on the events of this case can be found at <http://www.gallaudet.edu/~dpnweb/index3.html>. This is a case that does not have a dilemma. Instead there is a puzzle that requires explanation. There has never been a deaf president at Gallaudet. Nor have there been major protests by students. Why, on this occasion, did students protest? And why were the protests successful? Any analysis of this case must attempt to answer these questions.

1. *Social Movement*: It is helpful to begin by mapping out the collective action in terms of its identity, adversaries, and goals. This is a student-led movement and, in particular, a movement led by students who have a physical handicap, their inability to hear. The movement speaks not only to students at Gallaudet but also to other deaf people and, in fact, to those with other physical handicaps. Thus this collective action can be viewed as part of the disability rights movement. The specific targets of the protests are the board of trustees of Gallaudet, the body that makes important decisions about the university. The specific objective of the collective action is expressed in the student demands to have a deaf president. This is part of the idea of self-determination—the leaders and representatives of deaf persons should be deaf people. This emphasis on self-determination is highlighted in the students' labeling the board's action as paternalistic and indicative of a "plantation mentality." Deaf students believed that a deaf person better understands the needs of deaf people.
2. *Interests and Grievances*: This case shows that grievances play an important role in collective action. The protests would not have occurred if the board

had appointed a deaf president. The fact that they did not is the grievance, and it energizes students, especially given that many students had expected a deaf president to be appointed. But while this case demonstrates that grievances are necessary for collective action, it also shows that they are not sufficient. This grievance had existed for a long time, seeing that Gallaudet had never had a deaf president. So why did this grievance lead at this time to protests? Part of the answer could lie in the high expectations. People had been promoting the idea of a deaf president, something that may not have occurred when other presidents had been appointed in the past. It could also be the case that the times have changed. The larger disability rights movement has empowered people with disabilities to believe that they them can and should be in leadership positions.

3. *Mobilization*: The fact that a long-held and unrealized interest in a deaf president had never before led to protests could indicate that there was a free-rider problem. While students wanted a deaf president (a public good for them), they may not have been willing to contribute the time and energy to realizing this goal, thinking that others would put in the effort. This time, however, the free-riding problem has to some extent been overcome. Students protested, though the case does not indicate what proportion of students were involved in shutting down the university. It is clear that organizations of students worked to mobilize other students and other deaf persons. Their ability to shut down the campus made other "free-riding" students part of the collective action.
4. *Organization*: Clearly the ability to organize the protests was facilitated by the catness and netness of the students. Two categories unite the protestors—students and deaf persons—increasing loyalty and identification with the cause. The residential character of Gallaudet increases netness as students are able to reach other students quickly through residential networks. Also, it appears that the media and other information networks made more people aware of the protests, leading to increasing participation and financial contributions.
5. *Opportunity*: The opportunity structure in which these protests occurred was very benign. The administration of this university seems to have done little to stop the protests. There is no indication that they threatened students with expulsion or called in the police and threatened to use force. As a result the costs to students of participating were minimal; in fact, the weather was warm and students enjoyed the festive atmosphere of the protests outside. Why the administration did not attempt to suppress the protests is unclear. Maybe they did not want to undermine the prestige of the university. Parents send their children to Gallaudet because there they receive a superb education and are with other deaf students. Maybe the administration realized that having a deaf president could be an asset and that keeping a hearing person could be a liability. Maybe a political realignment was occurring on the board, and the initial decision to appoint a hearing president had been anything but unanimous. Finally, the positive media reports on the demonstrations created even more opportunities for students to protest.

## Teaching Ideas

1. *Issue*: The central issue in this case is whether the board should appoint a deaf president. A discussion of the case could focus on the pros and cons of doing so, examining why initially the board did not do this and why students wanted a deaf president. Do the students and the board have different views of Gallaudet? Do they identify with the school for different reasons, with those on the board identifying with its educational mission, while students identify more with its being a place for deaf people?

But this is also a case about collective action. The central issues concern why at this time the students protested the board's decision to appoint another hearing president and why their protests were successful. To get students thinking about these questions, you can ask them *counterfactual* questions. Why in the past had students not protested the selection of a hearing person as president? What has changed so that now students are upset at this decision? Often, student protests do not lead to changes in the decisions that boards or administrators have made. But in this case they did. What happened in this situation that is different from situations in which protests are not successful? After posing these questions and obtaining some tentative answers, lead a discussion in which the class analyzes the collective action using the *Guide*.

2. *Collective Action*: Map out the collective action. Ask students to describe the collective action in terms of its identity, adversaries, and goals. To whom did it speak? Who was the target of its actions? What was its larger vision?
3. *Logic of Collective Action*: Explore with students the logic of this collective action. Begin by looking at student grievances and why students were so upset about the selection of a hearing person as president. Ask students why, this time, student interest in having a deaf president led to protests. Students may focus on the raised expectations among students that the board would select a deaf president. Also highlight how this protest is part of a larger social movement for disability rights.
4. *Mobilization*: Examine how students at Gallaudet were able to mobilize so many students and other deaf people to participate in the collective actions. Was there a free-rider problem that was overcome somehow by organizers of the protests? How did shutting down the university contribute to the mobilization effort? How organized were the protests and collective actions?
5. *Organization*: Discuss with students the level and character of the cohesiveness and netness of the population that served as the base for the collective action. What increased their cohesiveness and netness?
6. *Opportunity*: The situation seemed to be quite benign for the students. Why didn't the administration seek to stop the protests? Why were the costs of participating so low for students? In general, what was going on with the student's adversary, the board? Could there have been divisions on the board? Finally, what role did the media play in this situation?

7. *Constructing Scenarios*: Based on their analysis, it can be interesting to have students imagine being at the beginning of the case, prior to the board's initial decision, and constructing various scenarios about what could happen. Students may, for example come up with a "Board Appoints Deaf President" scenario, "Board Appoints Hearing President and No Protests" scenario, "Protests Overturn Board's Appointment of Hearing President" scenario, and "Protests Fail to Overturn Board's Appointment of Hearing President" scenario. You could also ask students to imagine being on the board trying to figure out what they should do by constructing different scenarios. Would the board have appointed a hearing president if it had imagined a scenario with widespread student protests? Why didn't the board anticipate the extent of the student protests?

### **Critical Thinking Questions**

1. How would you describe Gallaudet University? How do you think students at Gallaudet view their school?
2. Why do you think there had never been a deaf president in Gallaudet University's 124-year history?
3. When the students heard about the board's decision to appoint another hearing person, why did they react with disbelief, incredulity, anger, hostility and outrage?
4. Why do you think the uproar and protests by the students were unexpected by the board and the university's administrators?
5. According to the case, Spillman, the chairperson of the board of trustees, tried to explain the rationale behind the board's decision to appoint a hearing person. What do you think she said to the students to justify the board's decision?
6. Why do you think the protestors used words like "paternalism" and "plantation mentality" to describe the board's actions?
7. After four days of protests and demonstrations, the board reversed itself and met the students' demands. Why do you think that the student protests were successful?
8. If you had been a student at Gallaudet University would you have participated in the protests? If so, why? If not, why not?
9. If you had been a member of Gallaudet's Board of Trustees, would you have voted to reverse the board's original decisions and appoint a deaf president? Explain your reasons for your views on this matter.

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### ***The Worth of A Sparrow (Case 1)***

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#### **Overview**

Phil Larsen, the chair of the Bird Control Committee for the College of Agriculture at the University of Minnesota, is responsible for controlling the

birds which have extensively damaged the college's cereal research plots located in Minneapolis on the university's campus. For years the practice has been to trap and kill the birds, but this practice has come under attack by the Animal Rights Coalition (ARC). ARC's demand that the trapping and killing of the birds stop attracts considerable publicity. The case focuses on the controversy between those who want to protect the research of University scientists and those who put a premium on the value of creature life.

### Analysis

Because there are so many actors and many unknowns, this case is an excellent one for using theories to develop explanations for the problems evidenced in situations. It is important to clarify what the unknowns are and then proceed to explain the conflict using sociological theories.

1. *Unknowns*: Even though there is a great deal of information in this case, much is still unknown and there are critical uncertainties:
  - Does the trapping and killing of birds help to prevent damage to the plots or does it, ironically, increase the survival chances among the surviving birds?
  - What is the cereal research all about? Is it as helpful and valuable as is claimed?
  - What are the university's interests in this situation?
  - What are Phil Larson's views and intentions?
  - What are the ARC's interests? Would it consider sabotaging the traps?
  - Why was there no Bird Control Committee (BCC) prior to the controversy?
  - Why is it so difficult for the parties to reach some sort of compromise?
  - Is killing the birds worth the costs?
  - Why do the BCC and the researchers consider moving the research site to the countryside a last resort?
  - Whose rights are more important—those of the birds or those of the researchers?
2. *Explanations*: Given the unknowns and uncertainties, more research will be needed in order to figure out what to do. The direction that research takes will depend to some degree on how one views the situation and attempts to explain the problems evident in this case. Here are some possible explanations to consider:
  - *Weak Bonds*: The strong bonds in this case are among the agricultural researchers and among the animal rights activists. The bonds seem to be the weakest in the relations between the university and the community. In the past, the university has received bad publicity, and those who live near it are concerned about some of its practices. From this perspective

attention needs to be given to the ties between the university and the community in which it is located.

- *System Problem*: As a whole, the university has many parts that perform important functions: teaching, research, housing and feeding students, fund-raising, space management, and so forth. This case is not about internal problems resulting from some malfunctioning of a part. Rather, it is about external problems and, in particular, the ability of the university to legitimize its activities, in this case its cereal research program.
  - *Tug-of-War*: Though the university owns the cereal plots and can, therefore, decide what to do with them and on them, it does not own the birds. For some people birds are a valuable resource; there are laws protecting some types of birds. The current situation appears to be one in which researchers are better off at the expense of bird lovers being worse-off. Redressing this inequality will require protecting the birds.
  - *Exchanges*: Those on the BCC seem to view the situation from this perspective. They are attempting to find the "best" means of protecting the fields (their "end"). To do this they weight the costs and benefits of various alternatives to killing the birds. It appears that they continue to believe that the most rational way to deal with this problem is to trap and kill. The ARC is viewed as a nuisance that is preventing the University from dealing with this in the most rational manner. However, there are those who question whether killing is rational and effective, and whether there are not alternative means that would work better. To fully analyze the case from this perspective requires examining what is of value to the researchers. It appears that not only are their research and, therefore, the plots valuable, but also the convenience of having the plots in the city is valued.
  - *Webs*: On the surface the case doesn't seem to have many symbols. However, science and the scientific enterprise are very symbolic. The researchers seem to have a view of the ARC as a bunch of people who are naïve about science and its value. The high value that researchers place on science is their social construction and informs the way in which they see the alternatives.
3. *Big Issues*: Though this case is about what Phil and the BCC should do about the destruction of the cereal plots, there are other important issues lurking in the background:
- *Resistance by the Researchers to Moving the Facility Out of the City*: Moving is seen as irrational and a last resort, purportedly because of the inconvenience researchers would experience. But how inconvenient would this really be? Would there not be benefits as well as fewer bird problems with the plots in the countryside? And could the university use the city plots for other purposes? The inability of the BCC to seriously consider moving the research site requires explanation.
  - *The BCC*: This committee is an in-house committee within the Agricultural School composed of people who have an interest in the ongoing cereal

research. While members seek advice and input from others, it is not representative of the various groups who have a stake on the issue of bird control methods. Was the BCC the best mechanism for making a decision on this issue? Should more people with other points of view have been involved in the decision? These questions raise the issue of democratic decision making and how, in conflict situations, to obtain input from all those who could be affected by the decision. It seems that in this situation there is no way for those who are opposed to the bird trapping and killing to voice their opinions except as outsiders through letters, petitions, and the media.

- *Legitimation of Science:* A premise of many of the actors in this case is that the research being conducted is very valuable and therefore takes precedence over everything else. The research is justified because it could reduce world hunger problems and because it has economic ramifications. But are the researchers using jargon about saving the world to justify their own convenience? There is little discussion of how beneficial the research has been. Instead its purported benefits are used to dismiss any alternative to killing the birds that could in any way impede the research.
- *Focus on How to Control:* As a result of who is involved in the decision and how the situation is viewed, the BCC sees its main objective as one of figuring out the best way to control the birds and minimize damage to the experimental plants. This narrow focus precludes the BCC from seeing the larger picture and considering the public relations and even the legal issues. The ability to find a solution that would be win-win, that is, a positive outcome for both the researchers and the ARC, is inhibited by the narrow focus of the BCC.

### Teaching Ideas

This is a complicated case with many people, connections, and interactions. To set the stage, begin the class by showing a video that contains a short news story on the controversy. The video is available from Program for Decision Cases at the University of Minnesota (see "Resources on Cases" section, "Websites and Case Databases": [The Clearinghouse for Decision Case Education: Agriculture, Food, Natural Resources and the Environment](#)). Then proceed to analyze the case:

1. *Actors:* Ask students to map out the actors and social connections in the case. The three main sets of actors are those involved with the university and the BCC, including Phil Larsen; those involved with the ARC; and the media. There are other ancillary actors. Some provide advice while others write to express their point of view.
2. *Unknowns:* Next, ask students to think about what is uncertain and unknown in this case. Ask them to think about what they don't know but would need to know in order to make a decision about the central issue of whether a change in the way in which the cereal fields are protected from the birds is warranted. For each unknown, explore what someone would decide to do if he or she had additional information.

3. *Theories*: Theories can help fill in the missing blanks and identify what is important to know in order to develop an explanation and make a decision. You can examine different theories as a whole class using the *Guide* to discuss the implications of each theoretical perspective for analyzing this situation. Alternatively, the class can be divided into small groups with each group being given one theory to work with and explore. Then the whole class discussion can begin with reports from each group on how their theory is relevant. Either way, you can use the following questions along with the *Guide* to stimulate discussion:
  - Where are the weakest bonds in this case?
  - What is the system problem that needs to be addressed?
  - Over what resources is there a conflict?
  - What are the costs and benefits of the various alternatives to killing the birds?
  - How do you think scientific researchers view this situation? What for them is the value of science?
4. *Moving*: It is important to bring up the question of why moving the fields to the country was considered to be the last resort. This will allow the class to critically examine the claims of the researchers that what is at issue is their ability to do their research.
5. *Process*: It is also instructive to discuss how this decision is being made and why the BCC is making the decision. Would a different decision be made if different people were involved in making the decision? The members of the Plant Pathology Department who are responsible for protecting the plants are in the same school, the School of Agriculture, as the researchers who grow the cereal from the Department of Agronomy. Does this create a conflict of interest? Can they seriously consider the full range of alternatives to killing the birds?

### Critical Thinking Questions

1. In his role as chair of the Bird Control Committee and head of the Department of Plant Pathology, what do you think are Phil Larsen's objectives in this case?
2. What are some of the alternatives to killing the birds? What are the pros and cons of each alternative?
3. Do you think that feeding the dead birds to the raptors helps or hurts the university's case for killing the birds? Explain your position.
4. What role do the media play in this case?
5. Why do you think that moving the research site outside the city is not seriously considered? Do you think this would be a good or a bad idea?
6. Do you think Phil and the BCC will do the "right" thing? What do you think the right thing is in this case?

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## *Conflict at Riverside (Case 2)*

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### **Overview**

Steve Williams and Rod Jessop, brothers-in-law, have very different views on the proposed major redesign of the Riverside Plant. Steve, a senior manager at the plant, sees the new and more automated technologies that are planned as "cutting edge." needed in order for the company to remain competitive. Rod, a prominent trade unionist, claims that some workers will lose their jobs, that the new jobs will be dead-end with little chance of promotions, and that the solidarity among workers will be undermined by the increasing competition for the remaining jobs. The brothers-in-law debate this issue, but neither can convince the other that their perspective on the changes is the correct one.

### **Analysis**

This is an excellent case for examining how there can be different readings of the same situation and how those readings can lead to different stances. In analyzing this case it is important to compare and contrast Steve and Rod's views, explain why they have different views, and explore the assumptions that each of them make.

1. *Stated Reasons for Different Positions:* Steve supports the proposed change while Rod opposes it. Steve's reasons for supporting the change are that the changes involve using cutting-edge technology that will allow the company to be more competitive, and that everyone (owner, workers, and consumers) will benefit. There will be job loss, but job security will be guaranteed during the transition, and Steve believes that the new jobs will be better jobs. Steve sees this change as the way of the future. On the other hand, Rod opposes the change because he believes that jobs will be lost, workers will have a lesser role in the new company, promotions will be rare, job security promises are unlikely to be given when other plants eventually adopt these changes, and the power of the union will be undermined by the divisions created among workers as a result of the proposed changes.
2. *Why Each Holds His Position:* Steve as a manager identifies with management. As such he is future oriented, looking at how the changes will lead to improvements. As a manager, he is concerned about his company's ability to stay ahead of the competition. He is also probably influenced by what other companies are doing and possibly by advice from corporate consultants. Rod holds his position because he represents the union and has been involved in prior management-union conflicts, including a big strike several years ago. Because of his past experiences with management, he doesn't trust them. He is also afraid of what change will bring both for the union and for what work workers will do.
3. *Assumptions:* Underlying their different views are different assumptions about what the change will do and why the company is redesigning the production process. Steve is optimistic. He believes in taking risks in order to be better off. He assumes that the future requires these changes and that

everyone will benefit from them. He believes that technological changes will increase productivity and that the company will survive only if it changes. He also believes that management knows what is best, and that workers and their union should trust them. In contrast, Rod is a realist who thinks more about the consequences, especially the negative consequences, of the proposed change than about what ideally the change is intended to do. He is risk adverse, worried that with the change everything could be lost. He views the situation as us vs. them and is, therefore, skeptical about the promises made by "them." He mistrusts management and assumes that the changes will divide workers and undermine the union.

Steve and Rod hold these different assumptions because they "see" the situation through different theoretical lenses. Steve uses more of a system/integration approach. He sees the company as a unified whole composed of parts. They are all in this together, and each part has to do its part to make the change work. For Steve, the survival of the company is the main issue. Without these changes the company will not survive and everyone, including workers, will lose. In contrast, Rod sees the situation from the perspective of a tug-of-war. For him, it is a misnomer to speak about what is in the company's interests. Managers have interests, as do workers, but they are not the same. What is good for one group may not be good for the other.

4. *Action Plans:* Given their assumptions about the change, they each have markedly different views about what should be done. Steve will work to make the change come about and to make the transition as smooth as possible. Rod sees his role as protecting the workers either by preventing the change or by negotiating conditions under which the change can occur.

### Teaching Ideas

A fun way to discuss this case is to reenact the debate between Steve and Rod. Students can be divided into small groups. Half the groups are "Steve" groups, the other half "Rod" groups. Each group then takes the point of view of its person.

1. After clarifying what the debate is about—whether the company should proceed with the proposed changes—have each group develop a list containing its reasons for its position on this issue. Then, as a whole class, have the people in each group state their reasons for their positions, listing them on the board to show the contrasting views.
2. Then have those in the opposite group explain why they think their adversary holds the position that he does in fact hold. This discussion should focus not on the stated reasons each has for their position. Rather, draw attention to the underlying causes of their stands in terms of what they have at stake, where they are coming from, and what their prior experiences have been.
3. Explore the different "lenses" through which Steve and Rod see this situation by having students examine the assumptions that each person is making. You

can do this by asking each group to think about the assumptions they are making when they developed their views on the change. Point out that something is an assumption for Steve (or Rod) if it is the case that if the assumption changes than Steve (Rod) would no longer hold the position that he in fact does hold. For example, Steve assumes that the only way the company will survive is by changing. This is an assumption because if Steve no longer assumes this, then he would no longer necessarily support the proposed change. After groups work on what their assumptions are, lead a whole class discussion in which you compare and contrast Steve's and Rod's assumptions. It should be clear from the contrast that Steve adopts more of a systems view of the situation, while Rod sees it as a conflictual tug-of-war.

4. You can also explore how the situation would be viewed from the three other theoretical perspectives. Ask students what they would think about the situation if they were an outside consultant viewing the situation from each perspective. Possible ideas are:
  - *Bonds*: There is little sense that workers are part of this company. Connections to it are weak.
  - *Exchanges*: A compromise is needed such that workers get some of things they want and management gives up some things that it wants.
  - *Webs*: There is a real problem of trust here. Each sees the other side as misguided. Steve sees Rod as anti-progress, while Rod sees Steve as out to destroy the union. Steve notes that the company has changed since the big strike, implying that now it can be trusted. But Rod wonders whether this is true.

### Critical Thinking Questions

1. What do you think are the most important differences between Steve's and Rod's views on the proposed changes at the Riverside Plant?
2. Why do you think Rod is unable to convince Steve that his views are correct? Why do you think Steve is unable to convince Rod that his views are correct?
3. How would you explain the fact that Steve and Rod have such different views of the same situation?
4. What is your view of the different "readings" of the situation offered by Steve and Rod?
5. How deep is the conflict between workers and managers at the Riverside Plant? Can it be resolved and, if so, how?

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### *Tossin' and Turnin' (Case 3)*

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#### Overview

Susana, a high school student, takes a job as a counselor at a summer day camp for special needs children. Responsible for four young boys between the ages of 7 and 12, she has her hands full. When one of the boys, Dustin, hints that

there could be major problems at home, Susana does not know what to do. Unable to talk to the camp site director who is always too busy, Susana wonders whether she should probe Dustin for more information or whether she has already overstepped the boundaries of her position as a camp counselor.

### **Analysis**

This case can be used to analyze the dilemmas people face when they are in “helping” roles that require them to work with people who have some sort of problem. Though Susana is just a summer camp counselor and not a social worker or psychologist, she is trying to make the summer experience a positive and developmental one for her campers. The “technology” she uses is non-routine. She must figure out for each boy and each situation what to do prior to doing it, and she must anticipate problems with her plans and figure out on the spot how to deal with them. This is challenging for the young Susana, but she appears to be learning by trial and error, until Dustin hints that something may be going on at home.

1. *Issue and Dilemma:* The central actor in this case is Susana, who faces a dilemma in regards to what to do about Dustin. Should she ask Dustin about his home life? The larger issue here is privacy versus obtaining useful information.
2. *Susana's Role:* The social relationship between Susana as a camp counselor and each of the four boys, her campers, is complex. Her job is to create activities and experiences for the boys that will be fun and educational. Her challenge comes from the fact that each boy has a unique problem that has impeded his development. The camp is purportedly designed to create special conditions that will allow for development among children who have special needs. In the case of children with physical and/or mental handicaps, Susana at least knows what the problem is and can work with the child. But in cases in which the problem is vague, as in the case of those who are there because of unstable family conditions, Susana is left guessing. She can see the low self-esteem and lack of confidence. But she doesn't know what exactly is producing it.
3. *Options:* In these cases in which she is uncertain about the problem, Susana just deals with the outwardly signs of the problem, as when she expresses faith in Dustin and comforts him when he feels unworthy. But Susana finds this option unsatisfactory. If there really is a problem at home, she feels that she is obligated to do something to help and maybe even protect Dustin. But because she doesn't know whether there really is a home problem, she is uncertain about what she should do.
4. *The Camp:* Part of the problem may be the organization of this camp. Susana's difficulty in finding someone from whom to get advice exacerbates an already problematic situation. Susana is just a high school student. She does not have the training and experience to deal with a potential case of child abuse. The fact that this camp does not have adequate supervision and a method for conveying potential concerns to those in charge indicates that there are problems with this organization. Maybe the goals of this camp are

unclear. Is its purpose to give children with special needs an opportunity to have fun? Or is it supposed to help students by giving them opportunities to develop in a context in which people are aware and able to help them with their physical and mental challenges? Maybe the problems at this camp are part of bigger problems having to do with under-funding, too few staff, and too many challenging children.

### Teaching Ideas

This case provides an opportunity to explore two social connectors—social relationships and organizations. Susana faces two problems. First, in her social relationship with Dustin as his camp counselor, she is uncertain what to do when Dustin hints that there may be major problems at home. Second, the organization of the camp, as seen in the inaccessibility of the director, leaves Susana with no one she can turn to for advice and assistance.

1. *Dilemma*: Begin the discussion by asking students what the major dilemma is in this case. Students will focus on Susana's dilemma about whether or not to probe Dustin to see exactly whether there is a problem at home and, if so, what it is.
2. *Susana's Role*: Why is this a dilemma for Susana? To answer this question, ask students to explore Susana's role as a camp counselor for children with special needs. What are some of the behaviors expected of her as a camp counselor? Is she just supposed to provide fun activities for her campers? Is she supposed to help them deal with the challenges that result from their special needs? Susana seems to think that investigating Dustin's situation would be overstepping her role as a camp counselor. Why would doing so go beyond what she thinks are the expectations of her role? Part of the issue here is that Susana sees her job as helping her campers to develop and deal with their problems. How can she do this when she doesn't know what their problem is? Is it part of her role to diagnose the situation and then prescribe remedies?
3. *Susana's Uncertainty*: Susana is uncertain about what her role should be. Why is she uncertain about this? Has her role not been explained to her in the training sessions? Is this a case of role ambiguity? Does she want to expand her role because of her feelings for Dustin?
4. *The Camp*: Susana realizes that she is uncertain about her role and its limits, and desires to decrease her role ambiguity. But the organization of the camp makes this very difficult. Ask students to shift their attention from Susana and her relationship with Dustin to the organization of the camp. Is it a bureaucracy? What are some of the problems it faces? Why is Susana unable to get advice from the site director? Why are there no procedures in place for dealing with cases in which counselors suspect child abuse?

**Critical Thinking Questions**

1. How would you describe Susana's social relationship of a counselor at this summer camp? What does her role entail? What are some of the dos and don'ts of that role?
2. According to the case, each day after camp Susana felt disappointed and unfulfilled. Why do you think she felt that way?
3. How would you describe Dustin? What are his special needs? How does he differ from the three other boys?
4. What did you make of Dustin's statements about his mom?
5. If you had been Susana, would you have asked Dustin about his home life? What are your reasons for your position on this issue?
6. How would you describe this summer camp? What do you think the camp's objectives are? What could be some of the challenges it faces as it tries to obtain their objectives?
7. If you were to reorganize this camp, what would be some of the things you would want to change?

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***Lucy Allman (Case 4)***

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**Overview**

Lucy Allman, a recently certified nurse practitioner, is taken aback when the Bradshaw family comes to the health clinic where she works. The youngest Bradshaw, 18-month-old Melissa, has an ear infection and is anemic. The mother, a 19-year-old woman with two other children, boys ages 3 and 5, has just moved with her new boyfriend to the county in which the clinic is located after her husband left her six weeks earlier. She and her boyfriend are unemployed. They have no health insurance, no money, and are about to be homeless. Lucy knows that this family needs help and tells Mrs. Bradshaw about the WIC program through which she can obtain food vouchers. But all Mrs. Bradshaw wants is the free medicine so her daughter will stop crying.

**Analysis**

In this case, Lucy Allman does not know what to do about the poor situation of the Bradshaw family. She is appalled by the condition of the children and by Mrs. Bradshaw's and her boyfriend's attitudes. It appears that this is one of the first times Lucy has encountered poor people like the Bradshaws, and she doesn't understand their priorities and ways. The dilemma Lucy faces results, in part, from cultural differences between social classes. Whether Lucy will be able to help this family depends in part on whether she can understand why Mrs. Bradshaw seems unwilling to take Lucy's advice and assistance. This is a case about cultural differences between those in the middle class, like Lucy, and those who are poor, like Mrs. Bradshaw.

1. *Resources and Social Classes*: It is instructive to begin by comparing the resources that Lucy and Mrs. Bradshaw have at their disposal. Chapter 4 discusses resources and class, looking at such resources as property, authority, and skills. To understand poverty, you need to broaden the list of resources. Ruby K. Payne lists 8 resources in her book *Poverty: A Framework for Understanding and Working with Students and Adults from Poverty* (Baytown, TX: RFT Publishing, 1995).
  - *Financial*: This is how we usually think of poverty. Mrs. Bradshaw has neither money nor a job. Lucy has a relatively good job.
  - *Emotional*: Being able to choose emotional responses, especially in negative situations, without engaging in self-destructive behavior. Mrs. Bradshaw is nervous at the clinic and unsure of herself, and her boyfriend exhibits hostility. Lucy feels very comfortable. And while she has emotional reactions to the Bradshaws, she keeps them to herself.
  - *Mental*: Having mental abilities and acquired skills to deal with daily life. Mrs. Bradshaw has limited amounts of education, while Lucy is highly educated.
  - *Spiritual*: Having faith and a sense of purpose. Lucy has hope. Mrs. Bradshaw probably feels despair.
  - *Physical*: Health and physical mobility. Mrs. Bradshaw's children, especially the youngest one, is sick. We don't know much about her own health, but it is likely that she will have more health problems than Lucy.
  - *Support Systems*: Having friends, family and backup resources which can be used in times of need. Mrs. Bradshaw, recently abandoned by her husband, appears to have no friends or family she can fall back on. Her only backup was welfare until she met her new boyfriend. Lucy probably has friends and family she could call on in a time of need.
  - *Role Models*: Having adults who are positive models and who do not engage in destructive behaviors. While the case tells us very little about Mrs. Bradshaw's and Lucy's social connections, Mrs. Bradshaw does tell Lucy that she was raised by her grandparents, indicating that her birth parents were not her role models.
  - *Knowledge of Hidden Rules*: Knowing the unspoken cues and habits of a group. This is Payne's way of talking about culture and is discussed more below. We see the hidden rules a bit in Mrs. Bradshaw's unwillingness to have eye contact with Linda and Linda's attempts to find out more about this family.

In sum, the resources that Lucy has at her disposal are quite different from those that Mrs. Bradshaw has at her disposal. It is Mrs. Bradshaw's lack of resources, first and foremost financial resources but also others, that makes her and her family poor.

2. *Class Cultures*: However, as this case shows, there is more to class differences than just resources. Lucy and Mrs. Bradshaw come from two different cultures. This is why Lucy has a hard time understanding Mrs. Bradshaw and

her behaviors and priorities. From her class perspective, Mrs. Bradshaw is irresponsible. Mrs. Bradshaw, in turn, has a great deal of difficulty in understanding Lucy and what she wants. From her perspective, Lucy is meddling in her family's affairs. It is difficult, however, to see in this case the class cultural differences. There are really no symbols, stories, or expressions of beliefs and worldviews in this case. What we see are the resulting behaviors and expressions of attitudes. But here are some contrasts drawn from Payne's analysis of the hidden rules among classes. Payne contrasts the hidden rules of those in poverty, those in the middle-class, and those who have wealth, but here I focus only on the poor and the middle class. Payne's contrasts are meant to highlight class cultural differences. Of course not all poor people will have the worldviews depicted in what follows. Payne's analysis is meant to draw attention to differences between cultures, differences that become apparent in the actions and views of individuals who are in that culture.

- *Possessions*: For the poor, people are important, while for those in the middle class, things are more important.
- *Money*: For those who are poor, money is to be used and spent. For those in the middle class, it is to be managed.
- *Social Emphasis*. For the poor, the emphasis is social inclusion of people whom they like. For the middle class, emphasis is on self-governance and self-sufficiency.
- *Time*: For those who are poor, the present is most important. Decisions are based on survival. For the middle class, the future is more important. Decisions are made after considering future ramifications.
- *Education*: It is valued and revered by those who are poor as an abstract ideal but not as a reality. For the middle class, it is seen as crucial in climbing the success ladder.
- *Destiny*: Those who are poor are more likely to believe in fate and luck. In contrast, those in the middle class believe in choice.
- *Language*: The poor employ a casual register. Language is about survival. The middle class uses a formal register, and language is used to negotiate.
- *Worldview*: For those who are poor, the world is usually seen in local terms, while those in the middle class have a national view of things.
- *Acceptance*: For those who are poor, acceptance is unconditional and based on liking. It is conditional for those in the middle class and based largely on achievement.
- *Driving Force*: For the poor, the driving forces are survival, relationships and entertainment. For the middle class, the driving forces are work and achievement.

Of course these hidden rules and culture motifs are not meant to capture all the orientations of individuals in different classes. Instead, these hidden rules should be seen either as underlying currents that propel behaviors or, better

yet, as tools that those in different classes employ when constructing their social worlds and making social connections.

3. *Culture of Poverty*: It is important when analyzing this case not to fall into the trap of blaming the victims, which in this case means blaming Mrs. Bradshaw for her problems. Mrs. Bradshaw is poor because she lacks the resources she and her family need in order to leave poverty. She is not poor because she lives in a culture of poverty, a culture that purportedly has values that make it difficult for someone to get out of poverty. This view, that a culture of poverty is the main cause of people's inability to leave poverty, leads to blaming victims for their situation. However, it is the case that one of the resources Mrs. Bradshaw lacks is an understanding of middle-class culture. Her inability to deal with middle-class institutions and people stems in part from her own lack of understanding of middle-class symbols, rituals, narratives, and worldviews. It is not so much her own culture that inhibits her from forming connections with those in the middle class. Rather, it is her lack of familiarity with middle-class culture that is crucial.
4. *Solutions*: Given this cultural analysis, Lucy's dilemma involves more than the issue of whether she should give Mrs. Bradshaw the medicine. Lucy also needs to figure out how to bridge a huge cultural divide. Because Lucy and Mrs. Bradshaw come from two different cultures, they talk past each other in the examination room. To connect with Mrs. Bradshaw, Lucy will have to see things from Mrs. Bradshaw's point of view and appeal to the things that are of value to her at this time. Lucy needs to realize that what is most important for Mrs. Bradshaw are her immediate concerns: medicine for her child, finding a place to live, getting food, and minimizing all the bureaucratic hassles that go with obtaining relief. Once Mrs. Bradshaw and her family are more settled and Lucy has built some rapport with her, she can begin the much more involved process of helping Mrs. Bradshaw to understand middle-class culture so that she and her family can begin to form social connections in that world and obtain the resources they need to get out of poverty.

### Teaching Ideas

Students tend to see this as a case about poverty rather than culture. In order to expand student understanding of the situation, it is important to be comparative in the analysis, comparing Lucy's middle-class perspective with the perspective of those who are poor.

1. *The dilemma*: At first glance the case seems quite simple. The dilemma for Lucy is whether to give Mrs. Bradshaw the medicine when she knows that more is needed in this situation. But why is this a dilemma for Lucy? Does she not trust Mrs. Bradshaw to do what is best for her children? Is she worried that she may even abuse her kids, or that her new boyfriend could harm them? Or does she want to help the Bradshaw family get out of poverty and is concerned because clearly just giving her the medicine will not do that? Exploring with students why this is a dilemma for Lucy will help to get out the various tensions that seem to lie below the surface of this case.

2. *Class Differences*: To better understand Lucy's dilemma, it is useful to compare and contrast Lucy's and Mrs. Bradshaw's class positions. More about social classes is presented in Chapter 4, but there the focus is on property, authority, and skills. Although Lucy has authority and skills, while Mrs. Bradshaw has neither, there is more to their class differences than these two things. Ask students either individually or in small groups to describe Lucy and Mrs. Bradshaw. Then use the descriptions along with Payne's list of resources discussed above to draw out how they differ in terms of financial, emotional, mental, spiritual, physical, support systems, role models, and cultural resources. When making these contrasts, use specific actions or traits that are discussed in the case to illustrate the differences.
3. *Cultural Differences*: It is difficult with the information presented in the case to map out the cultural differences between the poor and the middle class. To do this, I give students a "quiz" that can be found in Payne's book (pp. 83-87) that contains three sets of questions. Answering "yes" to the questions in the first set indicates that you know how to survive in poverty. Those who can answer "yes" to questions in the second set know how to live in the middle class, while the last set of questions taps surviving with wealth. Examples from the three sets respectively are: "I know how to feed 8 people for 5 days on \$25." "I know how to get my children in Little League, piano lessons, soccer, and so forth." and "I know who my preferred financial advisor, legal service, designer, domestic employment service, and hairdresser are." While these questions draw stark (some might even say stereotypical) contrasts between class cultures, they do point to important differences. I then hand out Payne's table from her Chapter 3 (pp. 91-92), which compares the hidden rules among classes along 14 different dimensions.
4. *Culture and Resources*: All of this provides the basis for discussing the relationship between resources and culture, and for counteracting the claim that Mrs. Bradshaw's problem is that she lives in a culture of poverty. Use the various theories of culture, especially the culture as a tool kit image, to discuss the problems Mrs. Bradshaw has because she lacks the cultural resources she needs to interact with those working in middle class institutions and settings. It is important to critically examine the claim that it is her culture that prevents her from leaving poverty. Highlight how events in the case (e.g., Mrs. Bradshaw's nervousness) indicate that it is more her lack of understanding and comfort with another culture - the middle-class culture—that creates difficulties.
5. *What should Lucy do?* Lucy's problem is her inability to see things from Mrs. Bradshaw's perspective. Mrs. Bradshaw's culture is foreign to Lucy because Lucy sees things from the point of view of someone in the middle class. If she can see things from Mrs. Bradshaw's perspective, she will learn how to appeal to what Mrs. Bradshaw values in this situation. To help students see this, ask them what Lucy would say to Mrs. Bradshaw after Lucy had imagined being in Mrs. Bradshaw's shoes. What in this situation do they think is most important to Mrs. Bradshaw? What in this situation do they think is most important to Mrs. Bradshaw? After discussing what Lucy could do in the short run, you can discuss what would help Mrs. Bradshaw in the

long run to move out of poverty. In leading this discussion, it is important to return to the issue of resources and how Mrs. Bradshaw could obtain the resources, including cultural ones, that she needs in order to leave poverty.

### **Critical Thinking Questions**

1. What do you think Lucy Allman's initial reaction was upon meeting Mrs. Bradshaw and her family?
2. Why do you think Mrs. Bradshaw is unable to look Lucy in the eyes? Why does Lucy keep trying to make eye contact with her?
3. Why do you think that Mrs. Bradshaw's husband did not believe in welfare and had not let her apply for welfare?
4. After hearing Mrs. Bradshaw's and her children's history from Mrs. Bradshaw, what do you think Lucy's assessment of the situation was?
5. After Lucy hears an aide say "I wonder where these people come from!" she admits that she was thinking the same thing but felt uncomfortable verbalizing the idea. Why do you think she was thinking this? Why do you think she was uncomfortable about thinking this thought?
6. Mrs. Bradshaw and her boyfriend seem to ignore Lucy when she tells them about the WIC program and suggests that they return to the clinic for well-child examinations for her children. How would you explain their behaviors?
7. If you were Lucy would you have given Mrs. Bradshaw the medicine? Explain your reasons for your position on this issue.

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### ***In the Eye of the Beholder (Case 5)***

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#### **Overview**

Bill Hise, a member of Minnetonka's City Council, has to decide whether to vote for a new lawn and nuisance weed ordinance. Prompted by the case of Marjie Kline, whose "natural" yard was cited for noncompliance with the old ordinance, the council has instructed its staff to research and then draft a new ordinance that would balance the interests of property owners who want to protect the value of their property and those who want to have yards that are "environmentally friendly." After a number of drafts the council has to decide whether to approve the new ordinance which allows "natural" yards with certain stipulations.

#### **Analysis**

This case can be used to help students critically examine social change and construct scenarios about the future. In this case, a local city council considers changing its lawn ordinance, prompted by changes in the types of lawns that some people desire to have in this suburban community. Competing interests are at work. Because lawns in the community can affect how residential neighborhoods are perceived by potential and existing homeowners, the lawns

are a public good whose appearance the local government has the right to regulate. As such this is a case not just about conflicts among individual homeowners with different interests, but also a case about the conflict between individual interests and the collective interests of the community and who defines what that collective interest is. Analysis requires exploring the competing interests in this community and how the collective interest is defined.

1. *Competing Interests:* The issue at hand is whether the city council should change its lawn ordinance given increasing interest by some homeowners in having "natural" prairie-like yards. The original ordinance prevents such yards, and one homeowner in particular, who is growing a natural yard, is upset by this. But there are other homeowners who want to keep the original ordinance because they are worried that natural yards will lower property values as well as attract pests. To them, the natural yards look ugly and unkempt. In part the conflict is a matter of tastes and aesthetics. Some people like and others dislike the natural yards. But local residents also see this as a case of economics, environmentalism, and even safety. Some homeowners believe property values will decline. Others champion yards that do not consume lots of water and do not require chemical applications.
2. *Public Good:* In many circumstances, people who differ about what they like can go their different ways because one person's actions do not affect another person's options. But in this case, lawn appearance is seen as a public good by many, that is, a community quality that affects everyone in the neighborhood. Because the appearance and care of yards can have externalities (or at least is perceived by some to have externalities) and can affect others, the city council has the right to regulate the appearance of yards.
3. *Public Interest:* The City Council, therefore, must decide what is in the public's interest. What are the council's short-run and long-run objectives? Does it want to prevent homeowners from neglecting their yards, protect property values, facilitate residential development, beautify the community, protect individual rights, promote environmentally sound practices, control wildlife, or what? It appears that the original ordinance was designed to enable local authorities to force negligent homeowners to maintain their lawns. Is that still the primary objective underlying the council's deliberations?
4. *Dilemma:* What is the dilemma with which Bill and the rest of the council is wrestling? At one level it is whether to vote for an ordinance that allows natural yards with some stipulations. But at another level the dilemma is how to create a balance in this community between tolerance of differences and the need for conformity. People now want to have different types of lawns. But some people want everyone to have the same type of "standard" lawn. Through the "tyranny of the majority," tolerance could decline, the minority could be forced to conform, and eventually diversity could disappear all together. How can the community maintain what the majority values, which is manicured lawns, and still allow those who want environmentally friendly lawns to have them? This larger dilemma raises additional questions. Are those who oppose changing the ordinance so that natural yards are allowed doing so out of ignorance and/or fear? Is there really any basis for their opposition to the change? Is there any evidence that property values could

decline? Are those who want the change really interested in establishing natural and environmentally friendly yards? Or are they just lazy or interested in minimizing the costs of maintaining their home?

5. *Scenarios*: This case is really part of a larger issue about the role of government in regulating individual behaviors. While this case deals with the regulation of homeowner's yards, governments and other quasi-governmental organizations such as homeowner associations regulate many other activities, including what types of uses can occur in a specific geographic area (through zoning laws), housing styles, and the use and placement of signs. Governments also regulate public health by requiring children to be vaccinated and through regulations governing the preparation of food. In all these cases you can imagine three generic scenarios: strong control that permits virtually no differences, virtually no regulation (deregulation) allowing anything to happen, and something in between, in which different types of behaviors are permitted with stipulations. Mapping out these scenarios with regard to specific issues can help students see the different roles regulatory bodies can play. Then, analyzing why a certain scenario is playing itself out can lead to insights into the character of the regulating agency and the community that it is regulating.

### Teaching Ideas

Teaching this case will probably require shifting student attention from the Marjie Kline case to the issue of what the city council should do about the lawn ordinance. To do so it helps to have students examine the bigger issue of conformity vs. tolerance.

1. *Issue*: A good way to begin is to examine what the issue at hand is. Some students will focus on the issue of whether Marjie should be allowed to have the type of yard she wants. But other students will highlight the issue of whether the city council should change its lawn ordinance and whether the new ordinance is a good one. This latter question raises the more fundamental issue of why the city council should have anything to do with the types of lawns people have. To explore this bigger issue, it is helpful to look at the role of governments and regulation.
2. *Regulation*: Ask students why governmental and quasi-governmental agencies such as homeowner associations regulate individual behaviors. Some students will note that governments are attempting to prevent people from unknowingly doing harm to themselves. But others will note that regulation often occurs when individuals, through the pursuit of their own self-interest, engage in behaviors that benefit themselves in the short run but that undermine the collectivity's long-run interests. Because the appearance of a yard can, purportedly, have negative externalities on property values, the collectivity through its government has the right to regulate lawns in order to enhance the long-run interests of homeowners. Is government regulation justified in these situations?
3. *Objectives*: This leads into a discussion of what the government's objectives should be in regulating yards. Allow students to brainstorm possible

objectives either in small groups or as a whole class. You can even ask students to rank the resulting list of objectives.

4. *Decision Points:* It is helpful to review the chronology of events and the various decision points in the case. While there are many occasions on which decisions are made, the two important ones are the initial handling of the complaints against Ms. Kline, and the final decision point when the council has to decide about the new ordinance.
5. *Initial Complaint:* Review with students what options the council had when it first received a complaint about Ms. Kline's yard. The council could have ignored the complaint and not processed it; let the neighborhoods decide (the decentralization option); strengthened the original ordinance so it was clear that there would be no exceptions; begun the process of drafting a new ordinance (which is what the council decided to do); or deregulated yard control, allowing individuals to do what they wanted with their yards. Go through each option, discussing its pros and cons. Through this exercise it should become clearer why and how governments regulate, and why this council decided to continue to do so albeit with a revised law.
6. *The New Ordinance:* Explore with students what the council was trying to achieve with the new ordinance. It is important to get at what the dilemma is here. The larger dilemma is tolerance versus conformity. Should the council accede to the will of the majority and force those in the minority to conform? Or should the council tolerate what the minority wants to do, regulating its activities so that the majority is appeased to some extent? Ask students to look at this situation in terms of a majority and a minority, and whether they think the minority's behaviors should be tolerated or not.
7. *Scenarios:* Finally, you can explore three scenarios: tight regulation and control, no regulation or deregulation, and regulation that allows for controlled variability. Map out each of these scenarios and what forces would lead to one or the other being played out. Have students think about different types of issues such as public health regulations, pollution control, occupational safety and health, regulation of drugs and alcohol, and even regulating religious practices.

### **Critical Thinking Questions**

1. How would you describe the community of Minnetonka? Besides yard care and maintenance, what do you think are some of the pressing issues in communities that are like Minnetonka?
2. Why do you think people in this community are so concerned about the appearance of yards? Do you think these concerns are justified?
3. Why was Marjie Kline upset when she was cited for failing to comply with the original lawn ordinance?
4. At the second council meeting Bill Hise realizes how complex this issue has become. What were the complexities about which he was now more aware?

5. In drafting a new lawn ordinance, what do you think the council's objectives were?
6. If you had been a member of the City Council, would you have voted for the new lawn ordinance? What are your reasons for your position on this issue.
7. If the new ordinance is passed, how do you think those with well-kept yards will react? How will those who want "natural" yards react? How will the media react? How will other communities react? Do you think other communities will view this as a model ordinance and adopt similar language for their communities?

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### *Off to College (Case 6)*

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#### **Overview**

This case is about three high school friends, Brian, Matt, and Jason, going off to college. While they are good friends, the boys are quite different in terms of both social background and interests. Brian, the leader of the group, is from a fairly well-to-do family, is quite popular, and will join the fraternity to which his father and grandfather belonged. Matt comes from a large family and has had to work in order to pay for college. Jason is from a poor single-parent family and is able to go to college because of a basketball scholarship. After three days of orientation, the young men head downtown and encounter a young woman who gives them a coupon for free admission to a local bar. Over dinner they debate whether to go. Brian intends to go, but Matt expresses reservations. After watching underage drinkers enter the bar, Brian enters, followed by Matt. But as Jason enters he is stopped by the uniformed doorman.

#### **Analysis**

This is an excellent case for students to practice using their understanding of social connections, especially social relationships and groups, to analyze a situation.

1. *Friendship Relationships*: One way to analyze this case is to focus on the friendship relationship between Brian, Matt, and Jason and how that relationship could be changing as a result of the new environment. It is important to explore why these boys are such good friends and the imbalance in the relationship with Brian being the leader.
2. *Identities*: This case is also about the salience of different identities. Each boy appears to have different reference groups and identities. Brian identifies with the fraternity that he will soon join, and he considers himself to be popular and a good student. Matt's identity as being fat was at one time for him a stigma, but now he probably thinks of himself more as a hard worker, football player, and pizza parlor manager. Jason's identity is as a basketball player, athlete, and someone from a poor single-parent family. Their identities are related to their behaviors as each boy has different things to gain and lose by entering the bar. Exploring the relationship between their

social backgrounds, their interests, and their identities can lead to interesting insights into their behaviors.

3. *Peer Pressure*: This is very much a case about peer pressure and conformity. The pressure seems to come from three sources: Brian, the leader of the group; the co-ed who invites them to the bar; and the larger group of students who are ignoring the laws against underage drinking. The case can be used to discuss the power groups can have over individuals, and how a person's desire to be part of a group can lead to conforming behavior. This case, therefore, provides an excellent vehicle for exploring both the value of groups as a source of identity and the problem of groups—conformity. How and when do groups become more than just sources of identity? When do they become forces promoting conformity?
4. *Role Transitions*: It is helpful to think about this case as one of a role transition from a high school to a college student. These boys are at the beginning of the role transition process. How are the two roles similar? How are they different? How will they be socialized into the new role? Will old social relationships such as their friendship be challenged by new roles and relationships?
5. *Deviance*: As a case about underage drinking, this case can be used to look at what is considered deviant and how behaviors become labeled as deviant. While drinking under the age of 21 is illegal, it is not considered deviant by many people. This case can, therefore, be used to explore the difference between norms and laws. Why is it illegal to drink under the age of 21? Why in college towns is it the norm to drink under this age? These issues can lead into a discussion of the drinking culture on college campuses and the factors that promote underage drinking, including drinking establishments that profit from such drinking.
6. *Gender*: Though not the central issue of this case, gender does play a role. A woman invites them to the bar, and the three central characters are males. Would the situation have been different if a male had invited them? Would the situation have been different if the three friends were all women?

### Teaching Ideas

When teaching the case there are two issues that students raise that need to be addressed. First, some students see this as a case of different personalities: the outgoing Brian, the stigmatized Matt, and the quiet Jason. Second, some students believe that Matt and Jason should have resisted the peer pressure. But students may not have thought much about why Matt and Jason did not do this. In leading a discussion of this case it is important to (1) shift attention from individual personalities to social connections and (2) explore the reasons Matt and Jason entered the bar when they had a lot to lose.

1. *Issues*: Begin by exploring the central issues of this case. Students will note that this is a case about underage drinking and whether each boy should enter the bar. But there are other issues, such as whether these three young men will remain friends and whether each will succumb to peer pressure.

2. *Identities*: It is very interesting to explore the different identity hierarchies that Brian, Matt, and Jason have. You can divide students into three groups, a "Brian," "Matt," and "Jason" group. If these groups are too large (i.e., more than 4-5 students in each group) you can have two or more of each type of group. Have each group pretend that they are the relevant young man and write down on a sheet of paper 10-15 answers to the question "Who Am I?" Then tell them that responses to this question typically fall into one of three categories:

- *Role Identities* related to group membership, such as band member, student, or poet.
- *Personal Descriptions* such as statements about physical appearance (tall, long hair), interaction style (extroverted or introverted) or personality (moody, optimistic).
- *Self-Evaluations* which involve judgments about the adequacy of role performances (e.g., good singer or struggling poet).

In groups, have students label each response in terms of whether it is an identity, description, or self-evaluation, and then list on a separate piece of paper just the identities. Finally, have them rank-order the identities as best they can. After the groups have done these tasks, reconvene the whole class and have each group put up on the board their identity hierarchy. Compare and contrast the three boys' identity hierarchies and examine why for each boy certain identities are more salient, using the ideas presented in the text. Note how the self-evaluations are about the identities highest on the list. Finally, and most important, discuss how the different identities are affecting each boy's views and behaviors about entering the bar.

3. *Friendship Identity*: The importance of the friendship identity will become clear through the above exercise. It is useful to explore this identity and the characteristics of friendship relationships. Many first-year students are making new friends while trying to maintain old ones, so they will have lots to say about what friendship is and what they think of the friendships in this case. Such a discussion can lead into the value and problems of friendships and more generally groups. Students will note that through friendships they feel a sense of belonging and have identities. But they will also note how friendships and the desire for them can lead to conformity and can become a form of peer pressure.
4. *Conformity*: Though not explicitly discussed in the text, this case can be used to introduce students to social-psychological research on conformity. This can lead into an interesting discussion of when and how groups become so powerful that they lead individuals to do things they would not otherwise have done.
5. *Role Transition*: An interesting exercise involves having students imagine how Brian's, Matt's, and Jason's identities will change in the next couple of years. Ask them which identities will become more salient and which will decrease in importance. Then you can discuss why they think there will be these

changes and how they could be related to changes in their social roles, groups, and more generally social connections.

6. *Decision:* After it is clear where each boy is coming from, students will want to discuss what they would have done if they had been in each boy's position. It is important to help them to see how their views on this issue are related to their analysis of who each boy is.
7. *Big Picture:* I often conclude the discussion by shifting attention to the context by drawing attention to another important social actor in this case—the local bars that are allowing and sometimes encouraging college students to drink on their premises. This can lead into a discussion of underage drinking, both in terms of why those under 21 are not legally allowed to drink and why drinking is such an important part of college life.
8. *Gender:* Though gender issues are not the central focus of the case, it is interesting to note that the case is about three young men. An interesting discussion often occurs when you ask students what would have happened if instead the case had been about three young women being invited by a young man to go to the bar.

### **Critical Thinking Questions**

1. How would you describe Brian, Matt, and Jason? In what ways are these three friends similar? In what ways are they different?
2. How do Brian, Matt, and Jason differ in their views on whether they should go to the Cove? How would you explain these different opinions?
3. If you were Jason, what would you have done? Would you have told the truth to the doorman and gone home or waited outside for your friends? Would you have lied and gone into the bar?
4. If you were Matt, once you saw Jason being questioned, what would you have done?
5. Do you think it would be more “deviant” for Matt to not drink his entire college career or to drink while he was under 21?
6. What do you think about these boys' friendship? Do you think it will last? Explain your views.
7. Even though drinking under the age of 21 is illegal, it seems that in this community the law is not enforced. Why do you think this is the case? Should the law be changed, or should it be kept and enforced?
8. If these three new college students had been young women instead of young men, would things have turned out differently?

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## *What's So Scary About the Truth? (Case 7)*

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### Overview

Thomas Hoffman, an English and journalism teacher at a high school in a well-to-do community, has to decide whether to allow the results of a sex survey that students conducted at the high school to be published in the student magazine. Tom, who has taught at the high school for over nine years, knows how conservative parents are in this community. The actions of the Parent Advisory Council and the School Board have resulted in books being taken off the school library's shelves and the overturning of the high school staff's plan to put condom machines in the high school, a decision prompted by a student-led initiative. The journalism class has decided to do the survey because it hopes that the information will show parents and students that there are issues about teenage sexuality that this community has to confront. Already parents have complained about the survey, and members of the Parent Advisory Council have called the principal. Caught between the parents and his students, Tom has to decide whether to print the story or withdraw it from publication.

### Analysis

This is an excellent case for using many of the sociological ideas and concepts presented in *Sociology in Action*. To analyze this case, students need to see the social connections, use theories to explore different perspectives on the case, decode the culture, uncover the power relations, and imagine what could happen by looking at the driving forces of collective action and demography. This case is probably most useful towards the end of the course, either in the section on power and inequalities or the section on imagining futures.

1. *Social Connections*: In this case there are social relationships, groups, organizations, and, to a lesser extent, networks. Of particular importance are both the parent-teacher and teacher-student relationships. Because of the character of this community, parents are involved in the school. As a result, parent-teacher relations are important; as Tom notes, that can be both an advantage and a problem. There are important groups such as the parents, teachers, students, the School Board and the Parent Advisory Council. And action takes place within an organization, the Bellevue High School.
2. *Theories*: Insights about this case can be obtained by considering the strong social bonds among parents, the conflicting tug-of-war over what the school can and can not do, and the webs of interaction that have created various forms of interacting.
3. *Culture*: An important aspect of this situation is the traditional and conservative character of this community's culture. Tom notes the conservative culture of this upper-middle-class, suburban community and its lack of cultural, religious, and racial diversity.
4. *Power and Inequalities*: To understand this community and its parents, you need to understand its class character. The parents want their children to have the very best, and they want them to be rewarded for hard work and

effort. There are very good schools not just because the community's wealth allows them to finance good schools, but also because parents care and are involved in their children's education. The class character of this community creates pressures on teachers. Parents, through the Parent Advisory Board and the School Board, appear to have a good deal of power, especially the veto power to stop things that they do not like. Teachers, because of their position within the school, have some power, especially when it comes to what goes on in their own classrooms. Students, it appears, have very little power. They try through teachers to make changes, but they do not possess any resources of their own that could give them power vis-à-vis others.

5. *Driving Forces*: The demographic make-up of this community seems to be very important. The lack of diversity, the upper-middle-class character, and strong parent attachment to the community that probably results from people living there a long time (or intending to do so) create a very tight-knit community in which everyone knows everyone, but also a closed community that is afraid of outside influences. Though at first glance this appears to be an ideal community for raising children, there are problems as evidenced in the teen-age pregnancy epidemic. Students have grievances. They have interests that they believe are not being met, such as the need for birth control and the desire to freely express their views and not be censored. Because of their high levels of catness (resulting from their all being high school students) and netness (resulting from their friendship ties), students have the ability to mobilize resources to pressure for changes. However, their collective actions do not appear to be very effective. Those whom they are pressuring to change, such as school board members, seem unreceptive to the student appeals, though the staff of the high school does seem receptive.
6. *Dilemma*: Tom's dilemma—whether to allow publication of the sex survey findings – is, as Tom notes, a lose-lose situation. Either he will anger parents or his students. As he considers what to do, he has to take into account the implications of his two choices. If he stops the publication, he undermines his relationship with his students and, in turn, his ability to help them learn. He also would be sending what he thinks is the wrong message to them. On the other hand, publishing the article is likely to undermine his rapport with parents and could even lead to him losing his job. If Tom is to turn this from a lose-lose situation to a win-win situation, he needs somehow to demonstrate to parents that the article is not a threat to their way of life.
7. *Future Scenario*: The dilemma Tom faces emerges only because of resistance by parents to the discussion of sexuality issues in schools. In order for Tom to find a way out of his dilemma, he needs to figure out why there is so much opposition in this community to anything having to do with sexuality. Is it that parents believe that they should be the only ones to teach and discuss sexuality with their children? Do they believe that teachers will do a poor job of educating their children about sexuality, possibly giving them ideas that they, the parents, do not want their children to have? Or are they trying to prevent sexual activity, thinking that discussion of sexuality, books on sexuality, and condom machines will promote sexual activity? Why are the parents so naïve about their children's sexual activity? In order to construct a

scenario in which Tom is able to print the results of the sex survey, Tom will have to imagine a way in which to allay parental fears and concerns. If this is not possible, then, given the power parents wield in this community, it is unlikely that Tom will be able to do what he wants to do and publish the story.

### Teaching Ideas

This case provides an excellent opportunity for students to use many of the skills they have acquired through the course.

1. *Dilemma*: Begin by having students produce a description of what this case is about. Have them describe the central characters, including the collective actors. What is Tom's dilemma? Ask students how this case is similar to and different from the other cases that they have been discussed so far in the course.
2. *Social Connections*: Have students identify the important social connections in this community. Ask students about Tom's role as a teacher and the connections he has to both parents and students. Look at the various groups and the organization of the school.
3. *Theory*: Shift perspectives on the case. Because this case is about a conflict, students are likely to look at it as a tug-of-war. Over what resources are the parties in conflict? What is the conflict about? The case can also be seen in terms of social bonds, webs of interaction, and even tradeoffs and exchanges.
4. *Culture*: Culture is very important in this case. Ask students how they would describe the culture of this community. Tom notes that the community has traditional values. What are traditional values? How do these values inform parental views of sexuality? What are the cultural implications of the lack of diversity that Tom notes?
5. *Social Class*: This is a very well-to-do community. What are the implications of the upper-class character of the community? The important divisions in this community appear to be generational, between parents and children (students). What are parent's interests, and how are they able to pursue them? What resources do they have at their disposal?
6. *Student Grievances and Collective Actions*: Why is it that students have expressed such a strong interest in sexuality issues? How are students able to pursue their interests? Why have they had limited success so far?
7. *Action Plan*: The initial focus of students will be on what Tom should do. Should he allow publication of the survey results, thereby empowering students but damaging his relationships with parents? Or should he prevent publication, thereby frustrating his students but maintaining his legitimacy in the community? This is a lose-lose situation. What could Tom do that to make this a win-win situation? Leading a discussion about this requires examining why parents have been so opposed to anything having to do with sexuality in the schools. This is the big unknown in the case. We know that parents time and time again have interfered in school policies concerning this issue, but

why? Having students brainstorm possible reasons for parental resistance can lead to interesting insights into what Tom could do in this situation.

8. *Sexuality*: Finally, you can use this case to have an interesting discussion of how teenagers learn about sex and birth control. What role do parents, teachers, religious clergy and educators, and peers play in the process by which young people learn about their sexuality? Are teenagers receiving the quality information they need to make informed choices about their sexual activities?

### Critical Thinking Questions

1. How would you describe Thomas Hoffman, the high school teacher? What do you think are the different "pulls" on him that could affect the decision he has to make?
2. How would you describe the students in Tom's twelfth-grade journalism class?
3. What are the important characteristics of the community of Bellevue? What do you think are some of the advantages of growing up in a community like this? What do you think are some of the problems that communities like this face?
4. What are the events that led to Tom's dilemma about printing the results of the sexuality survey? Why do you think the students wanted to conduct a sexuality survey?
5. Do you consider the results of the sex survey of consequence to the student readers in this high school? What are your views on this?
6. Why do you think parents have been so resistant to anything having to do with sexuality being dealt with at the high school?
7. What do you think are Tom's options in this situation? What are the consequences of the various courses of action he could take? In your view, what should Tom do?

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### *People Like You (Case 8)*

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#### Overview

Ted's life is turned upside down when his young wife dies and he has to raise his infant daughter. Unable to find affordable child care, he quits his job and goes on welfare. But after two years his welfare checks in Alberta, Canada, are stopped. So he decides to move to Vancouver where his sister lives and where he can immediately collect welfare until he is able to find a job. After moving in with his sister's family, Ted looks for work while his sister takes care of his daughter. But when his brother-in-law's small business faces hard times, Ted's sister has to take a job. Ted once again is forced to stop looking for work and care for his daughter.

## Analysis

This case provides an opportunity to discuss the difficulties people have from time to time in living the lives that they want to live. Ted, through no fault of his own, is thrown into poverty and has to collect welfare. He is unable through his own efforts to get off of welfare and out of poverty. In fact, he constantly seems to be thrown back into depending on welfare. Combined with the fact that he feels that he is being labeled as one of those poor people, Ted does not know what to do in order to get out of this predicament. He tries moving, using the support system of his extended family, and looking for work. But for a variety of reasons he is still unable to get off of welfare. This case provides an opportunity to explore the larger social forces as well as the idiosyncratic factors that can affect what people are able to do.

1. *Dilemma*: The central dilemma in this case is Ted's—how to get back on his own two feet and raise his daughter without depending on welfare and family support. The larger issue is the factors that impede and facilitate exiting from poverty and welfare dependency. The cause of Ted's poverty is not the issue, as he keeps telling himself when others label him as one of those poor people. In his case the cause is a tragedy—the death of his wife—that leads to a chain of events culminating in his quitting his job and going on welfare in order to take care of his infant daughter. What is important is not why he became poor but his inability to leave poverty and get off of welfare. Exploring the reasons for this can lead to important insights.
2. *Exiting Poverty*: There are many theories about what impedes and what facilitates exiting poverty. Tom's actions highlight some of the factors that prior research has identified. Going on welfare can be a strategy for moving out of poverty. Financial assistance enables people to obtain the means to live and care for their dependents. Reliance on kin is another strategy. Finding work is still another means. What this case highlights is the problems with these strategies. Welfare is temporary and can lead to dependence. Relatives have their own problems, and their resources are often limited. And work can be hard to find given one's skills, experiences, and the state of local labor markets.
3. *Driving Forces*: Analyzing this case requires, therefore, exploring the background conditions, the factors that if they were to change would affect Ted's situation. The most important background factor is the welfare system that in Canada varies from province to province. Reforms of the welfare system have made it no longer possible for Ted to receive welfare in Alberta, and the new changes in British Columbia will now prevent him from receiving welfare there. To understand this case requires examining why these welfare changes are occurring and their implications for people like Ted. Another important background factor is the economy and, in particular, the labor market. Initially it appears that opportunities exist in Vancouver and that the economy there is in good shape. But Ted has difficulty finding a job that pays more than his welfare benefits. And Ted's brother-in-law's business experiences difficulties.

4. *Scenarios*: Ted's success in figuring out what to do will depend on his ability to imagine various scenarios and the probability that they will occur. With changes in welfare policy, the economy, and his sister's family's status, there is a great deal of uncertainty about what the future will bring. Possible scenarios are the Welfare Scenario (get back on welfare once eligible), the Family Business Scenario (help his brother-in-law), the Marriage Scenario (find a partner), and the Retraining Scenario (go back to school).
5. *Stigmatization*: Part of the problem in this case is the stigmatization Ted feels as a result of being poor. Time and time again, others talk about “people like you” as if Ted falls into a category of people who are unwilling to get out of poverty. When Ted moves to Vancouver, he becomes excited and hopeful; but when he is stigmatized as a lazy poor person by his brother-in-law, he once again feels the pain of being seen as an undeserving poor person. The distinction that people and welfare systems make between *deserving* and *undeserving* poor contributes to this stigmatization. Those who are poor are constantly being judged by others as to whether they deserve help or not.

### Teaching Ideas

Students can learn a great deal from this case about poverty, welfare, and the larger driving forces that affect people's ability to leave poverty.

1. *Dilemma*: Begin by exploring what Ted's dilemma is, leading into the larger issue of the processes by which people exit poverty. Note that this is not a case about the causes of poverty. You can discuss some of the causes, such as low wages, unemployment, divorce and abandonment, chemical dependencies, mental and physical handicaps, and tragedies like the death of Ted's wife. But this case is about the problems people have in leaving poverty once they find themselves in poverty.
2. *Exiting Poverty*: Brainstorm with the class ways in which people are able to leave poverty. Students are likely to identify a number of factors including finding a well-paying job, retraining, moving, and family assistance. Some may even note that welfare is an exit strategy. After mapping out some exit strategies, ask students to look at what Ted has done and which strategies he has pursued. Why has he done some of these things and not others? Answering this question will lead into the social connections Ted has with others and how those connections influence what Tom does to get out of poverty.
3. *Driving Forces*: Ted's ability to take various routes out of poverty depends on the background conditions of this case. Explore with students what are the important driving forces that can or have resulted in changes. Students are likely to discuss welfare reform and possibly changes in the economy and labor markets.
4. *Scenarios*: Have students, either in groups or as a whole class, imagine various scenarios about Ted's future.
5. *Stigmatization*: Finally explore with students the title of the case—“People Like You.” Where does this title come from? Discuss how Ted feels about

being poor and how he thinks other people see him. Use the distinction between the deserving and undeserving poor to help students explore the consequences for people's sense of self of constantly being judged as deserving or undeserving.

### **Critical Thinking Questions**

1. How would you describe Ted? What are his significant social connections? What do you think are his salient identities?
2. Why did Ted decide to leave Alberta? At one point he says he is tired of things there. What do you think he is tired of?
3. A week after arriving in Vancouver, Ted has a heated argument with his brother-in-law, Rick. What was this argument about? What are the different views that Rick and Ted hold?
4. Families can be a safety net for those experiencing difficulties. In this case what kinds of support did Connie and Rick give Ted and Ramona? What else do you think they could have done?
5. At the end of the case, Ted does not know what to do. What do you think are some of his options given his situation? Which of these options would you recommend that he pursue?
6. Ted's situation is made more difficult by welfare reform and changes in welfare policy. What are some of the reforms discussed in this case? Why do you think welfare is being reformed? What do you think of the reforms that have occurred?

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### ***Lisa's Hidden Identity (Case 9)***

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#### **Overview**

Lisa, a lesbian from a not-well-off family, is able to attend an expensive private university after receiving a ROTC scholarship. But in order to activate the scholarship, she must sign a form indicating that she is not a homosexual. Believing she has no choice, she signs the form. But now she must hide her sexual orientation, something that she is not used to doing. This is made more difficult after going out on a date with Jenny. When Lisa finds out the Jenny's brother is also in the ROTC, Lisa does not know what to do.

#### **Analysis**

This case can be used to discuss issues related to both social identities and gender. The central issue concerns Lisa's attempt to hide her sexual orientation and identity as a lesbian. This is necessary because she has signed a form indicating that she is not who she really is, something she had to do in order to receive her scholarship. Lisa's dilemma is whether she should continue to hide her identity. Analysis of this case requires explaining why Lisa made these decisions and what she should do now.

1. *Lisa's Decisions*: It is instructive to begin by exploring all the decisions Lisa has made. Lisa early on decides to be open about her sexual orientation, including telling her parents. Lisa decides to attend a private and expensive university. She also decides to apply for the ROTC scholarship and to accept it once she receives it. She decides to sign the statement that she is not a homosexual. While at this university, Lisa decides to keep her sexual orientation a secret. Finally, Lisa decides to go out with Jenny. The point is that Lisa's quandary is the result of prior decisions and how they interact with the situations in which she now finds herself. For example, while we do not know why Linda wanted to go to Private University, we do know that her family's limited resources made this difficult. We also know that Linda signed the form because she wanted to stay at Private University, but the military's policy on homosexuals made it difficult for her to do so and be open about her sexual orientation. The quandary Lisa confronts is, therefore, the result of both the constraints she faces, her desires, and the prior decisions she has made.
2. *Identities*: As discussed in Chapter 2, identities are something that people usually want to act upon. A hidden identity seems like a contradiction of terms. Identities are something people enact, so to have an identity that one can not enact is contradictory. You would imagine that over time a person who is hiding an identity would either give up the identity or find a way to be able to live that identity. So when people hide identities we usually think of those actions as involuntary and possibly the result of discrimination. Understanding Lisa's situation requires, therefore, analyzing the discrimination homosexuals face and how it can lead them to hide their identities in order to not be discriminated against.
3. *The ROTC Policy*: To understand this case requires analyzing the ROTC policy and more generally the military's policy towards homosexuality. Are these policies discriminatory? On what grounds are they justified? Are they based on prejudices and misunderstandings? Do they contribute to prejudice and stereotyping?
4. *Lisa's Dilemma*: Lisa appears to be in a no-win situation. If she comes out, she will probably lose her scholarship and no longer be able to attend Private University. If she continues to hide her identity, she will not be able to be herself and to have the kinds of relationships and social interactions that she wants to have. Has Lisa put herself in this no-win situation by signing the piece of paper? Would Lisa be in this situation if the military didn't have the homosexuality policy that it does have? Is Lisa in a position to challenge the policy?

### Teaching Ideas

Students find this case very interesting, and it can be used to discuss their views on homosexuality and homophobia, as well as explore issues about identities.

1. *Decisions*: One way to begin a discussion of this case is to look at all the decisions that Lisa makes. Ask students to help you develop a list. Then look

at each decision and explore why she made it by examining both her desires and her constraints. This discussion will help students see that decisions are the result of the interaction between prior decisions, situational constraints, and individual desires and interests, including identities.

2. *Lisa's Identities*: Have students construct what they think Lisa's identity hierarchy looks like. Who is Lisa? What are her various identities? How do they think she would rank them in terms of their salience? The discussion is likely to point out that Lisa is a student, from a lower-working-class background, a member of ROTC, in love, and a lesbian. She also probably identifies with her school.
3. *Hidden Identities*: It is very interesting to explore with students the phenomena of hidden identities. After noting that this seems like a contradiction in terms, ask students to give examples of people who hide identities or situations in which people have done so. Students are likely to give lots of different examples, most of which will fall into one of three categories:
  - People who are being persecuted and discriminated against and who, therefore, could be harmed if they didn't hide their identity
  - People who are pretending to be someone or something else in order to impress someone or get something
  - People who are viewed by others as deviant or who are engaging in behaviors that are illegal

It is interesting to explore for each of these types the dynamics of hiding identities and the way the actions of others (or the attempt to influence others) leads to hiding an identity.

4. *Homosexuality and Homophobia*: This case provides an opportunity to discuss sexual orientation and the changing societal views on it. This can be an occasion for exploring how stereotypical views of gender relations often lead to homophobic reactions to homosexuality. Ask students whether they think views on homosexuality have been changing and why. Should gays and lesbians have the same rights as heterosexuals? Why does the military have the policy it currently has about homosexuals? Does this policy contribute to homophobia?
5. *Lisa's Dilemma*: As noted above, Lisa appears to be in a non-win situation. Given this, what could Lisa do? Some students will want to return to some of Lisa's earlier decisions and examine why she did what she did. Some may even argue that Lisa reaped what she sowed. Her mistake was when she signed the form and lied about her sexual orientation. Other students will argue that she was forced to lie, and that the problem is the ROTC policy, which should be changed. But what would lead the military to change this and its other policies regarding homosexuality?

### **Critical Thinking Questions**

1. How would you describe Lisa? What are some of the important things about her that you would need to know to understand her situation?
2. In high school Lisa was very open about her sexual orientation. Why do you think she was open about it?
3. Why do you think the ROTC was asking its scholarship holders to sign the form about homosexuality?
4. If you had been Lisa, would you have signed the form? If so, why? If not, why not?
5. Do you think Lisa will discuss her situation with Jenny? If you were Jenny and Lisa told you about her the problem, what advice would you give her?

## VII. Resources on Cases

### *Resources on Case Teaching and Writing*

- Boehrer, John. 1995. "How to Teach a Case" [Web Page]. Accessed 10/17/00. Available at <http://www.hallway.org/members/scripts/howto.asp>.
- . 1994. "On Teaching a Case." *International Studies Notes* 19(2):14-20.
- Boehrer, John and M. Linsky. 1990. "Teaching with Cases: Learning to Question." *New Directions for Teaching and Learning (The Changing Face of College Teaching)* (42):41-57.
- Christensen, C. R., David A. Garvin, and Ann Sweet, editors. 1991. *Education for Judgment: The Artistry of Discussion Leadership*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Christensen, Roland C. 1987. *Teaching and the Case Method*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School.
- Hutchings, Pat. 1993. *Using Cases to Improve College Teaching: A Guide to More Reflective Practice*. Washington, DC: American Association of Higher Education.
- . 1993. "Windows on Practice: Cases about Teaching and Learning." *Change* 25(6):14-21.
- Lynn, Laurence E. Jr. "Welcome to the Case Method!" [Web Page]. Available at <http://www.hallway.org/members/scripts/welc.asp>.
- Sharkey, Stephen. 1993. "Case Number Two: Social Structure and Personal Freedom: A Case about Teaching Introductory Social Science." *Change* 25(6):30-32.
- Silverman, Rita, William M. Welty, and Sally Lyon. 1993. "Case Method Teaching: How to Do It." Pp. 51-55 in *Case Studies for Teacher Problem Solving*, edited by Rita Silverman, William M. Welty, and Sally Lyon. New York: McGraw Hill Higher Education.
- . 1993. "To the Student." Pp. 1-6 in *Case Studies for Teacher Problem Solving*, edited by Rita Silverman, William M. Welty, and Sally Lyon. New York: McGraw Hill Higher Education.
- Simmons, Steve R. "An Introduction to Case Study Education" [Web Page]. Accessed 10/18/00. Available at <http://www.decisioncase.edu/intro.htm>.

Wasserman, Selma. 1994. *Introduction to Case Method Teaching: A Guide to the Galaxy*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Wilkinson, J. and J. Boehrer. 1993. "Crossing the Rubicon: Twenty-Four Faculty Transform Their Teaching. A Diary and Reflections." *Change* 25(6):52-58.

### ***Books with Cases***

Kleinfeld, Judith S. and Zuanne Yerian, editors. 1995. *Gender Tales: Tensions in the Schools*, New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.

Morgan, Gareth. 1989. *Creative Organization Theory: A Resourcebook*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Silverman, Rita, William M. Welty, and Sally Lyon. 1996. *Case Studies for Teacher Problem Solving*. Second edition. McGraw Hill Higher Education.

Wasserman, Selma. 1993. *Getting Down to Cases: Learning to Teach With Case Studies*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

### ***Web Sites and Case Databases***

#### Case Clearinghouse: Simon Fraser University

Selma Wasserman has been writing cases and helping her students write cases for many years. She has a large database of cases, many of which have to do with schools. For more information about the cases available through the Case Clearinghouse, contact Selma Wasserman, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C., CANADA V5A 1S6.

#### Case Studies In Science: University Of Buffalo

<<http://ublib.buffalo.edu/libraries/projects/cases/case.html>>

This site provides a directory of workshops, readings, online journals, societies and cases online. Links and descriptions to many important case education sites, as well as online cases and resources are also available.

#### CaseNet: Active Learning in International Affairs

<<http://csf.colorado.edu/CaseNet/>>

A site with information on teachers who use cases and examples of cases that they have developed. Emphasis is on international studies cases. You can also join the CaseNet listserver through this site.

#### Center for Cases Studies: Pace University

<<http://www.pace.edu/CTRCaseStudies/>>

Contains information on a superb working conference for college faculty on cases held annually. The Center for Case Studies initially published cases for teacher education. But it also has superb cases in its Case Studies for Faculty Development Series. For information on cases available through this center, contact Rita Silverman at the Center for Case Studies in Education at Pace University, Pace University, 861 Bedford Road, Pleasantville, NY 10570.

[Electronic Hallway](http://www.hallway.org/tour.htm)

<<http://www.hallway.org/tour.htm>>

The Electronic Hallway offers teaching cases, exercises, role-plays, teaching workshops, and curriculum planning resources to faculty focusing on public administration and public policy. You need a password to access this site, which is easy to obtain. Good case teaching resources are available through this site.

[Georgetown University Institute for the Study of Diplomacy \(GUISD\)](http://www.guisd.org/)

<<http://www.guisd.org/>>

A database of cases dealing with international relations. Cases are organized by geographic region and country. The Institute for the Study of Diplomacy is part of the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University.

[Harvard Business School Publishing](http://www.hbsp.harvard.edu/)

<<http://www.hbsp.harvard.edu/>>

The Harvard Business School has been the premier place for the development and use of cases for many years. Through this site you can access the huge database of Harvard Business School cases and other information on teaching with cases.

[Kennedy School Caseweb: Case Studies In Public Policy And Management](http://ksgwww.harvard.edu/~ksgcase/caseweb/)

<<http://ksgwww.harvard.edu/~ksgcase/caseweb/>>

The Case Program at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University is the world's largest producer and repository of case studies designed for teaching about how government works, how public policy is made, and how nonprofit organizations operate. The more than 1,800 cases in this database tend to be longer, but are very interesting. A superb resource for anyone interested in teaching with cases.

[Sociology Cases Database Project](http://www.nd.edu/~dhachen/cases/index.html)

<<http://www.nd.edu/~dhachen/cases/index.html>>

This is my WWW site. Through it you can learn about my project to create a database of cases. You can obtain basic information on the project, submit your ideas for cases, look at an example of a case, and access links to other sites about cases.

[South Carolina Executive Institute](http://www.state.sc.us/ei/)

<<http://www.state.sc.us/ei/>>

An institute for state government officials with some very interesting cases online.

[The Clearinghouse for Decision Case Education: Agriculture, Food, Natural Resources and the Environment](http://www.decisioncase.edu/)

<<http://www.decisioncase.edu/>>

A superb site with a wealth of information on teaching with cases, interesting cases, and links to other WWW sites.