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Stephen E. Brown is an experienced developer of multimedia language programs in a variety of languages.

Ceil Lucas is a sociolinguist and professor of linguistics at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C.

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INTRODUCTION

English in Everyday Life consists of eighty-four interview segments with everyday people, not actors, speaking English in the United States. The interviews are organized into ten chapters. Each chapter focuses on a different aspect of everyday life, from the family and the home to free time, sports, food, and the use of language. The goal in using an interview format was to elicit natural speech and to allow the speakers to express themselves as freely and naturally as possible. In these interviews, you will hear the vocabulary and sentence structures that real speakers use to talk about their everyday lives.

Because we wanted to provide learners of English with natural models of spoken English in the United States, those being interviewed did not memorize or rehearse their remarks. You will meet people of all ages and nationalities, from all walks of life: a policeman, a nurse, accountants, a paramedic, students, teachers, a librarian, a mechanic, a government worker, an IT professional, a travel agent, a sign language interpreter, musicians, and others.

Each chapter includes the complete transcript of each interview segment as well as definitions of vocabulary words, idioms, and constructions whose meanings or cultural references may not be immediately obvious to a nonnative English speaker. You will find questions and exercises at the end of each chapter that are relevant to both the text of the interview and your own personal

experiences. We recommend that you consult a comprehensive American English dictionary in conjunction with the use of the DVD and workbook.

About the Transcripts

What you will hear on the DVD and see in the transcripts are examples of actual speech. Our goal is to provide examples of English as it is spoken by a wide range of people in the United States today. You will hear speakers from many states—Maryland, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Arkansas, Illinois, Maine, Minnesota, and Michigan—as well as speakers from Canada, India, Guyana, England, New Zealand, Cameroon, Egypt, and Spain. Also, you will hear one speaker whose speech has many features of what is known as African-American Vernacular English (AAVE). So you will hear English spoken with many different accents. You will also see a deaf user of American Sign Language (ASL) with her interpreter.

You will notice that while all of the speakers are fluent, they sometimes use what some consider nonstandard or even ungrammatical forms of English. And you will see that not only do the nonnative speakers use these forms but native speakers of American English frequently use them as well. Some of these speakers are very fluent users of varieties of English used in other countries, such as India, varieties that have been referred to as "World Englishes" and that differ from American or British English in very systematic and nonrandom ways.

You will notice that when people speak, it is not at all like a newscast being read by an anchorperson on the evening news or like the written language that you might see in textbooks. You will see that people don't always speak in complete sentences—they hesitate; they interrupt themselves; they correct themselves; they start one sentence, give it up, and go on with another one. While

the speakers clearly knew that they were being filmed, what you see and hear is, for the most part, very natural speech. Our goal was to reflect this naturalness in the transcripts. Interjections and discourse markers such as *um, uh,* or *er* appear throughout the interviews and are transcribed exactly as they are spoken. Sometimes people talk at the same time, which is indicated in the transcripts by brackets around the simultaneous speech.

The transcripts also reflect the use of many customary and idiomatic constructions found in American English: *take it up a notch, so-and-so, such and such, like, y'know, c'mon, gonna, wanna,* and many others. Notes explaining such constructions appear at the end of each chapter.

It is our hope that you will find these materials innovative and useful for learning English as it is used in America today.

How to Use These Materials in the Classroom

The DVD and workbook of *English in Everyday Life* have been designed for use in any classroom, laboratory, or home setting. These materials, which are suitable for high school classes, university courses, and adult education programs, can be used as the second semester of an elementary course.

The way that language is used by speakers in these materials can serve as the basis both for in-class discussions and for homework assignments.

The DVD and the workbook provide eighty-four segments, which should be used as follows:

1. Select the segment to be used and simply *listen* to it, *before* reading the transcript of the segment. The student can do this on his or her own or as part of a class activity.

2. After listening to the segment, *read* and *discuss* the transcript carefully, making sure that all of the vocabulary words and structures are understood.
3. Then, *listen* to the segment again, this time using the transcript. Students may want to listen to the segment several times at this point.
4. In the classroom, answer and discuss the questions about both the segment and the students' experiences. And, of course, these questions and exercises can be assigned for homework.

Outlining a Course by DVD Segment

The instructor can decide how many segments to cover per week. Eighty-four DVD segments allow you to use the DVD and the workbook for an entire academic year. And the flexibility of the materials allows you to pick and choose the order in which to present the material. Each segment on the DVD is numbered on the menu and in the text so that you can pick exactly which one you want to focus on.

Sample Lesson Plan: One Week

First Day: Listen to the selected segments perhaps two or three times in class (do not read the transcript at this point).

Second Day: Read the transcripts out loud, making sure that the students understand all of the grammatical constructions, vocabulary words, and cultural references.

Third Day: Listen to the segments again, first without the transcript and then with the transcript.

Fourth Day: Discuss the transcript and the DVD segment and answer the questions pertaining to the segment. Assign as homework the questions and exercises that pertain to the students.

Fifth Day: Go over the questions and exercises pertaining to the students. Ask them to read their answers aloud, and have the class ask additional questions.

The DVD segments and their transcripts can very easily be supplemented with materials that relate to the topic of the segment. For example, the segments on Food can be supplemented with menus or recipes. The important thing is to be creative and to get the students involved.

Additional Activities

1. Ask the students to summarize in writing and also aloud what is said in a given segment.
2. Ask the students to write the question that leads to the speaker's response. Also, ask them to write additional questions to be asked.
3. Have the students interview one another on the topic of the segment in front of the class:
   - Help the students write their interview questions.
   - If possible, record these interviews on audiotape or miniDV. Listen to or view the interviews and discuss them as a group.
   - Have the students transcribe these interviews, complete with hesitations, self-corrections, and so forth. Make copies of the transcript for the other students. The teacher may review the transcript but should make corrections only to errors in transcription—in other words, if the speaker uses a nonstandard form and the student transcribes it accurately, you should not note it as an error. This is a good opportunity to point out the differences between spoken language and written language.

- Have the students write questions about their transcripts, similar to the ones in the text.
- Have the students record an interview with a native or fluent speaker, based on one of the DVD topics, and follow the same procedures just listed. Help the students prepare their questions, review the transcripts, and share them with the class. Also, ask the students to write questions to accompany their transcripts.

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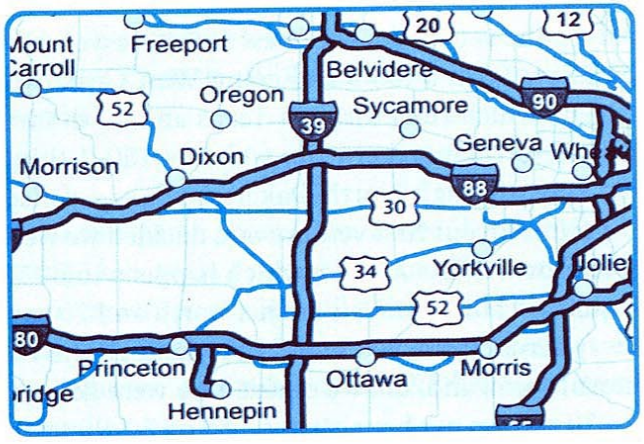
CHAPTER 1

LIFE IN AMERICA



In this chapter, interviewees talk about various aspects of life in the United States and how life in the United States may differ from life in their countries of origin.

1. DRIVING ACROSS AMERICA

MAN: I have driven throughout most of the country. Um, so, there's, you know, the speed limits, well, it's fifty-five, uh, there're . . . Do you know how the ro—, the roads—by the way, this is fascinating—do you know how the road

systems are laid out in the, in the U.S.? Do you know that? They're laid out, uh, if you, if you know locally where we are here, um, 95 is the main route. Ninety-five goes from the northern tip of Maine down to the southern tip of Florida, which is the entire **Eastern Seaboard**. If-if the, if the country were a rectangle, which it pretty much is, the, all **interstates** ending in odd numbers—95, 85, 75, 65, 55, going all the way up to I-5—I-5 runs the northern tip of Washington to the southern tip of [California / San Diego].

WOMAN:

MAN: All-all the way down the West Coast, so you have the, you know, 95 'n 5 to 95 and going West Coast, you have, uh, 10, which runs through Texas and all the way across there to the northern tip, which is 100, I think, and that runs through North Dakota, so, uh, a college friend of mine, on our first venture out, decided we were, we live on, sorta in the middle, which happens to be 70, it's not quite 50 but a little bit farther north and 70 runs all the way across from, you know, Maryland all the way to California, um, and, uh, we decided we were going to do 70 on 70—miles per hour, that is—80 on 80, 90 on 90, and 100 on 100! And we did it. So we-we were cruisin' across country in that manner and I've been th—, I c—, I would say I've been through at least half of the states. And if you drive through Kansas, the first five miles is pretty much exactly the same as the next five hundred-plus miles that you have got to travel to get across it. It's a very long state.

2. WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT AMERICA?

WOMAN: It was the most interesting thing to me, the **change of the seasons**. I think that is just absolutely . . .

'cause I guess as I grew up with just one season. In fact, I shouldn't say one—two seasons: we have the wet season and the rainy season. But it's summer all year-round. And I just love especially fall. I'm a fall person. I just love, I love to see the colors, the trees when they, oh, turn those beautiful colors—that's really, that's what I like about . . . And what I like, too, television, ooh, I'm a television nut. I look at television all the time. And in Guyana, we don't see the kind of programs that you have here, so . . .

INTERVIEWER: So what do you watch?

WOMAN: I like crime stories and, like "Law and Order" and, in fact, I watch all "Criminal Intent," all of those "Law and Orders."

INTERVIEWER: And what else?

WOMAN: I like game shows, too. I love "Jeopardy"; I love "Jeopardy." Uh, yeah, game shows and "Law and Order," those are my, crime stories, I like things like that.

Well, as I mentioned, the seasons. We don't have spring, summer, autumn, winter. We have summer all year-round.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

WOMAN: Um, another thing, the traffic here. You just have to contend here with cars and maybe couple bicycles. But in Guyana, you've got to contend with not only the cars, pedestrians, bicyclists, we—most people ride a bicycle in Guyana, they-they don't drive, they ride a bicycle. And there's also something we call a donkey cart, which is something like a **flat-bed truck**, but instead of bein' pulled by a-a car like in front, it's pulled by a donkey. And they're also, they also have the right of way, too, on the streets, too. So that's-that's something; every time I go home, I keep wondering, "How did I ever drive in Guyana

before?" because I know for sure I can't drive there now, so . . .

3. AN ISLAND IN MAINE

WOMAN: Taiwanese, both parents are from Taiwan, came to the States for graduate school, uh, and then decided to stay both for political reasons and for career reasons. Um, uh, my parents came through, their Ellis Island was Kansas, uh, Univer[sity of Kansas] at Lawrence.

INTERVIEWER: [Kansas.]

WOMAN: Middle of, middle of the country, that was, I guess they were pulling a lot of Taiwanese students at that time so they came through there for their graduate school and then a job opportunity opened in Maine so that's-that's how the family ended up being the only Taiwanese family within a hundred-mile radius in Maine.

INTERVIEWER: When did your parents come to the U.S.?

WOMAN: Um, in the '60s, the early '60s.

INTERVIEWER: So how was life—have they talked about how life was different there versus life here in the U.S.—have they told you much about that or commented on that or . . . ?

WOMAN: I think it wasn't so much how life, there-there were some aspects of life that were different in the U.S. versus in Taiwan, but I think a lot of the quality of life that we had or a lot of the specifics of, uh, our lifestyle had to do with living on an island in Maine as opposed to so much being in the U.S. I don't, I wouldn't, I'm old enough now that I think I didn't have a typical **upbringing**, I didn't live in a typical American town. It was just so much smaller but at the same time it was inundated every summer by millions of tourists from all over the world, so we-we lived in a sort of interesting balance between being a super-super isolated small town, middle of nowhere, no traffic lights on the entire island existence, and then having this center of, uh, the **spotlight** world destination for vacationers, um, which is an interesting mix. It was, the island is sort of split into two. I lived on what they called the quiet side of the island, the western side, so that wasn't developed as a tourist destination until the last decade. Um, the eastern side is where Bar Harbor is, all these sort of big tourist areas so that was, that's always been a big tourist destination since, you know, from the last century in the 1800s. Um, so we could always in some sense retreat back to our quiet side of the island, and it-it wasn't crazy the whole summer, thanks to that. But y-you could still feel a palpable difference between the way that life was in the summer and the way that it was in the rest of the year.

INTERVIEWER: Did you enjoy living on the quieter side?

WOMAN: I did. I'm glad I lived on the quiet side. It's a little bit crazy with all the tourists.

4. WEST VS. EAST

[Note: in this segment, you hear the voice of the interviewer asking a question and then the voice of the sign language interpreter, seated on the right, who is interpreting for the deaf woman, on the left, who is using **American Sign Language** (**ASL**).]

INTERVIEWER: So, you've lived—I mean, you've really lived in the West—in California and in Oregon. So how is living in the East different from living in the West?

WOMAN: Right, yes, that's a good question. The West—one thing about the West that's-that's really nice is the-the outdoors. It's, uh, it's nice to be with people who enjoy going out and doing things in nature like I do. But in the East, uh, there's so much cultural diversity, I'm able to meet so many different kinds of people. There's a lot of history here, museums, things of that nature that are really nice. And if I miss the West, I can always just fly over there and spend some time there again.

5. CANADA VS. THE U.S.

WOMAN: Well, there's work. You know, to be totally honest, that's **one of the reason** I stayed here. . . .

INTERVIEWER: Oh really?

WOMAN: Is, uh, the market—especially like in the Baltimore-Washington, and the entire like **Northeast corridor**—there's just so much work for musicians, for artists, and especially this area here because there are so many like big or middle-sized cities that all want an orchestra, and that they all want arts happening in their town, so, I mean, it's, basically, one of the-the **running gag** we have among **musician** is like, you really have to **weak in playing your instrument** to not find work in the Washington-Baltimore area. Really, it's like, you know. And so basically, that's, uh, the main difference for me—it's that I can, like, thrive here and make a living playing the violin, which is something I would have had a very, very, very difficult time doing in Montreal, especially since I left when I was so young and never built up . . .

INTERVIEWER: Uh-hmm.

WOMAN: . . . contacts and relationships up there.

MAN: Yeah, it-it makes me think of a funny story. Um, just the American perception of artists and musicians, um. If you go to Europe or even Canada, uh, you know, and-and you tell somebody—random person that you meet on the street—"Oh, I'm a musician," they say, "Oh, that's great!" And in-in the United States oftentimes, you meet somebody on the street and you tell them that you're a musician and they say, "Oh, well, what's your **day job**?"

A funny story: I was playing a quintet—a brass quintet job, uh, this is back when I lived in Oregon—we were playing at a fund-raiser for the, uh, the Oregon Republican Party and we were playing, you know, patriotic songs and stuff like that, and we had a short break, um, in between our-our performance, and a woman who was sitting near the front, uh, took me aside and said, "Oh, that-that man over there playing the tuba, what-what's his name?" I said, "Well, his name's Richard Frazier." And she says, "Well, what-what does he do?" I said, "Uh, he plays the tuba." And she said, "Oh, well, can-can you make a living playing the tuba?" And I said, "No, ma'am. I can only make a living playing the French horn." But that's-that's the perception.

WOMAN: Yeah, I had a similar story happening to me actually not far from here, in Hagerstown. We were playing, I was playing Maryland Symphony one week and there was a donor reception after the concert and, you know, I'm chatting there with patrons and like, I guess, guild members and, you know, other people that were attending the reception and one lady comes up to me and she's like, "You know, you look so good on stage and, like, you look like you're very, very good violinist and wh-where did you go to school, how did you get so good?" And, you know, I tell her, well, you know, my entire, like, musical education: went to Peabody, took, you know, private instruction, did bachelor, master's degree with a great

violin teacher, practiced ten hours a day for ten years, and-and, you know, got a bachelor's and a master's in music, and she's like, "Wow, that's great. So what do you do?" I'm like, "Well, that's what I do. I got my education in music and I play the violin." She's like, "You don't do **maths**, you didn't do science?" Like, "No." It's like, "But you can't do that! What-what-what do you mean, you-you don't do maths? You have to take maths. What's your job?" And she just would not understand that my education, my job was music and that, you know, I didn't do maths and I could still earn a living without having done maths and science, which was, at the time, very fascinating that somebody would not accept the answer that, "I'm a musician." Which is something that would never have happened to me in Montreal.

6. LIVING IN WASHINGTON

MAN: Uh, well, this is a, is a very urban environment. Um, I'm finding things from my own perspective because the United States is not urban—it's actually rural, most of it—but my, from my own perspective, this is a very much more built-up area and, um, and in that regard it's-it's different to what my-my childhood was.

INTERVIEWER: What other places have you visited in the United States or lived in the United States?

MAN: Uh, very little. It's all, it's all been here, really, in Washington.

INTERVIEWER: Oh yeah?

MAN: Yeah, it's all, it's all been, uh, my interest is-is politics and what shapes the course of countries and why people do what they do and why civilizations behave

the way that they do. So this is, if you were interested in looking at that, this has got to be an interesting place in that, in that way.

7. COMING FROM SPAIN

WOMAN: Well, I think that, uh, at that time—and this was twenty years ago—um, I think that I, uh, at first I thought that, like, the family structure was very different 'cause, of course, uh, I grew up in a country where family structures are very tight and every-everything centers around the family and that has changed, too, in Spain—but you know, at my time, eh, divorce wasn't even allowed, so when I came here, that's one of the things that struck me as different from-from Spain, that the family structure was very different, was more, uh, um, well, most people I-I met had parents who-who were divorced or, and then remarried and had stepbrothers and -sisters or half-brothers and half-sisters and that was—I mean, in Spain, you never. I mean, that was such an abstract concept, something that you heard about in movies, right? Of course, now that's normal in Spain, too. So I think that's one of the things that struck me.

INTERVIEWER: What do you like about life in America?

WOMAN: Uh, well, I-I like the academic atmosphere here. Um, uh, since I teach at a university, I think I-I benefit a lot from the **academic atmosphere**. There's a lot, there's a lot of resources, uh, easy access to grants, money, even though, of course, we complain all the time, you know, that there's not enough money, not enough support, but, of course, if you compare, uh, the situation here to the situation in other countries in-in Europe, there's a lot more resources here for-for research, and, um, also I like

the flexibility, the fact that, uh, people are just so free to move around. They get tired of their job, whatever, no problem—they just move to another place, uh, start another job, and I like that kind of flexibility, whereas I think in Europe in general people are more, uh, the mentality is, "OK, once you buy your house, that's where you die." You don't really move around that much.

8. TIME IN EGYPT AND AMERICA

I usually, I go in the morning. Uh, I get a lot of phone calls from **the student**. Uh, if somebody has a problem with, in any class or has a problem with a professor or has a problem in his own life, he can talk to me about it and I can explain to him what he has to do and I always let him know about the time between here and over there. Over here, the time is very, very valuable. You have to make sure, if you have a class at two o'clock, you have to be there at two o'clock exactly. If you make it five minutes before, it's OK, but do not late one more minute than the time. And back home, timing is not, no value for the times. If you have a class at two, you show up two-fifteen, at two-thirty, it's OK. But over here, when you do that, meaning you **underestimate** the professor and he will get really upset with you. So I always focus about the time because the value here, timing here is money and back home, time is, you know, we have a lot free times.

Well, the life in America is the best. America, I consider it, uh, one of the best places in the earth. I've been traveling a lot before I came to the States. I've been in England, I've been in France, I've been in Switzerland, I've been in Greece, I've been in Turkey, Czechoslovakia, Yugo-Yugoslavia—I've been traveling a lot before I come to the States. And United States one of the best because the economy is very strong and you have a lot of jobs

everywhere so that is very, very important in America. Back home, unemployment is almost 25 to 50 percent. It's very hard to get a nice decent job, and if you get a nice decent job, doesn't pay you enough money to make you live really well, so, but always go back. Home is home. Always, whatever home it is, it's the best place for myself and for anybody else, but America is the best.

9. AMERICAN MEMORIES

MAN: Well, I-I grew up in England. Uh, I was born down on the south sea coast, so if you know England, right down here, maybe a hundred miles from London, uh, in a little town called Poole, *P-o-o-l-e*. Uh, and I lived in southern England until I was about twelve years old. My, uh, my father was a-a war hero in World War II in-in India, so my memories are more related to-to that. And, uh, when I was about twelve years old, my father decided that he wanted to experience the American dream, which I called the **make a buck** myth, because the myth was that we never had much money. So we arrived in New York City, came on a boat, uh, about as old as the *Titanic*, but more successful, and, uh, lived in the Bronx. So some of my earliest American memories, uh, were hot dogs, uh, the Statue of Liberty, and American kids saying, "Hey, Slimy Limey, when are you going to learn to speak English?" So English—and timing is everything because this was few years before the Beatles—and if I had only come to America after the Beatles, I would have been **cool**. Instead, I was the **geek** who couldn't speak English. Uh, well, at that age, you know, you do what your parents want you to do, so we moved to Florida, and I went to high school in Florida.

INTERVIEWER: Where in Florida?

MAN: Uh, Pompano Beach. Home of the **Bean Pickers**. This is a time when Florida had little tourists—uh, you could literally go right to the beach. Now it's all condos for miles behind the beaches, uh. So I grew up, kind of grew up there. Kind of important to me is, when I arrived in New York, I was an English kid who had never seen a **person of color** in his life—1950s England was not a **segregated society**; there were not people of color living in England. Today it's very different. So I arrive in New York City and I lived in a boys' orphanage for a year, and all of the kids in the orphanage were black and Hispanic, Puerto Rican, African-Americans, and—very powerful experience—I mean, coming from England, living in the Bronx. When I went to Florida—**racially segregated**. The railroad tracks literally divided the town. S-so those, the juxtaposition of those three experiences probably are the most important experiences in my life in terms of what I believe in.

10. COMING FROM INDIA

MAN: Uh, now when I go back for vacation to India, I see what's-what's the difference-different. I-I find everybody working in a **slow motion**. You know, you see the slow-motion movie, the hand goes slowly, but, uh, and I-I see my brothers, uh, they take life little easy. They wake up in the morning and, uh, there's a lot of help around. Somebody comes to do the dishes, somebody comes to do the laundry, and somebody else is doing the ironing, and they don't have to do anything. My, but, my brother says he's very busy—I see him doing nothing. He just-just-just goes; he doesn't even drive his own car, and, uh, his, I mean, his wife doesn't even iron the clothes. It's just waiting. He just goes for the shower; somebody comes, takes

out his clothes; he changes, of course; and, uh, he goes to job. There are people who take care of the job. He's, just says, "Yes" and "No." People come to him, "Uh, this is OK?" "Yeah, OK." "Is this fine?" "OK." Accountant come and says that. He's not a big businessman—he's probably does half of the turnover that I do here—but he-he's like a king. And, uh, when I come back here, from the time I land U.S. airport, I have to pull my own bag, I have to drive my own car, I have to come home, pull my bags, take it myself in, and empty them myself. I have to do my own laundry, I have to wash, I have to clean the house myself. My, when my father came, he saw me cleaning the house, with the bathrooms. He said, "You, I thought this was America." I said, "Yeah, this is America. That's why I do it. You don't do it in India." He has never cleaned the bathroom. Somebody else does it for him. So life in India, now when I see, is like a luxury life. They think that I'm-I, since I have a little more money than them, so I'm-I have more luxury life, but unless you come and live here, uh, you realize it's-it's like super speed versus slow motion.

Doesn't give you time to think—that's good thing about, uh, life in America. When you-you grow old, you don't start, you never think you're old because you don't have time to think. And, uh, whatever you have, you have, what you don't have, you have no time to think, so time, lack of time is a blessing, in a sense. And, uh, of course I like, uh, if you, if you are enthusiastic and if your body allows you to work hard, you can open any kind of business; you don't have too much of bureaucracy, not too much of red tape, you can start business pretty quick, and, uh, of course, uh, you have liabilities, you have to work hard to do that but, uh. Yeah, you don't have to run over a period of one year, uh, like, uh, many other countries, like in India. America is very, very easy. I mean, I can just simply walk into a bank and show my good credit

and take a loan for anything. I mean, I can buy a house, virtually nothing in my pocket. I can say I'm a home-owner and back home in India, I need to have at least 80 percent, so, uh, I mean, there are a lot of good things. I mean, I like, uh, I like to drive, I like to go for, uh, vacation on-on, the driving. Good roads, I don't have to worry too much about it, cars are pretty good. Even if I have the best car in India, I can't drive at the speed I drive here. So there are a lot, a lot of good things. I mean, I, once I get used to, now I think now I am used to here, I cannot go back and, uh, have the slow-motion life anymore.

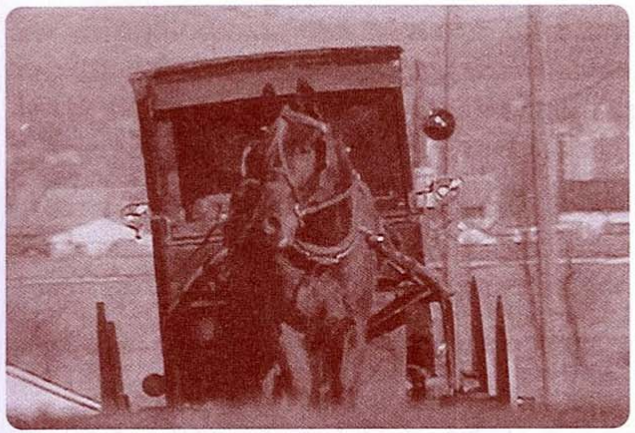
INTERVIEWER: Interesting.

11. CHANGING TIMES

Oh, oh, that's-that's a loaded question, you know that—seriously loaded. There was a time when-when I was growing up that, uh—and I sound like a **geezer** here—but there was a time where, you know, you didn't lock your door, um, I never had a key to my house. Those times, those-those-those ways still are out in **the West**. Uh, it-it's less gentle than it used to be and let's say, I'm not, don't even get me into why this-this could have happened.

12. SMALL-TOWN LIFE

That's an interesting subject there. I-I remember a time, we never locked our doors, uh, and I lived in a town, little town of Laurel for a while, and I think even back then, we never locked our doors 'cause nobody, you didn't have to worry about anybody **breaking into** your house or doing anything. And on the farm we never, we'd go away for a weekend and never lock a door. And you didn't worry. As



a kid, I remember at age six or seven, hitchhiking down the road during World War II. We'd go to Fort Meade to use the swimming pool. And we didn't think anything about **hitchhiking**, and you didn't worry about some **dude** picking you up and molesting you or anything like that, just, you just didn't hear about it back then. And then over the years, you just see where they, pretty soon everybody locks their doors, they got three or four locks on their doors, they, their kids can't go out and play in the yard, uh, like they could back in my day, and, uh, the parents just have to watch them every minute.

DEFINITIONS

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American Sign Language (ASL): A form of manual communication used by deaf and hard of hearing people in

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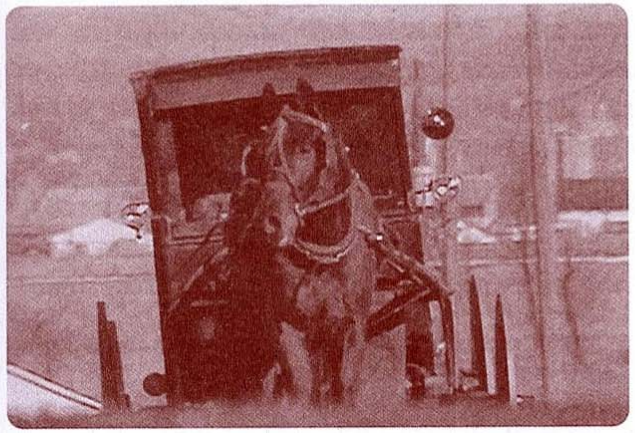

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American Sign Language (ASL): A form of manual communication used by deaf and hard of hearing people in

the United States. ASL is an autonomous linguistic system structurally independent from English. It is different from sign languages used in other countries, such as Italian Sign Language or Japanese Sign Language.

Bean Pickers: Manual laborers who harvested beans by hand; in this case, the name of the sports team at the school the speaker attended.

breaking into (break in): To enter illegally, usually by force.

'cause: Short for *because*.

change of the seasons: The transition of the year from spring to summer to fall (autumn) to winter.

cool: A slang expression that means to be desired or desirable, to be with it, to be in vogue, or to be happening.

day job: The primary job by which a person supports himself or herself while attempting to start, pursue, or establish another career. This term is used frequently with reference to musicians, artists, actors, and entertainers, who often work at night.

dude: A slang term for a man or a boy.

Eastern Seaboard: The eastern portion of the United States along the Atlantic Ocean.

flat-bed truck: A truck that has a flat and open back area for carrying cargo.

geek: An awkward person who doesn't fit in. It can also mean a person who possesses a lot of specialized knowledge in a particular field, such as a "computer geek."

geezer: A slang term for an old person.

hitchhiking: Standing or walking along a roadside asking for a ride from people driving by.

interstates: Refers to the major highway system of the United States.

make a buck: To earn money or make a profit.

maths (math): The field of study of numbers and calculation.

musician: Usually *musicians*.

Northeast corridor: The states in the northeastern portion of the United States.

one of the reason: Usually "one of the reasons."

person of color: A person not of the Caucasian race; a nonwhite person.

racially segregated: Separated on the basis of race.

running gag: A joke, funny story, or tale that is told frequently.

segregated society: A society in which the races live largely separated from one another.

slow motion: Moving at less than normal speed.

spotlight: In this context, the center of the focus of attention.

the student: The speaker probably means *students*.

weak in playing your instrument (usually, **to suck at something**): To not be very good or skilled at playing one's instrument.

underestimate: The speaker probably means *disrespect*.

upbringing: The guided or directed growth of a child by his or her parents or guardian into adulthood.

the West: The western United States.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. List what these speakers like about life in the United States.
2. Which speakers have had experiences in the United States similar to yours and why?
3. Which speakers have had experiences most different from yours and why?
4. Describe where you have lived in the United States.
5. What do you like about life in the United States?
6. What is the most difficult thing about living in the United States?
7. Identify three words or phrases in this chapter that are new to you, and write a sentence with each one.

CHAPTER 2

THE FAMILY

In this chapter, interviewees talk about life in their families.

1. A FAMILY IN MARYLAND

MAN: Family. I've been married to my wife for about seventeen, eighteen years. We married young, at the age of twenty-one and twenty-two. And we initially, for years, did not want children. We did a lot of traveling to a number of different countries, and finally, uh, somewhere around thirty-two, thirty-three, I looked at my wife