

Inside **OUT**

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LIVING OUT

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sponsored by:



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Inside OUT

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Synopsis

NANNY: “A child’s nurse, employed by a family on either a live-in or a live-out basis exclusively for child-care and related domestic tasks. Nannies work variable hours and are usually given almost total authority in areas outlined by the family.”

—Cora Hilton Thomas.
The Complete Nanny Guide

Nancy and her husband Richard are a family of lawyers living in an affluent section of Los Angeles. They are seeking a “nanny” or caregiver to look after their newborn daughter, Jenna, one who will make their child a priority. On the other side of town live Ana Hernandez and husband Bobby, two undocumented immigrants from El Salvador who fled their country because of a civil war largely funded by the United States. Ana and Bobby are raising their son, Santiago, in Los Angeles; Ana’s older son, Tomas, remains in El Salvador with his grandmother. Ana needs a job that pays enough money to bring Tomas to this country, but all her searches as a caregiver end in rejection because she has a child at home. Thus, when Ana meets Nancy, she lies—and says both her boys are in El Salvador. Nancy and Richard overlook Ana’s illegal status because she bonds so well with baby Jenna and because they feel the war was immoral.

A sharp and witty play, *Living Out* is a window to working mothers’ angst—both Ana’s and Nancy’s—and the experience of an undocumented immigrant.

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[Being a nanny] is a job, but the mother hopes that part of the job description is that the nanny will love the child. When you add to that factors of race, class, citizenship and power, you see it is the messiest, most complicated job.
—playwright Lisa Loomer

The Playwright

A native of Manhattan, Lisa Loomer studied theatre at Brandeis University and New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. She soon began performing off-Broadway as an actress and working with a political comedy group at the West Bank Cafe. Tired of performing other artists' monologues, Loomer began writing her own material under the pseudonym Jane da Vinci. Her first work for the theatre was a collaboration titled *A Crowd of Two*, which was produced at New York's American Place Theatre. Her one-woman show *All by Herselves* was performed at the Westside Arts Theatre in New York. In 1985 she served as a writer in residence at INTAR (International Arts Relations Theatre) in New York. She was a contributor to *A, My Name is Still Alice*, which premiered at Second Stage in New York City and has played at numerous locations around the country.

Her play, *The Waiting Room*, was a critical and popular success, so much so that she was besieged with offers to write sitcoms, screen-

plays, and articles on health and beauty. She has hopes of writing a Latino sitcom and has made two attempts: "Gloria" about a Puerto Rican talk show host and "East L.A." set in an unemployment office. In the meantime she has developed a film, *Looking for Angels*, which was sponsored by Sundance in Cuba where she worked with Gabriel Garcia-Marquez. She adapted Susanna Kaysen's memoir of her two years in a mental institution, *Girl Interrupted*, for Columbia Pictures and is writing a screenplay for Winona Ryder and Fox 2000 based on the book *Dreaming. Living Out* was commissioned by the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles in 2003.

Lisa currently resides with her husband in Sherman Oaks, California.

<http://www.questia.com/>

Working Mothers: Pros and Cons

NANCY: *I have the right to do it all—and not to do any of it very well?*
—Living Out

The goal of the Feminist Movement of the 1960s and 1970s was to give equal rights to both women and men, and to give women the choice to work, not the requirement to do so. The women who decide to work outside the home after the birth of a child fall into two distinct categories: (1) those who work because they need the income, who struggle to make ends meet, and (2) the driven, ambitious achiever—a professional who has chosen a career path.

Nancy and Ana have similar ambitions in their desire to lead better lives, but that desire entails enormous stress. “Though they may have similar goals, what they do not share is privilege: the space created by money, nationality and class.” 1.

Working moms cite several arguments in their favor. The added income they provide allows them some financial freedom and improved quality of life—a bigger house, a better car, etc. These mothers feel that it’s good for their children to see women take care of themselves. Working women feel that they have an identity, a certain self-esteem that comes from the challenge of activity and a brain that stays sharp.

However, there can be complaints. Employed mothers lament about feeling harried, pressured, stressed and having insufficient time for friendships. Most

experience guilt that comes from feeling they shortchange their children by not being there to guide and protect them. Some moms feel that if they leave their positions, they will be placed on the “mommy track.” Designed to create policies to help mothers balance career and family responsibilities, the term holds a negative connotation, though the basic concept was meant to be positive.

“The idea was to foster flexibility in the workplace for mothers. Yet this was lost because detractors focused on the idea that women have to choose between a family and a career, while men do not.” 2.

Stay-at-home moms don’t have these problems. They feel that they have quality time with their children because they do not have to juggle between job and home and therefore, have smooth-running households. In the area of discipline, they feel they can be consistent by setting boundaries and do not have to yield to demanding children because they are work-weary. Finally, if a family must relocate for business reasons, mothers provide the stability by being there.

But there are disadvantages for stay-at-homeers. Some women go through a non-identity crisis because in our society what you are is chiefly measured by what you do. There can be confidence issues—a mom who sacrifices all for her children loses all sense of herself. Many women long for intellectual stimulation—an adult conversation with another adult about current events, books, art, etc., instead of rating Pampers and potty training. The isolating, tedious housework usually does not allow for interaction nor does it garner any sort of feedback. Some women feel guilt about spending money and would like to have a little

extra to spend on themselves. Finally, there is the issue of respect. “In our schizophrenic society that simultaneously idealizes but devalues mothers... the bar continues to be raised to meet the ‘Good Mother’ standard.”
3. More is expected of mothers today than in previous generations and even the most secure women question their choices.

Each mother must redefine success for herself. At-home moms should realize that their lives are a continual evolution based on their children’s ages, personal

growth and the family’s financial position. Employed mothers must allow themselves the luxury of not “doing it all” or “having it all” or else they’ll burn themselves into the ground. The key word is balance in whatever you choose to do.

Denver Center for the Performing Arts.
Living Out. Design Conference, Denver:
May 17, 2006.

Sachs, Wendy. *How She Really Does It*.
Cambridge, MA: Perseus Books, 2005.

1. Design Conference Notes.
2. Brykman, p. 55.
3. Sachs, p. 76.

For all of the changes of the last decades, one thing has stayed the same: it is still women who adjust their lives to accommodate the needs of their children; who do what is necessary to make a home; who forgo status, income, advancement and independence.

—Ann Crittenden. *The Price of Motherhood: Why the Most Important Job in the World is Still the Least Valued*, p. 27. Brykman, Beth. *The Wall Between Women*. New York: Prometheus Books, 2006.

Nannies

NANCY: *But you know, I hate the term 'nanny.' It sounds so British. Makes me feel so PBS.*
—Living Out

Whatever one wishes to call someone who takes care of a child—nanny, babysitter, caregiver, au pair—there are some tips to follow when interviewing a prospective employee. In Nancy's case, she does not advertise but uses a placement agency. Therefore, according to Cora Thomas in her *Complete Nanny Guide*, the agency should have: (1) the applicant's birth certificate, (2) Social Security card, (3) valid driver's license, (4) home phone number, (5) proof of a physical examination within the last two years, (6) work references with addresses and phone numbers, (7) character references, (8) neighbor references and (9) a CPR (Cardiac Pulmonary Resuscitation) certificate.

Since Ana carries her own work references, perhaps this agency follows other procedures. The *Complete Nanny Guide* suggests the mother interview the prospective nanny in the nanny's own home, so as to get to know her in her own setting. "Any applicants who have something to hide will change their minds about applying then and there." 1. If Nancy had followed this suggestion, perhaps a messy situation could have been avoided.

The second interview should take place in the employer's home, so the parent or parents can observe the prospective nanny's interaction with the child or children. They should discuss ideas for child rearing, discipline and emergencies. It is the employer's obligation to discuss the amount of salary after federal and state taxes are withheld. When caregivers come from other countries, they are not aware of unemployment and health insurance, but ever since "Nannygate," a red flag has emerged. "Nannygate" involved Zoe Baird and Kimba Wood, both nominees for Attorney General in President Bill

Clinton's administration, who had to withdraw their nominations because of tax and employment law violations. They were not withholding the required amount.

All potential employers need a contract or written work agreement detailing conditions of employment. The International Nanny Association (INA) recommends that such an agreement include: "job duties, hours and days of duty, salary amount, when and how paid, compensation for overtime worked, days off and the required tax obligation." 2. Neither woman in this play seems very concerned about keeping a schedule or government obligations.

"Nannies are the most exploited workers in this country," writes Barbara Kline in her book, *White House Nannies*. "Experienced childcare workers, experts at the most important job there is, are still considered 'unskilled labor' in this country, even though they're respected professionals in other countries." 3. Even the late Princess Diana was certified for this position in Great Britain. Therefore, the *Complete Nanny Guide* has provided a Nanny's Bill of Rights. These include: "Nannies have the right to expect and be given the following: (1) two days off weekly, (2) prompt paychecks and overtime pay, (3) holiday and vacation pay... (5) clear communication from parents, (6) support and understanding from parents... (8) raises in pay, (9) appreciation and (10) rewards." 4.

Nancy and Richard seem to acknowledge these rules except for giving days off and providing rewards.

Ana also has the right to complain about the 'nanny cam.' The INA strongly recommends that if an employer has plans to install hidden cameras, "that the employer discusses the subject with the nanny, preferably before employment commences." 5. The Federal Wire-Tapping Law of 1986 states that it is illegal to tape conversations without the knowledge

Continued on next page

and consent of the individual being taped.
(Nancy can be excused on this one since the
NSA doesn't acknowledge this law.)

Barbara Kline, author and president of
Washington, DC's premier Nanny
Placement Agency, considers bonding
with one's newborn a necessity. She congratu-
lates parents who both decide to stay home
with their baby for a few weeks—without
help. "Maybe they should experience what
it's like to be alone with the baby." 6. That is
probably advice Nancy should heed. As for
Ana, the INA recommends that "nannies pro-
vide complete, accurate and truthful informa-
tion." 7. (That would include the fraudulent
Social Security Card and driver's license, too.)
To which one might add this advice for Ana:
don't let an employer exploit you!

International Nanny Association. <http://www.nanny.org/>

Kline, Barbara. *White House Nannies*. New
York: Penguin Group, 2005.

Thomas, Cora Hilton. *The Complete Nanny
Guide*. New York: Avon Books, 1995.

1. Thomas, p. 26.
2. INA, p. 3.
3. Kline, p. 34.
4. Thomas, p. 43.
5. INA, p. 1.
6. Kline, p. 185.
7. INA, p. 3.

RICHARD: ...*Everyone's working
and paying someone else to take care of their
child—it's insane!*"
—Living Out

The Civil War in El Salvador

The desire to prevent a leftist takeover in El Salvador after the assassination of Archbishop Romero motivated the United States to get involved. Human rights—a cornerstone of President Carter’s foreign policy—also propelled the U.S. to action. Not only the general level of violence, but also the murders of American citizens affected U. S. relations with El Salvador. In December 1980, four American churchwomen were raped and murdered; our government responded by cutting off aid to El Salvador, but only briefly, pending an investigation. In 1981, two American land reform advisers were gunned down in the Sheraton Hotel in San Salvador. The U. S. Congress subsequently decided to disburse aid only as improvements in the Salvadorian human rights situation became evident.

Simultaneously, the opposition strategy of the Salvadorian left was organizing. In 1981, leftist parties banded with guerrilla groups to coordinate their efforts against the government, uniting to form the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (Frente Farabundo Marti de Liberacion or FMLN). Their counter offensive began in January 1981; though it failed on several fronts, they retained certain military strongholds and helped to focus international attention on El Salvador. In August 1981, France and Mexico formally recognized the FMLN as a “representative political force” and called for a negotiated settlement between the warring factions.

The 1980 election of Ronald Reagan as President of the United States changed American policy in El Salvador dramatically. The new administration, worried about Communist expansion in Central America, viewed the El Salvador military government as a potential barrier against Communism. Subsequently, the Reagan administration increased both military and economic aid to El Salvador.

The civil war raged on in El Salvador, fueled by U. S. assistance to the Salvadorian military. The Salvadorian government harshly repressed dissent, and at least 70,000 people lost their lives in killings and bombings raids waged against civilians throughout the countryside. The country’s infrastructure had crumbled and the nation appeared to be no closer to its goals of peace, prosperity and social justice than when the process began. Then, in 1989, the murder of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her daughter at the University of Central America shocked the international community into action.

BOBBY: *They gave the guns. We gave the bodies. Americanos probably don't even remember which side they were on!*
—Living Out

With continuing reports of atrocities and murders in El Salvador, the U.S. Congress no longer accepted the State Department’s assurance that things were getting better. The House of Representatives created a special task force to monitor El Salvador’s investigation of the murders and selected Representative Joe Moakley of Massachusetts to head up the special force. During his research and visits to El Salvador, Congressman Moakley encountered a massive cover-up, severe problems with the Salvadorian armed forces, conspiracy and lies, which led him to challenge U.S. policy. He discovered that from a very high level, the armed forces of El Salvador had been responsible for the murders of the Jesuits. His investigation also led to the conclusion that certain levels of the U. S. government had known

Moakley's report revealed the cruel injustice of the U. S. backed Salvadorian government, setting in motion an international process to end the war. Both sides of the conflict in El Salvador approached the United Nations for help in negotiating a settlement. The U. N. sponsored talks culminated in the January 1992 signing of the Peace Accords, ending 12 years of civil war. The Peace Accords dictated that the FMLN surrender their weapons to

U. N. forces, and that 102 Salvadorian officers be dismissed. Considered to be the most successful U. N.-brokered agreement in the world today, the majority of the Accords have been followed.

http://www.pbs.org/itvs/enemies_of_war/elsalvador2.html

Illegal Immigration

ILLEGAL ALIEN: *a person who is not a United States citizen and who is in the United States in violation of U. S. immigration laws.*
—*Immigration and Illegal Aliens: Burden or Blessing, p. 71.*

THE FACTS

Of the roughly 12 Million undocumented immigrants in the U.S., 55% come from Mexico and 20% from other Latin American countries including El Salvador. This illegal population is growing about 275,000 to 300,000 each year. The 1996 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) legalized 2.7 million unauthorized persons (approximately 1.6 million illegal residents who had entered prior to 1982, as well as 1.1 million illegal agricultural laborers who had worked in this country for at least six months). This was an amnesty, a term President Bush wants to avoid. In 1990 and 1996, laws were passed to help stem the tide of illegal immigration, but they did not prove to be very effective.

TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS

In 1990 Congress passed an Immigration Act which empowered the Attorney General to grant Temporary Protected

Status (TPS) to people whose countries are suffering war or natural disaster. The impetus behind the creation of this act was the government's opposition to deporting thousands of illegals from El Salvador who had fled the civil war of the 1980s. When this TPS act expired in 1992, the administration chose not to deport these immigrants. This may be the reason Bobby and Ana are in this country.

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

1. We are a nation of immigrants and diversity is good for the U. S. society. "The only place where American society is evolving is where the immigrant influx is strong. Cities would have no future without them." 1.
2. Illegal immigrants are a source of cheap labor. Employers don't have to pay taxes or offer health care. Thus, many middle class families can afford household help.
3. Immigrants come to this country to work at jobs most Americans won't do. They are not here to collect welfare because all they are eligible for is Medicaid and limited food benefits.
4. Immigrants bring energy and enterprise to a society.

ARGUMENTS WHICH OPPOSE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

1. Our country is already severely overpopulated.
2. Since 9/11, controlling those who come into this country illegally has become a security issue.
3. Employers who hire illegal immigrants are breaking the law. The 1996 Immigration Reform and Control Act made it illegal for employers to knowingly hire undocumented workers and imposed penalties of up to \$11,000 for each violation.
4. Giving illegals legal status is wrong because it rewards criminal behavior.
5. Foreign workers who accept tougher working conditions and lower pay take jobs away from Americans.
6. The nation is continually in a bilingual debate.

WHERE WE ARE NOW

The House of Representatives Bill (HR 4437) is very austere and punitive in its provisions (or lack thereof). It requires:

1. Two layers of reinforced fence along much of the 2,000 mile border with Mexico.
2. The Federal Government would take custody of illegals detained by local authorities. This would end the practice of “catch and release”.
3. It would be a crime to assist any illegal immigrant to remain in the United States. Anyone supplying such aid is breaking the law and is subject to imprisonment.
4. All illegals, before being deported, must pay a \$3000 fine.
5. Anyone who is in this country illegally is considered a felon.

The Senate bill is more humanitarian in its approach. It requires:

1. Earned citizenship that will take 11 years.
2. To earn this citizenship, immigrants must hold jobs, learn English, pass criminal back-

ground checks and pay any fines and back taxes.

The President’s proposed bill includes some immigration incentives. These are:

1. A temporary worker program for immigrants who pass a criminal background check.
2. Citizenship for those undocumented immigrants who have worked here for a “number of years.”
3. Assistance in assimilating into our society.
4. Employer verification through an ID card.

Already enacted: The National Guard has been deployed to help the Border Patrol spot individuals trying to enter our country illegally.

WHAT THE POLLS SAY

A Time magazine poll of April 10, 2006 reveals:

1. 82% believes the government is not doing enough to keep illegals out.
2. 75% would deny illegals health care and food stamps.
3. 51% said children who are here illegally shouldn’t be allowed to attend public schools.
4. 78 % favor citizenship for those already here if they have a job, demonstrate they can speak English and pay their taxes.

WHAT EVERYONE AGREES ON

America must get tougher in controlling its borders.

Immigrants don’t come to America to change America. Immigrants come to America to be changed by America.

But either way, they come. 2.

— Senator Mel Martinez of Florida.

Continued from page 10

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Tumulty, Karen. "Should They Stay or Should They Go?" *Time*. April 10, 2006.

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<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HR4437>

1. Joel Kotkin in *Opposing Viewpoints*, p. 28.
2. *Time*, p. 5.

Teachers Speak Up for Voice Research

The National Center for Voice and Speech, a division of the Denver Center for the Performing Arts has been awarded a grant from the National Institute of Health to study the occupational voice use of teachers. Significantly, voice problems in teachers cost the US economy \$2.5 billion annually in medical care, substitute teachers and early retirement. The NCVS is looking for teacher participants for this study. To qualify, you must have vocal fatigue, teach full-time in the Metro Denver area, have the approval of your principle and be willing to wear a voice data collection devise for a two week regime. In addition, you will receive in- a clinical voice therapy evaluation, receive voice therapy advice for your study-related vocal fatigue and compensation for each day you complete the study. For more information, call 303-446-4834.

NCVS Profile: The NCVS is the only research and clinical care facility in the world that is affiliated with a major arts organization. Doug Montequin, PhD/CCC-SLP is a clinical voice pathologist, research associate and vocal coach. He works amongst a team of voice professionals that treat problems with the voice and swallowing, professional vocal performance, and neurogenic disorders (e.g. Parkinsons, ALS). This former actor has chosen the DCPA/NCVS for his practice because of his love of theatre and experience with professional performers. Doug was vocal coach for last season's productions of *The Clean House* and *The Ladies of the Camellias*. He is currently working as dialect coach for *Amadeus* and *Living Out*.

Activities

Discussion Questions

1. Why do people leave their countries to come to the United States?
2. Have immigrants taken “our” jobs?
3. What do immigrants and refugees have to offer to North American culture?
4. How well do you know your own community?
5. Are there people of another language or another culture from whom you can learn?
6. Discuss your ancestors’ migration to the United States and the reasons for it.
7. How does understanding the reasons for people’s immigration affect our reaction to them?
8. Discuss ways in which the economic system, from which we all benefit, is creating situations in other countries where people can’t survive.
9. How do people in the U.S. and the elite in some other countries benefit from an economic system which means suffering for others?

More discussion

1. What is the minimum wage?
2. Who are minimum wage workers?
3. What is the difference between directly and indirectly affected workers?
4. What is the difference between the minimum wage and a living wage?
5. Do we need a minimum wage increase?
6. Can a worker support a family on the minimum wage?
7. Will a minimum wage increase reduce poverty?
8. Is the EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit) a more effective anti-poverty tool than the minimum wage?
9. Does the minimum wage cause job loss?
10. Why doesn’t the minimum wage keep up with inflation?
11. How is the minimum wage determined?
12. Is every worker covered by the minimum wage?
13. Does Colorado have a higher minimum wage level than the federal minimum wage?
14. Do other countries have minimum wage laws?

Colorado Model Content for Reading and Writing

1. Students read and understand a variety of materials.
2. Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences.
3. Students write and speak using conventional grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.
4. Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.
5. Students read to locate, select, and make use of relevant information from a variety of media, reference, and technological sources.
6. Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience.