The following selections are concerned with issues of class, exploring the ways in which economic disparity often intersects with other forms of injustice and shapes the lives and futures of those living without access to financial security.

“In Phone Bank,” Amanda Huminski reflect on her first job in a call center and wonders how her colleagues—primarily older black women—are able to survive on such meager wages. In “A Different Kind of Field,” Sierra Laventure-Voltz recalls the tensions that were raised when her affluent school's soccer team attempted to hold practice on a field in an economically disadvantaged neighborhood. In “An Invisible Wall,” Nathan Hubel explains on how a chance encounter on a snowy day made him reflect on the pervasiveness of racial bias and how it impacts people's economic realities. Alex Payne's “Give” capture the physical and emotional pain her father feels after a life of physical labor. And finally, Leslie M. Mullin's “College Kids” reveals the ease with which people turn a blind eye to poverty and suffering.
Questions for Group Discussion

• What do these works reveal about the intersections of race and class?
• In what ways do racial bias and class inequality inform and reinforce each other?
• How do the authors respond to witnessing class inequality? What do they do? What could they do?
• What are some of the ways that financial insecurity affects people’s daily lives? What about their futures?

Writing Prompt

Unlike other forms of discrimination—like racism and sexism, for example—discrimination based on social class can sometimes be less obvious. Regardless of what social class you come from, you probably have experienced situations in which these class distinctions have revealed themselves. For example, some of your friends or family members may come from different social classes. These can be reflected in what kinds of houses they live in, what kinds of cars they drive, where they go on vacation or if they go on vacation at all, etc. Write about an encounter in which class differences between you and someone you know became apparent and how you dealt with it, and whether that affected your relationship with your acquaintance.