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## TOPICS

Famous Americans: Annie Leibovitz; home shopping cable channels and celebrity product lines; come versus go; via versus through

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## GLOSSARY

**portrait** – a painting or photograph of a person, sometimes with the entire body, but often just from the shoulders up

\* In the living room, there is a portrait of my grandmother as a young girl.

**the arts** – the study or practice of music, theater, dance, drawing, painting, photography, and similar fields

\* When you start college in the fall, will you study the sciences or the arts?

**big break** – something that happens that makes you suddenly become much more successful in your career

\* Michael wanted to become a professional baseball player and he got his big break when the coach for the city's team saw him play at a high school game.

**to be named** – to receive a position; to receive a new job or position title

\* Dr. Jeff McQuillan was named Time Magazine's Person of the Year.

**chief** – head; lead; most important; main

\* There are several mechanics fixing cars in this garage, but I always bring my car to the chief mechanic.

**celebrity** – famous person; a person known by many people, such as an actor, singer, or sports star

\* Gina has a book with the autographs of over 50 celebrities!

**channel** – a television station; one of the numbers that you tune into when you are watching TV

\* Which channel is showing the old movies with Cary Grant?

**cable** – television channel that is sent to homes through cables, or long wires

\* Will the soccer match be on a network or cable channel?



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**host** – a person who is on every episode of the show, presenting or introducing the contents of the show

\* The host of the show announced that there will be a surprise guest on this week's show.

**product line** – a group of products that have a similar design, brand (or name), and purpose, such as a type of makeup or perfume.

\* This product line of luxury cars will be marketed to business people.

**affiliated with** – connected to; with a connection to

\* Our summer school program for high school students is affiliated with the university.

**name recognition** – having a name that is well known by most people; having a famous name

\* We need a big star with good name recognition for your annual charity show if we hope to make a lot of money.

**via** – by way of; by a route that touches or passes through

\* Should we fly to New York City via Denver or Atlanta?

**through** – in at one end, side or surface and out the other

\* The children crawled through the bottom of the boat and came out the other end.



## **WHAT INSIDERS KNOW**

### **The National Portrait Gallery**

One of the main “attractions” (things or places to see) in Washington, D.C. is the museums and galleries “administered” (maintained; managed) by the Smithsonian Institution. One of these is the National Portrait Gallery. This museum is an art gallery with a “collection” (group) of pictures, paintings, and images of famous individual Americans.

The gallery is located in the third oldest “federal” (national) buildings in Washington, D.C. It was built between 1836 and 1867. The National Portrait Gallery has been there since 1968.

Part of its “permanent collection” (items always on display) are the portraits of the American presidents. The Gallery has the country’s only complete collection of U.S. presidential portraits outside of the White House. The permanent collection also includes portraits of important Americans of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These include major cultural, scientific, and political “figures” (people).

The museum also features portraits of famous artists, performers, and sports figures. In its “Bravo!” collection, you will find portraits of famous actors and composers (writers of music) such as John Wayne and Leonard Bernstein. If you are a fan of sports, be sure to visit the “Champions” collection. You will find portraits, “artifacts” (objects from history), and “memorabilia” (collected objects of historic importance) of athletes who have “distinguished themselves” (shown themselves to be important and successful) in many areas of sports. These collections also include “video clips” (short films) related to artistic and sport performances that are historically important.



## **COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT**

You're listening to ESL Podcast's English Café number 146.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast's English Café episode 146. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in the beautiful City of Los Angeles, in the State of California.

Do we have a website? Yes we do! Go to [eslpod.com](http://eslpod.com). When you're there, you can download a Learning Guide for this episode, an 8 to 10 page guide we provide for all of our current episodes that gives you lots of additional help in improving your English. You'll find all of the vocabulary words, definitions, new sample sentences using those words in different context, additional explanations of vocabulary that we don't discuss on the audio episode, comprehension questions, cultural notes, and a complete transcript of everything we say. You can also take a look at our ESL Podcast Store, as well as our ESL Podcast Blog, where several times a week we give you even more help in improving your English.

On this Café, we're going to continue our series on famous Americans; this time we're going to talk about Annie Leibovitz, who's a famous photographer – sometimes controversial photographer. Then we're going to focus on home shopping cable channels and celebrity product lines. You may have these in your country; these are television channels that just sell things. It's an interesting phenomenon; we'll talk about it. As always, we'll answer a few of your questions as well. Let's get started.

This Café continues our series on famous Americans. Today we're going to talk about a very well known photographer, by the name of Annie Leibovitz. Leibovitz is a portrait photographer; at least that's what she's most famous for. A "portrait" is a painting or a photograph of a person, sometimes the entire body of the person, but often just from the shoulders up, that is, the shoulders, the neck, and the head. That's a portrait photograph. In the past, before people had cameras – before photography, famous people and rich people would often ask artists to paint their portraits. Today, in many countries, there are portrait galleries, which are art museums where you can go and see famous portraits from the past. There's a famous gallery in Washington, D.C., the National Portrait Gallery, where you can see a lot of portraits like this. Annie Leibovitz really continues this tradition with photography; most of her famous portraits are of rich and famous people.



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Annie was born in Connecticut in 1949. She became interested in the arts when she was a high school student. When we talk about “the arts,” we usually mean music, theater, dance, drawing, painting, photography, and similar fields. Annie actually began writing and playing music. After she finished high school, she went to the San Francisco Art Institute, which is a very famous school for the arts here in California, up in Northern California in San Francisco.

Annie traveled to Japan, and while she was taking pictures on that trip, she became very interested in photography. She practiced her photography for several years, improving her photography skills while she worked at many other jobs. At the beginning, then, she wasn’t able to be a full-time, professional photographer; she couldn’t make enough money – a common problem with many artists.

Annie’s big break as a photographer came when she began working for Rolling Stone magazine, which is a magazine about rock groups and popular culture. She began there in 1970. A “big break” is something that happens that makes you suddenly much more successful in your career. For example, an actress might get her big break the first time she acts in a movie, or a singer might get his big break the first time he performs in an opera. As I said, Annie’s big break was to begin working for Rolling Stone magazine.

In 1973, Leibovitz was named the magazine’s chief photographer. To be “named” something means to receive a position and receive a new title – a new name for what you do. Annie was named the chief photographer; “chief,” here, means the head or the lead – the most important. The chief photographer at Rolling Stone is the most important photographer for the magazine.

During the ten years that she was the chief photographer there, she took portrait photographs of many famous musicians and other “celebrities,” or famous people such as actors and singers. In 1983, Leibovitz left Rolling Stone and began working for another magazine called Vanity Fair, which is mostly a magazine about “fashion,” or clothing styles, and politics. She continues to work there today.

Some of Annie’s portraits have become important parts of American pop culture. Perhaps her most famous photograph was a portrait of John Lennon, who, as you probably know, was a member of The Beatles. It was a photograph of him together with his wife, Yoko Ono. John Lennon liked the photograph so much he made Annie promise to put it on the cover of the magazine. Five hours later,



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John Lennon was shot and killed in New York, making her photograph the last photograph that was made of him while he was alive.

Annie also made a very famous portrait of Demi Moore, an actress, when she was seven months pregnant. The portrait was put on the cover of Vanity Fair magazine, and it made Annie very famous. Another important portrait was her official photograph of the Queen of England, Queen Elizabeth II, when she visited the United States, when she visited the State of Virginia. Annie's work has been shown many times in portrait galleries and art museums. She's probably one of the most famous photographers living, certainly, in the United States today. I went to see a collection of her photographs, oh, maybe six or seven years ago, at the Pacific Design Center here in Los Angeles, and her photographs were really amazing; very interesting, just – just really good situations. Leibovitz tries to put people in interesting poses, that is, in interesting positions with different kind of background and lighting. It really makes the photograph a piece of art. If you ever have a chance to see any of her photographs, I think you will agree there is something very special about them.

Leibovitz's photographs have also been sometimes controversial. Recently, she took some photographs of a young 15-year-old singer by the name of Miley Cyrus. The photographs were, according to some people, a little too sexual for a 15-year-old girl, and so many people complained about that. But usually her photographs are considered quite good, of the highest quality in terms of portrait photography.

Now let's turn to our next topic, which is home shopping cable channels and celebrity product lines. Many Americans, like many people all over the world, love to shop – love to buy things – and some of them like to do it from their own home, without needing to leave and go to a store. One way to do this is to watch one of the many home shopping channels. A "channel" is a television station. On cable television or satellite television, there are usually several hundred channels. A "cable channel" is one that is sent through the "cables," or long wires, that come into your house. Satellite TV, obviously, you have a satellite "dish," a receiver, on your roof that you can get the television channels from. People usually have to pay to get the cable channels or the satellite TV.

There are many types of cable channels. Some have programs, for example, only about travel, or food, or animals, or some specific topic that would interest a group of people. Some cable channels are all about shopping. These are what we call the "home shopping" cable channels. They show products and try to sell them through the television. If the viewers see something that they want to buy,



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they pick up their phone, call the number on the screen – call the number that they are told to call – and they can pay with their credit card. They then get their “purchase,” the thing they bought, through the mail usually a few days or a week or so later.

QVC is probably the best known home shopping channel. It has many different types of products, including jewelry, clothing, shoes, and what we call “beauty products,” things that are used mostly by women to make your hair look better or your skin look nicer and so forth. I, for example, buy all of my shampoo on the QVC channel!

The home shopping channel has a series of programs all day long, and all night; it’s a 24-hour channel. So, any time during the day or night you can turn the TV on and they’ll be selling something. Each of these programs throughout the day has a “host,” the person who presents the products that are for sale. The host gives you information about the product, and usually there’s a guest, another person with the host that has additional information about that particular thing that they are selling. A guest expert appears, usually, just on one episode about that particular product – that particular thing that they are selling. People call into the show and they can ask the expert questions about what they are selling before they buy it.

One of the things you will often see on these home shopping channels is celebrity products, or celebrity product lines. A “product line” is a group of products – a group of things – that has a similar design, purpose, often a similar name or brand. For example, they could all be types of makeup or perfume for a woman. A “celebrity product line,” then, is a group of products that are created and sold, or marketed by a particular celebrity, often using his name, or her name, to make it more popular and to get more people to buy it.

One famous celebrity product line is the clothing designed and marketed by Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen, who are twin sisters; they are young actresses. Usually people just call them the Olsen twins. They’ve made lots and lots of movies for younger people. They have the same audience – young girls, teenage girls, pre-teenage girls – that listen to Miley Cyrus, the singer I was talking about earlier, the 15-year-old who appeared in the photographs by Annie Leibovitz. Anyway, the Olsen twins have become very rich, very famous, probably worth more than a billion dollars right now, and one of the ways they have become rich is because they sell clothing that has their name on it. Many young girls buy them because they want to be somehow “affiliated with,” or connected to, these young actresses.



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Another very popular product line is by a woman who is known to most Americans, Martha Stewart. Martha Stewart is a celebrity who is very famous for advice on how people can make their homes better through decorating, through gardening, through cooking. She has a product line for the home; she sells sheets and towels, things for the kitchen. Her “brand,” or name of her product line, is Martha Stewart Living, and it’s very popular. In fact, there’s a television show with Martha Stewart; she has a magazine – or used to have a magazine. She’s considered a very well known person who can give you good advice about things in the home.

Martha Stewart is also famous because she was arrested and put in jail for lying to the government about some stocks that she bought. This was a very famous case a few years ago. But she went to prison, left prison, came back and continued her television show, and still makes millions of dollars every year.

You might ask why celebrities want to have these product lines. Some of them do it because they want to have greater “name recognition,” meaning they want to be even more famous and have even more people know them. Other celebrities have product lines as a way to make more money, since they get money every time one of their products is sold. Some American actors and singers have product lines in other countries but not in the United States. So you could go to another country and find a product line by a famous celebrity, but that product line may not be available here in the U.S. I’m going to be starting a product line of hair products – things to help you with your hair. If you’ve ever seen a picture of me you know that I’d be an excellent person to sell and market things for your hair. If you haven’t seen my picture, well, then I should tell you that I’m bald!

So, that’s home shopping channels and celebrity product lines. If you’re ever in the U.S., and you have a chance to see cable television, maybe in your hotel or in the home of someone you’re visiting, you’ll see a very interesting phenomenon of people selling things, and there are many people who love to shop – who love to buy things on this home shopping channels.

Now let’s answer some of your questions.

Our first question comes from Albert (Albert) in Spain. Albert wants to know how we use the English verbs “to come” and “to go.” This can be very confusing; let’s start with “to go.”



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“To go” means to leave a place – to depart from a place. We usually use the verb “go” to describe movement away from a place or position where you are. You may say to someone, “Go away Michael, I don’t want you here.” “Go away” means I want you to leave – to go to another place. You might also say, “Let’s go and visit my uncle John.” “Let’s go” means let the two of us – or the three of us, or however many there are – go to this different place.

The verb “to come” means to move toward or to approach a particular place or person. We use the verb “come” to describe movement to a place where the person is. So, “go” means to go away from that person; “come” means to come toward that person: “Would you come and visit me today?” You are in a different place, and I am asking you to come to me – to approach me. You could also say, “I have come here to ask you a question,” meaning I have come to this location from where I was before.

The idea here is that you have to know where the speaker – the person who’s saying the sentence – is, and where the person he or she is speaking to is located. For example, if the person saying the sentence is at a school and the person he is speaking to is at home, and he wants that person to visit him at the school, he would say, “Mary, please come to school to talk to me.” He’s at the school, she’s somewhere else; he’s asking her to travel from her home to the school. If we are talking about the speaker at home, and the other person they are speaking to is also at home, they would say something different. For example, Mary’s at home and her friend Bill is with her, she could say to Bill, “Please go to school to talk to John,” rather than “come to school,” because Mary is at home and she’s referring to something away from her.

Now, even though these are the general guidelines for the verbs “to go” and “to come” when used to talk about traveling or moving locations, many Americans use these interchangeably. That is, sometimes they’ll say “go” when you normally would say “come,” and sometimes they say “come” when people would say “go.” For example, you’re talking to someone on the phone who wants you to leave your house and go to his office. You say to that person, “Okay, I’m coming right now.” Well, according to our rules it should be “I’m going right now,” because I’m here and I’m talking about traveling to another place. But informally, in normal conversation, people will often use the two verbs to mean the same thing. I know that’s still probably confusing.

Graham (Graham) in China wants to know how we use the words “via” (via) and “through.”



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“Via” (it can also be pronounced “via”) is a preposition; it refers to the way or path or route that something travels from one place to another. For example: “I’m sending my letter to you via airmail,” meaning it’s going to go in a plane in order to arrive to you; it’s going to go by airmail. Or, let’s say you are flying from Los Angeles to the Philippines and your plane is going to stop in Hawaii, you would say, “I am flying to the Philippines via Hawaii.” That is the route – that is the path that I am taking.

“Through” is also a preposition; it can also be used to describe how something travels. We often use “through” in talking about something that goes or travels through a specific area. For example: “The river runs through the City of Sacramento, California.” It goes, or cuts into the city. You could also say, “My train trip to Seattle will go through San Francisco. You could also say it “will go via San Francisco,” either way would be correct.

“Through,” however, has some additional special meanings. “Through” can also mean something that goes in one side of an object and comes out the other side of an object: “I took my knife and I cut through the sandwich.” The knife went through the sandwich; it went from one side to the other. You wouldn’t say it “went via the sandwich.”

So, “through” and “via” are similar when we are talking about routes or paths that things take, but “through” has additional meanings as well.

If you have a question for the Café, you can send it to me via email. Our email address is [eslpod@eslpod.com](mailto:eslpod@eslpod.com).

From Los Angeles, California, I’m Jeff McQuillan. Thanks for listening. Come back and listen to us next time on the English Café.

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