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Nervous at the prospect of an interview, nervous because she does not speak English very well, and the interviewer will not know her language, Aurora tells herself, "But I know it. I have to say to myself, 'I am a human being and know some things. I have so many abilities.'" This significant statement indicates that Aurora, subject of one of the photostories, is overcoming some of the obstacles in the way of immigrant women, and many other women, in their effort to find employment. The program that has helped her achieve this affirmation of herself is outlined in the book under review.

Getting There, intended as an educational resource, was produced as a joint venture of immigrant working class women and women community workers. It is designed primarily for use in employment orientation programs to help immigrant women in looking for and getting work, but the authors believe that the stories "represent the broader experience of women everywhere—the journey to 'get there' politically, economically and culturally." The methods and tools described can be adapted to various groups, needs and situations.
The book has a pleasing format, effective photos and clear text. It contains material of four kinds: essays--one places the photostories in the broader history of immigrant working women, the other discusses the structure and ideology of the mass media and how they shape consciousness; a history of the making of the photostories; two photostories which form the basis of the book; a discussion section which provides starting points for using the book and which is directed at a variety of possible users.

At first reading Getting There might seem overly simple, but closer examination shows its sound pedagogy. The makers have not overlooked the obvious, nor have they been patronizing. Isolation is a barrier for many women and especially for immigrant women who are further isolated by language barriers. This is not to say that there are no obstacles for immigrant men and other men seeking employment but the sense of powerlessness is more severe for women who tend also to lack a sense of self-worth. It is true that men, by virtue of being born male, are assumed to have the right of entry into all fields of employment, while the same has not been true generally for those born female. Women are often diffident about making claims or demanding rights for themselves, and hesitant to put themselves forward. The first task, therefore, is to break down the isolation and build self-confidence.

The women begin by talking with one another in a friendly atmosphere. This process builds understanding and self-confidence and enables the participants to analyze their individual situations and the social context. As
they tell their stories they learn that they share many feelings and experiences, and as they analyze their common experiences they understand that they are not at fault in their situation, so they need not feel guilty. Through the photos they see themselves as thinking, feeling, human beings, not as cyphers or commodities.

The photostories are remarkable in presenting a number of effects simultaneously. The simply statements in the subject's voice reveal her inner feelings at each step of the journey. The photos of her show her various moods, but at the same time reveal the competent woman, and so contrast with the text to suggest courage and maturity. The shots of the city -- bridges, stairs, subways, shop windows -- are images both of obstacles and of possibility, and the woman, shown alone, can be seen as dwarfed or as an image of courage and strength. This last image contrasts vividly with the images of women portrayed in the advertisements who, in comparison, seem empty, one-dimensional persons.

Getting There should prove to be a valuable resource. It suggests various techniques but avoids rigid structures and so allows groups to develop their own personalities. The collective method encourages everyone to participate and can readily achieve that support system so necessary to break down barriers and help women to cope. The storytelling method does work with disadvantaged groups, and when used with photographs, slides, films, or graphics has enabled such groups to become self-help groups, powerful as lobbyists, encouraged to work for change.