Scholarship Interviews: Names You Need to Know
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Make sure that you know certain names as you prepare for your scholarship interview. Basic familiarity (or the lack thereof) will clearly affect how you are perceived. What follows is intended as a helpful checklist in that regard. Make sure you know . . .

- Key cabinet members, particularly those whose posts most affect your field.
- Your elected officials. And the leaders in Congress.
- The current Supreme Court.
- Notable heads of state around the world.
- Your interview panel.
- The namesake and/or founder for the award.
- Leading thinkers. Title/author/thesis for influential books in your field.
- Leaders and controversial figures in your field. Change agents.
- Relevant historical figures.
- Individuals making recent headlines.

And many interview questions are open-ended. So it is vital to figure out, before the interview, what you would like to talk about. This should include knowing WHO you would like to talk about . . .

- Your hero(es)
- Your most influential mentor
- Your role model. Individuals that you simply admire.
- Thinkers and authors that have strongly influenced you.
- Researchers that interest you.
- Leaders that capture your attention and/or loyalty.
- People whose actions and/or identity embody the ideas (and problems) most core to your thinking.
- Artists and writers that speak to you.
- Sources for your favorite quotes.
- Thinkers and authors whose views challenge your own.

Of course, these are mostly names that an educated and interested person should aspire to know regardless, and the names themselves are only as valuable as your ability to situate them within a larger context. However, learning the names should help you build a more coherent and detailed understanding of that context.

For that reason, you should begin to fill in the blanks as far in advance as possible. Cramming names into your head the night before the interview promises only marginal benefits (at best).