

APPLES

Service-Learning

**SERVICE-LEARNING SERIES:
TOOLKIT FOR PREPARING STUDENTS**

CAROLINA CENTER *for* PUBLIC SERVICE

Service-Learning Series – Toolkit for Preparing Students

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Service-Learning and Social Justice

What is it?

Social justice is defined by Warren (1998) as the movement of society toward more equality, support for diversity, economic fairness, nonviolent conflict resolution, and participatory democracy. In the classroom it looks like explicit recognition of oppression in its multiple forms.

Why talk about it?

Students who are involved in direct service to others in their communities are in an ideal position to examine the historical precedents of the problems they are addressing and to consider what types of efforts might be necessary beyond direct service to lessen the problems they are witnessing firsthand.

--Rahima Wade

How do we teach it?

- Create opportunities for discussion and assignments that directly address the interplay between topics you are examining in the course and issues of inequality, power and marginalization.
- Just as a service learning course has goals related to discipline-specific knowledge and skills, intentionally include goals related to understanding personal, social and structural inequalities within the course.
- Read and review the article by Rahima Wade (in this section on the toolkit) that lists essential elements of educating for social justice.

“...And Justice for All” Community Service-Learning for Social Justice

Rahima Wade

Discussing social justice issues in the classroom can be challenging, given their controversial nature. And working for social justice may involve activities focused on long-term change rather than immediate observable benefits. Yet students who are involved in direct service to others in their communities are in an ideal position to examine the historical precedents of the problems they are addressing and to consider what types of efforts might be necessary beyond direct service to lessen the problems they are witnessing firsthand. This paper discusses how social justice issues can be integrated into high quality service-learning programs. Combining community service activities with the study of social issues can give students additional ideas for how they can contribute to meaningful societal change and can strengthen service-learning activities by helping students learn the skills, knowledge and attitudes they need to participate in improving the larger society.

What Is Social Justice?

Social justice is a term often referred to but rarely defined. Much more has been written about injustice than the nature of social justice. From a historical and academic perspective, however, several well-known philosophers have defined social justice. Aristotle’s view of justice was a rule based distribution of benefits and burdens among society members to achieve a basic level of goodness for all. Philosopher John Rawls also equated justice with fairness, believing justice would result from the following situation: A group of mutually disinterested individuals, unacquainted with their places in society, if given the charge to divide up society’s resources, would inevitably arrive at the creation of a just society that would include an equitable distribution of rights and responsibilities and opportunities for self-development for everyone. More recently, feminist scholars such as Carol Gilligan and others at the Harvard Graduate School of Education Center for the Study of Gender, suggest that the notion of social justice cannot be thought of in purely intellectual terms, that it also encompasses care, relationships and responsibility. Andra Makler, a social studies professor at Lewis and Clark College, asserts that at the root of all conceptions of social justice is some sense of an appropriate social structure and respectful relationships among persons, without regard to race, ethnicity, religion, age, physical ability or sexual orientation. Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell and Pat Griffin, professors in the Social Justice Education Program at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, define a socially just society as one in which all members have their basic needs met. In addition, they note that in a just society all individuals are physically and psychologically safe and secure, able to develop to their full capacities and capable of interacting democratically with others. While people may disagree about how prevalent social justice is in our society and how best to further equity, most Americans will concur that justice is a core value in our democratic society.

What Are the Essential Elements of Educating for Social Justice?

Social justice education begins with children's experiences and then moves toward fostering a critical perspective and action directed toward social change (Bigelow, et al., 1994). While delineations of social justice education vary, an analysis of the sources used in developing this paper point to eight characteristics as essential elements of effective social justice education:

Student-Centered

Students need to feel cared for and respected to learn to trust one another, share ideas openly and collaborate on issues of mutual concern. Teachers need to respect students' abilities, interests and opinions, and encourage students to make connections between themselves and the curriculum.

Collaborative

Effective social justice teachers create a classroom community in which students collaborate with one another to learn, solve problems and mediate conflicts, and effect change. In addition, students should interact with others in the school and community to build equitable partnerships that support mutually shared goals.

Experiential

Student involvement and engagement in mentally and physically active experiences are essential in the social justice classroom. Through projects, role playing, mock trials, simulations and experiments, students experience concepts and key ideas firsthand, rather than just reading or hearing about them.

Intellectual

Social justice education is not just about process; it involves real intellectual work on the part of students and teachers. Students engage in inquiry and research as they interview community members, seek out information through the Internet and examine primary sources. Throughout these experiences, students are asked to apply the skills and knowledge of the curriculum as they examine multiple perspectives on a variety of issues.

Analytical

In searching for ways to create a better world, social justice teachers ask students to critique the status quo, examine underlying assumptions and values, and explore their own roles in relation to social issues. Teachers also ask students to consider whose voices are left out, who makes the decisions, whose stories are buried and how to create change as they uncover various sources of information. Analyzing the causes of injustice in the school, community, society and world is at the heart of social justice education. Reflection in social justice-oriented service-learning projects addresses the controversial nature of the issues under study and asks students to look at how they may be part of the problem, as well as how they can become part of the solution.

Multicultural

One aspect of social justice education is concerned with a conscious and consistent focus on including the history and perspectives of all people, including those with different ethnic

backgrounds, physical abilities, religious beliefs, genders, sexual orientations and socioeconomic classes. Every social justice issue under study should employ source materials from multiple perspectives. Teachers must be culturally sensitive in terms of their students as well, seeking out advice from colleagues, parents and community members for working most effectively with students who are culturally different than them.

Value-Based

While educators sometimes like to think of themselves as value-neutral, every classroom decision – from curriculum content to room arrangement to teaching strategies – involves values. The social justice teacher recognizes this fact and welcomes controversy and value-based issues in the curriculum. While respecting students' individual views, teachers also encourage students to come up with reasoned opinions and explain how their ideas support social justice. As historian Howard Zinn asserts, it is important for teachers to model the process of taking a stand and sharing their own positions on issues, while reminding students that their opinions, even if different from the teacher's, also are valid.

Activist

Along with learning about social problems and questioning prevailing practices, students need opportunities to work for social change. In particular, social justice teachers encourage students to work for the rights of those who are dominated or marginalized, such as people of color, individuals with disabilities, those who are poor, the very young and very old, and those whose religions or languages are different from the mainstream society. Students often work alongside individuals who have not enjoyed equal rights for mutual support and empowerment.

Community based teaching? Lessons learned about teaching tolerance from Community Based Organizations

Warren, K. (1998) Educating students for social justice in service learning. *The Journal of Experiential Education*, 21(3),134–139.

By Leda Cooks and John Reiff, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Service-learning can be one of the most powerful tools available for introducing college students to issues of diversity and social justice and for teaching them to approach with respect and understanding people who differ from them in race or ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, age, and a wide range of other dimensions of social identity. Service placements can draw students out of their comfort zones, engaging them with people who differ from them in ways that they have never directly encountered before. Stereotypes can be shattered by the reality of the person standing in front of the student, and s/he may be pushed to find new ways of seeing both self and other.

Service-learning, however, can also be **mis**-educative, if key elements are missing. A white middle-class student working in a low-income community of color, for example, may read everything s/he encounters in ways that confirm the prejudices the student brought into the community. Reflection alone is not enough to get past this problem, because the student may use reflection to crystallize the connections s/he is drawing between initial prejudices and the social conditions encountered.

Nothing we can do will guarantee our success at this endeavor, but we can greatly increase our chances if we make issues of social identity, diversity, power, privilege and oppression an explicit part of both the *preparation* we give students before we send them into the community, and a part of the *processing* we ask them to do as they examine their service experiences.

The authors of this paper both work at a large state university in the Northeastern United States. One is a member of the faculty of the Communication department and has brought service-learning into both undergraduate and graduate courses over the past fifteen years. The other is director of the Office of Community Service Learning (OCSL), a unit of the honors college that supports service-learning across the entire campus. The OCSL provides grants for departmental and faculty development and research in community service learning. As well, the office created and runs an undergraduate fellowship program and a first-year learning community with a social justice and civic education framework. Our long term commitment to develop university community partnerships through more equitable and just relationships has meant recognizing our own institutional privilege and blinders and listening deeply—not for answers but for new ways of posing questions both to ourselves and our students. This paper details some of the lessons that our partners in the community have taught us about the preparation and training of students, and ways that those lessons have been applied in a specific service-learning project.

A Charge from the Community to the Service-Learning Office

In the 2004-2005 academic year, the Office of Community Service Learning began investigating how students from service-learning classes are viewed by the staff of the community organizations with which they work. Our VISTA volunteer conducted intensive interviews with the staff of 15 human service agencies; we then organized a focus group of another 25 human service staff who talked for over an hour.

We learned that students can be a wonderful resource to bring into the work of community-based organizations (CBOs). Typical comments included:

- “Everything is fresh to students; they want to get experience wherever they can.”
- “Student volunteers have a high energy level and creative ideas that can balance the older adult volunteers they work with.”
- “When they work out, volunteers do things that couldn’t be replaced with paid people.”
- “They often do just one-hour, specialized or simple activities that staff don’t have time to do.”

We also learned that students can be a substantial drain on community-based organizations. Typical comments included:

- “It’s hard for students to match their schedules with the organization. They disappear for summers, which is hard for us, when relationships have been built.”
- “They can be flaky.”
- “It is always a risk investing time in interns and students who may or may not work out. When volunteer projects don’t come through, they end up being a cost of time to staff members. One intern left after starting two groups; obviously these groups then needed to be supervised, so a staff member took over.”

But especially interesting were the answers to this question: “What do you wish students knew before they ever walked through your door? What would you want us to do to prepare them before they come to you?” Answers fell into three categories:

1) Community staff wanted students to understand that each agency has an **organizational culture** which is different from the culture of the college or university. In their work with one another or with their clients, people in the organization might *speak* differently from the ways people use language on campus. They might *dress* differently—perhaps more formally than students’ dress, as an indicator of the professionalism they bring to their work. They might relate to *time* differently—placing a higher value on punctuality, for example, or performing triage on a set of phone messages and only calling back some. Community staff didn’t want us to teach our students the cultures of their organizations; they just wanted us to alert the students to the fact that there would be an organizational culture and that they would need to start learning its norms as soon as they arrived.

2) Community staff wanted students to know as much as possible about the **community** in which they will be working. Most of our students do not come from the communities close to the university, and their home communities may be quite different from the communities around us. Staff asked that students be introduced to the history, the politics, the demographics, the economics, and the culture of the community. Who lives here? How do they make their livings? What are their struggles and their hopes?

3) The third point is linked to the second. Community staff wanted students to have spent some time exploring the meanings of their own **social identities** from a social justice perspective. What might it mean, for example, to be a white person coming in to “help” people in a community of color? What might it mean to bring the experience and the assumptions of a middle class upbringing into a poor community? For that matter, what

might it mean to show up as a college student in a community where very few people have gone past high school? Community staff told us that they didn't want our students' first encounters with the people of their communities to be the first time our students asked themselves these and other questions about what it means to be who they are. Given the responses of the community staff, in what follows we describe a project and course that attempts to address the themes discussed above and then discuss the pedagogy of the course/project as it relates to teaching tolerance.

The Example of a Specific Service-Learning Project

The objective of the media literacy and violence prevention project (MLVPP) is to bring together University Communication students across three courses to develop and implement a media literacy, conflict resolution, and violence prevention project for area sixth graders. The project has been dedicated to both community service learning and community based research. The community service learning (CSL) courses for which the project is intended are Television Violence and Conflict and Mediation, although over the years the project has also included courses in Media and Public Policy and Public Speaking. The project is unique in that it makes links among elements of the communication discipline that are sometimes dealt with as discrete and unrelated, such as interpersonal conflict, intercultural communication and mass communication. This provides the participating students with an opportunity to view the intersections between and among the courses they take as Communication majors, and the faculty instructors of the courses encourage these connections through written reflection and discussion. However, in order to better concentrate on the pedagogical and community aspects of the project, most recently, faculty co-taught a capstone course that focused on the project. In addition to developing the University students' knowledge of media literacy and interpersonal conflict, the curriculum included materials on education for social change, intercultural communication and community based research skills.

The project takes place in three area school districts of varying income levels. One school, an elementary school, is in a middle-to upper income community; the second middle school is in a lower-middle to middle income community and the third middle school is in a poor and working income community. The students are fairly homogenous in cultural background and income level in each school, with about 7% differences in majority/minority populations. In one school, however, the cultural backgrounds of the students (Puerto Rican and African American) differ greatly from those of faculty—an issue of some concern to the students, parents and local community. The University students have been primarily white, middle class and female, although more recently students have varied in their race/ethnicity and class profiles. As is typical of service learning classes, we tend to have many more female than male students in our courses.

In past years, students enrolled in courses associated with the project spent the early part of the semester building their knowledge of the content they would be teaching the sixth graders. Each week the University students participated in a one hour colloquium in which they learned about community service learning, the schools in which they would be working, and about media violence, media literacy, interpersonal conflict and conflict resolution skills. The most recent capstone course focused more comprehensively on the community and diversity, social justice, white privilege and on ways faculty and students could work for change in the community through community based learning and research. In what follows we go into some detail about the curriculum and ways we attempted to address the issues brought forward by the CBOs.

Application

To better focus our pedagogy on the CBO areas mentioned: organizational culture, community knowledge, intercultural communication, and thinking through privilege, in the latest iteration of the program, we designed the capstone course mentioned above. The first several weeks of the course were spent discussing community service learning as it relates to social justice and social change. Myles Horton's autobiographical book, *The Long Haul* (Horton, 1998), provided a basis for some of these discussions. Foundational questions here included: *What's the big picture? Where does education or schooling fit into this picture? How can education work for social change? How can we use our education to work toward justice in our communities?* Students worked to address these questions in small groups and in the whole class, as well as in guided reflection papers. Not all students take our classes or even do CSL to change the world-- we understand that there are other motivations for attending college--however, we screened students before they enrolled in the course to make sure that they were interested in working with children. We also had a mix of students, some of whom were already engaged in an intensive community service learning program on our campus¹. The students motivated each other to look more deeply at their reasons and goals for being involved with the project.

From this starting point, we began to address issues of *difference* and working through *privilege* through an exercise in asset mapping across the student groups in our classes and in the three school districts. Asset mapping (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993) has been used as a tool to discover the assets otherwise hidden in communities by having community members think about what they do on an everyday basis that can help others in their neighborhoods, as well as structural and institutional resources that might be present but mis- or under-used. Students read a couple of papers from the community workbook and then proceeded in groups to map different segments of their school communities. Timing did not permit in-depth interviews and the level of creativity and innovation that we imagined, but the exercise opened the door for more comprehensive semester-long work in the future.

In addition to providing a position from which we could discuss perceptions of difference and privilege, asset mapping also created a space for learning about the community and culture(s) of which the schools were a part. Asset mapping was especially important in the third school and its district, where perceptions of poverty, different cultural backgrounds, burned out teachers and the state's designation of the school as "underperforming," gave us a language only of deficit. By looking deeper into the possibilities for assets in cultural resources, extended families and neighborhood ties, we also were able to see the influences on the institutional culture of the school that extended beyond its walls. We further researched the schools as *organizations* through site visits before our "official visits". We spent time with teachers, principals and informal time with the students. Principals also came to our campus—in one case holding a two hour workshop on the culture of the school and surrounding community. We videotaped the workshop for those who could not attend and showed portions in class as a prompt for continued discussion.

Additionally, we gathered information on the districts through census data, websites for the schools (and data contained on those sites), data from the department of education and information gathered from the sixth graders through survey responses obtained before our visits. Although it could be argued that in our research we missed much of the daily organizational life of the school—the relationships between staff, faculty and administration, and between school personnel, families and community leaders—we had a beginning

knowledge of the *organizational culture* and beginning relationship with the school community we were entering.

During our visits to the schools (each university student group went twice weekly for three weeks in the spring) we videotaped the presentation/discussions with the sixth graders. In the university class we played back the tapes (or portions thereof) and students spent considerable time discussing how interpretations of the materials we presented differed across classes, schools and districts. These comparisons often generated discussions of “good” versus “bad” teaching, students, and schools. We worried over the possible reification of stereotypes in students’ attempts to solve what they saw as physical, social and cultural problems in the poorer school. In an effort to privilege learning over problem solving, we focused on the language students used to discuss their work in the schools. While those in the wealthier districts took pride in “teaching” the sixth graders about media literacy and conflict resolution, those in the poorer district mostly dismissed teaching as untenable and instead focused on, as they put it, “helping” the students. Their discourse centered on the problems of the students, the inability of the teacher to connect and on simply being there to listen. We used these instances as opportunities to discuss privilege and differences: differences in the language of *teaching* versus *helping* led to discussion of the valuing of certain kinds of knowledge over others. We asked, for instance: *What kinds of knowledge best helped you survive in your environment? How did that knowledge correspond with the knowledge valued by the dominant culture?*

As students reflected on their work in the schools, we introduced them to various methods of research that centered on ideas of social justice and change through participatory action. We discussed and used traditional research methods as well, such as survey, interview and ethnography. While we did not have the time or opportunity to conduct a full-fledged research project, students saw these methods as another entryway into knowledge that might make a difference in lives of the people with whom they were working. As the final project of the semester, student groups wrote a summary report consisting of their asset maps, curriculum (including workbooks and exercises for the students) interviews with students and teachers, and survey summaries. These reports were prepared for the teachers and principals of the schools.

Each of the categories from the CBO data summarized above: the importance of organizational culture, knowledge of the community within which students are working and self-knowledge with regard to identity and privilege were integrated in some way into the design and experience of the course. Although we were clearly limited by the middle school teachers’ and administrators’ schedules, as well as our own outside work and the logistical challenges of undergraduate student schedules, we managed to gather enough data and first and second-hand experiences to see what and how well the three areas might be addressed. Other limitations, including the boundaries of the academic semester, the focus on standardized testing in the sixth grade classrooms, and the varying interest and commitment levels of the undergraduate students and the sixth grade teachers and students must be acknowledged lest we present too rosy a picture of success here.

While the example of the MLVPP demonstrates the possibilities for addressing and integrating the CBO concerns into a CSL course and project, in what follows we propose a more general pedagogical framework that the reader could apply to any CSL or other course. Since receiving the charge from the community based staff to better prepare our students for working with and learning from diverse groups of people in the community, we’ve spent the most time working on the third point--self-knowledge with regard to identity and privilege--

because it seemed to us both the most difficult to address and in many ways the most important. In the Office of Community Service Learning, we have been developing training approaches on issues of social identity, diversity, power, privilege, and oppression. We are refining these approaches in courses offered directly by the office, and are beginning to offer them to faculty across the campus. This training is based heavily on the work of the University of Massachusetts Amherst Social Justice Education program, and we feel that it can apply to anyone interested in working toward more just and equitable practices in our community service learning pedagogy:

1) An analysis of the various systems of prejudice and discrimination in our society as a comprehensive **fabric of oppression** (see Appendix). All the threads of this fabric, the various “isms”—sexism, racism, heterosexism, classism and the like—work in fundamentally similar ways: they divide people into two groups, according unearned privilege and power to one group at the expense of the other. (We acknowledge that reality is more complicated than a simple set of binary oppositions, but we argue that the presence of this set of binaries in our culture exerts tremendous power on our thought, feeling, and behavior.) For each of these threads, each of us will find ourselves classed either among the privileged or the subordinated, but the patterns of privilege and subordination across the whole fabric differ among us. We tend to be much more aware of the workings of this system at those points where we are identified with a subordinated group, where we are placed in pain; the benefits of privilege tend to be much more invisible, thought of as normal—at least to those in the privileged group.

2) An analysis of the fabric of oppression drawing strength from its existence on multiple levels: **the intra-personal, the interpersonal, and the institutional**. We define these levels for students, offer a few examples, and engage them in identifying other examples from their own experience.

3) The notion of **the cycle of socialization** (Harro, 2000) as an explanation for how we came to play our roles in this system. By naming the process of socialization and showing how it functions throughout our lives to teach us things that are essential—how to think, feel, act, and be members of a human community—we show the power of socialization. By showing how through this process we also learn our roles in systems of inequity and oppression, we open the possibility for students to examine what they have themselves learned to think, feel, believe, and do, without falling into the twin traps of blame and guilt—or a posture of denial driven by the desire not to be beaten down by blame or guilt.

4) The use of **the identity matrix**, which is a chart much like the Fabric of Oppression, but with the groups in the two middle columns left blank. We ask students to locate themselves in the matrix, placing themselves in the privileged or subordinated column for each “ism”, then to share with each other stories about their experiences in both the subordinated and privileged positions. Learnings at this point can be intense. We then ask them to identify the predominant patterns in this matrix for the *staff* of the community organization with which they are working, and for the *people who are served* by that agency—and to identify the points at which their own identities differ from the predominant identities in either of the other groups. We now have a set of points for critical inquiry, and a charge we give to the students

for the remainder of the semester is to explore through speculation, observation, and conversation the meanings of these differences for them and for the people they encounter.

Conclusion

The pedagogy of community service learning has strong theoretical foundations in progressive and experiential education. Scholars build on the work of pragmatists, experiential learning theorists, ethical learning theorists, as well as critical/radical education theorists. Much of the theoretical research cites Dewey, Freire or Piaget, but others such as Gardner, Kohlberg, and Lave have been frequently cited as well (Furco, 2002). The pedagogical basis of CSL envisions students as active, critical, engaged participants in civic life. The partner in this equation, the community, or frequently democracy, while often idealized, is rarely, if ever, a participant in building theories of teaching and learning. We do not profess to accomplish such a large project in this paper; although we hope to provide a framework toward teaching that is community based and an example of how such an attempt played out in our courses. We envision a community based teaching that is rooted in the pedagogical concerns of our community partners-- concerns often based in the CBO position as outsiders to higher academic institutions and who come from cultural, social and economic positions that differ from those of our CSL students. It is our hope that such a re-thinking of our pedagogy and pedagogical (institutional) position is one step toward that goal.

Endnotes

i. These students were part of the Citizen Scholars Program, a unique two year program that brings together top students across campus who are committed to working for social justice and social change through CSL.

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Appendix

<u>Identity Category</u>	<u>Privileged</u>	<u>Subordinated</u>	<u>Form of Oppression</u>
Race	White People	People of Color, Biracial People	Racism
Gender	Males	Females, Transgender People	Sexism
Religion	Christians	Members of Religions Other than Christian	Religious/Cultural Oppression
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexuals	Homosexuals, Bisexuals	Heterosexism/ Homophobia
Socioeconomic Class	Wealthy and Middle Class People	Working Class and Poor People	Classism
Physical, Psychological, or Developmental Ability	Temporarily Able People	People with Disabilities	Ableism
Age	People Aged (roughly) 25-50	Young and Old People	Ageism
Ethnicity	People from Western European cultures	People from all other cultures	Ethnocentrism
[This box left blank to indicate that other categories could be added.]			

Helping Students Explore Their Privileged Identities

By Diane J. Goodman, diversity consultant based in Nyack, New York, and adjunct faculty in the graduate school of education at the State University of New York–New Paltz *For more on understanding and addressing resistance to social justice issues, see Goodman 2001, 2007. To contact Diane Goodman, e-mail dianejgood@aol.com. Equity & Excellence in Education, 37: 55–66, 2004*

Self-exploration is central to our growth as individuals, our relationships with others, and our ability to promote equity. Our various social identities—sex, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, age, socioeconomic class, religion, and ability, among others—are important aspects of our selves that shape our attitudes, behaviors, worldviews, and experiences. As we work to create and participate in diverse and democratic environments, we need to understand how our own and others' identities and related social locations affect our lives and our interactions with each other.

Most of us have identities that are part of both privileged groups (for example, male, white, heterosexual, middle or upper class) and oppressed groups (female, person of color, gay, poor or working class). Current theory and research focuses particularly on the intersectionality of our multiple social identities, which simultaneously interact within different contexts of societal inequality (see, for example, Dill and Zambrana 2009). While it is critical to understand the complexity of our whole selves, it can be useful to focus on individual aspects of identity as we develop greater awareness of our social positions.

While self-exploration can be difficult, exploring a privileged identity can be particularly hard for many people. Educators are likely to encounter resistance when asking students to undertake this kind of self-examination. But faculty can find ways to help students move beyond fear and defensiveness. The approaches described below can apply in a wide range of contexts, from diversity workshops to classes in different disciplines.

Challenges to Exploring One's Privileged Identities

In general, educating about issues of diversity and social justice can be challenging. Students are often resistant to reevaluating their beliefs about themselves, others, and the world. Questioning one's assumptions can feel emotionally and intellectually threatening, and students can struggle with many barriers to examining their privileged identities.

Belief that "I'm just normal." When I ask students to name the social identity with which they most identify, they rarely choose a dominant identity (sometimes with the exception of identifying as male). This may be because people who are part of privileged groups seldom have to think about their privileged identities: they are usually surrounded by people like themselves and therefore see themselves as "just normal." Because dominant cultural and societal norms are based on values and characteristics that they hold, they (and the dominant society) often construe people from oppressed or underrepresented groups as the ones who are "different."

Denial that differences make a difference. When people are part of the norm, they find it easier to believe that social identities do not really matter. Therefore, they feel little need to examine how social identities impact their own and others' lives. Students may maintain that they treat everyone equally and that they do not see differences. While often made with good intentions, this claim denies aspects of who others are and the realities of others' lived experience. Students may also believe that systemic inequality is essentially a thing of the past, and that with today's "level playing field," there is no need to focus on identities and their significance.

Guilt, shame, and discomfort about privilege. An exploration of one's privileged identities can engender discomfort. Students may equate being part of the dominant group with being an oppressor—that is, a "bad person"—and they may find it unsettling to acknowledge how they might be participating in and benefiting from systems that unfairly

disadvantage others. Guilt and shame often arise as people explore their biases and their privileged group's role in historical and contemporary oppression. Students may fear they will get stuck in these feelings or be subject to blame if they explore the privileged aspects of their identities.

Focus on one's oppressed group identities. People are often much more inclined to reflect on their marginalized identities than they are to think about how they are privileged. Dominant society often makes people cognizant of their subordinated group identities, because they face obstacles and mistreatment that arise from these differences. In part to avoid feeling guilt and shame, many people prefer to focus on how they are oppressed rather than on how they are privileged. Sometimes students ultimately feel that being part of an oppressed group is preferable to being part of a dominant group and thus attempt to shift the spotlight from how they are advantaged in one area to how they are disadvantaged in another.

Strategies for Helping Students Explore Privileged Identities

As a foundation for helping students examine their dominant identities, faculty can follow some general principles for establishing effective contexts for learning. In order to create spaces that are respectful, supportive, and allow students to take emotional and intellectual risks, faculty can establish guidelines, conduct warm-up activities, and encourage gradual amounts of personal sharing. In this environment, faculty can address students' defensive feelings and help them develop their understanding of self and others.

Affirm all identities. As noted above, students are particularly apt to ignore aspects of their dominant group identities. Faculty should help students see that they are a mix of social identities, that all identities and cultures have positive qualities, and that no person is good or bad because of his or her social identities. One approach is to have students conduct a social identity inventory, noting aspects such as their race, sex, and ethnicity in writing, by drawing, or by sculpting with different materials. After creating their inventories, students can answer questions like, "Which identities are most central to who you are, and why? What do you like about or gain from particular identities? What do you wish people understood about a particular identity?" The primary purpose of these questions is to reinforce that all social groups have valuable qualities and that social group membership does not determine one's inherent goodness or worth.

Examine how differences matter. Once students acknowledge their various identities, faculty can help them see how different identities can lead to different perspectives, experiences, values, world views, and access to power and privilege. Faculty can ask students questions to help them think about their social identities' impact: "Which identities are you most or least aware of, and why? How do you think your different identities affect who you are, your experiences, and how you see the world?" Through discussion, students can begin to see how people are systematically advantaged or disadvantaged based on group membership. Experiential activities like the popular Privilege Walk and guided imageries where students imagine a reversal of roles can help expose norms and privileges. Being "discrimination testers" (observing who gets followed in stores or waited on more quickly in restaurants, for example) helps reveal how differently people are often treated. Research studies, media reports, films, interview exercises, and speaker panels can also help students learn about others' experiences. I find that personal stories tend to have the most effect on students, although a factual foundation is important to differentiate individual anecdote from systemic patterns. Students who are ready for more complex analysis can consider how one of their privileged identities (for example, their race) is affected by their other identities (such as sex, class, or religion), while being careful not to focus simply on how their subordinated identities diminish their privilege.

Show that people receive privileges whether or not they recognize or want them. When examining power and privilege, it is critical to highlight that people from privileged

groups receive advantages regardless of whether they are aware of them or want them. People from privileged groups often do not realize that they are benefiting at someone else's expense. Students need to realize that privilege is not about intent or about "being a good person," but arises from a larger system where social identity affects access to resources and opportunities. Films and research studies that show how people from dominant groups have greater access to jobs, housing, and medical treatment can demonstrate these dynamics.

Emphasize the systemic nature of oppression. By focusing on the systemic nature of oppression, faculty can avoid suggesting individual blame. This approach reduces defensiveness and resistance. Although each person plays a role in systems of inequality, all systems are larger than any one individual. Students may feel freer to examine their attitudes, behaviors, prejudices, and stereotypes if they understand how everyone has been socialized to develop distorted views and fill narrow roles. Activities that ask students to recount messages they heard while growing up (about gender-appropriate behavior, for example) can assist with this process. Students will find that their recollections are remarkably similar, which speaks to the pervasive nature of these messages and the power of the dominant ideology. These discussions can give students the opportunity to reevaluate the biased messages they have internalized.

Heighten investment. Faculty need to help students realize the value of exploring their privileged identities. Since different motivations may resonate with different students, it's helpful to suggest a variety of benefits: development of self-knowledge and authenticity; increased comfort in dealing with diverse people and situations; avoidance of engaging in unintentionally hurtful actions; improved ability to work through feelings of anger, guilt, and shame; increased capacity to act in ways that are more consistent with one's morals; and the skills to better address inequities. Faculty can remind students that discomfort is part of the growing process and that by becoming more aware, they can increase their effectiveness at working in and contributing to a diverse world. Moreover, faculty can reassure students that the goal of democracy and social justice is not to simply change who benefits from unequal systems, but to ensure that all people are treated with respect and have equal access to power and resources. Systems of oppression ultimately hurt everyone (though in different ways), and all individuals have something to gain from greater social justice (see Goodman 2001).

Provide positive role models and options for action. Students need ways to channel their reactions to exploring their privileged identities so they do not become overwhelmed with feelings of guilt or powerlessness. They can gain inspiration for constructive action by reading about or hearing from people with privileged identities who have worked for social justice. These role models (past and present) offer examples of how people from dominant groups can act as allies and show students that they can be part of a larger history and community of change agents.

Students can additionally benefit from reading about theories of social and racial identity development (for example, Hardiman and Jackson 1997; Helms 2008). These readings identify paths toward positive privileged identities. By emphasizing accountability and responsibility and developing options for action, faculty can help students feel empowered to create personal and social change.

Final Thoughts

The process of examining ourselves, and particularly our privileged identities, is rarely simple. But its rewards are often great. By exploring their privileged identities, students can enhance their personal development, improve their relations with others, and become better citizens of the world. This exploration is easier when faculty refuse to simply cast individuals from privileged groups in a negative light, instead seeking to foster awareness and action that supports diversity and equity.

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The Challenge of Short-Term Service-Learning

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This paper presents the results of interviews with staff from 64 community organizations regarding their experiences with service-learners. One of the themes that emerged from the interviews focused on concerns related to short-term service-learning commitments that last a semester or less. We explore the challenges presented to community groups by short-term service: investment of staff time; staff capacity to train and supervise; incompatibility with direct client service; timing and project management; and academic calendar issues. Despite these obstacles, many community organization staff reported their desire to continue working with service-learners for altruistic and other reasons. The paper concludes with thoughts on how to deal with the challenges presented by short-term service-learning.

One of the most popular forms of service-learning today is the service-learning component added onto a regular course. Such service-learning experiences are short-term, requiring only a semester or shorter commitment by the student and involving only a few hours a week during that time. The 2006 Campus Compact survey of service-learning (2007) found that the majority of students performing service, including co-curricular service, participated for 2.5 or fewer hours per week. Two “best practices” in service-learning highlighted at the University of California Berkeley consist of one eight-hour field trip in one case and a one-hour per week service engagement in another (Voorhees & Furco, 2005). Even in the field of pharmacy, where the development of a practice ethic is paramount, at least one service-learning placement expected only 16 hours of participation (Kearney, 2004). In business, one standard was a single 8-10 hour placement (Wittmer,

2004). Some analysts promote short-term service-learning for students with little to no consideration of its impacts on communities (Fitch, 2005; Reed, Christian Jernstedt, Hawley, Reber, & Dubois 2005).

How do community organizations react to students who arrive on their doorsteps expecting a ten-hour service-learning placement with lots of deep experiences and no future commitment? As we will see, small- and medium-size community organizations—those that have the most to gain from service-learning when it’s good quality and the fewest resources to waste on it when it’s not—often find short-term service-learning to be an unhelpful time sink. Not to have figured this out long ago, given the popularity of

the grafted-on service-learning project, is surprising. However, remarkably little is known about this issue. While analysts allow that problems exist with the application of service-learning, any mention of the challenges of time in short-term service-learning is rare in proportion to other topics.

Only a few analysts even recognize the existence of this time problem. Noley (1977), who was the Executive Director of the Commission on Voluntary Service and Action at the time she was writing, noted that “CBOs [community-based organizations] believe students spend too little time actually working to make meaningful differences in the lives of clients served at their site.” But these concerns basically went unheard and unaddressed. Birdsall (2005) mentioned that there are “time constraints” on service-learning, and Enos (2003) briefly noted that short-term service-learning places extra stress on both community and academic partners. Eby’s provocative 1998 essay was perhaps the first to elaborate on the problems with short-term service-learning, including the injection of poorly trained students into the community, the emotional impact on children of short-term service-learners who suddenly leave when the semester is over, and the disruption of the organization’s workflow. But the essay was based on experience rather than specific research findings. Wallace (2000) and Daynes and Longo (2004) also identified the “problem of time” created by the academic calendar that negates the continuity of work in community settings. Both also briefly addressed the question of how much time is required to effectively serve the community, with Daynes and Longo critiquing the short-term service-learning

model. Wallace relays a conversation between Myles Horton of the Highlander Folk School and Herman Blake of UC-Santa Cruz which points out the gulf between the ideal and the reality: "...he asked Horton...if students from Santa Cruz could come and do internships at Highlander. 'Yes', Horton replied, 'we will be glad to have them, provided that they stay with us for two years.'"

Most importantly, there is a lack of in-depth research on how, specifically, community organizations are impacted by short-term service-learning. Most of the information available on the length and depth of a service-learning experience focuses on students rather than community impacts (Ender, Martin, Cotter, Kowdewski, & DeFiore, 2000; Fitch, 2005; Krain & Nurse, 2004; Landsverk, 2004; Mooney & Edwards, 2001; Myers-Lipton, 1998; Parker-Gwin & Mabry, 1998; Reed, Christian, Jernstedt, Hawley, Reber, & DuBoise, 2005). Furthermore, much literature promotes the idea that *all* service-learning is good for *everyone* (Honnet & Poulson, 1989; Metz & Youniss, 2003). The famous Cruz & Giles (2000) article found numerous claims regarding the benefits of service-learning to the community, but no mention of the challenges of time or anything else.

The little research available that even briefly addresses the problem of time from the community perspective suggests some of the problems with short-term service-learning. Bacon (2002) quotes a community organization partner who would prefer to "train the student... earlier and then get them practicing sooner and for more time...It would be nice if it could be done over longer than a semester (p. 42)." Vernon and Ward (1999), Bushouse (2005), and Sandy and Holland (2006) also encountered community organizations that criticized the short-term time commitment of service-learning and wanted more than a semester of service. One of the few studies on civic impacts of service-learning, in this case with high school students, found that short-term service-learning had less civic impact than long-term engagement (Billing, Root, & Jesse, 2005). Worrall (2007) also cited community organization staff concerns about student commitment and short duration of service expressed through evaluation surveys at her institution.

While these studies suggest that short-term service-learning is less than ideal for community organizations, we have little research focusing on community organization staff perceptions of short-term service-learning. This paper reports on research addressing that gap.

The Project

This research was conducted in Madison, Wisconsin, using a project-based approach that

engages community stakeholders in a process of identifying issues, diagnosing those issues, developing prescriptions for them, implementing the prescription, and then evaluating the impact (Stoecker, 2005). The research reported in this paper focuses on the diagnostic step. After informal listening sessions to hear some of the concerns of community organizations about service-learning in the Madison area, we brought together a focus group of about 20 community organization staff. The focus group confirmed and outlined some of the organizations' concerns regarding service-learning. Seven participants from that focus group agreed to serve as a core group to guide the research process. The research was designed jointly by the core group members, students in a graduate seminar, a service-learning staff person, and two university researchers. We agreed among us to focus on the entire population of small- to medium-size community organizations (defined roughly as less than \$1 million annual budget and/or 12 or fewer full-time staff) who had hosted service-learning students, since such organizations have both the most to gain from the added capacity students might bring, and the most to lose from low quality service-learning. We used a broad definition of service-learning that included any student performing any service for a community organization for academic credit. That included some students that may more accurately be considered interns or practicum students, but doing so also allowed us to compare organization staff reactions to different types of student placements. Our definition also more accurately fit the community organizations' concept of service-learning—which included internships and practica—than the stricter definition used in most academic literature. Our definition of "short-term service-learning," again drawn from our interviewees, includes service-learning placements that last a semester or less, and typically involve a few hours a week of contact time.

Each of the three major higher education institutions in Madison—the University of Wisconsin, Edgewood College (a private faith-based institution), and Madison Area Technical College, have staffed service-learning offices, operate extensive service-learning programs, and participated with this project. We used lists obtained from all of the service-learning offices and from other regular sources of service-learning at the University of Wisconsin. We ultimately identified a population of 101 small- and medium-sized organizations that had participated in service-learning partnerships. In contrast to Worrall (2007), who only included organizations large enough to have more than one staff member who worked closely with service-learners, our organizations were nearly all too

small for such staff capacity.

The students received two types of training prior to conducting the research. First, we used a fish-bowl-style training where everyone observed one student interviewing a community organization representative and wrote interview notes. Seminar participants then processed the interview collectively and compared their notes with each other. Then we met with the core group members and students conducted “practice” interviews with them, using digital voice recorders and also writing notes. The community organization staff members then provided the students with feedback on the interview process and we processed all the interviews as a large group.

We requested one-hour interviews with each organization, explaining that we would cover seven topics: community organization staff definitions of service-learning, ways of connecting with service-learners, reactions to different service-learning structures, managing service-learners, diversity issues in service-learning, communication and relationship issues in service-learning, and indicators of success. Some organizations declined an interview based on their belief that they had been erroneously identified as having worked with service-learners. Others refused because their volunteer coordinator or other staff who managed service-learning had either recently left or recently arrived. Most of those who refused cited time constraints. A small number initially agreed to be interviewed but then did not keep their appointments. The students ended up conducting 67 in-depth interviews with representatives of 64 organizations, using an open-ended interview guide based on the seven topics listed above. Students wrote partial transcripts and returned them to the interviewees for validity checks (Mays & Pope 2000; Morse, Barret, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers 2002). Students then organized into two- to three-person teams and each team coded the interviews for a single topic. The team coding allowed us to qualitatively assess inter-rater reliability within the broad context of a grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Findings

Community organization representatives raised many provocative issues related to communication and relationship building, training and management of service-learners, and cultural competency. But perhaps the most consistent theme that emerged was the frequent reference to challenges associated with short-term service-learning. The emergence of this theme is all the more important because no interview question specifically asked organizations about their reactions to short-term service-learning. It was surprising that a third

of the interviewees spontaneously brought up concerns about short-term service-learning without any prompting in the interviews. In addition, there is a distinct absence of interviews lauding the practice of short-term service-learning. Our purpose was not to conduct the typical satisfaction study often used by service-learning offices at the end of a course, but to get an in-depth understanding of how community organization staff experienced service-learning. Thus, we make no claims about whether the groups were happy or not with service-learning overall, only that they voiced concerns about short-term service-learning without any solicitation.

In this study, 21 participants—about one-third—reported working only with service-learning students fitting the criterion of short-term service-learning—serving a semester or shorter for only a few hours per week—and the rest had worked with students for both short-term and year-long periods. The challenges of short-term service-learning grouped into a number of categories: time investment, capacity to supervise, direct-service difficulties, timing and project management, and calendar issues.

Investment of Time in Working with Short-Term Service-Learning Students

A lot of short-term service-learning is done as a class requirement, creating a dual sense of frustration for the community organization. First, the experience is often too brief to greatly benefit either the organization’s mission or satisfy significant learning objectives. Second, the often mandatory nature of such short-term service-learning requires the organization to deal with the potential for student resistance or resentment and less-than-quality performance. Nine organization representatives said they were hesitant to invest time in service-learners who treated their service experience as a class requirement or obligation, and thus lacked altruistic dedication and commitment. Two of those representatives explain:

They [students] tell us right out that ‘it seemed better than writing a paper.’ We know automatically their hearts weren’t invested. More-invested students say things like they like working with children, or have experience working with children...

I think the biggest thing is that students are not willing to go above and beyond what their professor is requiring of them. ‘I am too busy; I have to do 30 hours; that is all I’m going to do. I can’t do six months’...

Even when the students are thrilled to be there, the simple fact is that these brief service-learning relationships lack continuity, and thus are sometimes a poor time investment for the agency. Many non-profit organizations are operating within tight or pre-

carious budgets and can't afford to spend a lot of time and energy planning and implementing service-learning projects that do not give them a good return. Two other organization staff discuss the inefficiency of such a system:

[Service-learning] projects are a one-time deal; next semester the focus shifts, our priorities change. It would be nice to have some more ongoing relationships we can massage and nurture over time. I certainly think you would get stronger projects on both sides that way.

The whole thing [service-learning] takes time and investment in that person, and if we know they are going to go away in a semester then frankly it might not be worth our time if we are super-busy, which we often are.

Some organizations hold out hope, however, that the student's initial investment for a course requirement may turn into something more. And it does happen, of course, that students "catch fire" with the mission of an organization, or bond with clients, particularly when they are tutoring or mentoring youth, for example. That possibility is sometimes worth the risk of accepting a short-term service placement. But other times it is not worth the investment:

Part of what we try to do, or hope, is that people will be so into what they're doing that they'll do it on their own then afterwards...but when you get certain people who are only doing it for requirements, that can be a real pain, and even less than worthwhile.

The lack of commitment exhibited by some short-term service-learners sometimes can even lead them to exploit the goodwill and time investment of community organizations. They commit to working longer than their course requirement to get the placement, but then do not follow through on that promise after they have met their minimum hours. Eleven organizations expressed frustration at training students who do not follow through on the time commitment originally agreed upon.

We were getting a fair number of people who said they would do the whole year, so they would do the 25-hour training, and do one or two shifts, and then we'd sign their little form saying they'd got their 40 hours in, and then we'd never see them again. That got really frustrating...Often the amount of time, either for the semester, or per week, it just isn't really meaningful for what we're doing.

Incompatibility of Short-Term Service-Learning with Direct Service

There was agreement among 14 organizations that short-term service is often a particularly bad fit or

inappropriate for direct service, especially when working with youth. Oftentimes, programs for young people are aimed at correcting problems associated with lack of good role models and other inconsistencies in their lives. The short-term service-learners' transient nature, and their potential to be unreliable and lack commitment, only exacerbates those problems. Here, three interviewees whose organizations work with low-income and homeless children express concerns about the emotional distress sometimes accompanying short-term service-learning:

We do not want to have students come in, meet with them [the children] for a few weeks, then start to get connected and have them drop off the face of the planet. That is not healthy for these kids. They really need to have strong role models in their lives. We ask students to give at least a six-month commitment. But some people would say okay, and then not show up again after they did the commitment they needed to for class...

For us, a lot of our kids come for three months and then they are gone, so sometimes [short-term service-learning] fits. With a lot of homeless kids [however], counting on certain people is really important. If they know that so-and-so is coming back next week; that means a lot to the kids. They have a lot of people that wander into their life for a day and then are gone and they have to start over...

Some [service-learners] continue on past the semester...but that's usually our only hesitation with the [university students] is that timeframe, especially if [the children] get real attached to one of our volunteers; the one-semester-based timeframe is hard on the kids.

Sometimes, as mentioned above, this is because the students are motivated only to meet the minimum hours stipulated by their professor. But even the students who make a sincere commitment can find their lives changing from semester to semester in ways they didn't expect:

For the most part when their semester is up, they don't continue. A lot want to but because of their schedule changes, transportation issues, or whatever reason, it's pretty rare that we see them again, but we do have exceptions. Sometimes kids will say "where's so-and-so" after a few months of depending on them for homework help or they knew they had someone to play checkers with...generally it's too short.

Capacity to Supervise and Train Short-Term Service-Learners

The biggest part of the service-learning time investment for organization staff is in training and supervision. Since many cash-strapped small- and medium-sized nonprofit organizations need to rely at least somewhat on skilled volunteers, their meager staff often must spend significant time in managing them. With short-term service-learners it is not efficient to spend 20 hours training someone but then only receive 15 hours of service. Twelve organizations commented that short-term service-learning made it difficult, and often costly, to invest staff time in supervising and training the service-learner, two of which are quoted here.

... [The intern] is here twenty hours a week. I have a service-learner here for just a few hours a week; it doesn't make up for the administrative costs...

Our number-one reason [for not having service-learners] is time...there are time constraints on both mine and the person who would be in charge of supervising [a service-learner]... I wouldn't even say it is because they are a volunteer as opposed to a paid staff, it is just the time of having to supervise somebody else in addition to taking on all of your own responsibilities.

In many cases it is simply not time efficient for the organization staff to provide the same formal training and oversight to short-term service-learners that it gives to people who make a longer commitment. Two staff members explain:

We really don't have many opportunities for people to come in for ten hours. Especially if they're going to be working with children, by the time we are done training them our staff could have done the same thing, but better.

We are always looking for interns, but projects that we tend to have—some of them have a steep learning curve, so that by the time we get someone up to speed, it's really not worth it for one semester.

A number of the organization representatives with whom we spoke, as shown in this section, explicitly compared service short-term learners to long-term service-learners and interns. They strongly prefer the intern model because it provides both longer-term service and a greater probability of hosting a committed and skilled student.

Issues with Timing and Project Management

The challenges with managing service-learning placements include having ample time to prepare for

working with students, delegating work to them, and finding time for reflecting with students and evaluating their projects. Nearly one-third of the organizations noted the difficulty of designing a meaningful service-learning project to fit a semester-long or shorter period. Some staff expressed doubt in their ability to provide educational support for short-term service-learners, noting that their own stressful jobs prevented the depth of planning and thought they would have liked to put into service-learning projects. A fairly common complaint among the agency staff is that it is unrealistic to expect students to prepare, carry out, and reflect on a project all within a one-semester time frame:

I think it has been challenging the few times we have tried to use [short-term service-learning] to figure out the timing of it. Students have a really narrow window at the beginning of the semester where they have to figure out what they are doing and then it is kind of a narrow couple-of-month window to do it and then they are gone. And it has been hard for us to kind of be prepared enough and have any kind of plan ahead of time on how we might use somebody that shows up on our doorstep saying they want a project.

The interviewee above also mentioned that it is often difficult to manage delegation of work even among organization staff, let alone among service-learners that are “short-term and unexpected.” On the whole it seems that service-learning projects are more successful when there is a clear, realistic goal between the higher education institution, the student, and the site supervisor—or as one organization put it, a “shared possible goal.” Along the same lines, another organization staff member noted that both parties' satisfaction is contingent upon “mutually agreed-upon objectives.” The lack of time in short-term service-learning to clarify the goal and how it is to be carried out also hampers the ability of all parties to adjust the project as it proceeds:

The big thing with [this particular class] was, I guess, it was a big misunderstanding on our part, or their part, or probably both ...What they were doing for us was creating some marketing materials and enhancing our website and stuff, and they saw it as a semester-long project, so the product that they were giving us, they looked at as their final. Whereas it should have been done two months earlier because there is a lot of going back-and-forth with ‘I don't like this or that,’...in the real world it doesn't work that way. You don't turn in a final project and say, “here you go, goodbye.”

Once the semester is over...poof..., they are gone. Sometimes the works are unfinished,

sometimes they are not very good, and they left us a mess. I am very hesitant to go back to [this particular class].

Community organization staff care about the student's learning as well, and short-term service-learning makes it difficult to develop a project that will serve both the student's educational needs and the organization's service needs. They worry that, in some cases, no one really benefits.

The limited-term aspect is what makes it [service-learning] not work for the childcare program; we would like people that can make a long-term commitment. For direct service I do ten hours of training and a background check, and by the time that process is done, usually about half those hours have already been used. Even 30 hours...they come in and do five or six shifts...I don't know that it's beneficial for the students either, it's such a limited contact with the program, and it's hard to know where there's growth and learning.

Community and Campus Calendar Incompatibility

There is certainly recognition out there that campus and community calendars don't correspond very well. This is actually a problem with all service-learners, including even those who commit to an entire year. What we have not recognized is that the incompatibility of the two settings can create serious problems in a short-term service-learning context. Five organizations discussed having issues with their service-learning students due to the conflicting campus-community schedules.

You lose 'em [undergraduate service-learners] for a week over Thanksgiving, and then you lose 'em over Christmas, and then...they don't come back until the end of January, and then you've got spring break, and they've got finals...and you know, none of those things are part of our calendar...versus most of our grad students understand that you can only be gone for a week, because if they've got a client, you can't blow them off for two or three weeks, because if they didn't need to meet with you, they wouldn't BE here...but also, we can't afford to put things on hold for six to seven weeks out of the year, because the work still goes on...

Midterms, finals, school breaks, and lack of continuity in the academic workload also present challenges for consistency in short-term service-learning projects.

A semester is pretty short, and the problem with the semester is there's a bunch of holes...service-learning doesn't mean the rest of their

classes stop, so they have a lot of demands on their time. And sometimes those demands get way higher, like midterms, finals, spring break... So all those things make it tough to get in and get a unit of work done.

The breaks in the academic calendar can create real burdens for organizations. Agencies have to find ways to fill in during those times when students are not technically in session and don't feel any obligation to work at their service-learning site.

It has typically been certain times when you don't have enough volunteers.... There is also the seasonal issue of people going on winter break. That has been a big issue for us, as much as we rely on service-learners. Winter break is a huge issue, spring break is a smaller one, and summer can require a whole new round of recruiting people to volunteer.

As the quote above suggests, the nature of short-term service-learning exacerbates this problem. If a class does not consistently send approximately the same number of service-learners each semester, there will be gaping holes in the volunteer pool of the organization. Of course agency volunteer coordinators are always recruiting to fill gaps created by people moving on, but if you're talking about half of a class being assigned to one agency, that can make or break a program.

...One year we had I think eight or nine people who were all from the same class who came out...well, that had a really significant impact on [the agency] in terms of needing volunteers...literally half my volunteers on Wednesday...and Thursday nights had come from this project.... The next year, I don't think anybody mentioned it, so none of the students knew about us and so we went from having nine volunteers [from the class] one semester to zero the next...and that's a big fluctuation.

This story reinforces the point that students who can commit to an entire year can cut the organization's volunteer recruitment and orientation burden in half.

How Agencies Make the Best of Short-Term Service-Learning

Even though nearly all of the 21 organizations that had worked only with short-term service-learners had less than positive feelings about it, eight organizations discussed why they continued working with these service-learners regardless of the drawbacks. A surprising number of organizations saw mentoring students as almost an extension of their mission, similar to Worrall's (2007) findings. Community organi-

zation staff value playing a part in the education of service-learners, even if the returns of short-term service-learning may be questionable, as these two organization representatives discuss:

I believe [service-learning] helps [students] put a face to the disease, in working with clients. I believe, part of our mission of course is education and prevention, and by virtue of being around all this and going through the trainings and the orientation, they learn more about [the organization's cause].

We do weigh it, you know, is it really going to be more of our time? You have to analyze each project, each opportunity, to see if it really is going to beat a cost-benefit ratio kind of thing, but in general, like I said, I have a personal bias to working with students...

In at least some cases, the definition of short-term service-learning is the organization serving the student rather than the other way around.

Other organizations, also consistent with Worrall (2007), value the perspective that students can bring. In the daily grind of just getting the work done on a shoestring budget, having fresh energy and new ideas can be energizing for the staff.

It helps our staff with being able to do a better job. They have a little bit more support and they have somebody to work with. I think it's a good experience for the staff that provides the supervision as well as the other staff, to have new people, new faces; just fresh perspectives on things that the students bring. It helps to motivate sometimes, I think.

One of the most promising reasons for having short-term service-learners is to do specific projects, a service-learning model called *project-based service-learning* (Bradford, 2005; Draper, 2004; Stoecker, Stern & Hathaway, 2007; Wayne State College, n.d.). Many organizations have special projects that they lack capacity to do. Having students with specific skills do those projects can fill those capacity gaps.

...With [a semester-long service-learning class], we were looking at some products that were more technical..., and those are things that if you had to pay for them would cost you an arm and a leg. And also the learning curve for us, this is something that we have no idea what to do or how to do it. We look to the students for some guidance, you know, you learn it, tell us; rather than us learning it, because of that kind of time commitment.

One agency delineated special projects for students that fit into a single semester. This allowed them to

avoid the scheduling challenges presented by the agency's regular mode of direct-client crisis service:

...I see service-learning working best with sort of 'pre-packaged' projects that have very defined parameters—that are meaningful, so it's a worthwhile experience—but not so time-sensitive.

Shorter-term projects can also support community outreach. This particular organization worked with two students on a media campaign, including an analysis of media process, which happens annually at this agency during the month of April "...so we really kick into gear in January, and then May is sort of the evaluation time...so it works well in a semester." But even within this project, the challenge of short-term service-learning was evident. Aside from the simple logistics and the amount of time required, it is hard to gauge, in one semester, the students' motivations and personal time pressures, and therefore difficult to predict the quality of the product.

One of the service-learners [who] worked on Media and Outreach and analyzing our awareness campaign...was just phenomenal. Put in way more time than required. The other one was a really good-hearted person that just didn't have the time to meet the commitment that the program asked, which wasn't even to go above and beyond, so we had a really mixed experience just in that little microcosm. They came from the same class, one was a sophomore pre-med that was way overwhelmed, the other was a senior with hardly any classes left to take, and just really wanted to do this.

Low-resourced community organizations may also be able to maximize the positive effects of short-term service-learning by implementing a student intermediary model. This model uses one student as a kind of quasi-volunteer coordinator, who can manage a group of service-learners for a single organization, relieving the organizations staff of much of the supervision burden (Stoecker, Stern, & Hathaway, 2007). Such a model has been developed for community-based research (CBR) at Mars Hill College. At Mars Hill, students often play minor roles in CBR projects for two years before they are given the responsibility of managing a project themselves (Strand, Cutforth, Marullo, Stoecker, & Donohue, 2003).

Can We Move Beyond Short-Term Service-Learning?

While service-learning proponents may think that short-term service-learning is good for students, it is an open question whether it is good for communities. For those who are convinced that it is

not, the challenge is to find ways to develop long-term opportunities. One option is to integrate service-learning assignments into “year-long” courses, where groundwork and training are laid in the fall, and direct service continues throughout the entire year. Another option in cases where students cannot make the commitment to a year-long class is for faculty to form relationships with community agencies and send approximately the same number of students each semester, for a set period, so that the agency can depend on at least a certain number of “warm bodies.”

The desire for long-term service-learners was underlined by nearly one-third of the organization representatives interviewed. In addition to the benefits of a longer time commitment, long-term service-learners are frequently either upper-level undergraduate or graduate students in an internship or field placement, technical college student interns, work-study students, or committed multi-semester undergraduate service-learners. An interviewee stated that, in contrast to a negative experience she had with an undergraduate service-learning class that was “too unstructured,” a relationship had developed with another department that was working well:

...I know exactly what’s supposed to happen there. I know what they’re supposed to learn while they’re here. I know what I can expect from them. It helps that they’re here for a full year, so there’s a long period of time to develop and get things done...it’s worth our investment because, you know, we get somebody every October who’s brand new, doesn’t really know what they’re doing, but is here for a long enough time, for enough hours, and enough intensity that they figure it out, and so then we get several months worth of really productive, good work from them, and at the same time they’re getting really deep, valuable learning from us.

Implementing such a model requires some changes from higher education institutions. One example comes from the Trent Centre for Community-Based Education and the U-Links Centre for Community-Based Research—partner organizations that work with Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario, Canada. Trent University’s curriculum is structured around year-long courses, and service-learning is incorporated into many of those courses as part of the University’s institutional structure. The design builds on the European “science shop” model, which extends service-learning and community-based research models and makes them more community-focused and project-based. Both community-based research and

service-learning is organized through a process where community organizations write proposals for projects and the Centre then locates students in existing courses to carry them out (Hall, 2006).

It may not be practical for all service-learning commitments to be a minimum of a full year, given the current structure of higher education in the United States. But if higher education faculty, students, and administrators at least recognize the shortcomings, they can work to mitigate them with better planning and support services. A number of our interviewees discussed how they would really appreciate a heightened level of support from a university or college staff member, someone at a service-learning office, or perhaps a temporary grant-funded position or student scholar that would have the responsibility to support service-learning.

For all of the service-learning projects we could offer for people to do, there is all of this behind-the-scenes planning that needs to happen in order to get people in a room to do something, so it would be nice if we had somebody who would be able to coordinate that stuff because I just don’t have time....

To the extent that higher education institutions are either unwilling or unable to adapt themselves to better support community organization needs, the organizations themselves will have to take responsibility for getting the most out of short-term service-learning. While we believe that the burden to make service-learning work should rest with higher education institutions, we recognize the commitment of community organizations to serving students even when it hinders the organization’s productivity. We also note that the organizations Worrall (2007) studied were able to adapt themselves to the problems of short-term service-learning. The strategies that work for Worrall’s higher-resourced organizations, however, are likely not possible for small-medium-size agencies that have at most one staff person who can manage service-learners. Our tendency is to encourage such organizations to “just say no” to short-term service-learning. And while some in fact do just say “no,” our interviews also revealed that many organizations fear that rejecting any offer of help may eliminate them from receiving any future offers.

Conclusion

While it is true that only a minority of our community organizations, approximately a third, expressed concerns about short-term service-learning, we reiterate that they did so without prompting from the interviewers. Service-learning is a higher education intervention like any experimental

research. Ironically, however, there is no institutional review board or informed consent process required for service-learning activities. If an experimental research project produced reports of adverse effects for a third of the treatment group, it would be thoroughly scrutinized. It is important to heed the concerns expressed by community organization staff.

Community organizations, by themselves, do not feel like they are in a position to press higher education institutions to structure service-learning so that it better fits community needs. Consequently, we engaged the community organization staff from this project in developing a set of community standards for service-learning, which they hope will be taken up by faculty and administrators and used to help prepare and implement better service-learning projects (Tryon & Stoecker, 2007). They continue to host service-learners in the meantime, because they really need the help. Many also value the opportunity to be informal teachers in a real-life setting that can transform students to become better engaged citizens, or to even begin lifelong relationships with particular nonprofits or causes. There is a tacit understanding among most nonprofits that when dealing with unpaid help, be it service-learners or well-meaning volunteers, things do not always work smoothly, and that is just the nature of the nonprofit sector. However, if higher education institutions can begin to incorporate some of these suggestions and internalize organizations' preferences in their course planning, relationship-building, and preparation of service-learners, it will go a long way toward better service-learning practice. The result will be a true 'win-win' situation that benefits not only the learning objectives of the student and teaching goals of their instructor, but does more good than harm to the communities they purport to serve.

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Power and Privilege: Community Service Learning in Tijuana

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As social scientists engage their own subjectivity, there is greater awareness of their own touristic “gaze,” or at least the power relations that are evoked in the researcher-subject interaction. In teaching students involved in community service learning, the challenge is to provide a learning experience that addresses power inequities between student and served. How do we teach students to recognize axes of privilege, be critical of their roles, and be sensitive to the multiple dimensions of power relations among and between server and served? This article proposes to examine how service-learning can be a catalyst for examining the important issue of subjectivity. Drawing from qualitative data of students working in migrant labor camps and community development projects in the context of Tijuana, I discuss how students viewed power differentials and came to consider their relative social class and racialized differences in the context of the Mexican border zone.

Dimensions of Subjectivity: An Introduction

Reciprocity is the key to community service learning; this is what differentiates it from philanthropy and charity. The reciprocity involved, however, is asymmetrical. I remember as a young girl, about age nine, my sister and I were waiting for the distribution of Christmas gifts. We were at a community hall, and the distribution of gifts was part of a philanthropic event. Although I was only nine, I vividly recall two things about the occasion. I remember getting the gift, a Chinese Checker game set. But more vivid was the wait. Waiting to open the gift, waiting while I felt others were watching us. I remember experiencing the slightest feeling of unease, for I knew that most other classmates had this exchange in their homes, not in a public setting, and I knew that I had to appear most grateful, regardless of what the package held. As I remember this event, it pains me to remember that even though I was most grateful, I was the object of their gaze. My reaction was the reward for their charity. And while it did feel nice to get a new gift, I'll never forget that humbling feeling. My mother, a single woman, an immigrant, never openly expressed such feelings; her resourcefulness was always useful in keeping our household abreast economically. But I find it funny to imagine, now, how this type of interaction would unfold in the present, with my students as the protagonists involved in a similar exchange. Would they ever be able to understand those feelings of a little girl's angst? And, perhaps more importantly, is such an understanding an important part of their interaction?

To me, this memory marks a tension of service-learning. How can we teach students to be cog-

nizant of, and sensitive to, what Mary Louise Pratt (1992) calls, “contact zones”: the disparate social spaces where authority and hierarchy encounter and engage with the Other? This can be a particular challenge when students are not diverse in their social class and ethnic backgrounds, as is the case at my campus where the student body is primarily middle- and upper- class, and predominantly White. For me, a central challenge in making community service learning a valuable pedagogical tool is figuring out how to encourage students to think about and critically reflect upon their own social locations; that is, be cognizant of how their “gazes” might be imbued with power. Ethnic Studies scholar Gail Perez (2001) eloquently addresses the difficulties of critical pedagogy: “Pedagogical innovations like experiential learning must be scrutinized; they are often so narrowly defined that their transformative potential is negated (i.e., the power relations within them are mystified)” (p. 87). Below I argue that while community service learning is ideally designed to be rooted in mutuality and reciprocity between servers and served, issues of power and privilege can create an asymmetrical relationship between both. A sustained service-learning interaction, fused with close analysis to server subjectivity, is central to addressing such inequities.

Many of the social sciences and humanities are undergoing a process of decolonization, raising to the surface power issues and incorporating historically-marginalized voices. How this process translates into the classroom, however, is a challenge. Anthropologists in particular have not been as

engaged with community service learning as a pedagogical tool, despite the many similarities in method (particularly field research) and approach (at local levels). The reluctance to incorporate community service learning into the classroom may stem from a lag in how theory is transformed into praxis. While many educators have begun to decolonize our discipline, perhaps some are reluctant to send out students without examining the nuances of how such sensitivity to relations of power unfolds. This sensitivity is very difficult to teach because American society is trained more to be consumers, tourists, and myopic in terms of constructing social realities. For a student who has never before been a recipient of some kind of service, for example, the task of reflexivity is one that cannot simply be explained; it must be lived. It is as challenging to teach students to be reflexive about the service-learning encounter as it is to make them aware of their various axes of privilege.

This task of locating and deconstructing power relations is one that creates tremendous resentment, and sometimes even hostility, in students. In a compelling article, Ann Green (2001) cautions of the tendency to gloss over differential power relations when students do not “feel good.” The topic of race can make a student uncomfortable, she argues, and must be dissected, particularly when there is a racialized power imbalance in the community service learning interaction:

Well-intentioned white people, both students and faculty, must learn racial awareness, and middle class people of all races must think about how class affects the service situation. It is absolutely important to talk about the intersections of race, class, and service in order to prevent service-learning from replicating the power imbalances and economic injustices that create the need for service-learning in the first place. (p.18)

While anthropologists may be especially sensitive to these types of social relations, it is only recently that we have begun to examine ourselves critically.

The value of community service learning is it can potentially offer an incisive starting point to discuss these power differentials. The community service learning context provides a ‘contact zone,’ allowing for an interactive opportunity in which understandings and practices can be turned on their heads, improvised, examined and reexamined. Metaphoric borders of identity can be explored, even crossed. Recognition of the power differentials can occur at multiple levels, and differently for servers and served at various moments and across contexts (spatially and temporally). Though little

research has examined which conditions elicit particular responses among students (some have argued that the process is a linear one, or a “continuum” of learning), I argue that ‘border crossings’ in the contact zones tend to be more haphazard, not necessarily producing systematic and similar responses among students, but varied and diverging experiences.

The key to navigating this “messiness” of experiences is to provide, inasmuch as possible, a *sustained experience* in which servers and served have an immersion experience among each other. Just as anthropologists emphasize devoting long amounts of time to their field sites, developing rapport with a key informant in particular, service-learning students should have the chance to develop in-depth rapport with a single community member and carry this relationship through the duration of the academic period. Limited visits to the community site or a single visit during the academic period may be counter-productive to the learning aspect of service work. A sustained experience, allowing the server to begin to hear and begin to see differently, can be tremendously empowering at both ends. Potentially, such a sustained interaction can overcome an essentialization or reification of the Other. By highlighting not stasis but the dynamic aspects of social relations, and by having the opportunity to explore the particularities—the detailed histories of individuals—rather than producing generalizations, community service learning can allow for exploring the varied positions of power that members of the served community inhabit. This can be valuable in debunking stereotypes and challenging students’ tendency to construct the Other as a monolith. It can begin to provide students, in spite of a homogenous experience on campus, with new tools for examining and understanding their diverse social worlds.

Rethinking Subjectivity

In the late 1980s and 1990s anthropology as a discipline underwent major changes. Particularly with the injection of cultural studies and feminist theoretical frameworks, anthropologists began to critique our historical links to colonialism and examine how cultural ethnographies sometimes resulted in reified representations of the Other. Anthropologists started to get serious about their subjectivity. We started to debunk the idea that fieldwork was “objective” and began to incorporate our biases into the craft of research. This opened up many new avenues for anthropologists, who converged with philosophers, semioticians, and literary analysts to begin deconstructing the objectivity/subjectivity polemic. This allowed anthropologists to insert themselves in between the space of

the subject of their study and the product of their study (the ethnography). What was most valuable about this new paradigm was that anthropological inquiry had a self-reflexive element, and we began to discern the voices and accents of the researchers themselves. Throughout this revision to the craft of ethnography, an examination of power relations ensued. In particular, anthropologists began to examine sites of power, of resistance, of acquiescence; in short, understanding agency became a central organizing principle of our discipline (see Ahearn, 2001; Ortner, 1984; 2001).

In a sense, there is a parallel between how the objectivity/subjectivity framework has been deconstructed and how community service learning and the practice of philanthropy have been related. Philanthropy occurs in the absence of reflexivity, without conscientiousness toward the differential relations of power embedded in the interaction, and as a hegemonic relationship in which the “receiving” group has been “selected” as “needy” by a more powerful group. In community service learning, the receiving group usually has some say in how they are accessed, in the type of services they receive, and in forming and developing the relationship. Students are required to be reflexive about the interaction, and in this sense while the relation of power is still present, students can process the interaction and critically theorize it in light of these themes. Subjectivity is at the center, or at least this is the goal.

Modes of Power and Community Service Learning

While we may attempt to teach sensitivity to the varied dimensions of power relations, and theorize the importance of reflexivity, how do students ultimately perceive the service-learning encounter? How differently do students experience service-learning, compared to philanthropy or charity? Both charity and philanthropy, Vron Ware (1992) argues, are situated in a history of power and domination, serving to regulate class difference and ensure class privilege (elaborated by Mindry, 1999, p. 186). Does service-learning also regulate such differences? Are the relations of power involved in community service learning masked under the guise of “mutuality”?

Mindry (1999) and Malkki (1995) have theorized the nature of the relationship between giver and receiver of aid in terms of “philanthropic modes of power” (Malkki, p. 296). They describe how charity and other forms of service are laden within a field of power relations, and how this type of service work operates without any conscientious acknowledgment of how power operates, about

who holds the power, and how the service recipients are made to feel as a result of the service-interaction. Although their research is not in the context of community service learning (it is on the roles of NGOs), the implications of their concerns are relevant here. In describing the relationship between those who serve and are served, Mindry clarifies the essence of philanthropic power:

The language of privilege and responsibility to others is deeply imbued with a sense of hierarchy and superiority. Philanthropic work reinscribes the privileged status of those engaged in such work by emphasizing their superior position in relation to those who become the object of their caring. (p. 188)

Mindry argues that philanthropy does not empower, but rather *legitimizes* the social hierarchy:

It reinscribes the social order or, at best, seeks to change things in ways that do not substantially threaten the existing order, and in fact make the dominant order seem morally worthy and a standard to be emulated. Philanthropy is a liberal project that is profoundly configured by “enlightenment” and modernist ideals of progress, and “betterment.” (p. 188)

Community service learning is also a liberal project, yet it differs ideologically from philanthropy in that its goal is to promote social change (Morton, 1995; Rhoads, 1997). Nonetheless, the encounters are still largely marked by class differences, and many writers lucidly point out that some students “just don’t get it,” and are precluded because of their own “developmental realities” (Green, 2001; Jones, 2002; Rosenberger, 2000). As Jones asserts, “...there is some likelihood of service-learning experiences actually reinforcing the negative stereotypes and assumptions that students bring with them to the class environment” (p.10). To what extent, contrary to its goals, does community service learning reinscribe power relations?

Cynthia Rosenberger (2000) fluently addresses this issue:

Recalling Paulo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1997) I began to question whether service learning is yet another way that those who have power and privilege, even if only by education, name the problems and the solutions for the less privileged. I became concerned that service learning easily carries connotations of “doing good,” of the “haves” giving to the “have-nots,” of “we” serving “them”—perspectives that reproduce positions of power. For me, the fundamental question became: To what extent does service learning, although intended to meet community needs

and promote active citizenship, sustain the hegemony of the elite and perpetuate the status quo of privilege and oppression created by the economic and educational opportunities of class, race, and gender? (p. 24)

Because community service learning is a tool that brings these issues to the forefront, it can be utilized to deliberately think and theorize about such tensions. Being more self-conscious can begin to help name these power differentials, and in the process of naming them, can begin to teach critical approaches to subjectivity. We can then begin to explore where the axes of potential resistance to hierarchical relationships exist. How can contestation, or modes of resistance, be collaboratively created? Within the social sciences, some have begun to employ “participatory action” research strategies, the core of which shares many similarities with the ideal outcomes of community service learning: collaboration in project design, policy-relevance, sharing in the data collection and analysis procedures, disseminating project outcomes at local levels, de-centering the hierarchical researcher-subject relation. There is clearly a link between participatory action research and the aims of community service learning.

As a newcomer to community service learning, I had some hesitation (based on the above theoretical inclinations) about incorporating experiential learning into the classroom. Below I detail my experience of community service learning in a course titled, “Sociology of the Border” (referring to the U.S.-Mexico borderlands).¹

Context: Exploring Subjectivity in the Borderland

Located in the “borderlands” of the U.S.-Mexico region, students attending the University of San Diego are exposed to Mexican migrants on a daily basis. Mexican workers tend the campus gardens, serve students food in the dining halls, empty campus trashcans, and mop academic halls. While driving north within San Diego County and further beyond, Mexican workers hunched over at the waist can be observed in the fields picking berries or tomatoes for our nation’s markets. At local restaurants and fast food eateries they work as busboys or in the kitchen. They service many residential communities as gardeners, nannies, and housekeepers. Until recently, aboard the local trolleys, it was not uncommon to witness those who “appear to be ‘illegal’” stopped by U.S. Border Patrol and asked for identification. Signs on local freeways alert drivers that migrants may be running across the freeway to evade border patrol. Cars line up to

pass the border checkpoints, located 60 miles north of the border. In short, the students on our campus are exposed on a daily basis to what it means to inhabit a “borderland” space. Mexican immigrants form a tremendous part of everyday lives, yet many students have never personally met an “undocumented immigrant.” Many students only experience their labor indirectly and rarely have they had the opportunity to interact one-on-one, know of their plight, other than through propaganda such as “SOS” (Save our State, California Proposition 187 that sought to make it illegal for immigrants to utilize public health services and access to public education). A hostile climate exists in San Diego toward Mexican immigrants. Last year in Penasquitos (a suburb of San Diego), three migrants were beaten by White boys; other migrants have been targets of stoning and even shootings.

My class, “The U.S. Mexico Border/Borderlands” sought to teach students about Mexicans’ economic and social contributions. The goals of the course were to: understand the evolution of the borderlands and its international-political climate; move beyond an individual-level approach to understanding the phenomenon of migration and examine its historical-structural dimensions; deconstruct “Operation Gatekeeper” (the militarized wall that has been erected between the United States and Mexico); and critically examine the border patrol’s actions. More importantly, I wanted students to experience the border culture that is sometimes isolated beyond the university ivory tower. I wanted them to learn that immigrants are not criminals, as the media sometimes portrays them. I wanted them to experience their humanity.

Preparing students for community service learning among Mexican migrants began with a tour of the Tijuana region. We had just learned about Tijuana’s “Black Legend,” the economic history behind how Tijuana became a notorious touristic destination (Ruiz, 2000), and I wanted to take my students to the sites they would be visiting later for their community service learning assignments. Some of my students had never before been to Tijuana, some had only visited the “party zone” on *Avenida Revolucion*, a couple of my students were born in Tijuana, and about half of my students grew up in the “borderlands” as Chicanas and Chicanos, considered themselves “borderlanders” and claimed to be somewhat more comfortable in the surreal Tijuana space than others. Accompanying us were three experts: the Director of Community Service Learning on our campus, the Assistant Director of the Trans-Border Institute from our campus, and a visiting professor from Texas, who was serving as President of the Association for

Borderland Studies. While the goal was to offer students a preview of the sites, overwhelmingly I felt, as did some students, that we were very much like tourists, elite tourists for that matter, as we sat from high in our chairs on the bus and drove around the city. And so we began our experience of the U.S. Mexico border zone, theorizing “the tourist gaze”(Urry, 1990) and the power relations that have constructed our country’s contentious history with our southern neighbor.

Over the course of the semester we read extensively and relied on guest speakers to discuss issues not prominent in the media. One speaker recounted the numerous human rights violations against migrants. Another discussed the negative portrayal of immigrants in the media (as “invaders” in our society). We also watched a video produced by the Border Patrol showing the latest technological advances on how the border is policed to capture those who enter illegally. (We had a tour scheduled with the Border Patrol, but they cancelled it due to “Homeland Security”). These diverse pedagogical approaches sought to expose students to a plurality of perspectives about migration and policing the border. The film, *Natives*, taught students about how local (White) San Diegans construct themselves as “native” to this region, discursively re-inscribing Mexican migrants as distinct, foreign and “other,” despite their long history in the United States (see also Chavez, 2001).

There were two service-learning components to the class: a group project in which all participated in an event (“Day of the Child”) to benefit children of one community in Tijuana; the other, an on-going project, was scheduled through the Community Service Learning office on campus. Students could choose between visiting three different placements. 1) *Casa del Migrante*, a sort of half-way house for migrants waiting to cross into the United States, where cultural information, temporary lodging, food, clothing, and medical assistance is offered. Students could share a meal with migrants, engage in conversations, assist in distributing food supplies, and learn first-hand knowledge from migrants who had been apprehended attempting to cross the border and planned to do so again. 2) *La Morita*, a community/educational center and clinic that meets medical and educational needs of those who have moved from elsewhere in Mexico to Tijuana, many of whom are on the migratory path to the U.S., or have family members who are. Here students could engage in a range of activities, from brainstorming about possible community projects to actually constructing physical edifices, alongside Mexican workers. 3) *Migrant Outreach*, a service that provides supplies, food, and religious

services to migrants already in the United States. Students traveled to the migrant camps and spent a half-day on Sundays talking with the migrants, teaching them or practicing English language skills, learning or practicing Spanish skills, and providing some items to which migrants might not have access (such as blankets and clothing).

It is important to note that in these contexts, the migrants are not simply passive recipients (even though they are colloquially termed, “*pollos*” or “chickens,” because they are subjected to the “*coyotes*,” the human smugglers, who can assist or thwart their efforts to cross). Rather, migrants know of, and clearly articulate, the liminal status they inhabit in the United States. These community service learning sites are places where they can safely express their needs and fears. Their “undocumented” status in the United States, however, belies a more complicated position. As I detail below, from the Mexican perspective, migration is viewed as a heroic endeavor (this is especially because remittances from migrants contribute significantly to the Mexican GNP). Thus migrants know they are fulfilling important national and local needs within Mexico, and yet this role is juxtaposed with the discrimination they encounter within the United States. We see, then, that migrants simultaneously occupy varied positions of power and powerlessness.

In designing this class I faced two main challenges. First, I was teaching in a highly-charged political context: the local San Diego population has approved numerous political propositions to have immigrants apprehended, bar them from using public services, and blockade their entrance into the country (Operation Light Up the Border). This challenge manifested itself subtly. For example, one student told me a story of her hometown, Temecula, and her everyday encounters with migrants evading border patrol. Outside of class she told me that one day, as she rode her bike, a migrant’s car, involved in a chase with the Border Patrol, crashed into her. She told me that since then she harbored a deep resentment against all migrants, for their recklessness. She painfully recounted this narrative, and I interpreted her to say that even though she could understand the structural/historical context of migrants, this particular individual event tainted her understanding. I wondered about my other students’ experiences and how their individual ideas, and perhaps stereotypes, about migrants would play out in my classroom.

A second challenge I was concerned about in designing this course was a sense of resistance that I had encountered in previous courses when teaching about issues of privilege. Most sensitive was

the topic of “Whiteness,” which I discussed as the silent and normative dimension of racial relations against which all other races are constructed (see Frankenberg, 1997; Giroux, 1997; Lipsitz, 1998; Rasmussen, Nexica, Klinenberg, & Wray, 2001). How could I make service-learning relevant to these students when, at a theoretical level, within the classroom many of them seemed indifferent, even irritated that I teach from the prism of difference? This points to the partial futility in trying to teach didactically about cultural difference alone.² If I made community service learning a requirement, how would I manage the various reactions and create a useful pedagogical exercise? How, most importantly, would I be able to have students, through their service, recognize their own subjectivity, reflect on their own relative power, and make some connections to their own identities?

Methodology

The data presented below are based on an availability sample of 30 students from one class: 25 females and 5 males; 16 Chicanos/Latinos (I include in this group three Mexican bi-nationals who resided in Mexico and commuted to San Diego), 12 white students, and 2 African American students. (Note that the classroom demographics were not representative of the campus.) My sample size of men was too small to account for variation by gender. With regard to national origin, it was glaringly evident that there were marked differences of social class. (For example, one student’s bodyguard followed our class around the streets of Tijuana in a Mercedes Benz as we visited the service-learning sites.) Because many undocumented immigrants are from the southern states of Mexico, which have higher indigenous populations, the differences between the Chicanos/Latinos in the class and the migrants were also marked by phenotype and Spanish accents.

I incorporated multiple methods of processing student experiences with migrants. I offered discussions of power relations throughout the class and told students they could incorporate these dimensions into their written ideas. (I also told students I was considering incorporating their ideas and comments into a paper, and asked them to explicitly grant or deny me permission to anonymously include portions of their ideas.) I also required written reflections, with latitude to use prose, poetry, essays, or journal entries.

The analysis is inductive (it begins with data rather than theory) and it engages “exploratory” questions (not seeking explanations, rather, searching for the relevant questions in terms of power, privilege, and community service learning). My

aim was not to make generalizable conclusions, but rather to begin to determine the departure points from which to theorize community service learning and issues of inequality.

The analysis presented below is drawn from transcriptions of oral discussions, debriefing sessions, and categorization of 45 pieces of textual products that I was granted permission to include in this article. Utilizing content analysis (Weber, 1990) to review them, I created three categories based on use of language, content of narratives presented, and depth of reflection. Theme one, “Constructing Self and Other,” included text that suggested either a judgmental stance toward migrants, or a monolithic treatment of difference. Theme two, “Foreignness” included narratives that suggested student awkwardness among migrants. Narratives raising issues such as, “I felt like the minority” or “They were judging me,” were included in this category. The third theme, “Examining Subjectivities,” included texts discussing privilege or theorizing about one’s own identity relationally. The classification process was subjective and I do not attempt to make generalizable conclusions based on what is presented here. The effort should be read only as a preliminary exploration of student responses to raise questions, not as an attempt to draw conclusions.

An Exploration of Identities: Data Analysis

Before launching into the findings within the three theme categories, it is important to note that the themes are imperfect - some students’ analysis reflected overlapping categories or documented change in perceptions over time. In these few cases, a multiplicity of sentiments were expressed, illustrating how student experiences in their service-learning can shift. In the example below, a student’s poem illustrates her varied reactions. Her poem is a useful conversational tool to begin discussing issues of power and reflexivity.

You are sent as a hero
he prays to be saved
you wish your task were over
he dreams, like you, he had it made

he feels like an example
you feel like an observer
he tells you of his struggle
you tell him you’re the intruder

you share your sadness for him
he shares he doesn’t want your pity
you want to take back those words
he wants to go back to your city

he gives you strength and hope

you feel your heart bleed
he is the one who saved you
you were the one in need

you complete your duty
he survives his day
you go back to your reality
he can't from his life stray

In this poem the student describes herself as a “hero,” “observer,” and “intruder,” illustrating a tension between multiple roles she experienced. She recognizes that the migrant reached her (he gave her “strength and hope”), and alludes to a sense of reciprocity. At the end of the poem, she returns home. In a subtle way she concludes her poem with the reality that after this encounter she returns to her literal home, her safe refuge, which of course the migrant does not have. I appreciate this poem for its raw honesty, for artistically attempting to multidimensionally convey what the student has experienced.

Throughout the course my challenge was to let my students stand on new ground, both literal and metaphoric, and then aid them in getting used to how the ground shifts as they reflect on their own subjectivity. During in-class reflections, Chicanas dealt openly with identity differences—describing, for example, how they shared common tastes and sometimes language with the Mexicans in Tijuana—yet experienced them as a different social group (they crossed a “social border” (Hayes & Cuban, 1997).³ The social class differences between them were a topic of conversation. We discussed how it is that once migrants have adjusted to life in the United States, it becomes very difficult to return to Mexico as the same individual. One student had parents who had worked as migrants in the fields as day laborers. She shared her personal experience of how her parents had a difficult time leaving everything behind in Mexico to seek a better life in the United States. Her service was at Migrant Outreach, where they teach basic English and serve food. She wrote,

At first I found this task very difficult and depressing. How is it that I can just walk off, and not let it bother me that I am going home to have a roof over my head and a warm meal whenever I want to cook? As I continued to attend, I felt more frustrated because I wanted to make a difference. The way I do this is through communicating with the migrants. I learned that sometimes they just need someone to listen to them, to their stories, their troubles. Sometimes these men are starving for attention and need someone to let out their frustrations, anger, and loneliness. They just need someone to listen, not judge them, and just try to understand.

It occurred to me that the human contact these migrants had with students, most of whom were women, fulfilled a valuable need. In the broader context of San Diego County, these men are often targets of animosity and degradation. One migrant, for example, complained that he felt discriminated against when he went into the supermarket, because his “clothes were filthy” and he “did not smell like perfume.” Meeting with the female students provided a unique social opportunity. Most migrants who live in migrant camps are young men and their interactions with other young women are limited.

The migrants inhabit a liminal social position. In the United States, they are social outcasts. Yet this position belies the “mystique of migration” and the lauded *machismo* that surrounds the migration process from a Mexican perspective. The President of Mexico, Vicente Fox, for example, recently declared Mexican migrants to the United States as national heroes. In Mexico there is ample folklore and a cultural aura (particularly conveyed through popular music) that exalts the migratory process. Migrants to the United States are viewed as “risk-takers.” Young men, in particular, who migrate are lauded for their heroism, fearlessness, and bravado. They embody the sense of Mexican masculinity in their unabashed quest to earn money and improve their social status by traveling the sometimes perilous route across the border.

I realized that even though my students might not be interested in dating the migrants, the migrants probably appreciate young attractive women spending their Sunday afternoons chatting with and listening to them.⁴ It is possible, even, that my students could be satisfying an intimate psychological need. The only contact many of these migrants have with single women is with prostitutes that visit the migrant camps (personal communication with Migrant Outreach Director, 2003). I chose not to directly theorize this dimension with my students, because I did not want to confound their experience with such speculation. It is clear, however, that multiple layers of power relations complicate service-learning interactions. We also see that dimensions of gender and sexuality can be intimately embedded within the social relations of community service learning.

Below I give examples of the three themes I found among my student’s written work. Through the service-learning opportunities, some students, in the process of discussing their own relative identities, discursively reified the migrants, inadvertently constructing them as objects of their gazes (theme one). Others described a feeling of “foreignness” (a sense of displacement or momentary loss of identity), expressed as feelings of being the

“other” or “like a minority” (theme two). Yet others considered their relative power, openly theorized differences, and attempted to critically examine dimensions of privilege (theme three).

Theme One: Constructing Self and Other

One student wrote, “I felt like I was back at home in East Los Angeles with so many people of color; they even sold jalapenos at McDonald’s.” She wrote that she felt she could relate to the migrants because her mother had crossed illegally when she was 19 years old, but that “my family is now established in the US and they live comfortably, even though only 10 years ago her mother would become fearful at the sight of the border patrol’s green van.” But the student also said she felt like a tourist, as if people were staring at her because she was with the group of college students.

As we were walking we saw a stand with meat, and the people were just fanning the flies away with a piece of paper. Right away I heard some students saying, “That’s not healthy,” and “I don’t believe that,” and “that is gross.” Even I was thinking these things, because I go to the supermarket where the meat is packed up nicely, but for them [the Mexicans], all they have is this marketplace.

Here we see a moralizing discourse, the student establishes herself as different than the Mexicans on the basis of hygiene, a powerful mechanism for indicating social differentiation. In the process, this student has discursively defined her identity, establishing herself as both similar to, and yet socially distinct from, those she is serving.

The second example illustrates a student romanticization of the migrant with whom she interacts:

I went outside and began talking to one of the migrants who was waiting to go inside. I think I asked him if I could take a picture of him and he was asking me about my photography class and we got to talking a little. While I was taking some pictures of him there were three men sitting on the sidewalk a bit further back. They all made sure that they had their heads turned or somehow did not have their faces in the picture. When I was looking at the pictures later I was thinking about how noble he looked. He was a *campesino* (peasant) from Guerrero and had a job waiting in Pennsylvania picking strawberries. He was going so that he could make money to send home so that his children could continue their schooling. He was really proud that he had come all this way and was trying to go to work for his family. Because he viewed his journey in this manner I feel that is why he was so confident, sincere, and noble in

the pictures (as well as in his character in general.) He did not feel like a criminal, like he was from an inferior society, running away from difficulties, or anything else along these lines. What he was doing was something respectful, something to be proud of, and nothing to be ashamed of; he was going somewhere to work hard so that he could better provide for his family’s needs. I really hope it works out for him on one hand and that he is able to end up where he wants, but I also hope that he does not end up getting his visa and stays in Guerrero with his family. I feel this way because of the hardship that he is going to face if he tries to come to the US again. It makes me so sad and angry that he will be treated in such a manner that is so wrong once he is in the US.

Here we witness an interesting dimension to the interpersonal dynamic between the student and migrant. She describes him as a “*campesino* from Guerrero” and a “strawberry worker,” and elaborates his identity in terms of his familial role (father and provider). She finds it important to note he does not seem “criminal-like” nor “inferior,” nor an escapee from social ills (here we see some of her preconceptions of migrants). Together with the other qualitative indicators, her depiction of him as “proud,” “sincere,” and “noble” summarizes him as the quintessential “noble savage.” This is one of the tensions in anthropology: how can we describe our subjects and not essentialize or reify them? How can we convey these dimensions of subtlety to undergraduates in just one course?

Theme Two: Feelings of “Foreign-ness”

Some students defined their experiences in terms of the awkwardness they felt, stating they felt like the “Other.” One student expressed feelings of momentary social isolation:

When we were all sitting together and we were trying to teach them English I realized how hard it was for both of us to be there. For me as an American citizen, I felt like a spoiled brat and I felt like a complete outsider. I was the minority. I was the rich USD student and they were the poor migrants, lucky enough to have survived the trip across the border. It made me think of all that I have, how lucky I am to live here with all the opportunities that I have. But it made me sad to think that just because these men live on the other side of a line, they could not have the same opportunities. It was very awkward; at the same time it was a great experience. It really helped the information that we have learned come alive. I actually saw the altar that is in the book *Shadowed Lives*. I heard the stories of the men and where they were coming from and whom they had left behind. It was truly touching.

This reflection comes from a White student who early in the class established herself as “very patriotic” and somewhat uncomfortable with the migrant-centered perspective from which I taught the class. I empathize with her sense of self-described “awkwardness” in the migrant camp context. The sense she experienced is similar to the one most ethnographers experience in a new context. This feeling of being a “stranger,” in a sense glimpsing what it may feel like to be the Other, is a useful one. Inhabiting this space of discomfort, I would argue, is a critical component to understand the migrants’ plight. It is truly a painful space to occupy, for it is precisely at a moment when a student is not in her safe, secure space, that she can begin to feel what it is like to cross a border (see also Skilton-Sylvester & Erwin, 2000).

Theme Three: Examining Subjectivities

While some students found the literal and metaphoric border crossings to be somewhat unsettling, because they had never experienced a marked sense of Otherness, other students delved into the experience, using it as a basis for self-examination. One student, for example, a White male, achieved remarkable analytical depth in his narrative. He theorizes his own identity in light of his meeting with the migrant:

When I take this into Tijuana and sit down to dinner with a migrant who will be crossing the border illegally in a matter of days, I am very aware of my own circumstances. Here I am, a 22 year-old man who has everything the 26 year-old man in front of me wants. The difference between us is a matter of appearances and location of birth. Those two things have determined in many ways what the rest of our lives have been like, and will continue to be. As we talk about ex-girlfriends and his kids, and eventually the act of crossing the border, I continue to be haunted by my privilege and power. I noticed that he would seldom look me in the eye, that he was more than willing to speak English instead of Spanish. I felt a sense of power and belonging even though I was in his country. I actually felt that I had a right to be there because of my material wealth, and of course, my Whiteness, even as we talked about his fight against a country that believes he does not have the right to come in; my country, the U.S. ... The man I ate dinner with may be in the US working illegally at his old construction job, or he may have been caught crossing and sent back to Tijuana. Wherever he is, I know that because I am a citizen of the US, and he a citizen of Mexico, I will always have opportunities that he doesn’t. This will always create an environment where I have more power if I

so choose, because I do not need him or his country, but he would risk his life to enter mine. It is thus my responsibility to be aware of the power I bring to the relationship, and do what I can to acknowledge we are still equals.

By acknowledging his difference and naming his own dimension of privilege (his Whiteness and social class position), he conveys sensibility to axes of power, rare to find in an undergraduate student.

Another student shared the following story:

Serving meals at *Casa Migrante*, I made eye contact and exchanged “*Buenos Dias*” with the people in line. I found it odd at first that not everyone thanked us, or said anything when they received their meal. Some scowled and were quick to take their food. I thought about this for a while and then tried to put myself in their place, waiting in line for hours for their small lunch. I realized that this was as much their food as it was mine; I was just the one behind the counter on the serving side rather than in line on the receiving side. Why should they have to thank me? I almost feel guilty now thinking that they should have.

Sometimes the service interaction does not produce “good feelings” as in the above example. The student had spent her Saturday afternoon waiting to serve the migrants and she felt they were ungrateful for their food. The awkwardness of the encounter, however, enabled her to glimpse migrants’ perceptions of the interaction. Through this exchange we see that the student reflected on her role, feeling somewhat powerless, guilty, and embarrassed that the exchange did not produce the anticipated effect. She began to understand how humbling it might be to be a migrant. Perhaps she was also made aware of how humiliating it can be to experience the waiting: waiting to receive, imagining what it feels like to be the object of a more powerful gaze.

Discussion: Constructing and Deconstructing Borders

As a teacher and scholar of border studies, I construct how my students think about and relate to Mexico. Am I also complicitous in constructing the border? Does service-learning reinscribe the border, or help break it down?

The physical border, as a material space between the United States and Mexico, exists. Its shape is a militarized wall, manned with the latest technology and it is made real by the migrants who are determined to cross. They risk their lives crossing where the border is most porous. Yet, the U.S.-Mexico border is also a social construction. Peter Andreas (2000), in *Border Games: Policing the U.S.-Mexico*

Divide, argues that the militarized border zone (Dunn, 1996) is a political façade—one that serves the intentions of politicians who have a vested interest in maintaining an image of a peaceful and orderly border. While thousands of migrants are apprehended every month, the employers of the migrants who create the demand for illegal labor are ignored. They are not monitored or “raided” by the Border Patrol, as they once were. The spotlight is on the permeation of the physical border itself. Institutions such as agribusiness, who perpetuate the need for migrant labor, are not the targets of political intervention.

In my class students learn that the border is actually very porous; though the United States may construct a reinforced wall, migrants continue to cross. This is not only in response to the demand for their labor, but also due to a long history in which bi-national social networks have been formed. Many Mexican families live a “transnational” existence. Crossing the border is also part of Mexico’s national identity.

In speaking and interacting with migrants, students recognize the human face of migration and begin to understand how laws and policies affect real peoples’ lives. For example, now that migrants cross the border through Arizona and California deserts, a deplorable number of migrants die of dehydration. Students encountered migrants who cross the borderlands by foot, gallon-size bottles of water in hand. In Tijuana, students witnessed the wooden crosses nailed upon the Mexican side of the barrier, a physical reminder of, and memorial to, the thousands of migrants who have died attempting to cross.

In thinking about my complicity in constructing the border, I am aware that the community service learning experience may reinforce negative stereotypes of migrants. Many living in the migrant camps on the undeveloped hills of San Diego, for example, have no running water or basic amenities. In exposing the “periphery” that the migrants occupy, however, I find that at least I have begun to sow the seeds of conscientiousness within my students. I see my own role as one that involves developing a vigilance of the injustices toward migrants. Even though I have been accused of “bias” for not presenting the perspectives of so-called “nativist” (anti-immigrant) groups, I accept the label. It is my only strategy to resist reinscribing the border as it has been constructed.

Conclusion

A distinguished law professor asked me recently about the legality of having students interact with “illegal” migrants; what problems might this

cause? To me, migrant humanity supercedes the issue of legality. Such a biased predisposition is perhaps at odds with my discipline’s history of positivism and attempted “objectivity.” Nonetheless, I can either be constrained by this realization or embrace it. Most practitioners of critical, participatory action research acknowledge that such approaches are only slowly approximating the mainstream. Meanwhile, I am honest about my convictions, and allow my students to ponder these issues as well. There is also a fine line in terms of how this position is conveyed to students. On the one hand, I want to caution them about self-righteous illusions about the larger value of their contributions. At the very least, I want to restrain the tendency to view migrants with pity, as victims, and without agency. On the other, I am hopeful that they at least will begin to imagine collaborative strategies of resistance. The tenets of participatory action research are relevant here. As Jim Thomas (1993) suggests,

Conventional ethnographers study culture for the purpose of describing it; critical ethnographers do so to change it. Conventional ethnographers recognize the impossibility, even undesirability, of research free of normative and other biases, but believe that these biases are to be repressed. Critical ethnographers instead celebrate their normative and political position as a means of invoking social consciousness and societal change. (cited in Calderón, 2004, p. 90)

Though we cannot predict whether community service learning will perpetuate power differences, we can take steps to make students aware of this danger. A realization of power differentials is clearly an important step in beginning to dismantle the hierarchy of social relations between server and served. The trajectory begins with faculty members who, as role models, highlight their collaborative efforts with local communities. In the classroom, faculty must carry over this “collaborativist perspective” to their own students. This means acknowledging our own limitations and biases and speaking openly about issues of Whiteness and other dimensions of privilege. Ira Shor (1996) argues, “power-sharing [in the classroom] repositions students from being cultural exiles to becoming cultural constituents, from being unconsulted curriculum receivers to becoming collaborative curriculum-makers” (p. 200, cited in Ochoa & Ochoa, 2004). The writing and sharing of personal narratives can be one departure point to examine such dimensions of subjectivity. Storytelling, or “counter-stories” (stories that center dimensions of privilege) are tools that can be used by students to

“unpack” their experiences with service-learning. Daniel Solórzano and Tara Yosso (2002) highlight the transformative potential of stories.

We believe counter-stories serve at least four functions as follows: (a) They can build community among those at the margins of society by putting a human and familiar face to educational theory and practice, (b) they can challenge the perceived wisdom of those at society’s center by providing a context to understand and transform established belief systems, (c) they can open new windows into the reality of those at the margins of society by showing possibilities beyond the ones they live and demonstrating that they are not alone in their position, and (d) they can teach others that by combining elements from both the story and the current reality, one can construct another world that is richer than either the story or the reality alone. (p. 36)

I have argued for a *sustained* service-learning interaction, one that differs from “drop in” or single-episode encounters with the community. Many students feel inadequate, uncomfortable, or out of place in the community service learning context. They need a sustained experience, with conscientious reflection, to be able to move beyond the “tourist gaze,” to embrace collectivist efforts, and begin to have a lived experience of learning.

Notes

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¹ The community service learning component was created through the institutional efforts of the on-campus Community Service Learning Office at the University of San Diego, recently recognized as one of the nation’s leading service-learning institutions by Campus Compact (USD was named one of 100 campuses to be nominated for Princeton Review’s “Colleges with a Conscience”). The Community Service Learning office hosts “Faculty Curriculum Development Workshops”

and invites professors to experiment with service-learning in their courses, offering practical support for infusing community service learning projects into existing and new courses. Their approach is rooted in grassroots efforts to establish liaisons between the University and the surrounding communities. (Most recently the office helped develop and sponsor a course titled, “Community, Consensus and Organizing,” in which community leaders are brought in as co-teachers.) In short, the Community Service Learning office at USD offers tremendously valuable support in establishing, maintaining, and coordinating service-learning opportunities.

² I would like to thank Arthur Keene for pointing this out to me.

³ I mistakenly thought that the Chicano and Latino students would have an easier time adjusting to the community service learning experience, perhaps because I knew many of them personally and knew some had immigrant parents. It is important to note, however, that students who identify ethnically with members of their presumed ethnic group will not necessarily have a better understanding of the discrimination experienced by members of that group. This is because social classes, places of origin, and particular “stand points” affect the interactions. One cannot assume that even similarities in phenotype or cultural background will allow for the creation of social bonds, or even minimize distrust (see Twine and Warren 2000). Some of my students came from working class backgrounds and had been exposed to racism and discrimination (one student had even been stopped by a border patrol agent on the way to school). I do not have enough information to determine whether Chicano and Latino students expressed greater affinity with the migrants at the community service learning sites than the other students. In the context of the classroom, however, many Chicano and Latino students expressed greater empathy toward migrants and vocalized these opinions with much less hesitation, in some cases defending migrants when other classmates asserted that they were “breaking the law” by entering the U.S. without documentation.

⁴ One Chicana wrote, “After dinner I began to speak to Carlos, an elderly man that appeared to be in his 60s, he greeted me by asking me if I knew when the social worker would get there. I told him I did not know. We then began to converse and he asked me what I thought about the feminist movement and how often I read the bible. It was then that I realized that I was being lectured by this man and questioned about my beliefs. As he spoke I could feel that he thought his viewpoint had more validity than mine. In contrast to the other men that had told me their stories and shared their personal experiences with me, this man thought I should be learning from him.” This example illustrates two things. First, the experience shifted the domain of power—the student did not expect “to be lectured.” She later told the class that the conversation unnerved her because she did not expect to have a philosophical discussion with a migrant worker. Second, it illustrates how various domains of identity (age, gender, and social class) converge in the service-

learning context. Such differences make it difficult to assert that ethnic identity alone will serve as a catalyst for increased understanding between server and served.

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To Hell with Good Intentions

by Ivan Illich

An address by Monsignor Ivan Illich to the Conference on InterAmerican Student Projects (CIASP) in Cuernavaca, Mexico, on April 20, 1968. In his usual biting and sometimes sarcastic style, Illich goes to the heart of the deep dangers of paternalism inherent in any voluntary service activity, but especially in any international service "mission." Parts of the speech are outdated and must be viewed in the historical context of 1968 when it was delivered, but the entire speech is retained for the full impact of his point and at Ivan Illich's request.

IN THE CONVERSATIONS WHICH I HAVE HAD TODAY, I was impressed by two things, and I want to state them before I launch into my prepared talk.

I was impressed by your insight that the motivation of U.S. volunteers overseas springs mostly from very alienated feelings and concepts. I was equally impressed, by what I interpret as a step forward among would-be volunteers like you: openness to the idea that the only thing you can legitimately volunteer for in Latin America might be voluntary powerlessness, voluntary presence as receivers, as such, as hopefully beloved or adopted ones without any way of returning the gift.

I was equally impressed by the hypocrisy of most of you: by the hypocrisy of the atmosphere prevailing here. I say this as a brother speaking to brothers and sisters. I say it against many resistances within me; but it must be said. Your very insight, your very openness to evaluations of past programs make you hypocrites because you - or at least most of you - have decided to spend this next summer in Mexico, and therefore, you are unwilling to go far enough in your reappraisal of your program. You close your eyes because you want to go ahead and could not do so if you looked at some facts.

It is quite possible that this hypocrisy is unconscious in most of you. Intellectually, you are ready to see that the motivations which could legitimate volunteer action overseas in 1963 cannot be invoked for the same action in 1968. "Mission-vacations" among poor Mexicans were "the thing" to do for well-off U.S. students earlier in this decade: sentimental concern for newly-discovered poverty south of the border combined with total blindness to much worse poverty at home justified such benevolent excursions. Intellectual insight into the difficulties of fruitful volunteer action had not sobered the spirit of Peace Corps Papal-and-Self-Styled Volunteers.

Today, the existence of organizations like yours is offensive to Mexico. I wanted to make this statement in order to explain why I feel sick about it all and in order to make you aware that good intentions have not much to do with what we are discussing here. To hell with good intentions. This is a theological statement. You will not help anybody by your good intentions. There is an Irish saying that the road to hell is paved with good intentions; this sums up the same theological insight.

The very frustration which participation in CIASP programs might mean for you, could lead you to new awareness: the awareness that even North Americans can receive the gift of hospitality without the slightest ability to pay for it; the awareness that for some gifts one cannot even say "thank you."

Now to my prepared statement.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

For the past six years I have become known for my increasing opposition to the presence of any and all North American "do-gooders" in Latin America. I am sure you know of my present efforts to obtain the voluntary withdrawal of all North American volunteer armies from Latin America - missionaries, Peace Corps members and groups like yours, a "division" organized for the benevolent invasion of Mexico. You were aware of these things when you invited me - of all people - to be the main speaker at your annual convention. This is amazing! I can only conclude that your invitation means one of at least three things:

Some among you might have reached the conclusion that CIASP should either dissolve altogether, or take the promotion of voluntary aid to the Mexican poor out of its institutional purpose. Therefore you might have invited me here to help others reach this same decision.

You might also have invited me because you want to learn how to deal with people who think the way I do - how to dispute them successfully. It has now become quite common to invite Black Power spokesmen to address Lions Clubs. A "dove" must always be included in a public dispute organized to increase U.S. belligerence.

And finally, you might have invited me here hoping that you would be able to agree with most of what I say, and then go ahead in good faith and work this summer in Mexican villages. This last possibility is only open to those who do not listen, or who cannot understand me.

I did not come here to argue. I am here to tell you, if possible to convince you, and hopefully, to stop you, from pretentiously imposing yourselves on Mexicans.

I do have deep faith in the enormous good will of the U.S. volunteer. However, his good faith can usually be explained only by an abysmal lack of intuitive delicacy. By definition, you cannot help being ultimately vacationing salesmen for the middle-class "American Way of Life," since that is really the only life you know. A group like this could not have developed unless a mood in the United States had supported it - the belief that any true American must share God's blessings with his poorer fellow men. The idea that every American has something to give, and at all times may, can and should give it, explains why it occurred to students that they could help Mexican peasants "develop" by spending a few months in their villages.

Of course, this surprising conviction was supported by members of a missionary order, who would have no reason to exist unless they had the same conviction - except a much stronger one. It is now high time to cure yourselves of this. You, like the values you carry, are the products of an American society of achievers and consumers, with its two-party system, its universal schooling, and its family-car affluence. You are ultimately-consciously or unconsciously - "salesmen" for a delusive ballet in the ideas of democracy, equal opportunity and free enterprise among people who haven't the possibility of profiting from these.

Next to money and guns, the third largest North American export is the U.S. idealist, who turns up in every theater of the world: the teacher, the volunteer, the missionary, the community organizer, the economic developer, and the vacationing do-gooders. Ideally, these people define their role as service. Actually, they frequently wind up alleviating the damage done by money and weapons, or "seducing" the "underdeveloped" to the benefits of the world of affluence and achievement. Perhaps this is the moment to instead bring home to the people of the U.S. the knowledge that the way of life they have chosen simply is not alive enough to be shared.

By now it should be evident to all America that the U.S. is engaged in a tremendous struggle to survive. The U.S. cannot survive if the rest of the world is not convinced that here we have Heaven-on-Earth. The survival of the U.S. depends on the acceptance by all so-called "free" men that the U.S.

middle class has "made it." The U.S. way of life has become a religion which must be accepted by all those who do not want to die by the sword - or napalm. All over the globe the U.S. is fighting to protect and develop at least a minority who consume what the U.S. majority can afford. Such is the purpose of the Alliance for Progress of the middle-classes which the U.S. signed with Latin America some years ago. But increasingly this commercial alliance must be protected by weapons which allow the minority who can "make it" to protect their acquisitions and achievements.

But weapons are not enough to permit minority rule. The marginal masses become rambunctious unless they are given a "Creed," or belief which explains the status quo. This task is given to the U.S. volunteer - whether he be a member of CLASP or a worker in the so-called "Pacification Programs" in Viet Nam.

The United States is currently engaged in a three-front struggle to affirm its ideals of acquisitive and achievement-oriented "Democracy." I say "three" fronts, because three great areas of the world are challenging the validity of a political and social system which makes the rich ever richer, and the poor increasingly marginal to that system.

In Asia, the U.S. is threatened by an established power -China. The U.S. opposes China with three weapons: the tiny Asian elites who could not have it any better than in an alliance with the United States; a huge war machine to stop the Chinese from "taking over" as it is usually put in this country, and; forcible re-education of the so-called "Pacified" peoples. All three of these efforts seem to be failing.

In Chicago, poverty funds, the police force and preachers seem to be no more successful in their efforts to check the unwillingness of the black community to wait for graceful integration into the system.

And finally, in Latin America the Alliance for Progress has been quite successful in increasing the number of people who could not be better off - meaning the tiny, middle-class elites - and has created ideal conditions for military dictatorships. The dictators were formerly at the service of the plantation owners, but now they protect the new industrial complexes. And finally, you come to help the underdog accept his destiny within this process!

All you will do in a Mexican village is create disorder. At best, you can try to convince Mexican girls that they should marry a young man who is self-made, rich, a consumer, and as disrespectful of tradition as one of you. At worst, in your "community development" spirit you might create just enough problems to get someone shot after your vacation ends_ and you rush back to your middleclass neighborhoods where your friends make jokes about "spics" and "wetbacks."

You start on your task without any training. Even the Peace Corps spends around \$10,000 on each corps member to help him adapt to his new environment and to guard him against culture shock. How odd that nobody ever thought about spending money to educate poor Mexicans in order to prevent them from the culture shock of meeting you?

In fact, you cannot even meet the majority which you pretend to serve in Latin America - even if you could speak their language, which most of you cannot. You can only dialogue with those like you - Latin American imitations of the North American middle class. There is no way for you to really meet with the underprivileged, since there is no common ground whatsoever for you to meet on.

Let me explain this statement, and also let me explain why most Latin Americans with whom you might be able to communicate would disagree with me.

Suppose you went to a U.S. ghetto this summer and tried to help the poor there "help themselves." Very soon you would be either spit upon or laughed at. People offended by your pretentiousness would hit or spit. People who understand that your own bad consciences push you to this gesture would laugh condescendingly. Soon you would be made aware of your irrelevance among the poor, of your status as middle-class college students on a summer assignment. You would be roundly

rejected, no matter if your skin is white-as most of your faces here are-or brown or black, as a few exceptions who got in here somehow.

Your reports about your work in Mexico, which you so kindly sent me, exude self-complacency. Your reports on past summers prove that you are not even capable of understanding that your dogooding in a Mexican village is even less relevant than it would be in a U.S. ghetto. Not only is there a gulf between what you have and what others have which is much greater than the one existing between you and the poor in your own country, but there is also a gulf between what you feel and what the Mexican people feel that is incomparably greater. This gulf is so great that in a Mexican village you, as White Americans (or cultural white Americans) can imagine yourselves exactly the way a white preacher saw himself when he offered his life preaching to the black slaves on a plantation in Alabama. The fact that you live in huts and eat tortillas for a few weeks renders your well-intentioned group only a bit more picturesque.

The only people with whom you can hope to communicate with are some members of the middle class. And here please remember that I said "some" -by which I mean a tiny elite in Latin America.

You come from a country which industrialized early and which succeeded in incorporating the great majority of its citizens into the middle classes. It is no social distinction in the U.S. to have graduated from the second year of college. Indeed, most Americans now do. Anybody in this country who did not finish high school is considered underprivileged.

In Latin America the situation is quite different: 75% of all people drop out of school before they reach the sixth grade. Thus, people who have finished high school are members of a tiny minority. Then, a minority of that minority goes on for university training. It is only among these people that you will find your educational equals.

At the same time, a middle class in the United States is the majority. In Mexico, it is a tiny elite. Seven years ago your country began and financed a so-called "Alliance for Progress." This was an "Alliance" for the "Progress" of the middle class elites. Now, it is among the members of this middle class that you will find a few people who are willing to send their time with you_ And they are overwhelmingly those "nice kids" who would also like to soothe their troubled consciences by "doing something nice for the promotion of the poor Indians." Of course, when you and your middleclass Mexican counterparts meet, you will be told that you are doing something valuable, that you are "sacrificing" to help others.

And it will be the foreign priest who will especially confirm your self-image for you. After all, his livelihood and sense of purpose depends on his firm belief in a year-round mission which is of the same type as your summer vacation-mission.

There exists the argument that some returned volunteers have gained insight into the damage they have done to others - and thus become more mature people. Yet it is less frequently stated that most of them are ridiculously proud of their "summer sacrifices." Perhaps there is also something to the argument that young men should be promiscuous for awhile in order to find out that sexual love is most beautiful in a monogamous relationship. Or that the best way to leave LSD alone is to try it for awhile -or even that the best way of understanding that your help in the ghetto is neither needed nor wanted is to try, and fail. I do not agree with this argument. The damage which volunteers do willy-nilly is too high a price for the belated insight that they shouldn't have been volunteers in the first place.

If you have any sense of responsibility at all, stay with your riots here at home. Work for the coming elections: You will know what you are doing, why you are doing it, and how to communicate with those to whom you speak. And you will know when you fail. If you insist on working with the poor, if this is your vocation, then at least work among the poor who can tell you to go to hell. It is incredibly

unfair for you to impose yourselves on a village where you are so linguistically deaf and dumb that you don't even understand what you are doing, or what people think of you. And it is profoundly damaging to yourselves when you define something that you want to do as "good," a "sacrifice" and "help."

I am here to suggest that you voluntarily renounce exercising the power which being an American gives you. I am here to entreat you to freely, consciously and humbly give up the legal right you have to impose your benevolence on Mexico. I am here to challenge you to recognize your inability, your powerlessness and your incapacity to do the "good" which you intended to do.

I am here to entreat you to use your money, your status and your education to travel in Latin America. Come to look, come to climb our mountains, to enjoy our flowers. Come to study. But do not come to help.

Why 'Servanthood' Is Bad

By John McKnight

Reprinted with permission from The Other Side, Jan-Feb 1989.

In a small, relatively isolated community on Martha's Vineyard, about every tenth person used to be born without the ability to hear. Everybody in the community, hearing and non-hearing alike, spoke a unique sign language brought from England when they immigrated to Massachusetts in 1690. In the mid-twentieth century with increased mobility, the people ceased to intermarry, and the genetic anomaly disappeared.

But before the memory of it died — and the sign language with it — historian Nora Groce studied the community's history. She compared the experience of the non-hearing people to that of the hearing people.

She found that 80 percent of the non-hearing people graduated from high school, as did 80 percent of the hearing. She found that about 90 percent of the non-hearing got married, compared to about 92 percent of the hearing. They had about equal numbers of children. Their income levels were similar, as were the variety and distribution of their occupations.

Then Groce did a parallel study on the Massachusetts mainland. At the time, it was considered to have the best services in the nation for non-hearing people. There she found that 50 percent of non-hearing people graduated from high school, compared to 75 percent of the hearing. Non-hearing people married half the time, while hearing people married 90 percent of the time. Forty percent of the non-hearing people had children, while 80 percent of hearing people did. And non-hearing people had fewer children. They also received about one-third the income of hearing people. And their range of occupations was much more limited.

How was it, Groce wondered, that on an island with no services, non-hearing people were as much like hearing people as you could possibly measure? Yet thirty miles away, with the most advanced services available, non-hearing people lived much poorer lives than the hearing.

The one place in the United States where deafness was not a disability was a place with no services for deaf people. In that community all the people adapted by signing instead of handing the non-hearing people over to professionals and their services. That community wasn't just doing what was necessary to help or to serve one group. It was doing what was necessary to incorporate everyone.

I've been around neighborhoods, neighborhood organizations, and communities in big cities for thirty-six years. I have never seen service systems that brought people to well-being, delivered them to citizenship, or made them free.

When I'm around church people, I always check whether they are misled by the modern secular vision. Have they substituted the vision of service for the only thing that will make people whole — community? Are they service peddlers or community builders? Peddling services is unchristian — even if you're hell-bent on

helping people. Peddling services instead of building communities is the one way you can be sure not to help.

We all know that at the Last Supper Jesus said, "This is my commandment; love one another as I have loved you. There is no greater love than this; to lay down one's life for one's friends." But for mysterious reasons, I never hear the next two sentences. "You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer call you servants, because servants do not know the business of the one they serve. But I have called you friends because I have made known to you everything I learned from God." It is not right to be hung back by service and servantry. The goal is to be a friend.

I'm consistently impressed by how dangerous people are who want to serve others. The service ideology and its systems don't work for three reasons.

First, they constantly steal money from people who are poor. At the center where I work, we've added up how much money the four levels of government — federal, state, county, and city — specifically target for low-income people in Cook County. It adds up to about \$6,000 for every person with an income below the poverty line. (That figure is low; not everyone below the line participates in low-income programs.) For a mother with three children, that is the equivalent of \$24,000. Three years ago, the median income in Cook County was \$23,000. In one sense, we spend for every poor person more money than half the people in Cook County make. But Chicago still has poverty!

So I asked our researchers, "Of the money appropriated for low-income people, how much did they get in cash and how much in services?" They replied, "They got 63 percent in services and 37 percent in income." Now, if you are a family of four, that means your servants walked away with over \$15,000 of the money appropriated for you while you got less than \$9,000.

Bureaucracy is not the problem. (Bureaucracy eats only about 6 percent.) The money goes to health- and human-service professionals: nurses, doctors, psychologists, psychiatrist, social workers, public-housing administrators, land-clearance officials, welfare workers. It doesn't go to the poor.

The second problem with service systems is that they base programs on "deficiencies." I fight whenever I can — in legislatures and before policy-making bodies — against "needs surveys" in low-income neighborhoods. Here is why.

I was organizing block clubs in West Side neighborhoods. I wasn't very good. But people responded. They understood what I was saying. Then the anti-poverty program came, and within three years organizing became incredibly difficult.

The anti-poverty program sent people out to interview people this way:

"Mrs. Jones, we're from such-and-such. We're doing a survey. Can you tell me how far you went in school?"

She looks down a little and says, "Well, I just got through tenth grade." So they

write on the clipboard, "Dropout. Two years." Not "educated ten years," but "dropout two years."

Then they say, "I wonder if you could read this to me."

She looks at it, embarrassed. "No. I can't read."

"Illiterate," they write. Then they say, "Just now you squinted your eyes. Do you have trouble seeing?"

"Yes. I think I need glasses."

"Visual deficit," they write. "'Do you have any children?"

"Three daughters, ages fourteen, sixteen, and eighteen."

"Do any of them have children?"

"The fourteen-year-old has a child, and the eighteen-year-old has a child."

"Teenage pregnancy," goes on the clipboard.

Then they say, "We're going to get you some help. Just wait. We're going to make a service center here." And they cash in their needs inventory for a GED dropout training center and three people who work there, for an illiteracy program with four staff people, for a neighborhood optometrist who is responsive to the community, and for a new teenage-pregnancy counseling program that gets the schools more money. This poor woman is a gold mine. That's how she ended up getting one-third what the service system got.

When I go back to this woman, organizing, I say, "Mrs. Jones, I'm organizing for the local neighborhood organization, and your neighbor told me to talk to you. She told me that when her daughter was hit by an automobile down at the corner, you took charge while she took her daughter to the emergency room. And when the tree fell down across the street, you're the one who came out and told people who to call, what to do about the tree. She told me you're the leader on this block. People trust you. People believe in you. People follow you. That's one of the most wonderful things in the world, because you have the opportunity to join with other people like yourself in the neighborhood to being to do more things than just deal with the tree and the crisis with the little girl. So would you come with me to a meeting tonight?"

"No," she says, "I'm waiting for the people in the white coats."

Service systems teach people that their value lies in their deficiencies. They are built on "inadequacies" called illiteracy, visual deficit, and teenage pregnancy. But communities are built on the capacities of drop-out, illiterate, bad-scene, teenage-pregnant, battered women like Mrs. Jones. If the church is about community, not service, it is about capacity, not deficiency.

Third, the service system displaces the capacity of people's organizations to solve problems. It says, "Don't form a community organization. Sit and wait for the white coat to come save you." The proliferation of an ideology of therapy and service as "what you need" has weakened associations and organizations of citizens across the United States.

Many churches and pastors have become the agents of systems. They themselves may not understand whom they represent, but they refer people to systems. Instead of building community, they help take responsibility away from the community and give it to professionals. People who do this in the name of the church and of Jesus are community busters. They are not agents of Christ.

Here are five rules to protect yourself from being the agent of the devil in the middle of a church. (I could give you ten if I had more space.)

Saul Alinsky referred to the first rule as the "iron rule": Never do for others what they can do for themselves.

Second, find another's gifts, contributions, and capacities. Use them. Give them a place in the community.

Third, whenever a service is proposed, fight to get it converted into income. Don't support services. Insist that what poor people need is income.

There is a point where things called services can be useful. Most low-income communities are well beyond that point. If you improve the professional credentialing of big-city school teachers and systems, knowing and wisdom will decrease in direct relationship to the increase in that system's poor. The increase in medical resources in Chicago is now decreasing the health status of poor people.

The fourth rule is a sort of subhead of the third. If those in power are hell-bent on giving poor people services rather than income, then fight for those services to come in the form of vouchers. That way the persons who must be served at least have a choice as to who will serve them. And there may be some competition.

Fifth, develop hospitality. Abraham, the head of a tribe, decided to follow a God who claimed to be the only God. That made Abraham and his people strangers in their own land. They journeyed as strangers through the world. And they developed some unique ideas about responsibilities to strangers because they were strangers themselves.

Jesus' disciples were also people who decided to become strangers — in their own land and in others. They built communities based on their decision. That renewed their understanding of obligations to strangers, and hospitality was renewed.

In every household, in every tent, the door was open — to the stranger, the outsider, the enemy, or potential enemy. And the stranger was one with whom one acted, not in service, but equality.

Then a terrible thing happened in third-century Italy. At the side of a monastery, they built a little room for strangers. And they called it a hospice. The church took over responsibility for the stranger. And Christians forgot what had been unique about their community — how to welcome the person who was outside and hungry.

The hospice took hospitality out of the community. "Hospice" became "hospital." The hospital became Humana, a for-profit corporation buying up church hospitals. Communities and churches have forgotten about hospitality. Now systems and corporations claim they can produce it and sell it and that you can consume it.

You must struggle with all your might to reclaim the central Christian act of hospitality. You will have to fight your local hospitals. You will have to fight Humana. You will have to fight the social services. They have commodified hospitality and called it a service. They have made a market of the temple. And you know what you're supposed to do the money changers: get 'em out! Or bring into the church the hospitality that is at the center of understanding a relationship as a friend not a servant. A church's response to people without should be hospitality, not services.

* * * *

Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing Community Assets was written by John P. Kretzmann and John L. McKnight. McKnight is the author of this article "Why Servanthood is Bad." Though not addressing theological issues, nor presuming Christian activism, it presents a radically new departure for urban community re-formation, stressing assets rather than deficiencies. Published by ACTA Publications and 376 pages long, it is a bargain at \$12.00 through [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

One review says that this is a guide that ". . .summarizes lessons learned by studying successful community-building initiatives in hundreds of neighborhoods across the U.S. It outlines what local communities can do to start their own journeys down the path of asset-based development."

Why Service-Learning Is Bad

John W. Eby

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Abstract

Service-learning has potential to transform teaching and learning in the academy and to call a generation of students to develop social responsibility and an ethic of service. Research on the learning side of the service-learning equation shows that students develop social responsibility, reduce racism, develop leadership and gain personal and social skills. There are however important questions which must be examined on the service side of the equation. The demands a learning orientation places on service limits its effectiveness and its ability to address community needs at a structural level. The service students do is often ameliorative and the explanations of social issues gained through service-learning are often individualistic. Through participation in service-learning, students may develop truncated understandings of the nature of social problems and of strategies for fundamental social change. This paper examines potential negative aspects of service-learning and identifies an agenda for strengthening the service provided through service-learning.

The service-learning movement is burgeoning. It is estimated that more than 50 percent of colleges and universities in the United States have some kind of service-learning program with more added every semester. The number of high schools, middle schools and even grade schools with service-learning is increasing. Conferences on service-learning are well attended. Both the quality and the quantity of research is increasing. Service-learning is widely praised by educators, faculty, administrators, students, parents, politicians, and community service agencies as a great hope for restoring relevance for the academy, as a strategy for creating a generation of students with an ethic of service, and as the answer to community social problems. Different representatives of the same groups also question service-learning because they claim that it does not address real community problems, because it is not real learning and because it teaches students inadequate understandings of service and social issues.

The service-learning movement is fueled by an uneasy sense that the academy is becoming increasingly irrelevant to real issues of society and by the increasing popularity of volunteerism in society. The President's summit focused national attention on volunteerism. There are so many follow up mini-summits that national figures must pick and choose which ones to attend and video recordings are used to provide a token presence. Some businesses are freeing employees to do volunteer work on company time. Community volunteer centers are adding staff. It is not unrealistic to talk of an emerging service movement and not too optimistic to expect a dramatic increase in the numbers of persons doing volunteer service and in the numbers of agencies depending on volunteers to accomplish their work.

The excitement and euphoria of the service-learning movement, fueled by dramatic stories of the benefits of linking learning and service masks underlying troubling issues. The limitations of service done in the name of service-learning are often overlooked and possible harm done by to communities by short term volunteers is ignored. Conversations about negative aspects of service-learning do surface occasionally in the hallways of the academy and in the lounges of service-learning conferences. There is talk of McService, service bites, quick fix service, happy meal community service, or service in a box. Discussions of the limits service-learning have surfaced on the Internet. Community leaders and agency representatives concerned about fundamental community change raise significant questions when given opportunity.

Unfortunately these voices are often informal and sporadic. Much of the discussion about service-learning is carried on by advocates. Most of the published research about service-learning is done by academicians particularly interested in the learning side of the equation. Community leaders and residents do not have a voice in the dialogue. The voice of community leaders committed to community development and structural change would be particularly helpful. Service is awarded something of a “sacred” status so it is neither popular nor politic to raise questions about the assumptions or unintended effects of volunteerism which often characterizes service-learning. However, if the service-learning movement is to reach maturity and live up to its potential, it must realistically face its limitations and broaden its emphasis beyond volunteerism. It must carefully examine what students learn about social problems and social structure through the kind of service service-learning does. It must examine the subtle effects of service on communities. This suggests both an agenda for planning and organizing service and a research agenda.

This paper is intended to be provocative and to generate such discussions and encourage such research.

Service-learning grows from mixed motives

Because of the strong emphasis on learning within service-learning, service can be subverted and become a “means to an end” rather than an end in itself. At its best, service should be defined by persons served and should be accountable to them in significant ways. Programs should be managed by local people and agencies controlled by them. Often service-learning is organized to respond to the needs of an academic institution which sponsors it, the needs of students, the needs of an instructor, or the needs of a course. The needs of the agency and the community often come last.

There are other forces which dilute both the motivation and the performance of service. The need for service-learning to gain legitimacy with doubting colleagues in the academy is a powerful force to redirect energies from service toward learning. Colleges and universities sometimes use service-learning as a public relations device to enhance their reputations in their communities in order to raise funds and recruit students or to mask negative impacts of other actions they take. Students sometimes use service-learning to make themselves feel good or to strengthen their resumes. They may use service-learning to avoid writing requirements or other course requirements when options are given. Agencies use service-learning to get free labor and to gain prestige. The fact that agencies will take almost any warm body is a sad commentary on

how much they need help. Participation in service-learning programs gives agencies access to a college or university and the prestige and help that brings. Religious students sometimes use service as a means to gain converts. Businesses support service to enhance their reputations and sometimes to legitimize or divert attention from other practices which may not be in the best interests of the community.

There is also danger of “using” individuals and communities in inappropriate ways as laboratories or as subjects for experiment and practice. Community members become objects rather than participants or passive recipients rather than actors. The fact that service-learning mixes objectives has potential for prostituting service by making it serve objectives which contribute to the students or the college or university rather than to the community.

Service-learning is based on a simplistic understanding of service

The service-learning movement is fond of the quotation from Martin Luther King. “Everybody can be great. Because anybody can serve. You don’t have to have a college degree to serve. You don’t have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve. You don’t have to know about Plato and Aristotle to serve. You don’t have to know Einstein’s Theory of Relativity to serve. You don’t have to know the second theory of thermodynamics in physics to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.”

While it is true that anyone can serve, it is also true as Allan Keith-Lucas (1972 p.119) comments that, “To help another human being may sound like a very simple process. Actually it is one of the hardest things that anyone can be called to do.” When service-learning is done without proper selection of students and without appropriate training, orientation and reflection, it can support ineffective and sometimes harmful kinds of service. Such service trivializes service and demeans service professions.

Service-learning teaches a false understanding of need

John McKnight (1996) in an insightful discussion of “Professionalizing Service and Disabling Help” discusses the concept of need often carried by students into service-learning assignments. Need, he says, is often defined as deficiency or as the lack of something a client needs or wants. The deficiency is placed in the client. Deficiencies are translated into a set of disconnected parts and treated with specialized service. Needs are understood to reside in the individual rather than in the system. Each need can be isolated as a discrete deficiency. Service is provided in discrete units directly targeted to a particular deficiency.

Freire (1971, p. 53) uses images borrowed from a “banking” system to describe this understanding of education. The system acts as if students are empty receptacles to be filled by the teacher. Education becomes an act of transferring knowledge from the teacher to the student. Students are passive depositories and teachers depositors.

This understanding of need as deficiency reinforces simplistic understandings of social problems and ignores resources and strengths already in communities. It is rewarding for a student to share love, hugs, and mathematics with a student in a tutoring program, but this individualization of social issues ignores structural components and causes. Often students who do service-learning enter communities from outside. This reinforces the idea that communities

themselves are deficient and need outside resources to work at their problems. By defining needs as deficiencies, students are able to separate themselves from the problems they encounter. They fail to see that often the same social structures which work well for them create the needs in the communities in which they do service-learning. By focusing on individualized need and individualized service students miss the systemic nature of social life.

Defining need as deficiency also reinforces the fundamental misunderstanding among many Americans found by Bellah (1985) and colleagues. They discovered that while most people they surveyed thought the world was going to “hell in a hand-basket,” most also were optimistic about their own personal futures. They failed to grasp the fundamental fact that their individual futures were intrinsically linked to the future of the society. A Somali proverb states that the presence of a man in a village who is too poor to own a camel is an embarrassment to the entire village. In America the village blames the man for his poverty! Unfortunately, service-learning when it is characterized by individualistic understandings of need perpetuates this kind of individualism.

Service-learning teaches a false understanding of response to need

Help according to McKnight (1996) is often offered as a mirror image of the individualized definition of need. The answer to need as deficiency is an outside person whose service fills the deficiency. This exaggerates the importance of the person who serves, demeans the person served and ignores resources in the community such as peers, families and community leaders. It fails to recognize the political, social and economic factors which create the need.

This definition of response allows service to be shaped to reflect the skills, schedules, interests, and learning agenda of the students in service-learning rather than to meet real community needs. Needs are defined in terms of what students have to offer. “To a person with a hammer, everything looks like a nail.” Resources in the community are often ignored. Too often service-learning reinforces assumptions of persons who need help that they do not have the resources to solve their own problems. It communicates to communities that they too are deficient and that the answers to the issues they face must come from outside. Service-learning tends to skew programs toward the needs of students rather toward the needs of communities. It often ameliorative rather than oriented toward change of social structures. It puts band-aids on deeply rooted problems and gives students an inadequate understanding of service.

Service-learning diverts attention from social policy to volunteerism

Most service-learning programs include volunteer service. The President’s summit on volunteerism, the many state and local follow-up summits and the visibility given to volunteerism by national figures such as General Powell have elevated volunteerism to almost sacred status. While the importance and significance of volunteerism cannot be overstated, volunteerism and private programs cannot substitute for appropriate governmental action and social policy. At a recent regional meeting touting volunteer service and service-learning, both the Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the Mayor of the City of Harrisburg stated that government can reduce its role now that volunteerism is increasing. It is tempting to see volunteerism as a viable response to deeply rooted social issues.

The fallacy of that claim is evident when noting that \$16 billion annual reduction in programs for the poor in the recent welfare reform bill approved by congress compares with the \$11 billion total of all secular and private giving for the poor (Wallis, 1997). If service-learning diverts effort from social policy initiatives to volunteerism it will do a major disservice to those it is designed to help.

Service-learning encourages diversion of agency agendas

The existence of a ready source of well motivated and generally competent service-learning volunteers encourages agencies to divert energies to meet the needs and interests of the volunteers sometimes at the expense of their own mission. Time spent catering to needs of volunteers and participating in their learning robs time from agency work. Time required to develop and run programs designed for short-term, untrained volunteers from outside the community detracts from time needed to involve community residents in working at community issues and to design programs which have long term structural impacts.

Service-learning can do harm

Service-learning exists within a number of constraints imposed by its very nature. Students must serve on schedules dictated by the college calendar, sports events, classes, availability of transportation, and their many personal commitments. Safety and liability considerations impact what they can do. When service-learning is done within a course, activities must fit with course objectives. Many students have little experience working with people different from themselves or little exposure to the issues involved in their service activity. Many professors are experts in their disciplines but not in community service or cross cultural relationships.

Service-learning has potential to do actual harm to individuals, particularly to children with whom students work. Because students come and go, relationships are short term. What may be a casual relationship for a student may be very significant relationship for a child or young adult in the program. Breaking the relationship at the end of the service-learning assignment can be traumatic and can add to the fragmentation already typical of poor communities. Students may reflect ethnocentrism and racism in ways that are harmful. Idealistic students may inappropriately criticize agency practices and policies.

Implications for design of service-learning

Admittedly, the discussion above is provocative and based on stereotypes and broad generalizations of volunteer service and service-learning. There are many service-learning programs which do not fit the stereotypes. But unfortunately many do.

As it matures, service-learning must go beyond “good intentions” (Illich, 1990) and “do goodism” to incorporate “state of the art” theoretical understanding and principles of good practice for service and social change. A beginning agenda to help move in this direction might include the following points.

Service-learning must incorporate the perspectives of all of its stakeholders

Service-learning brings together six sets of primary stakeholders; students, faculty, educational institutions, service recipients, community agencies, and communities. Each of these stakeholders has its own agenda and interests. Unfortunately very few discussions of service-learning give voice to all of these stakeholders.

One of the major challenges of service-learning at this stage of its development is to bring together with integrity the interests and cultures of all stakeholders. This is no easy task. Sven Groennings after interviewing more than 20 service agencies on behalf of the Association of Episcopal Colleges wrote, "While both service agencies and educational institutions are stakeholders in service-learning, the partners represent two cultures, which differ in purposes and considerably in vocabulary. Each of the partnering sectors lacks a solid widely-shared understanding of the dynamics of the other. There are weaknesses in the structure of inter-institutional relationships ("disconnects") which hamper communication, conflict resolution and the development of leaders who are accustomed to working together" (Groennings, 1997). The "disconnects" are even greater between other pairs of stakeholders in the matrix. Too often conversation and planning is done by each group alone or in pairs, rather than with representatives from all groups.

Authentic partnerships between colleges and communities are essential

For learning to occur in service-learning there must be careful planning and clear objectives, the experience must be linked integrally with academic courses, and the experience must include structured reflection. The most critical factor in the service component is the local agency which provides the setting for students to work. It is important for the agency to have authentic roots in the community and to provide continuity for programs in which students serve and for the relationships which short-term service-learning students build.

Effective programs include training, supervision, monitoring, support and evaluation. Much of this must be done by the agency. To do this well requires a heavy investment of agency resources. Most agencies are already stretched beyond their capacities. They have limited resources to respond to unending need.

Priority must be placed on developing clear expectations and mutual understandings between partners. It is also important for the college or university to contribute their "fair share" to the partnership. There are many ways this could happen but often does not. Colleges might provide financial reimbursement for agency time invested in service-learning students. Or they might provide other in-kind resources such as research, consultation, use of university facilities, or program evaluation. However this is often difficult because service-learning is not fully incorporated into the infra-structure of the college or university. Individual faculty often carry the additional work load and cost to incorporate service-learning into courses. For authentic partnerships between colleges and universities and communities to develop, ways must be found to incorporate service-learning into budgets and into faculty and staff loads.

Principles of good practice must be followed

The Principles of Good Practice for Combining Service and Learning developed by more than 70 organizations at a Wingspread conference in 1989 (Hornet & Poulsen) provide a

framework for programs of high quality. These principles call for service-learning to include responsible and challenging actions for the common good, critical reflection on activities, clear goals, involvement of those with needs in defining needs, identification of clear responsibilities of all partners, careful matching of providers and needs, sustained organizational commitment, providing training, supervision monitoring, support recognition and evaluation of programs, flexible and appropriate time commitments, and participation with diverse populations. This set of principles provides an excellent checklist for planning service-learning.

The planning and evaluation of service provides an opportunity for service-learning to incorporate an interdisciplinary approach so central to the concept of service-learning itself. Disciplines such as social work, political science, sociology, organizational behavior and community development should be generously used by the administrators of service learning activities. Frequently practitioners of service-learning are long on motivation and good will but short on expertise that relates to social and community change. There is a particular challenge to design programs which can use short term service-learning students in ways which fit into long term community programs or to find ways for students to spend longer periods of time in agencies.

The learning agenda must include social structural issues

Learning in service-learning is both intentional and serendipitous. It is important to thoughtfully manage both areas. Curricular content should help students to develop what is often called a ‘sociological imagination,’ that is the ability to see patterns, structures and social context. C. Wright Mills (1959) talks about “personal troubles of milieu“ which are rooted in the character of the individual and “public issues of social structure” which transcend the individual. Most students do not make the distinction intuitively. They must be helped to see structural conditions. Training, supervision and reflection must give careful attention to sensitize students to see factors beyond those residing in individuals.

Students tend to reflect on service-learning primarily in egocentric terms. They are quick to comment on the meaning service added to their college experience or the relationships they developed. They frequently reflect on changes in personal attitudes such as decreases in racism and increases in empathy for persons in need. This is important. But reflection must also include critical analysis and understanding of theoretical issues, service strategies, social change, agency policies, social policies, and community structure.

Advocacy and community development must be included

The short term nature of service-learning almost forces it to rely on settings which provide opportunity for direct service. However, as service-learning matures it is especially important to broaden service opportunities to include advocacy and community development.

Research Agenda

The issues raised above suggest a research agenda. There is a great need for case studies showing creative and innovative ways to do effective service in service-learning. Descriptions of exemplary programs can be used as models for planning and evaluation. Studies of ineffective

programs can help identify critical factors for success. Research should specifically examine the impact of service-learning on local communities and on persons served. Doing this requires using outcome measures rather than more commonly used input measures such as hours served or tasks done. Case studies can be used effectively for assessment (Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, & Kerrigan, 1996).

There is also need for research on short term service and volunteerism particularly as it affects agencies and communities. It is important to understand at greater depth the issues raised in the first section of this paper. Work needs to be done to identify the critical factors which determine the outcomes of service-learning. Additional research on the impact of service-learning could contribute greatly to improving quality and impact. A check list for planning the service component of service-learning would be helpful.

Summary

Service-learning has great potential to transform teaching and learning. It also has great potential to provide quality programs and people to local agencies to work with them to transform communities. However, if done poorly service-learning can teach inadequate conceptions of need and service, it can divert resources of service agencies and can do real harm in communities.

As service-learning matures, it must realistically face its limitations and realistically recognize both strengths and weaknesses. The answer to criticisms is not to abandon service-learning but to structure both learning and service to build on strengths and compensate for limitations.

One of the challenges facing service-learning is to bring to the service end of the service-learning equation the same level of rigor, expertise and critical analysis that has been applied to learning. This will include responding to the legitimate interests of all the stakeholders, following principles of good practice, developing strong college/community partnerships which reflect quality and reciprocity, teaching a sociological imagination, incorporating advocacy and community development opportunities, and developing evaluation and assessment strategies which will assure continued program improvement.

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Lesson Plan: Preparing Students for Service-Learning

Class Title

Preparing for Your Service-Learning Experience

When to Use This Lesson Plan/Tips for Use

This lesson should be used in the second or third class before students are placed with their community partner.

Estimated Lesson Time

One 50-minute session

Materials Needed for Lesson

Handouts (see below)

Timer/Bell

Dry erase board or flip charts (for notes)

Markers/Dry Erase Markers

Handouts Needed

Student FAQ Sheet

Student Responsibilities Agreement (Signed by student and given to instructor)

TIPS Sheet

Service-Learning Agreement form (signed by Agency and Student—copy for agency and instructor)

Student Hours Log Sheet (signed by Agency and Student)

Learning Objectives:

Students Will:

- **Define service-learning and volunteerism**
- **Understand how the service/community partnership connects to the course/discipline**
- **Understand the responsibilities and rights they have in connection to their community partnership**
- **Commit and sign the “Student Responsibilities Agreement” in preparation for beginning their community partnership**

Preparation

1. Make copies of handouts listed above or arrange for students to bring hard copies/e-copies to class
2. Read handouts indicated above
3. Bring indicated supplies to class

Session Outline

Introduction: For the next 50 minutes we are going to discuss the service-learning aspect of this course, your community partnership and the expectations.

Mingle Activity (15 minutes -five minutes for activity/10 minutes for discussion)

Before we begin our discussion of the details of service-learning in this course, we're going to do an activity to explore the "big picture" of service—by having you define some terms in your own words.

Mingle Activity Explained (this can be done with six to 600 people but requires ability to move around):

In a second I'm going to ask you to stand up—we're going to have a mingle activity. Think of it as something between a cocktail party (without the cocktails) and speed dating (without the dating).

So, if everyone would stand up and find one person YOU DO NOT KNOW and stand in front of them. I'm going to say a word and when I do, one of you will free associate with the word I say—this can be one word responses, a story, whatever comes up. You just have to keep talking until I ring the bell (45 seconds). Then you will switch and the person that was listening will then share.

Instructor asks if there are questions and then asks one person in the pair to raise their hand. This person will LISTEN first. If there are no questions then instructor will say the first word:

1. Volunteering

After the first person talks for 45 seconds, you will ring the bell and then the listener will talk about the same word (volunteering). After each partner in the pair has gone, the instructor will ask the group for some of what they heard and write this on the board or on a flip chart.

Instructor says: *So what were some of the words/ideas you heard in connection to the term "Volunteering?"*

Get five to 10 ideas up on the board and then you will move to the next word (you'll process what the students said later—not now).

Instructor says: *Great, now I'd like you to switch partners—find someone new—again, someone you don't know. You are going to do the same thing in this pair as well but with a new word (ask for a volunteer to raise their hand in the pair). The word you will discuss this time is:*

2. Service-Learning

After the first person talks for 45 seconds, you will ring the bell and then the listener will talk about the same word (service-learning). After each partner in the pair has gone, the instructor will ask the group for some of what they heard and write this on the board or on a flip chart.

Instructor says: *So what were some of the words/ideas you heard this time in connection to the term "Service-Learning?"*

Get five to 10 ideas up on the board and then you will move to the next word (you'll process what the students said later—not now).

Instructor says: *Thank you, now I'd like you to switch partners ONE LAST TIME—find someone new—again, someone you don't know. You are going to do the same thing in this pair as well but with one last word (ask*

for a volunteer to raise their hand in the pair). *The word you will discuss this time is:*

3. Discipline-specific word

NOTE: This is a good time to choose a word specific to your discipline and make connections to your field/their coursework/service-learning. In some ways this also serves as a vehicle for early assessment to understand how students view your field and how they see the connection at the start of the semester.

You will process this word in the same way you did the first two words.

Instructor says: *So what were some of the words/ideas you heard this time in connection to the term*
“_____?”

Get five to 10 ideas up on the board. Now you will have 3 words to discuss.

Instructor Questions:

What do you notice about the words / ideas for each word?

Are there similarities or differences you notice?

How are volunteering/ service-learning similar? Different?

How does (Discipline) fit into this discussion?

NOTE: This is an opportunity for you to see where students are coming from and make any points you need to make about how your field and your class connect to the work of the community and why you have chosen to teach a service-learning course.

Review of Handouts (30 minutes)

(15 minutes) Pass out the handout: **Service-Learning in the Classroom: Student’s Frequently Asked Questions**. You may have asked students to read this already and so they may just have questions for you to field. You could fill up 30 minutes easily with students’ questions, so try to be clear about how much time you want to use for this. Also, review the handout and decide if there are specific items that are critical for you to review. For example, you may want to discuss how you will grade the service-learning component of the course.

(10 minutes) Pass out the handout: **Service-Learning Student Responsibilities**. This form is worth reading aloud word for word to make sure the expectations for their service are explicit. After reviewing, make sure you have time for questions. Students will turn give this back to the instructor by the end of this class.

(Five minutes) Pass out the handouts: **Service-Learning Agreement**. This form is for students to sign with their community partner (their supervisor) and will be given back to the instructor (usually by the third week of the semester). Make sure students know where to find this online (APPLES website) as well. You don’t need to discuss this in great detail as it’s a form that involves setting their work responsibilities with the agency

Note: You may also want to review the **student log sheet** (tracks hours of service) as a reminder that students will be expected to keep track of their hours. This is a form signed by students and an agency representative. As an instructor you may want to have this turned in mid-semester (to make sure students are doing the work) and at the end of the semester.

Lesson Plan: Understanding Hidden Racial Assumptions/Perceptions

Class Title

Understanding/Uncovering Hidden Racial Assumptions

When to Use This Lesson Plan/Tips for Use

This lesson can be used to help students uncover hidden assumptions about race (or other identity groups) using the Implicit Association Test (IAT)

Estimated Lesson Time

One 50-minute session

Materials Needed for Lesson

Ideally students would complete the IAT in a computer lab or personal laptops in a classroom.

Handouts Needed

None.

Learning Objectives:

Students Will:

- Explore the topics of subtle racism and implicit attitudes in a hands-on way that allows students to assess whether they have hidden racial biases.
- Understand how hidden biases might impact their service-learning experience and their engagement with the community.

Session Outline

(Five to 10 minutes) You may want to start with a brainstorm about how students see subtle racism and implicit attitudes about race in popular culture. Explain that one of the most popular implicit measures -- the Implicit Association Test (IAT) -- works to detect unconscious biases.

Here is an explanation of the IAT from *Understanding Prejudice and Discrimination*:

The IAT is a computer-based test that measures how rapidly people are able to categorize various words and images, and it capitalizes on the fact that most of us identify words and images more rapidly when they come from closely related categories than when they come from unrelated categories. For instance, if you associate librarians with intelligence and boxers with violence, you can probably tell in a split-second that synonyms for intelligence like smart and brainy relate to the dual category "librarians or intelligence," and synonyms for violence like aggression and hostility relate to the dual category "boxers or violence."

But what if we switch the elements around, and you are asked whether smart and brainy relate to the dual category "librarians or violence" or to the dual category "boxers or intelligence"? In this case it will probably take you longer to match smart and brainy with the

category containing "intelligence," because these dual categories contain elements that are not stereotypically related to each other. Thus, by comparing the speed with which people categorize words or images, the IAT indirectly assesses how closely people associate certain elements with each other. To examine racial stereotypes, for example, the test might replace librarians and boxers with Whites and Blacks. With this version of the IAT, faster responses to "Whites or intelligence" and "Blacks or violence" (compared with "Whites or violence" and "Blacks or intelligence") could indicate the presence of an implicit stereotype.

Activity

(Five minutes) Students will then take the race IAT in class. You may choose another identity category as well (i.e., sexual orientation or gender).

(10 minutes) Afterwards, have students work in pairs and small groups to discuss the following:

- What were your IAT results?
- Do you believe your results were accurate? Why or why not?
- What was your reaction when you learned your results?
- Regardless of the IAT, do you think that you have hidden racial biases? What is your evidence?
- In your opinion, how common are hidden racial biases, and how important are they compared with other more explicit racial biases?

NOTE:

Instead of sharing in small groups, you may want students to reflect individually through writing or you may choose to go into a large group discussion.

(15 minutes) Suggested discussion questions for large group:

- How might hidden biases and assumptions impact your community service work?
- Are there any hidden biases that you think may impact the community's perception of you (when you think about the community your service-learning site serves)?
- Why is it important to understand our "hidden" assumptions?

(Five minutes) Closing—Make connections to students' responses and the impact it may have on the service aspect of the course.

Keep In Mind:

Because the IAT may reveal information that students do not want to know about themselves, instructors may need to prepare for discomfort and be capable of facilitating a discussion around the results. This may not be the best activity early in the semester before students have a chance to know one another and develop increased comfort with their peers and the instructor.

Source: This lesson plan was modified from Understanding Privilege. Link at:
<http://www.understandingprejudice.org/teach/assign/iatrace.htm>

Teaching about Whiteness

Why teach about whiteness?

- White people need to take responsibility for race, since they invented the idea in the first place (at least in its modern sense). The question of race should not just be raised when studying "people of color" (or during Black History Month).
- Studying whiteness means studying institutional racism, especially practices that create "white privilege." Since white privilege is systemic and not personal, this approach can combat the tendency to get stuck in the "white guilt" syndrome (which involves both confessions and denials).
- Studying whiteness can change the dynamic of any classroom, whatever its ethno-racial makeup, by moving the conversation from personal attitudes (and guilt) to the objective analysis of historical events, legal codes, social institutions, and cultural practices.
- Silence about whiteness lets everyone continue to harbor prejudices and misconceptions, beginning with the notion that "white" equals normal. Whiteness oppresses when it operates as the invisible regime of normality, and thus making whiteness visible is a principal goal of anti-racist pedagogy.
- Whiteness has been a significant legal and political category, and thus a powerful reality even if it is based on a fantasy. Whiteness is a way of distributing wealth and power according to arbitrary notions of biological difference.
- Whiteness has been a significant aesthetic and cultural value (or symbol or commodity), and thus requires a defamiliarizing or deconstructive interpretation.
- Teaching about whiteness helps move classes beyond the "celebrate diversity" model of multiculturalism.
- Teaching about whiteness moves antiracist education in new directions by presenting difficult challenges to the very idea of "race."

Approaches to whiteness, questions to ask:

- Always historicize: who invented white people? when was the term first used as a racial category? in Europe? in the United States? Who was included? Has the list of the included ethnicities changed since then? Why?
- When does "white" enter into usage as a legal term in laws, statutes, court decisions, etc. in the United States? What are some significant milestones in the legal history of whiteness?
- Who are "Caucasians"? When was the word first used as a racial category? What associations or meanings does it imply? Are "Caucasian" and "white" the same thing? What about "Aryan"?
- Is "white" a term for a racial group or a cultural group? Is there any such thing as "white" culture? Are all its practitioners of the same skin color?
- Is "white" a "pan ethnic" category along the lines of "Asian American" or "African American" or "American Indian"? Or should we speak of "European Americans," even though not all of them are "white"?
- If "white" is not a coherent cultural or ethnic category, what kind of category is it? Social? Economic? Political? National?
- Can "white" be used as a group name without invoking connotations of white supremacy? Or are whiteness and white supremacy fundamentally linked?

Exercises, Activities, Projects, Inquiries:

- Consciousness raising: Begin with Peggy McIntosh's essay on "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack." Read other deconstructions of whiteness in David Roediger's anthology *Black on White* to establish the long history of African American theorizing about whiteness. Sample contemporary white writers on whiteness.
- Screen the video [Blue Eyed](#), which records a whiteness workshop for teachers run by Jane Elliott, inventor of the famous brown eyed/blue eyed classroom experiment. Also recommended is white filmmaker Macky Alston's PBS documentary *Family Name*, in which he seeks out the extended black family of Alstons and explores his relation to the color line.
- Keyword exercises: have students collect the entries on "race," "white," "Caucasian," "Aryan," "black," and "Negro" (for example) from at least two dictionaries and two encyclopedias. Compare the results, and ask students to now try writing their own definitions of some of these terms. Or have them use an interview technique, in which they record definitions of these terms gathered by interviewing other students, family members, teachers, librarians, etc.
- Historical research: have students find uses of the word "white" and "black" (or "colored" or "Negro") in legal or political documents, such as acts of Congress, Supreme Court rulings, state and local statutes, etc. Discuss "whiteness" as a legal category (or legal fiction). Investigate the laws on interracial sex and "miscegenation" (see the anthology *Interracialism*, ed. Werner Sollers).
- Life analysis (based on the questions in McIntosh's essay): have students make a list of ten things they normally do during the week. Then have them imagine that they woke up one day to find that their "race" had changed to [fill in the blank]. Going through their lists, students should analyze how each thing might be different for them were their "race" different. Would they be able to go to such places, talk to such people, enjoy such events, etc.? Would they feel comfortable doing so? What would be the chances that people of that race would be found doing these things in these places in these ways? What other things might they be doing instead? What real differences, in other words, does "race" make each day in our lives.
- Cultural Identity paper: This assignment challenges students to examine their identity in terms of culture, race, and ethnicity. Typically, white students have tremendous problems with this assignment at first, since they have unconsciously coded "culture" as something that only "people of color" have. "I don't have a culture, I'm just white, just an American" is a fairly standard first response. By exploring their own race and ethnicity, and by thinking critically about the notions of culture and identity, students gain both a vocabulary and a method for taking on the larger issues raised by multiculturalism and whiteness studies. (For an account of this assignment see Gregory Jay, *American Literature and the Culture Wars*, chapter three, "Taking Multiculturalism Personally.")
- Media analysis (read excerpts from Richard Dyer's book *White*): look for images of whiteness in the media. What kinds and types of whiteness appear most often? Are there different classes of white people? If so, how are they represented differently by the media? How long can one watch television or read a newspaper or magazine without encountering anything but white people, or mostly white people? Have students bring in copies of major newspapers and magazines and analyze the distribution of images of whiteness and blackness. Make a list of the top grossing films of the last five years and consider whether their characters and presumed audience show a bias toward whiteness. Consider screening such films as *King Kong*, *The Jazz Singer*, *Pinky* or *Imitation of Life* (1934; remade 1959).
- Literary analysis: read portions of Toni Morrison's [Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination](#). Using texts by white authors, analyze the way whiteness gets constructed

through comparisons to a dark or black "other." Debate whether or not schools should offer courses with names such as "Major White American Authors" or "The White Tradition in American Literature." Compare texts by white and black authors to analyze what difference whiteness makes (for example, compare Franklin's Autobiography with Douglass's Narrative, or the poems of Langston Hughes with those of Robert Frost, or the stories of Alice Walker with those of William Faulkner). Have students rewrite particular stories or passages by changing the race of the narrator or main character. (For a substantial overview, assign Valerie Babb's book *Making Whiteness Visible: The Meaning of Whiteness in American Literature and Culture*).

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Activities and Resources to Address Power, Privilege and Inequality

This list of activities and resources is provided as a starting point for faculty who are interested in beginning dialogues around power and inequality. We encourage you to “pick and choose” and to modify activities to suit your particular curricula goals. *Also, this list is a work in progress, please feel free to let the APPLES office know if you have additional resources/ activities you have found useful in your teaching.*

General

- UnderstandingPrejudice.org is a web site for students, teachers and others interested in the causes and consequences of prejudice. You will find on this website more than 2,000 links to prejudice-related resources, as well as searchable databases with hundreds of prejudice researchers and social justice organizations.
<http://www.understandingprejudice.org/teach/highact.htm>
- Diversity Web - a project of the Association of American Colleges and Universities, the Web site includes archived issues of Diversity Digest and comprehensive information on a wide range of campus practices and diversity resources. www.diversityweb.org
- Created by the nonprofit organization Diversity Works, The Source is an “online sortable database of diversity, anti-oppression, and community-building activities.” Users can search for activities of varying lengths and for various audiences. Topics are organized by “isms” and themes (such as identity, ally work, and privilege), and users can access a wide range of resources fitting pedagogical contexts from icebreakers to teambuilding activities to writing exercises. This resource is available at <http://thesource.diversityworks.org/>
- Diversity Matters offers a large selection of free downloadable podcasts on a broad range of topics related to diversity and inclusion. Sign up to receive weekly updates to stay informed of upcoming guests and topics. Use these pod casts as discussion tools to stimulate important dialog and learning within your team. www.diversitymatters.info/podcast.html
- This site produced by a class at Ball State University which includes a variety of exercises you can use in or out of class on prejudice, stereotyping and bullying.
<http://www.bsu.edu/learningfromhate/teaching.htm>
- The ideas of faculty who have participated in the Teaching and Learning Series on Diversity at the University of Colorado-Boulder are drawn together here in a collection of short essays framing "teaching tips" with a preface and a short bibliography composed by a distinguished faculty member.

Approaches to Teaching around Inclusion

- For a history of inclusive approaches to teaching and learning, review [Diversity Work in Higher Education](#), a series of notes and exercises adapted from Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice (Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell and Pat Griffin, ed. Routledge 1997).
- This resource addresses what to do when conversations around religion, politics, race, class, gender, etc. become heated in the classroom. "Handling Hot Moments in the Classroom" by Lee Warren of Harvard University's Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, offers strategies for turning difficult encounters into learning opportunities.
<http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/html/icb.topic58474/hotmoments.html>
- This University of Washington Web site developed by the Center for Instructional Development and Research, offers resources via pull down menus that allow teachers to explore key questions related to inclusive teaching strategies.
<http://depts.washington.edu/cidrweb/inclusive/>

Class/Economic Inequality

- For stories and tips on cross-class alliance building, go to www.ClassMatters.org created by Betsy Leondar-Wright, Communications Director at United for a Fair Economy, and author of the book *Class Matters: Cross-Class Alliance Building for Middle-Class Activists* (New Society Publishers, 2005).
- **The New York Times Special Edition: Class Matters.** The “Class Matters” site has articles, videos, and slideshows on topics such as marriage, health, religion, education, and immigration viewed through the lens of class. Some of the interactive parts of the site allow people to rhetorically-situate themselves in society based on levels of education, income, occupation, and wealth. <http://www.nytimes.com/pages/national/class/>
- **People Like Us: Social Class in America (PBS documentary series).** “People Like Us” shows how social class plays out in the U.S., whether they live in Park Avenue penthouses, Appalachian trailer parks, bayou houseboats or suburban gated communities. The “background,” “the film,” “games,” “stories,” “resources,” and “talk back” pages include valuable resources on social class in America. <http://www.pbs.org/peoplelikeus/>
- **Cornell’s Center for the Study of Inequality** offers an interactive online inequality quiz: <http://inequality.cornell.edu/>
- **United for a Fair Economy (UFE)**
 “United for a Fair Economy is a national, independent, nonpartisan, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. UFE raises awareness that concentrated wealth and power undermine the economy, corrupt democracy, deepen the racial divide, and tear communities apart. We support and help build social movements for greater equality.”
<http://www.faireconomy.org/>

Race

- **Race the Power of An Illusion.** This online resource is a companion to the 3-part documentary of the same name produced by California Newsreel. It provides a look at race in historical, scientific and social contexts. [Race: The Power of An Illusion](#)
- **What is Race?** - Here are a few interactive online activities designed to test one's knowledge about race. For example, you can try out "Sorting People," in which you can see if you can tell somebody's race by looking at them.
- **What’s Race Got To Do With It?** A series of “engagement” activities divided into “low risk” or “high risk” based on the level of readiness of your students. The toolbox also **contains** essential tools and background information for educators. Visit the [For Facilitators](#) section of this site for tips and information on how to use What's Race Got to Do with It? to spark dialogue and foster change. Visit the [Resources](#) section for links to more information on issues raised by the film. <http://www.whatsrace.org/pages/games>

Sexual Orientation

- For ready-to-use handouts, exercises, activities and lesson plans related to Sexual Orientation, the [Western Illinois University Committee on Sexual Orientation](#) provides the richest and best organized page for faculty. In addition to resources housed on this library page (providing how to, why to, and ready to use exercises), make use of the box on the right side of the page to explore more on "Being an Ally" or "For Faculty: Curriculum and Teaching Issues."