Civic Education in Sociology through Service Learning and Action Research

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Throughout the semester we will be taking a look at how to achieve a sense of sociological mindfulness. The service project is one way of learning about sociological mindfulness through experience. The service learning experience has several objectives that should help you apply sociological mindfulness to your life. First, it will expose you to a larger community; preferably one that will stretch your comfort zone. Second, it will help you gain insight to several of the themes discussed throughout this course (gender, race, ethnicity, age, social class, etc.) Finally, you will gain a stronger understanding of the impact that service learning can provide to you and the community at large. In Michael Schwalbe's "The Sociologically Examined Life," he states, "What we do as individuals might not seem to have much effect on the world often our acts of resistance seem to go unnoticed, but it is through small acts that the world is remade."

As a sociology student it is your responsibility to ask yourself the same question that Schwalbe often asks, "What kind of mark do you want to leave?"

"Being caught up in our daily concerns, we often fail to see and appreciate all of our connections to others—those who make our clothes, grow our food, clean up our messes, pay for the schools we use, use the schools we pay for, benefit or suffer from actions by politicians we elect, look to us as examples, and so on. Sociological mindfulness helps us see these threads of social life and how they sustain and obligate us. The main benefit of this awareness is that it can make us more responsible members of a human community."

PROJECT ASSIGNMENT:
This assignment requires a minimum of 10 HOURS of volunteer work through the semester. This volunteer work will take the place of the traditional semester exam and research project. The hours should not be shared with Political Thought or NHS. We want you to have a service experience that takes you out of your comfort zone. Try to work with a group you normally don't have a chance to interact with. You can volunteer at homeless shelters, goodwill stores, food pantries, special needs schools/service centers, senior citizen homes, G.I.V.E. events, Special Olympics, P.A.D.S., political organizations.

Some of the places where students had positive experiences have been:

P.A.D.S. (various)
Wings (Palatine)
Feed My Starving Children (Libertyville, Schaumburg)
Bernie’s Bookbank (Lake Forest)
Uptown Café (Uptown, Chicago)
St Thomas soup kitchen (Chicago-Uptown)
Best Buddies (G.I.V.E.)
Shriners (G.I.V.E.)
Special Olympics
TOV (JUF)

These experiences may count for hours, but ONLY 4 TOTAL hours:

Peer helpers
Giveathon
Project dance
Snowball
Charity walks/5ks
Project dance
Anything that just involves SHS students;
Class board, etc...

The project has 3 steps:

Step 1: Locate a volunteer opportunity. Due by the first progress report.

Some recommendations for step one: Start now and allow a bit of time to find what you want. Be understanding, polite and positive. Try to get a hold of a live person. Be persistent; You may have to call or email several times to get a hold of someone. DO NOT say "I have to do this for class" or "This is an assignment," you may be confused with someone who has court-ordered service and the organization will think that you don't really want to do it. Instead say "I heard about this from a friend/teacher and I WANT to do it."

Step 2: Serve the hours. Step 2 must be posted within 1 week of when you serve the hours. All hours must be finished by the last progress report of the semester.

Be professional and responsible. Also, be polite and patient. Show up on time. Dress appropriately. Within one week that you serve some hours, post on your blog about the experience. Your post should prove that you did the hours as well as be a reminder of what the experience was about. The details you write about in the post will help you at the end of the semester when you write the final paper (step3). Here is what you should include in your post:
Name of organization you volunteered at? Where was your experience (address)? Date(s) and time(s) of experience? Supervisor or person in charge and phone/email address? Journal about the actual experience. Things to record: How did you feel about the service before going? What were your expectations? Were there aspects that you were apprehensive about? Where did you have to go for the service? Had you been there before? If not, what was it like going to this place? Who were the people you came into contact with? What were they like? What was the interaction like? What was the actual job you did? What was it like? Was there anything that surprised you? What were you thinking as you did it? How long did your tasks last? What did you think as you went home?

Step 3: Final Paper. Due the second to last Friday of the semester.

"You must be the change you wish to see in the world" –Mahatma Gandhi-
Sociology
Service Experience
Step 1: Proposal
Find a place to volunteer

Your Name: ___________________________ Period: _____ Date: __________

Your Plan For A Service Experience: contact a service organization:

1. What organization did you inquire to?

   Name: ___________________________

   Location: _________________________

   __________________________

   Estimated # of Hours you will serve here: ________________

2. Who did you contact at this organization? (Name, position, email and/or phone)

   ______________________________

Locating a volunteer opportunity.
Your first task is to seek out placement in some volunteer position. You may find it necessary to seek more than one position to complete your 10 HOURS. The work you do must be voluntary, paid positions will not be included in your required hours. Furthermore, your work should not consist of doing a favor to a friend or coworker (i.e. volunteering in a clothing store) you should however choose a placement from a recognized organization that offers volunteer work for a community. The organization does not have to be purely charitable. For example you can volunteer at community centers or senior citizen homes.

   A. Ask your parents if they have any ideas about volunteer opportunities. Check with your church, temple, village hall, township office. Ideas: -

   __________________________________________

   __________________________________________

   __________________________________________

   B. Check with Ugive. Look for upcoming opportunities that you might be interested in.

   __________________________________________

   __________________________________________

   __________________________________________

   C. Check the list of opportunities on my website. Which opportunities look interesting to you?
Before, during and after you have a service experience, try to be mindful of these questions: Things to record: How did you feel about the service before going? What were your expectations? Were there aspects that you were apprehensive about? Where did you have to go for the service? Had you been there before? If not, what was it like going to this place? Who were the people you came into contact with? What were they like? What was the interaction like? What was the actual job you did? What was it like? Was there anything that surprised you? What were you thinking as you did it? How long did your tasks last? What did you think as you went home? **Also include:** Name of organization you volunteered? Where was your experience (address)? Date(s) and time(s) of experience? Supervisor or person in charge and phone/email address?

After each service experience, you should write your observations down. These observations will be posted to your blog (in addition to your usual weekly posts). This should help you to remember the details about your experiences so that later in the semester you will be able to write a sociological reflection about your experiences. This also provides evidence of your participation in the service experience. Post about your experience within 1 WEEK after you do the service.
Sociology
Final Paper – Community Service Reflection

After completing your service hours, you must reflect on your community service experiences. The paper should meet the standards of the class:

**Literacy** – Please relate your experiences to a variety of different sources (readings, videos, websites, images) from the semester. Thoroughly explain the connection between the source and your service experience. Try to be specific about what aspect of the service related to the source. Your grade will be based on the following scale:

4- Student *thoroughly* connects a *variety* of sources from personal research or experience to community service experiences *in a detailed and specific way*.
3- Student *thoroughly* connects a *variety* of sources from throughout the semester to community service experiences *in a detailed and specific way*.
2- Student connects source from throughout the semester either lacking in variety, thoroughness or detail.
1- Student fails to connect sources from throughout the semester and is lacking in variety, thoroughness or detail.

**Sociological Content** – Please connect your service experience(s) to the sociological concepts and terms we have used this year. Please see the attached appendix for some suggestions of how to connect service experiences to sociology.
4- Student is able to connect multiple sociological concepts from different units in a meaningful and accurate way. The connection is explained with irrefutable conviction.
3- Students is able to connect either multiple sociological concepts in a meaningful and accurate way with irrefutable conviction. Or, the student is able to connect multiple concepts from various units but might lack some conviction, or leaving some meaning unclear.
2- Student is able to connect a concept in a way that is either accurate or meaningful.
1- Student is unable to make connections that are accurate, meaningful.

**Academic Expectations** – Please write the reflection with proper prose, grammar, spelling and format. Use .5-1.5 inch margins, 10-12 font, and double spacing. Turn it in on time.

4- Student is able to do all of these.
3- Student misses one of these.
2- Student has 2 or 3 mistakes or is late.
1- Student has more than 3 mistakes or is late and has other mistakes.

Appendix A – Connecting to Sociology

*Culture:*
Identify unique elements in your service experience, such as: material culture, norms, values and sanctions. Consider how these cultural elements aid in the functioning of the organization and how they contrast with mainstream elements of culture.

Socialization:
Analyze the modes of interaction that you engaged in during your service. Where there differences in the way that you acted towards the clients versus other volunteers versus members of the organization? Did you see any processes of socialization occurring with yourself or with the clients that you were working with?

Deviance:
Reflect on the whether the organization or clientele of the organization where you were volunteering bears any stigma from the larger community. Often times, community-service organizations have the primary goal of aiding individuals who carry a deviant identity. Whether it is poverty, substance abuse, illness, age, disability, etc. Observe how the clients manage their stigmatized identities. How do the workers at the organization treat the clients? Do the clients manage or reject the label of deviant? How does the work of the organization help change societal perceptions of the stigmatized?

Social Class:
What role does class inequality play in their organization? How is the organization funded? How do community service organizations in general generate enough interest for people to volunteer their time and donate their money to help others? How does charity fit into the American Dream ideology? Do you believe that most Americans are willing to sacrifice some of their own wealth to help those in need? Why? Why not?

Race/Ethnicity:
Reflect on the racial and ethnic dynamic of their organization. Is there a difference between the racial or ethnic composition of the staff, the volunteers, and the clientele? Did your experiences of the racial or ethnic composition at the organization parallel your everyday experiences? Have you gained any insight into a particular group? Explain.
GROUNDING SERVICE LEARNING IN SOCIAL THEORY*

This paper grounds the practice of service learning in a sociological understanding so that we may more fruitfully tie this pedagogy to our field. A base for such grounding can be found in the work of C. Wright Mills, who built on the work of John Dewey. We argue that incorporating sociologically informed service learning into the curriculum is necessary for completing the progressive educational and social reforms sought by both, thus enabling us to fulfill Mills' "promise" for our discipline (Mills 1959). On the other hand, a sociologically uninformed service-learning experience may hinder, rather than help, the movement toward a just society because students may objectify community residents and blame them for their problems. Thus, we present potential problems associated with service-learning and argue for the concept of addressing key sociological insights prior to immersing students into a program of service-learning.

ROBERT J. HIRONIMUS-WENDT
Millikin University

LARRY LOVELL-TROY
Millikin University

Service learning has become the "pedagogy of the 1990s" across many U.S. campuses. Although the implementation of service learning as an educational pedagogy has grown steadily throughout the 1990s, we contend that there has been little effort to date to support this practice with the insights from sociological theory. We ground the practice of service learning in the rich theoretical traditions of sociology so as to (1) more fruitfully tie this pedagogy to our field, (2) offer insights to sociologists less familiar with the "promise" of this pedagogy, and (3) help practitioners outside sociology better understand its potential. We argue a base for such grounding can be found in the work of C. Wright Mills, who himself built on the work of John Dewey. Although neither Mills nor Dewey specifically called for service learning, much can be developed from their work to support service-learning in sociology.

We begin by introducing the reader to service learning as both an applied form of sociological practice and an educational pedagogy and by reviewing the recent research into its effectiveness. We next review the works of Dewey and Mills and indicate how their educational and social philosophies serve as springboards to this pedagogy. We argue that their failures to immerse students directly into the community limited the degree to which their social visions could be achieved. On the other hand, we believe the higher-order goals of service learning (e.g., enhancing civic responsibility, community activism, enhanced academic learning, etc.)

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Editor's note: The reviewers were, in alphabetical order, Winifred Poster, Rik Scarce, and Linda Schelble.
FOOD, HUNGER, AND POVERTY: A THEMATIC APPROACH TO INTEGRATING SERVICE LEARNING*

Service learning, the integration of community service and curricular content, is being embraced by sociologists in a variety of teaching settings. One of the primary challenges of service-learning pedagogy is incorporating the community-based experience into the curriculum. This article will center on my strategy for meeting this challenge. My Introduction to Sociology course employs a thematic approach in order to create a fully integrated experiential learning experience. I have used this highly adaptable approach successfully in two types of institutional settings. This article will describe the institutional contexts, course content and objectives, service-learning component, use of themes for integrating service and curriculum, and student outcomes. In addition, I will explore the potential pitfalls of this approach and suggest strategies for avoiding them.

HEATHER SULLIVAN-CATLIN
SUNY Potsdam

Service learning, the integration of community service and curricular content, is being embraced by sociologists in a variety of teaching settings. The use of this pedagogy has been shared, assessed, and encouraged in a variety of recent books (e.g., Eyer and Giles 1999; Ostrow, Hesser, and Enos 1999), special issues of journals (e.g., Teaching Sociology 1998), an ASA resource manual (Ender et al. 1996), and numerous articles (e.g., Ender et al. 2000; Hironimus-Wendt and Lovell-Troy 1999; Kendrick 1996; Roberts, Mason, and Marler 1999). "Sociology seems ripe for service-learning," explains Howery, in that "we are a field that emphasizes a mode of thinking as much as a body of content" (1999:151). Experiential learning activities like service learning are ideal for developing the "sociological imagination" and conveying substantive content (methods, theories, concepts, etc.) (Wright 2000).

One of the primary challenges of service-learning pedagogy is incorporating community-based experience into the curriculum. This article will center on my strategy for meeting this challenge. I take a thematic approach (the use of two unifying themes) to my Introduction to Sociology course in order to create a fully-integrated learning experience. The use of themes to organize course curricula is a technique often used in primary, secondary, and higher education classrooms. Thematic approaches are effectively applied across the disciplines including the humanities (e.g., Cross 1999; Italiano and Marchegiani Jones 1996; Viti 2000), the natural sciences (e.g., Lung 1999), and the social sciences (e.g., Sternberg and Pardo 1998; Wilson and McLauchlan 1997). For example, Mjakjik and Cantu (1999) offer an approach to teaching the Gilded Age historical period utilizing such themes as urbanization, industrialization, and westward expansion.

Noted strengths of the thematic approach include "unifying the disparate material of a wide-ranging course" (Sternberg and Pardo 1998:293), making the subject matter relevant (Connor 1998; Lung 1999), integrating course units (Lung 1999), and organizing the

*Please address all correspondence to the author at the Department of Sociology, SUNY Potsdam, Potsdam, NY 13676; e-mail: sullivan@potsdam.edu

Editor's note: The reviewers were, in alphabetical order, Janet Bogdan, Morten Ender, and Mary Wright.

CAPTURING THE EXPERIENCE: TRANSFORMING COMMUNITY SERVICE INTO SERVICE LEARNING

Using a quasi-experimental design, this case study outlines the author’s application of specific techniques necessary to implement a service learning component in an introductory sociology class. It also systematically compares the outcomes from two groups of students, one of which was involved in relatively unstructured community work and the other in a structured service learning assignment and examines the benefits experienced from this transformation. Although adding the structure necessary to accomplish effective service learning involved careful preliminary reflection, planning, and coordination, the study suggests that the service learning approach enhances students’ development of a sociological orientation and understanding of structural linkages to poverty. It also indicates that students involved in structured service learning may better master course materials than students involved in less-structured community work, as measured by objective examination. Finally, the study supports earlier claims reported in the literature that service learning might be a particularly effective way of improving the efficacy of introductory sociology courses.

SHIRLEY A. HOLLIS
Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne

There is ample evidence to confirm that sociology instructors have joined the ranks of other university faculty in incorporating service learning into their course content. However, it is also clear that instructors use the concept of “service learning” to refer to a wide range of student activities including not only structured learning but community service, volunteer work, and internships. This is supported by observations made by researchers at the National Service Learning Clearinghouse who have concluded that “service learning means different things to different people” (Belbas, Gorak, and Shumer 1993). This finding causes concern because often, as Burns (1998:38) suggests, “individuals and/or organizations...commit their time and energy to a worthy cause without engaging in a structured learning process.”

The lack of consensus regarding service learning is combined with a relative paucity of evidence that might show what actually works and does not work between different service-learning models. Despite the popularity of service learning, the many guidelines that exist for organizing service-learning projects, and an impressive number of anecdotal accounts of successful applications of service learning within the sociology curriculum, relatively few comparative studies examine the organization of particular service-learning models and their effects on undergraduate students’ mastery of principles of sociology. The current study seeks to

*S I would like to express my appreciation to Robert Wendt and two anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments and suggestions. I would also like to thank the staff and students at Emerald Youth Foundation in Knoxville, Tennessee, for hosting the service learning students profiled in this study. Please address all correspondence to the author at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne, 2101 East Coliseum Boulevard, CM229, Fort Wayne, IN 46805-1499; e-mail: HollisS@ipfw.edu

Editor’s note: The reviewers were, in alphabetical order, Dick Cone, Tim Knapp, and Brenda Kowalewski.

UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL INEQUALITY THROUGH SERVICE LEARNING*

KEVIN D. EVERETT
Radford University

I AM PERENNIALLY CONCERNED with having my students link the subject matter of sociological approaches to social inequality with the lived reality of the less-privileged members of our society. By making this link, I believe students will come to see the applicability of the sociological perspective to their own experiences. One of the challenges in making this connection is getting students to critically analyze, clarify, and rectify for themselves the stereotypes people hold about the less fortunate. I have sought to achieve these aims by integrating service learning into my courses on social inequality.

Service learning is one type of experiential education that helps students link their academic study of sociology to life experiences through active learning. It is a pedagogical approach that views learning as a continuous, dialectical process grounded in experience, and it emphasizes "learning by doing" (Kolb 1984; also Dewey 1938). Examples of experiential education include internships, field studies, and preprofessional training such as student teaching (Keeton and Tate 1978; Lewis and Williams 1994; also De-

Martini 1983). Its emphasis on reflection and reciprocity between those "serving" and those "being served" distinguishes service learning from other forms of experiential education (Jacoby and Associates 1996; Kendall 1990). Service learning uses intentionally structured opportunities to engage students in activities that address community needs in order to promote student learning and development (Jacoby and Associates 1996).

The process of service learning aims to enhance student learning by linking course-specific content to a service experience that meets actual community needs (Giles and Eyler 1994a; Hondagneu-Sotelo and Raskoff 1994; Honnet and Poulsen 1989; Morton and Troppe 1996; Parker-Gwin 1996; Sheckley and Keeton 1997). Service learning is not simply volunteering (see for instance Furco 1996). Many people volunteer in their communities without critically examining their beliefs or the structural causes of the need for such services to even exist. Simply "doing" is not sufficient for learning to occur (Kolb 1984; Schon 1983, 1987). Experience is transformed, learning occurs, and Bloom's (1956) cognitive objectives of analytic, synthetic, and evaluative (critical) learning are met when the service experience is integrated holistically with the readings, class discussions, written assignments, presentation of conceptual and theoretical subject matter of the course, and opportunities for reflection.

Assessment research into the effects of service learning on students' development almost uniformly reports positive results (Wutzdorff and Giles 1997; also Kraft 1996). The research states that students perform closer to their potential and learn to apply course concepts to new situations (Cohen and Kinsey 1994; Markus, Howard,
BRINGING HOME DIVERSITY: A SERVICE-LEARNING APPROACH TO TEACHING RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS*

In this article, I test claims about students' development and sociological learning by comparing two classes of students enrolled in a Race and Ethnic Relations course—one section that took the course as a service-learning course and another that took it as a lecture-discussion course with some required experiential exercises. Change in students' development over the course of the semester is examined in the areas of citizenship, empowerment, diversity awareness, leadership, moral development, and rejection of individualistic explanations of social problems. Based on results from changes in survey responses, service-learning pedagogy appears to have an advantage over experiential learning with respect to students' development in these six areas.

Students enrolled in the service-learning section of Race and Ethnic Relations engaged in service-learning projects by either: (1) working as an intern at an appropriate site; (2) working on a group project—either working with a Latino agency to survey the community's health care needs, or compiling a curriculum for an educational initiative in a housing project, or testing local financial institutions to determine whether they were discriminating against Hispanics with respect to their fees for money-Wiring services; or (3) working on a large, ongoing violence-prevention project.

SAM MARULLO
Georgetown University

A number of authors assert that service-learning enriches students' learning, not only regarding the content of the course, but also in matters such as diversity, citizenship, empowerment, leadership, and values development (Cohen and Kinsey 1994; Enos 1998; Hedlin 1989; Hesser 1995; Marullo 1996; Miller 1994). However, these claims have been based largely on professors' observations and anecdotal evidence. To skeptics, such claims might not carry much weight. Unfortunately, the field of evaluation research on service-learning is fairly new and quite underdeveloped in terms of empirical studies of students' learning outcomes (for exceptions, see Batchelder and Root 1994; Boss 1994; Miller 1994; and Olney and Grande 1995). In this article, I test claims about students' development and sociological learning by comparing two classes of students enrolled in my Race and Ethnic Relations course. One section took the course as a service-learning course and another took it as a lecture-discussion course with some required experiential exercises. I used a survey instrument, developed by Giles and Eyler (1994), to compare students' responses to a number of questions concerning citizenship, empowerment, diversity awareness, leadership, moral development, and rejection of individualistic explanations of social problems. Through this stringent experimental test of the value of service-learning, the results reported here contribute to the nascent body of research that demonstrates the comparative strengths of service-learning pedagogy.

Over the past 10 years, I have taught 14 sections of Race and Ethnic Relations at

*An earlier version of a portion of this paper was presented at the annual American Sociological Association meeting in Toronto, Ontario, Canada in August 1997. Please address correspondence to the author at The Volunteer and Public Service Center, B-01 St. Mary's Hall, Washington, DC 20057; e-mail: marullo@gunet.georgetown.edu

Editor's note: The reviewers were Kichi Iwamoto, Vaneeta D'Andrea, and Ralph McNeal.
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN SOCIOLOGY:
SERVICE LEARNING AND OTHER
COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING INITIATIVES

Despite increased popularity and a strong pedagogical tradition, the literature on community-based learning (CBL) initiatives and service learning evidences a certain conceptual imprecision. In the hopes of clarifying definitional ambiguities, we critically review the CBL literature, identifying six distinct types of CBL options and their characteristics. The result is a hierarchy of community-based learning, which while not proposed as a definitive conceptualization, is likely to be useful in terms of curricular development. Using a hypothetical sociology class, the community-based learning options identified (i.e., out-of-class activities, volunteering, service add-ons, internships, service learning, and service learning advocacy) are discussed in terms of their pedagogical differences and associated curricular benefits.

LINDA A. MOONEY
East Carolina University

Bob Edwards
East Carolina University

BACKGROUND

In recent years there has been increased interest in student volunteering and, more specifically, service learning (Chapin 1998; Hinck and Brandell 2000; Shumer and Cook 1999; Ward and Wolf-Wendel 2000). Service learning is an evolving pedagogy that incorporates student volunteering into the dynamics of experiential learning and the rigors and structure of an academic curriculum. In its simplest form, service learning entails student volunteering in the community for academic credit. It is not a new concept. As early as 1902, John Dewey extolled the values of a “progressive education”—an education where thought and action come together in classroom and real life settings (Dewey 1938).

While not immediately embraced as a philosophy, Dewey’s principles resurfaced in practice in the 1960s, popularized by such national service programs as VISTA and the Peace Corps. Student activism, and with it volunteering, waned in the 1970s and early 1980s (Shumer and Cook 1999), but by the

*Please address all correspondence to Linda A. Mooney, Department of Sociology, East Carolina University, Greenville, NC 27858; e-mail: MooneyL@mail.ecu.edu

Editor’s note: The reviewers were, in alphabetical order, Kevin D. Everett, Anne Martin, and Rachel R. Parker-Gwin.

1Brooks (1997:3) notes that sociology also fell victim to the temporary loss of a volunteer ethic:

*In sociology the first signs of this change
SERVICE LEARNING AS PEDAGOGY AND CIVIC EDUCATION: COMPARING OUTCOMES FOR THREE MODELS

Two primary goals of service learning for students are positive civic and academic outcomes. Most research has focused on service learning's effectiveness as civic education. In this study, we examine both civic and academic outcomes for 260 students participating in three models of service-learning courses. After one semester, student outcomes were mixed. We consider two pedagogical issues: requiring student participation in service learning and the role of reflection activities in positive outcomes. Faculty members should consider carefully whether to require participation in service learning. Students' academic outcomes may be enhanced by regular critical reflection and extensive integration of service activities with course material throughout the semester. As with any teaching strategy, service learning's value depends on its implementation.

RACHEL PARKER-GWIN
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

J. BETH MABRY
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

In recent years, national and community leaders have promoted volunteer service in the United States. In 1990, Congress passed the National and Community Service Act, and two years later, President Clinton sponsored the National and Community Service Trust Act. In April 1997, former Presidents Ford, Carter, and Bush met with President Clinton in Philadelphia to highlight the importance of volunteer service. In the National Community Service Trust Act, Congress charged the Commission on National and Community Service to develop and promote service-learning programs in colleges and universities nationwide.

Service learning enables students to apply classroom material to community service (Parker-Gwin 1996; Shumer and Belbas 1996). Through partnerships between a college or university and community groups and agencies, students receive course credit for volunteer work and for reflecting in journals, class discussions, papers, or class presentations on how their service relates to course material, their academic discipline, and larger social issues. As a form of experiential learning, service learning allows students to apply what they are learning to "real life" issues and to cultivate a commitment to community service and an understanding of social processes.

Service learning has been incorporated in a variety of courses and disciplines, such as anthropology, environmental science, psychology, education, urban planning, economics, political science, and composition (Batchelder and Root 1994; Herzberg 1994; Kennedy and Mead 1996). At Virginia Tech, service learning has also been used in biology, computer science, mathematics, and physics, as well as the social sciences.

All partners involved can benefit from service learning. Colleges and universities can help meet the economic, social, and cultural needs of their communities and regions (Harkavy 1996). Community organizations and their clients can gain assistance with specific projects (Kennedy and Mead 1996). Faculty members may find that in-

*The authors gratefully acknowledge the helpful comments of Jill Kiecolt, Dale Wimberley, Michael Hughes, the editors of this special edition, and three anonymous reviewers on earlier drafts of this manuscript. Please address all correspondence to Rachel Parker-Gwin at the Department of Sociology, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University; e-mail: rparkerg@vt.edu

Editor's note: The reviewers were David Long, Peter Kaufman, and Jodi O'Brien.
Your homework is to do nothing. That’s right, do absolutely nothing. Be unoccupied and unemployed for 10 minutes and to see what you can see. I prefer that you do this experiment in a relatively busy place and I mean do nothing quite literally. You should stand in an ordinary social setting and do nothing for 10 minutes. You are to stand still. You aren’t allowed to pretend that you are waiting for someone. That would be “doing waiting,” with all the activity entailed by that particular behavioral pattern: glancing nervously at one’s watch, looking around periodically and repeatedly so as to appear to be looking for someone, and so on. You aren’t allowed to “do sight-seeing.” That is, self-consciously to act the way we think people do when they are sightseeing: scrutinizing and admiring architecture, landscape, and the like. You aren’t to sit down and “do relaxing” or “time out” or “people watching.” You are, quite simply, to do nothing.

Requirements & suggestions for the assignment:

I suggest that you stand because that position would give more opportunity to “do nothing” than sitting or lying down, which have deep associations with time out and rest. The experiment will be more difficult if you sit or lay down.

It will take time for your mind to adjust. If you give up too soon, you will not have seen anything because you won’t have allowed enough time for your eyes, or mind, to adjust. Attempt it for at least 10 minutes, but give it longer if you are having trouble.

A further strict requirement for this experiment pertains to the your mind: do not occupy your minds with daydreaming of any kind (being unoccupied, unemployed). Do not engage in remembering your past or in planning your future. You are not to surrender this present moment to the past or the future; you must “be present” and to do this experiment with “beginner’s mind.”

“Beginner’s mind,” in a sense, is the opposite of “expert’s mind.” The expert is so full of knowledge, facts, judgments, and theories, etc. that he can’t see anything new or fresh. “Beginner’s mind,” in contrast, doesn’t know in advance what it’s going to see and experience. A Beginner’s mind is open, hollow, flexible, receptive, and tuned in to what is happening in the present moment. “If your mind is empty, it is always ready for anything; it is open to everything. In the beginner’s mind there are only possibilities; in the expert’s mind there are few.”

When you are finished, record what went on within you and without you. Be reflective, analytical and detailed. Write about what you experienced. Use your sociological imagination.

FAQs

“What are we supposed to see?”
See what you can see.

“What if someone approaches you?”
You’re on your own.

“What’s the purpose of doing this experiment?”
Just do it. Actually do it. See what you can see. See what you see.
“Why can’t we just imagine what it would be like to do this?”

We must attempt to ‘do’ sociology. If you only imagined what it would be like to be unoccupied and to do nothing for 10 minutes, all they would get would be the reports of their own socialized imaginations. It is necessary to actually do the "experiment." Sociology, like other established sciences, is safe to "learn" and safe to "teach"—but dangerous to do. Also, if you don’t actually do these "experiments" or "exercises," you won’t begin to develop your sociological muscles, your sociological imagination. This way of teaching about society implies that you have to change not what you think about society, but how you think about society; and you can’t change the way you think about society simply by thinking about it because you’ll just be doing more of the way you think. This way of sociological knowledge is experiential and experimental. It is empirical but not positivistic. You don’t get it by first understanding it and then doing it. Only by doing it do you understand it.

Record your findings below:

Where did you do nothing? ____________________________________________

When did you do nothing? ____________________________________________

Reflect on this experience:

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UN-OCCUPIED AND AWARENESS
How do you react to the experiment? What are your thoughts on it?

David
I kept saying to myself, “No, I couldn’t possibly do it there...not there either...” Then I realized just what I was saying; that in all these places it was socially forbidden to do nothing.

Through doing the “experiment” those students began to engage themselves in questioning, sociological questioning, regarding how they ordinarily live-in-society and how they ordinarily define themselves, how they do being ordinary. They began to think about who they think they are. (pg 23)

This experiment raises some key questions for sociology and how to apply sociology to one’s life.
Where does society end and my self begin? How much of who I think I am genuinely comes from me, from my inner sources and conscious awareness, and how much comes from my programming by society, my socialization? To what degree am I programmed into unconscious living, mindless, conformist, automatic, habitual living? To reverse Socrates, to what degree am I socialized into living an unexamined life? Our experiments engage us directly and personally in small “ventures in de-socialization;” they provoke us to un-learn what our society has taught us to take-for-granted. (pg 24)

One of the major difficulties or obstacles in studying “society” is that it is so massively omnipresent as to be invisible. Our perception of society has become dulled through almost constant use. An old saying goes, “It wasn’t a fish who discovered water.” We are in a very similar situation regarding society. (pg 24)

Did anyone experience a realization of any sort? Did anything occur to you, perhaps in a sudden flash of intuitive enlightenment?
The essence of the un-occupied experiment is...the extraordinary experiential bull’s eye regarding ordinary society and the social construction of reality that are achieved...Instead of unconsciously doing society, we begin to become aware that we have, all along, been doing society...and self. (pg 25)

Was this difficult to do? Do we have a fear of doing nothing?

Ty
Doing nothing is a lot harder than it actually sounds. I always thought that doing nothing was what I did best. As it turns out, it is probably what I do worst. (pg 26)

Why does nothing have such a powerful impact on us? Why does not-doing give access to dimensions of societal life that are otherwise routinely invisible to us, lying below the threshold of noticing or describing? The nature of societal life seems to be most powerfully and nakedly revealed by not participating in it—not participating but with great awareness. If not participating reveals so much about the texture and micro-composition of ordinary societal life, it would seem to be because participating, co-constructing, and co-accomplishing is the essence of everyday society...society tries, in a sense, to prevent the question “Who am I?” from arising. (pg 26)

UNOCCUPIED AND SOCIAL CONTROL
How was your doing nothing perceived by those around you?

When we engage in doing nothing...we somehow trigger a generic alarm system in our contemporary society and become the subject of police surveillance. (pg 28)

Kris
I stood in the middle of the mall (next to a walk way). I felt very awkward inside at first because I was breaking a "social rule," and I knew it, but I decided to watch other people's reactions. They all stared at me as they walked by with questioning faces. They didn't know what I was doing. They could not understand why I was not doing anything. But no one would ask me. A strolling cop walked by me twice to watch what I was doing. Young girls would go by laughing, thinking and saying, "Whoa, he's weird." By this time, I felt disgraced. I soon came to the conclusion that I shouldn't care, because I wasn't doing anything morally wrong. Why should it matter? This kept up for ten minutes. Then an officer of the law came up. "May I see your license?" I gave it to him. "What do you think you are doing?" "Nothing." "Are you shopping around here or what?" "No I'm not doing anything." (pg 28)

This experiment, as I said, is not particularly about "people watching." It is not about watching people in society, but rather about watching society in people.

This is Peter Berger's "society within us." (pg 29)

UN-EMPLOYED AND OUR WORK IDENTITY
How does our work/what we do justify who we are? How do we tie our identity to what we do? What are we if we are not our work?

Doing nothing provokes suspicion. Why? Just-being is a wholly alien mode of being.... We camoflague ourselves with the appearance of purposeful activity... and because we are all so disguised, we don't see each other and we don't see ourselves." (pg 30)

Aimee
My setting was in front of a busy store... a security guard came out and approached me and asked what I was doing.... When I said that I was doing nothing he asked me if I was waiting for somebody. I said no quickly. Then in a very insulting way, he asked me to leave because "We don't allow people to loiter in front of the store." I told him I wasn't doing anything, and I wasn't loitering. At this he told me to leave now, or else I was going to be escorted off the property. I was so (pg 31)
Salituro’s Sociology
Socialization
The Un-TV: You Are What You Watch

For this experiment, you are going to watch TV - not a show or a program, but TV itself. I want you to become conscious of how you watch TV. See what you watch. Watch what you see. Examine the trance that we turn on the TV to create. Ordinarily, if you are watching television, you can’t also observe and experience the experience of watching TV. When we watch TV we rarely pay attention to the details of the event, in fact we rarely pay attention. This experiment is designed to make ‘watching TV’ into an experience, an experience we can notice, rather than an absence of experience.

Instructions

Step 1: Count the Technical Events.
For ten minutes simply count the technical events that occur while you are watching any show. Pure TV is what you see on a security camera. It records exactly what is in front of it and nothing else. A technical event is anything else. Zooming in, switching angles, graphics, background music are all technical events. Simply count the number of times you see or hear a cut, zoom, superimposition, voice over, etc.

Step 2: Watching.
For ten minutes watch any show without turning the sound on.

Step 3: Watching the news.
For ten minutes, watch any news program without turning the sound on.

Step 4: Watch someone watching TV.
For fifteen minutes, watch someone else watch TV.

Step 5: Watch the TV.
For thirty minutes, watch the TV without turning it on

Reflect on your findings below:


