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Service Learning: The Right Thing for the Wrong Reasons?

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make up a responsible society or how schools might encourage them. This lack of balance in the text reduces it to a level of a manual on how to bring about curriculum change. Its ideas could well be applied to any curriculum area that lends itself to direct student involvement in which learners encounter the views, values, and lifestyles of other people. (Sport as well as personal and social education are obvious contenders here.) The marginalisation of citizenship and its values in this collection of case studies in favour of a curriculum-development perspective is disappointing. This reader wanted to read about a range of American practice in a curriculum area that is rapidly gaining national prominence in British primary and secondary schools.

The final section, on models of partnership, attempts to bring together some emerging points, but again the emphasis tends to be more on learning and less on the concept and practice of service. Perhaps this final section could have summarized thoughts on the nature and values of service to the community to give substantive content to a text heavy on process.

Service Learning for the Multiple Intelligences Classroom

by Sally Berman

(Arlington Heights, Ill.: Skylight, 1999)

Reviewed by Gregory J. Marchant

Associate Professor of Educational Psychology
Ball State University, Muncie, Ind.

In service learning, students use meaningful community service to achieve educational goals. By most accounts, service learning is a good thing, a very good thing. For instance, a recent article in *Educational Leadership* suggested that service learning helped develop stronger ties to the community, deeper feelings of self-worth, a spiritual core, a moral code, and a sense of civic pride.¹ However, concerns have been raised regarding transportation, scheduling, supplies, funds, time and energy taken from academics, and burdens on working students.² Therefore, although the benefits of service learning may be great, service learning projects may be difficult to implement.

In this, her fifth book involving implementing innovative teaching approaches, Sally Berman uses her thirty years of high school teaching experience to present nine service learning projects. The goal of the book is to present the benefits of service learning while minimizing implementation problems. There are three projects for each of the three levels of sophistication presented. The basic service learning projects are an "adopt a road" cleanup project, a program lending used sporting equipment, and a

project to provide hygiene products to the homeless. The intermediate projects involve reading to young children or senior citizens, working in a soup kitchen, and tutoring for community members, especially senior citizens, on computers. The advanced service learning projects involve both facilitating information to and from the community and the federal government, and organizing visual arts students to beautify areas through graffiti removal, creating public art, and planting ornamental gardens.

Each project is described with attention to examples, materials needed, and a learning focus. The book describes how to manage each project through preparation, monitoring, and evaluation. The assessment and evaluation components are particularly useful. Student reflection is also emphasized with log pages for elementary, middle school, and high school levels. The book links big ideas with details that will serve teachers wishing to provide well-designed service learning experiences. There is no indication, however, that the content or organization of the book is informed by the concept of multiple intelligences, as the title implies.

Service learning is more than forcing students to do volunteer work in the community. The educational benefits of service learning cannot be assumed; they need to be built into the projects. This book provides a framework for maximizing the educational benefits of nine key service learning projects while presenting, organizing, and managing approaches to help with the implementation. These specific projects can serve as examples for transfer and for the development of other projects.

1. B. Gardner, "The Controversy over Service Learning," *NEA Today* 16, no. 2 (1997): 17.
2. S. Krystal, "The Nurturing Potential of Service Learning," *Educational Leadership* 56, no. 4 (1998/1999): 58-62.

Leading without Power: Finding Hope in a Serving Community by Max De Pree

(San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997)

Reviewed by Jean E. A. Fleming, Assistant Professor
Adult and Community Education

Dept. of Educational Leadership, Ball State University

Max De Pree, author of *Leadership Is an Art* and *Leadership Jazz*, provides another provocative view of leadership, work, and life in his most recent work, *Leading without Power*. From forty years of experience in for-profit and not-for-profit organizations and nineteen years as a grandparent, De Pree brings to life his belief that organizations and individuals must continually move toward realizing their potential. De Pree sees potential not as limited to self-fulfillment, but as expressed through stewardship and servanthood. He suggests that

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human potential is best expressed through love.

The concept of organizations as places of realized potential, as places where "persons can fulfill their promise" (p. 11), is central to this book. Each chapter is devoted to assisting organizations to become such places, to develop the characteristics of what De Pree refers to as movements and as vital organizations. According to De Pree, realized potential involves not so much the how of work, but rather the why; the focus is not on goals but on the kinds of persons we intend to become. Thus the book is no how-to manual. Instead, it might be considered a series of conversations to be held on the way to creating places of realized potential.

De Pree identifies attributes of vital organizations that seem to encapsulate his hopes for organizations as places of realized potential: truth, access, discipline, accountability, nourishment for persons, authenticity, justice, respect, hope, workable unity, tolerance, simplicity, beauty and taste, and fidelity to a mission. He sees these vital organizations as having both pragmatic and moral dimensions, both reaching "outward to serve others and inward toward their potential" (p. 180). Indeed, moral purpose is at the heart of De Pree's message, for "without moral purpose, competence has no measure and trust no goal" (p. 179).

This book is not about power, or at least not about externally imposed power. It is, rather, about creating places that reach for human potential through service to the common good, and through that service, find hope. Power has no meaning when people volunteer, when they work for love and fulfillment, as they do in many nonprofit settings. De Pree has written the book in hopes that for-profit organizations may learn from the nature of work of nonprofit groups, and that nonprofits might also come to look at leadership in a new light.

Throughout his book, De Pree raises questions, suggests deeply personal examinations of leadership and work, and provides direction for examining the ensuing challenges, always weaving the practical with the poetic, the simple with the profound. He quickly and easily assists his readers toward immediately influencing their organizations, while simultaneously recognizing they may spend a lifetime contemplating the issues he has brought to light. *Leading without Power* will help teachers and administrators place their work in a larger context, encourage them to examine and communicate the moral purpose of their work, and inspire them to define who they must be to realize their potential, serve the common good, and find hope.

***Toward a Civil Society:
Civic Literacy and Service Learning***
by C. David Lisman

(Westport, Conn.: Bergin and Garvey, 1998)

Reviewed by Brian L. Clarke, Senior Lecturer

Faculty of Education and Psychology

University College Worcester, Worcester, England

Toward a Civil Society explores the theoretical and political context of civic education within the perspective of service learning. Lisman defines service learning as "a form of learning in which students engage in community service as part of academic course work" (p. 23). He is voicing the opinion, present in all Western democratic countries, that education and promotion of civic virtues and responsibilities go hand in hand. His argument, however, goes deeper because he adds a pedagogical dimension and value to it. By placing his discussion within the context of higher education, he sees colleges and universities as playing a particular role in providing community-based experiences, which then become the basis for developing reflective learning in students. In this way, the concept and achievement of a strong democracy are enhanced when individuals develop a civic conscience, become active decision makers, and engage in critical inquiry. Such actions put a new spin on the importance of reflective practice as an improvement paradigm. The beneficiary is not just the individual but the community. In a British setting, the tradition of civics education has rested with the mainstream primary and secondary schools. Even then, it is a comparatively recent phenomenon, which would certainly not embrace the values of service learning envisaged by Lisman. Reflective practice is alive and well in British higher education, but it is seen as part of the process of learning and teaching, particularly amongst professionals in teacher training and the caring professions who seek improvement in their own work places.

Having set out his definition and argument, Lisman goes on to analyse four main conceptual stances relating to service learning: volunteerism, consumerist politics, justice, and a strong democracy. A discussion of the implications of this latter position occupies his last two chapters, unpacking how a community-development approach to service learning might work as a partnership between campus and community. He establishes procedural principles based upon those of experiential learning, focusing upon empowerment, group problem solving, and active engagement with the community. He presents numerous vignettes that show how his ideas are used in colleges and universities throughout the United States.

The final section is a powerful plea for the higher education sector to recognise its ethical and social responsibilities toward the local democratic process, where pedagogues provide the role model for these values in their teaching. In this respect, the book is as

much about how students in higher education should learn and how teachers should teach as it is about creating a more civil society. This perhaps is the book's one weakness, the lack of a cogent critique of what constitutes a civil society. This very readable book will appeal not only to teachers engaged in community-based education, but to that wider university audience which wants to create a more critically reflective student body and recognises in its own teaching the values espoused by Dewey.

***And There Were Giants in the Land:
The Life of William Heard Kilpatrick***
by John A. Beineke

(New York: Peter Lang, 1998)

Reviewed by O. L. Davis, Jr., College of Education
University of Texas, Austin

I accepted the reality of giants, individuals whose immense prominence towered over most other people. I just don't believe that I ever had seen one. Then, on a Saturday night in Boston forty-six years ago, a uniformed sailor on liberty from Navy OCS, I decided to attend a meeting of the John Dewey Society. I chose a second-row seat. Everyone's eyes sought out the frail, older man with the massive shock of white hair who sat alone on the stage. He was William Heard Kilpatrick, professor emeritus, Teachers College, Columbia University. I do not remember the nature of his address that evening, but I remember listening in awe. The circumstance was near unthinkable: I, only a few weeks away from being a teacher in distant Texas, was hearing William Heard Kilpatrick. Years later, I continue to believe that I was in the presence of greatness that night.

As I read John Beineke's new biography of Kilpatrick, I sensed much the same feeling that I experienced years ago. This time, however, a more experienced teacher, I attended to Kilpatrick's career and words with special care. In addition, I came to know Kilpatrick—the man, the professor, the author—in greater detail. Certainly, I better understand both the man and his ideas as well as the context in which he lived. I know better how he became and remained the voice of Progressivism in American education.

This comprehensive biography easily replaces Samuel Tenebaum's 1951 biography. To be sure, Beineke had first access to Kilpatrick's long-sealed diaries, a rich trove of his commentary about daily events, personal insights, musings, and reflections. He also talked to Kilpatrick's heirs and some of his students and used oral histories of some of his con-

temporaries. To his great credit and to our benefit, Beineke has mastered the abundant research evidence to write a narrative that acknowledges the power of Kilpatrick's work and its worth as well as it tells the absorbing story of this highly productive and influential educator.

This biography captivated me. I checked references. I reread portions. I wrote margin notes. When I finished the final chapter, the volume had met my major criterion for a successful book: I felt filled, I knew much more than I had about Kilpatrick, and I wanted to know more.

For example, why did Kilpatrick not revise and reissue his *Foundations of Method*? This book, written in 1925 for his popular Teachers College course of the same name, was studied by thousands of teacher candidates across the nation. Much of Kilpatrick's interpretation of Dewey's philosophy was developed or expanded in this book. With some helpful clues from Beineke, I believe that Kilpatrick abandoned the findings of this book because he came to disagree with Edward L. Thorndike's behaviorist psychology, on which much of *Foundations* was based. He may also have seen the emptiness of some of his own syllogisms. These are mere conjectures, however, in the absence of direct evidence.

Of course, Beineke's book also enables readers to understand the influence of Teachers College on American education during Kilpatrick's tenure. Kilpatrick's own prominence too easily and incorrectly makes TC seem only a bastion of progressive education. The in-house disputations and squabbles among Kilpatrick and his colleagues refute this simplism, however. Kilpatrick, to be sure, likely taught more students and he certainly drew a higher salary than did any other professor at the college. Nevertheless, he was only one of several distinguished educational giants on the TC faculty. His Deweyan progressivism was counterbalanced, for example, by George Strayer's concern for economic efficiency and William Chandler Bagley's emphasis on essential knowledge. These and other TC professors attracted students and renown, even in their differing advocacies, and they, Teachers College, and American schooling prospered.

This biography will be the standard work on William Heard Kilpatrick for many years. It deserves that status. As good as it is, and it is very good, it probably will not be the final word. Both Beineke and Kilpatrick understood that prospect. On the final page of the text, Beineke quoted from Kilpatrick's *Foundations of Method*, "Reached the end? We haven't reached the end. There's plenty more. We have merely paused. It is the term that has ended."

Gary K. Clabaugh

Service Learning: The Right Thing for the Wrong Reasons?

It is a deep and abiding truth that in helping others we help ourselves. Among the many benefits is knowledge. We learn things about others, life, and ourselves that are enriching, even ennobling.

Perhaps that's the hope for service learning. By setting up situations where students help others, we hope they will gain this fulfillment. But when students are forced to serve, when they're made to do the right thing for the wrong reasons, personal growth fades away and less desirable lessons take their place. And the foremost of these lessons is to do as little as possible.

For instance, I asked a college freshman to tell me about the forced service imposed on him in a religion class in high school. He hesitantly confessed that he performed no service whatsoever. Resenting the requirement, he just made things up and forged the requisite signatures. When that got to be too complicated, he dropped the class.

Besides learning escape and evasion techniques, what else do you suppose this fellow learned from his forced "service" experience? Perhaps that deception is better than servitude. Maybe that cheating can be difficult and demanding. But whatever he learned, it wasn't what his teacher had in mind.

I also asked a recent college graduate to tell me about his compulsory service. He too eventually went AWOL. But let's let him speak for himself.

"As part of my class work for creative writing I was required to engage in some form of 'charitable' behavior. I chose the VA hospital because it was one of the only activities given on the list of suggestions that did not require working with the homeless and/or terminally ill AIDS patients.

"We were required to 'volunteer' at least twice a week for approximately an hour and fifteen minutes at a time. This was in lieu of class. During this time we were to keep a journal detailing our experiences.

"After about two weeks of force feeding bedridden veterans with Alzheimer's and watching the nurses and orderlies act abusively towards them, I figured out that no one was really keeping track of my comings and goings. Consequently, I spent the rest of that semester playing Frisbee in the park and drinking beer with my friend (who was the other VA hospital volunteer).

"At the end of the semester I wrote a moving sixty-five-page journal detailing the triumph of the human spirit over the horrors of Alzheimer's disease. The entire journal was written over two evenings. I received a "B+" in the class."

Clearly, this young man learned to do as little as possible too. But what else did he learn? When I asked him that, this was his response:

"I learned that it is not good to get old. I learned that regardless of how heroic, young, virile, or successful you may have been at one point in your life, you can still end up slowly dying in your own waste whilst being playfully

When students are forced to serve, when they're made to do the right thing for the wrong reasons, personal growth fades away and less desirable lessons take their place.

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mocked by gelatinous middle-aged nurses in comfortable shoes.

"I learned that weakness makes me uncomfortable. I learned that severe illness makes me uncomfortable. I learned that people treat old folks like children. I learned that 'Ensure' (high protein liquid food supplement) does not taste as bad as one might think.

"The most important lesson of the entire thing was that it is not good to be so old and sick that you are unable to take care of yourself. One cannot help but think that these poor folks would be better off dead.

"Keep in mind that they were veterans and war heroes as well. Think about the level of care afforded to your average Joe."

These are important realizations, but should he confess them to his professor? She was his creative writing teacher, not his analyst, and one wonders whether such intimacy is either appropriate or wise.

Yes, when it comes to forced service, students rarely learn what is planned. That's a major reason why students routinely write what they think the teacher wants to hear in their journals. Another reason for this deceptive fiction is it's unwise to trust the person who dragooned you into servitude in the first place. It's a perfectly rational response for anyone who is dealing with someone who has the power to impose things on them then grade the results.

Admittedly, forced service "volunteers" can learn things of value. Sometimes it's as simple as discovering that they actually like what someone initially forced them to do. But the learning can be very personal and entirely too revealing. You'll recall, for example, the second student I interviewed said, *"I learned that weakness makes me uncomfortable. I learned that severe illness makes me uncomfortable."* These are important realizations, but should he confess them to his professor? She was his creative writing teacher, not his analyst, and one wonders whether such intimacy is either appropriate or wise.

There are other complications in truthfully reporting what one has learned from forced service. If a student is drafted into providing service to the afflicted, hard up, or decrepit, for instance, he or she might conclude that America is a heartless land of barbarous inequalities. Or he or she might decide that America's power elite secretly disdains self-sac-

rifice and throws crumbs to the sick, penniless, and aged just to keep them subdued. But what happens if they report this and it turns out that the teacher thinks Rush Limbaugh is right, or is a charter member of the 700 Club?

It is these sorts of things that make service learning journals outstanding works of fiction. Although, to be fair, students have been concocting stories for their teachers long before service learning became faddish. Consider the experience of two sisters I know. A despotic parochial elementary school nun required the older sister—we'll call her Sally—to write an essay on what she wanted to be when she grew up. Having sized up her teacher as a humorless, dull-witted, true believer, Sally and her younger sister cooked up a cockamamie story. It was an account of how Sally longed to be a nun, but came to realize it required more moral strength and piety than she could muster.

I was there when these partners in crime concocted this bald-faced lie. They laughed until they nearly wet themselves. "Is this too much?" one would giggle after writing something shamefully saccharin. "No, no, she'll go for that!" the other would gleefully reply. They predicted the paper would receive an "A," and it did.

Yes, students have made up baloney for their teachers for a long, long time. But forced service learning journals usually are the most creative writing kids will ever do in school. Students of even limited intelligence are smart enough not to expose individual vulnerabilities and deep feelings about this bondage to the very person who imposed it—particularly when that person holds a grade over their heads.

In concocting these deceptions students learn how to figure out what the "boss" wants. They learn how to obey, or at least pretend to. They learn how to put up with ridiculous impositions. They learn how to pretend to care. They learn how to smile when they are resentful. All practical things to know—particularly if you want to work for corporate America. But is this hidden curriculum what those imposing the requirement have in mind?

Here is an even more perverse feature of forced service learning requirements. They can be used to establish or maintain domination. "I know what she wants me to think," reflects the student, "so I had better put that in my journal." It's like a kid getting caught doing something he shouldn't in school. "What are you doing?" asks the teacher, who knows perfectly well. "Nuthin'," the kid says sheepishly. "Come on, I wasn't born yesterday!" responds the teacher. "No, really, I wasn't doin' nuthin'." What's behind the teacher's non-question and the student's transparently false response?

Dominance and submission; that is what it's really about. It's akin to the underdog rolling over, exposing his belly, and wetting himself to show submission to the leader of the pack. When service learning is imposed on youngsters, it sometimes works the same way.

If forced service is so prone to miscarry, why is its popularity growing? Because it's a "hot" topic and America's culture is largely momentary. Then there is the added advantage that those who impose it establish their bona fides as "caring" persons at minimal cost. All a legislator or educator need do is compel students to perform odious services they wouldn't perform themselves and, shazam, they're "humanitarians."

There is nothing inherently wrong with community service as a learning activity. In fact, done right, it

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connects theory with practice, promotes critical reflection, bridges the gap between generations, and teaches both charity and social responsibility. But *forced* service often fails to accomplish any of this; and might even undermine it. Worse still, the resentment it engenders often obscures the most indispensable lesson. What we give to others is often returned twofold.