

## Service-Learning “Rules” that Encourage or Discourage Long-Term Service: Implications for Practice and Research

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*We use research and theory on intrinsic motivation to suggest that some service-learning practices may be counter-productive. Although these practices may encourage student involvement in the short-term, they may reduce interest over the long-term. We pose seven questions about service requirements and suggest answers that would be least likely to undermine long-term service. The seven questions are clustered into three groups: 1) choice and control over community assignments (we emphasize internal choice rather than external incentives and coercion, and we suggest projects in which students can feel as though their contribution made a difference); 2) choice and control over how activities are undertaken on site (we suggest providing freedom and opportunities to create positive phenomenal experiences, a fit between tasks and the student's interests, and opportunities to experience mastery and competence); and 3) ways of addressing long-term internalization of service values (self-attributions, discussion, and modeling). These strategies may increase the quality of the students' performance in the immediate project as well as increase their long-term interest in service.*

Six students spent a quarter as service-learners in a “children’s community garden.” They participated 3 hours each week, presenting lessons, interacting with the children, and working beside them in the garden. They were prompt and reliable, engaged, and seemed genuinely committed to helping the children. To facilitate the “learning” component, they read and discussed scholarly and popular articles about children’s gardens. To assure them that their service was meaningful, the articles underscored the importance of nature for children’s development and psychological well-being. An outsider looking at these students would think they were all intrinsically motivated and all likely to continue even once the course requirement had been fulfilled. And yet, as much as they enjoyed it and as highly as they rated it as a life experience, in the two years since that quarter, only three of these students ever returned to the garden or volunteered for any other kinds of service activities. Why did some continue and others drop out of this kind of community participation?

Two of the most important issues facing educators and community organizations are: how do we motivate young people to be involved in community activities, and how do we develop a long-term commitment once they are involved? For many, the first impulse is to require community service. There are increased calls for mandatory service as a way to recapture Americans’ sense of community (see Markus, Howard & King, 1993, for overview). At the University of Utah, more and more faculty now require service in their classes. Many of them hope to change how we educate, but also hope to foster a

lifelong commitment to service amongst their students. The description above illustrates an experience common to service-learning educators: many students appear to enjoy and benefit from a service activity, realize the contribution they’re making, and seem enthusiastic at the time—but then never volunteer again. How do we account for this apparent discrepancy between these students’ expressed satisfaction and enjoyment, and their lack of further service participation? Why is it that some continue but others do not?

This article takes a social psychological perspective on how the *structure* of a service project might relate to long-term commitment to service. By “structure” we mean the complex of rules, guidelines, and instructions that influence whether a student undertakes service (e.g., voluntary, required, or punitive), that influence how students locate service opportunities, and that guide students’ day to day service activities.

The heart of our argument is that faculty and agencies may unwittingly undermine students’ long-term interest in service: faculty in the way they assign service opportunities, and leaders at the service setting in how they manage the project. We are very interested in suggesting ways of avoiding such undermining effects. For ethical reasons, we are less interested in strategies for persuading, or otherwise manipulating, students to be more favorable toward service in the absence of undermining structures. Our arguments are based on social psychological research as well as numerous experiences with service-learning (CW has taught service-learning class-

es for over 10 years; NM has been a service-learning student leader for several years and has supervised service-learning students at a local children's garden for two years). We did not conduct systematic interviews, but did talk to many service-learning students in our class and in others'. We view this article as a way to stimulate research on these issues, rather than as a final statement.

Some key findings with implications for increasing long-term interest can be distilled from the psychological literature on choice and control and from the environmental psychology literature on behavior change. First, in general, people prefer autonomy, choice, and control over their goals and over their strategies for achieving those goals; external rewards, whether positive or negative, must be used carefully lest they undermine students' natural interests (some ways of using rewards will be suggested below). Second, people prefer activities that make them feel good—that actually lead to positive feelings and evoke words like "effective," "successful," "fun," "interesting," "satisfying," and "challenging." Indeed, even if people don't initially enjoy a task, if they have a reason to persist at it, they will figure out ways to make the activity more phenomenally pleasant (Sansone, Weir, Harpster, & Morgan, 1992). Some situations make it easier than others to create these positive side-effects.

These research findings lead us to pose seven questions about how service-learning is structured:

1. Is service required or optional?
2. Has the project been pre-defined by the instructor and/or agency, or do students have input and choice about activities?
3. How unique or identifiable is the student's contribution to the project?
4. At the service setting, how much autonomy does the student have in day to day activities, and is this complemented by enough guidance so that the student can be successful?
5. At the service setting, how positive are the students' experiences while engaged in the task? Do they enjoy the tasks and feel successful? Do they have positive social interactions? Can they change their way of doing tasks to maintain interest?
6. During reflection, what kinds of attributions does the student make for his or her service involvement?
7. During reflection, is there any discussion of students' long-term intentions towards volunteering?

We predict that students are more likely to take on

a future orientation to service when the answers to these questions converge on autonomy and choice, and/or on opportunities for creating positive experiences.

We begin with a brief overview of relevant theory and research on intrinsic motivation. Then we elaborate on our seven questions, suggesting how responses might influence students toward a long-term commitment to service. Although our primary interest is in implications for long-term service, much of the literature is also relevant to the quality of students' short-term service—their actions and demeanors at the site. Such qualities as reliability, enthusiasm, and quality of their work can be influenced by choice, control, and ongoing experiences.

### Intrinsic Motivation<sup>1</sup>

#### *Autonomy, Choice and Control*

For well over twenty years, psychologists have found that intrinsic and extrinsic motivators operate very differently on human behavior (e.g., see Lepper & Greene, 1975, 1978). Internal motivators are those that are inherent in tasks or are based on individuals' learned and internalized values.<sup>2</sup> These might include enjoyment, interest, challenge, success, pride, and other factors inside the individual, not controlled or manipulated by someone in the environment. In contrast, external motivators are outside the individual, and are conceptualized as "externally controlling." Examples of positive external factors include rewards of money, candy, privilege, and social praise. Examples of negative external factors include loss of grade points, public embarrassment, and personal ridicule. The foci of the present analysis, rules and requirements, fit the "external" category, and can be considered positive or negative, depending on how they are used. For example, we would consider "extra credit" for service-learning to be positive, but loss of course points to be negative.

#### *Opportunities for Creating Interest*

Recent theory and research suggest that if people want to maintain an otherwise boring behavior, they will actively create interest where none existed (Sansone & Harackiewicz, 1996; Sansone, Weir, Harpster, & Morgan, 1992). For example, Sansone, Weir, Harpster & Morgan asked students to copy letters from one matrix to another—at face value, a repetitive and boring task. For some of the students, the task was described as a puzzle, and their job as they copied was to identify the hidden words. Another group of students was told to copy the letters, and that the mental work involved would be good for their immune systems and improve their overall physical health. The final group was simply

instructed to copy the letters. The researchers' key question had to do with which students figured out ways of making the task interesting. The "hidden word" group was already interested, and did not use any additional interest-enhancing strategies. The "copy/no health effects" group did not see any reason to persist at the task, and also did not use interest-enhancing strategies. However, the "copy/health benefits" group tried different ways of making the task more interesting. Some tried to memorize the matrices to make it more challenging, some paid more attention to ancillary text about font styles, and some tried to copy the various font styles used in the matrices. Thus, because they were interested in maintaining this behavior, they tried a variety of strategies for making the task more interesting. Werner and Makela (1998) found that this model did a good job of accounting for residents' maintenance of recycling behavior. Residents who could identify some pleasure in recycling (e.g., learning more about the waste stream, doing recycling tasks as a family, meeting people at the recycling center) were the better recyclers. These findings suggest that students should have some freedom and control over how they actually do their service activities—some flexibility that allows them to make tasks interesting.

Whereas we acknowledge that some amount of structure is necessary for all service-learning projects, we propose allowing choice and control in as many aspects of service as possible. This includes the choices of *whether* to serve, *where* to serve, *how* to serve, and *whom* to serve. Our philosophy is that students need to "own" their activities as much as possible, in all aspects.

We now turn to the seven questions whose answers will strongly affect students' interest in service over time. Our first four questions about the structure of service-learning underscore the importance of choice and control for intrinsic interest.

### Service-Learning Structures

#### *Choice and Control*

#### *1. Is the service required or optional?*

Many faculty require service activities in their classes, and some institutions expect students to undertake service as a graduation requirement. If students attribute their behavior to a "requirement," they are unlikely to develop internal reasons for their service. The more they perceive their participation in external terms, the less likely it is they would even think about the internal reasons ("I did it because I wanted to") that can lead to sustained interest and future service participation.

Research indicates that extrinsic motivators are very effective at inducing behavior. Indeed, a com-

mon point raised in support of external rewards is that it is difficult, if not impossible, to induce people to change a behavior or try a new behavior without proffering an incentive (Eisenberger & Cameron, 1996). Unfortunately, many studies show that once the external rewards are removed, people usually stop the behavior (Cialdini, Eisenberg, Green, Rhoads & Bator, 1998; Katzev & Johnson, 1987). People's explanations for their behavior are an important component of this pattern. To the extent that people attribute their behavior to the external reward, rather than to their own personal motives, behavior will stop once the reward is removed<sup>3</sup> (see Clary, Snyder & Stukas, 1998, for extensive discussion).

The general principle, derived from years of research, is that extrinsic rewards are very good at eliciting behaviors, but very bad at eliciting *enduring* behaviors (Stern & Oskamp, 1985; Katzev & Johnson, 1987; Werner, Turner, Shipman, Twitchell, Dickson, Brusckie, & von Bismarck, 1996). Indeed, if someone is willing to sufficiently reward people for their behavior, then the behavior will likely continue indefinitely. The implication for service-learning is clear: as long as people are required to participate in service, they will, but once they leave the controlling setting, they stop participating unless they develop internal, personal motivators. This effect should be true even for abstract social motivators, such as praise and the admiration of friends. A student who finds herself caught up in service activities because her classmates participate could easily lose interest the following semester if she moves to new classes and new social environments in which service is not valued.

*2. Has the project been predefined by the instructor and/or agency, or do students have input and choice about service activities?*

Whether service-learning per se is required or voluntary, faculty differ in the extent to which they specify service opportunities beforehand or leave it to students to choose. There are several strategies that could optimize choice. The instructor's decision of how to proceed must depend on the nature of the course subject matter, the ages and maturity of the students, the students' academic level, the instructor's previous experiences with service-learning projects, the number of students, and so on. Strategies that optimize community placement and activity choice—whether service per se is required or optional—should, in our view, get students to think about why they are doing service, and what their internal satisfactions might be. Such in-depth thinking should encourage the internalization of service ideals.

To some extent, the freedom to choose particular

projects allows students to judge what they're getting into, and that should increase satisfaction. They can decide if working in this particular setting and on this particular set of activities is what they want to do. They can decide if they have enough time and energy to do this particular job well. But we believe the effect of choice goes beyond these pragmatic considerations. We suspect that when a task is freely chosen, students accept responsibility for doing a good job and stop "watching the clock." This psychological investment in the project will not only affect short-term and long-term investment toward community service but also enhance the educational values that service-learning faculty hope to foster—creative thinking, depth of processing of the subject matter, and interest in the project's relevance to the course.

An excellent example of "choice" comes from a service-learning class developed by a colleague, Tom Huckin. The class is an upper-division, professional writing class, but instead of using made-up assignments, Huckin asks students to volunteer for local nonprofit organizations. Groups of students get to choose the organization, thereby enabling them to find a topic or cause that is meaningful and important to them. Then they spend the term writing publicity releases, grant proposals, grant reports, lesson plans, and other written products needed by the organization. The class enables the students to develop writing skills while assisting in a cause with personal relevance. Thus, the service-learning project contains both faculty-created structure and student-generated choice. Although we have no data, according to motivation theory, this freedom to choose a site, coupled with the responsibility and the opportunity to make a difference, should offset the externally "required" participation. All these should increase students' personal responsibility and ownership of their activities, which may increase the likelihood of future service at this site or others (relative to no choice).

3. *How unique or identifiable is the student's contribution to the project? How much input does the student have in designing the project?*

In our discussions with students, we have heard complaints about service-learning projects in which they were "anonymous drones." In many cases, the projects had been designed earlier, involved large numbers of other students, sometimes even from previous semesters, with no input from them into the design or conduct of the project. CW has heard students describe such experiences in relatively negative terms. They had no sense of ownership of the project, they did not feel as though they were providing a community service, and they saw few benefits for themselves or the community residents with

whom they worked. On the other hand, the more that students have the opportunity to be part of the design of a community project, and the more their part is distinguishable from others, the more likely that they will be invested in the service in the present and in the future.

#### *Strategies for Using Rewards without Undermining Interest*

If people need to choose service voluntarily in order to internalize a service value, how can we increase their interest in making this choice? How do we motivate people to try new things without using external motivators such as requirements or incentives? One study addresses this question directly. Cialdini and his colleagues (Cialdini, Eisenberg, Green, Rhoads, & Bator, 1998; see also Cialdini, 1993) noted the importance of self-concept to individuals. We often define ourselves by traits, such as "honest," "hard-working," "kind," and "fun." Central or important traits can guide behavior, especially when they are salient for personal reasons or if they have been activated by the context (e.g., Snyder & Swann, 1978). We feel uncomfortable if we behave in ways that are inconsistent with important aspects of our selves.

Cialdini and his colleagues drew on these ideas in developing a strategy for "undermining the undermining effect of reward." They used a reward (one of 5 attractive prizes, chosen by the child) to motivate children to try a behavior, but then offset or "undermined" that external motivator by attributing the child's behavior to a personal trait. Children were given a reward, but were then told "... you look like the kind of [girl/boy] who understands how important it is to [do the desired behavior], and who really wants to be good at it." The children then learned and practiced the desired behavior. During a free period later, when children could choose to do the behavior or not, the researchers measured how well they did the activity (i.e., an index of "wanting to be good at it"). Children who were told that they "appeared to have the trait" produced better work during the free play compared to children who were only given the reward. Furthermore, the "trait" instruction had this positive impact whether it was made before or after the learning and practice period, so it appears to be a robust effect.

How can such labeling be effective? Research on the "malleable self" indicates that people have complex views of themselves, and behave in accord with which aspect is salient or relevant at the time (see, for example, Linville, 1987; Rhodewalt & Agustdottir, 1986; Snyder & Swann, 1978). Therefore, we believe such labeling is a strategy worth evaluating for its utility in service-learning, as

long as it is used honestly. For example, students working with youth in the children's garden are observed for a while. If they have unique personal traits desirable in this context, they may be told that they have a "vivacious" or "engaging" personality to which "children will be attracted." It's natural and honest, and may offset the undermining effects of required service.

In addition to such self-concept- or "trait"-related strategies, there are ideas based in traditional learning and reinforcement literatures. Indeed, many researchers have struggled with the puzzle of how to initially use rewards or other external inducements to get people started on a behavior, while using other means to eventually wean them away from this external orientation. This may be especially useful when activities are not immediately appealing, such as difficult tasks that require some level of skill to be satisfying (e.g., Lepper, Greene, & Nisbet, 1973; McLoyd, 1979). One approach comes from an extensive research literature that shows that inconsistent or variable rewards result in the most persistent behaviors.

This finding has been translated into everyday activities, such as riding mass transit and reducing energy consumption. The translation technique is to *add uncertainty* to whether participants are rewarded. Thus, people might be induced to try service because of an external incentive, but when it becomes clear that they will not receive that reward, they turn to the task itself (saying to themselves, "it's challenging and fun") or to internal motivators ("I believe it's important"), to explain their behavior. One such approach is to *randomly reward* people seen engaging in the desired behavior. Another is to use an *unlikely reward*, such as asking people to pay full fare for a bus ride, and then inform them that the payment enters them in a lottery for a modest rebate or gift (see Everett & Watson, 1987, pp. 1000 ff; see Cook & Berrenberg, 1981, for more examples of this technique). The idea here is to offer a reward as an incentive, but make that reward so unlikely or inconsequential that people eventually attribute their behavior to their own internal reasons rather than to the proffered reward (Cialdini, 1993).

A related example comes from the energy crisis of the 1970s. In this case, researchers *suggested but did not promise* that a reward would be forthcoming if households reduced their energy consumption. People in the reward group might have their names published in the newspaper as successful energy conservers. This group reduced energy consumption substantially. And when the reward failed to materialize, participants maintained the behavior—in theory because they figured out their own internal reasons for conserving. A comparison group given

instructions but not expecting any publicity hardly changed its energy use at all (Pallak, D. A. Cook, & Sullivan, 1980). We do not encourage deliberate lying, but could imagine adapting this strategy to service-learning, such as by fulfilling the proffer of publicity but limiting the exposure (such as a list of names in an in-house publication, making the list of names so long and in such small font that the reward is clearly minimized, and so on). For us, the self-concept emphasis and uncertain delivery of reward described above are more ethical ways to proffer a reward but minimize its ability to undermine long-term commitment.

In a structured academic setting, reducing the salience of a requirement may be hard to achieve because students are so aware of grades and academic requirements. But there are many opportunities to reduce the importance of the requirement and increase students' emphasis on other rewards or reasons for their service activities. In the children's garden, for example, after each volunteer session, students and staff discuss the positive and negative experiences of the day. After evaluating the session, they discuss their role and the long-term implications of their work in the garden. This reinforces an understanding of the importance of their work and may minimize the salience of service as a requirement. An additional step would be to begin talking casually about service lifestyles in a general way, allowing the student to open the question of their own future plans. For example, in casual interactions, staff might introduce students to adults who help out in the garden "because they enjoy making a contribution" and "getting out of the house." Thus, in multiple settings and in subtle ways, staff can encourage students to think more broadly, outside the bounds of their course requirements.

#### *The Service Setting: Choice, Control, and Creation of Interest*

So far, we have emphasized choices within the classroom or university structure. We turn next to choices and opportunities at the service setting itself.

4. *At the service setting, how much autonomy does the student have in day to day activities, and is this complemented by enough guidance so the student can be successful?*

The same issues raised about students' choice over whether and where to serve can be raised about their choice and control at the service-learning site. Iisley (1990) interviewed a host of volunteers in a variety of settings. He identified the following 8 factors that contribute to volunteers' commitment to continue at the setting. Like us, Iisley believes that situations can be structured to encourage commitment and long-term service (see especially Chapters 2 and 3

on sustaining volunteer motivation and commitment). Although his findings may not be relevant to all service-learning projects, they are worth considering. Note the themes of choice and control (through participation in decision making, #'s 1, 4, 5) and personal competence (#'s 2, 3, 5, 6, and 8), both components of intrinsic motivation.

1. Allow volunteers to participate in problem solving and significant decision making.
2. Assign volunteers to tasks and roles that fit their individual needs and interests.
3. Give volunteers work that offers opportunities for both personal development and meaningful service.
4. Soon after volunteers join the organization, work out explicit agreements that specify a feasible commitment of time and other resources and allow for personal variations in time, energy, and interest.
5. Provide on-the-job experiences that include constant opportunities for both reflective study and evaluation and for joint planning and design of organizational service goals and action. Much of the volunteers' continuing motivation comes from seeing clear steps that lead toward the group's goals and successfully completing them one by one.
6. Provide a job structure that allows for individual advancement through a series of steps that lead to higher levels of responsibility, skill, and influence.
7. Develop channels for supportive feedback from clients, co-workers, and managers or leaders and for recognition of volunteers by the organization and the community.
8. Encourage meaningful learning activities both inside and outside the organization. (pp.31-32)

Although it may be difficult for faculty to give students autonomy, our experience is that it is well worth considering. For example, in one class, students worked with a local service-learning network to locate a suitable opportunity. They were fortunate to find a service opportunity with an elementary school teacher who also believed in autonomy and choice. It was a remarkable alliance, and the science center built by these university and elementary school students is still in use at the elementary school (Werner, Voce, Gaufin, & Simons, 1999; see also Werner, 1998). Another example comes from a colleague, Fred Montague, who provides numerous kinds of service opportunities and accepts service suggestions from students. A key component is that he always insists that students

think about and justify their decisions. Thus, he makes students convert the external requirement into an internally determined, thoughtful choice.

5) *At the service setting, how positive are the students' experiences while engaged in the task? Do they enjoy the tasks and experience success? Do they have positive social interactions? Can they change their way of doing tasks to maintain interest?*

Although it may seem obvious that students need to enjoy the day-to-day activities of their service-learning, we have heard enough anecdotes about this issue that it is worth analyzing. We focus on four issues: a) the "fit" between the student's preferences and the service activities; b) success at the service site; c) flexibility to create positive experiences at the setting; and d) friendships in service-learning activities.

*"Fit" between service-learner's preferences and the setting.* One way to increase chances that students will enjoy the task is to be very clear about what the duties are at the setting.

*Assuring success.* "Success" is another positive experience in service-learning settings. Indeed, a sub-theme in Ilsley's list (above) is that people prefer success experiences. This is consistent with a variety of lines of work in psychology, beginning with White's (1959) and Bandura's (1986, 1991) seminal work, and continuing today in basic research on intrinsic motivation (Harackiewicz & Manderlink & Sansone, 1984; Sansone & Harackiewicz, 1998; Sansone & Morgan, 1992) If students flounder, they feel incompetent or frustrated. And, if they are not sufficiently challenged, they become bored. But success leads students to believe that they are making a positive and much needed contribution (Werner, unpublished proprietary data).

*Flexibility to create positive experiences.* Imagine a situation in which students enjoy some of their service activities, but dislike others. Sansone and her colleagues (Sansone & Harackiewicz, 1996; Sansone, Weir, Harpster, & Morgan, 1992) argue that when people want to be successful in this kind of situation, they figure out ways of making the less-desirable activities more interesting. This suggests that students should have some flexibility at the service setting. They should have freedom to try out interest-creating strategies. In accord with this philosophy, when NM invites students to the children's garden, she notes that students can use previous projects as guidelines, but also have many opportunities to decide for themselves how to do things if they prefer.

*Friendships as an integral part of service.* As noted above, an important "positive experience" that can accompany service-learning is the possibility that friendships can form. Social relationships can be an

integral part of the total service experience and an important determinant of long-term commitment to a service lifestyle. To support social relations, we encourage students to bring a friend when they participate in large-group service activities. We also encourage people to form friendships at the site. Too often, we see service-learning projects in which the students work in parallel fashion rather than taking advantage of this opportunity to get to know others. Sometimes, it takes a supervisor or other leader to actively go through the crowd, introduce people, and make sure that all the students feel comfortable and are getting to know each other.

Our next consideration is "internalization," or the extent to which people develop attitudes and self-concepts that support a service lifestyle. Internalization occurs slowly, as people think about issues and develop an integrated network of information. Internalization can be a natural side-effect of "reflection," the topic of our final two questions.

#### *Internalizing Service Values*

6) *During reflection, what kinds of attributions does the student make for his or her service involvement?*

7) *During reflection, is there any discussion of students' long-term intentions toward volunteering?*

Reflection is the process of thinking about one's service activities and their relationship to course content. It also provides an opportunity to discuss deeper personal values about one's role in the community, the satisfactions of service, and so on. To strengthen commitment to the idea of service outside of course requirements, we talk in general about the importance and satisfaction of service. Explicitly discussing service as a lifetime activity can have a similar impact. Naturally, we avoid pressuring students into making long-term commitments; it would be inappropriate and would probably arouse reactance. We also suspect that emphasizing personal rewards from service is more important than stressing the needs of the community, although both are important to emphasize in reflection discussions.

#### **Discussion**

In this article, we have reviewed common service-learning structures (rules and management principles) and proposed that many have the potential to unwittingly undermine students' intrinsic interest for both the immediate service project and long-term service. We posed seven questions people could ask about service requirements and suggested answers that would be least likely to undermine long-term service. Although our ideas are grounded in extensive research literatures, our evidence is based on personal experiences and conversations with service-learning students. It should be followed by

more systematic qualitative and quantitative data collection.

Our approach contrasts with the notion that we can use requirements to get people to "try" service as a way to get them interested in a service lifestyle. By this view, once students discover service's intrinsic rewards, they will become psychologically committed and maintain a life of service. It is similar to incentive strategies, such as the use of free samples and sale prices to get people to try a new product; if the product is worthwhile, people will be willing to purchase it at full price. In service, we suspect this approach works with a small minority of students—those who are intrigued by the idea of service but are too shy to get started on their own. However, most students do not fit this profile, and even for them, negative experiences can undermine future interest. Furthermore, as reviewed above, research with children and adults indicates the opposite pattern—behavior continues only as long as the external inducement is provided. It depends on what one wants: if one wants to induce and maintain behavior with external sanctions, that's fine. But if one wants people to sustain service behaviors, alternative approaches such as those described in this article should be considered.

Social psychologists (our background) tend to emphasize situational influences on behavior. An alternative view is "personality," or the idea that people who are long-term community servers are different from those who are not (e.g., Fitch, 1987). By this view, students come into the classroom with or without a pre-existing interest in service, with or without a sense of responsibility and caring, and faculty cannot influence the students. Students with "service" personalities will volunteer happily, those with "nonservice" personalities will resist or refuse to participate.

Although we agree that many students come predisposed to serve, we also believe that situations can be created that arouse interest, even in "nonservice" types of students.<sup>4</sup> As stressed in the present article, the structure of situations can contribute to personal changes that strengthen a "nonservice" student's commitment to service, or undermine the emerging values (Ilsley, 1990). Furthermore, with effort, faculty can create situations that take advantage of pre-existing personal factors. An example of this pertains to how to announce service-learning opportunities. By being as specific as possible about the activities and personal rewards, one can optimize the fit between student and setting.

As a general principle, as Clary, Snyder & Stukas (1998) recommended, service-learning requirements should avoid undermining students' preexisting desires to serve. These authors concluded that how

students construe the service-learning opportunity is an important determinant of their future plans regarding service. As they said, "...only those individuals who would not otherwise be volunteering... or who feel that it would take external control to get them to volunteer... may find their future intentions undermined by a requirement to volunteer" (p. 63; see also Clary, Snyder & Stukas, 1998). In essence, they suggested that students already disposed to serve are robust, and likely to construe even mandatory service in positive ways. We suspect that the ideas proposed above for "softening" the impact of required service will be particularly useful for these favorably-disposed students. By encouraging choice and control over when, where and how to undertake service, we can increase chances that these students will construe their participation as voluntary.

The concepts of "choice" and "control" over whether to undertake a service project take us back to the description of student involvement in the children's garden that opened this article—the three students who appeared to enjoy working in the children's garden, but never returned once the quarter was complete, compared to the three who continued in service. We suspect that whereas we viewed it as their completely voluntary decision to get involved, the three students viewed service-learning as a way to fulfill a new graduation requirement—a requirement that we had forgotten about. As long as that was their predominant orientation, it is not surprising that service did not become an enduring part of their repertoire. Had we realized it at the time, we could have taken more care to use reflection and day to day interaction to offset this external pressure and give these students the same chance as the long-term students to develop a more internalized value toward a lifelong service ethic.

### Notes

We thank Irwin Altman, Irene Fisher, Charlie Shimp, and Barbara Brown for their very many helpful conversations about the theory and practice of service-learning. We also thank our colleagues Carol Sansone and Jessi Smith for their help in negotiating the complex literature on intrinsic motivation (naturally, any errors are ours, not theirs).

<sup>1</sup> There is an extensive and sometimes controversial literature on intrinsic motivation. (See, for example edited volumes by Lepper & Greene, 1978 and Sansone & Harackiewicz, in press; two recent meta-analyses, Cameron & Pierce, 1994 and Deci, Koestner & Ryan, 1999, and related commentaries, one in *Review of Educational Research*, vol 66, 1996, and the other in *American Psychologist*, vol 53, 1998.) Unfortunately, there is little research on the long-term consequences of reward for everyday activities.

<sup>2</sup> We assume that children can be socialized into valuing certain outcomes, such as pride in their work, preference for challenging tasks, enjoyment of problem solving, and so on. For present purposes, we consider these to be internal motivators, even though they might have been taught by outsiders. We also acknowledge that some rewards involve a combination of internal and external factors. An example of this would be someone who resonates to social praise: the social praise is external, but the fact that the person responds to this is an internal factor. Such fine-grained analyses are beyond the scope of the present analysis.

<sup>3</sup> Consistent with this, two kinds of rewards do not undermine intrinsic interest: unexpected rewards, and feedback rewards—rewards that serve primarily as a signal that the recipient is doing a valued task well.

<sup>4</sup> We imagine that "service personality" is distributed normally in the population. Ideas about structural features that increase interest in service would probably have limited success with extremely anti-service students. In a "triage" analogy (those who will make it without assistance, those who will make it only with assistance, and those who are hopeless), we are aiming at both students who will engage in service on their own (to avoid undermining this initial interest) and students who will "make it" with assistance. We do not disregard or abandon the third group, the "hopeless" cases. We believe the ideas presented in this paper are relevant to them, but it may be more difficult to determine how best to reach them.

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