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Short-Term Urban Service Trips:
Relevance in Ministry and
their Impact on Adolescents' Perception of the City and Continued Service

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Abstract

Short-term urban service trips that include active service, education and guided reflection are an appropriate introduction to urban ministry for adolescents. Eighteen adolescents were interviewed at the end of a week-long service trip facilitated by Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection in Chicago, and then interviewed again four months later. Short-term urban service trips develop and positively influence adolescents' perception of the city. Adolescents' involvement in community service post-trip was not generally influenced by their experience; involvement is correlated with their pre-trip activity.

Short-Term Urban Service Trips:
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Religion is important to many American adolescents. As adolescents experience an increasingly urban world around them, their Christian worldview must be reflected in light of this urban environment. Education and experience that apply adolescents' faith in this unique setting is necessary. Experiential education and service-learning are quickly becoming popular methods in the education ring. Additionally, short-term service or mission trips are becoming more prominent in Christian culture. The impact of these trips has rarely been studied, especially after the adolescent has left the environment of service. By interviewing 18 adolescents who took part in a week long service program during the summer of 2006, this research project has concluded that adolescents' perception of the city, after participating in a service program, remains consistent and positive in the months following their experience. Adolescents' involvement in service activities is not greatly impacted by the trip; their involvement coordinates with their service history prior to the week-long encounter.

According to the United Nations, most world cities increased in population between 1975 and 2003, and will continue increasing into 2015.¹ The United States census projects that the population will shift from 46% to 58% urban between 1996 and 2020.² An urban area is defined as incorporated cities, towns, villages and borough with a population >2,500 people; unincorporated territory in the "urban fringe" of cities with a population > 50,000; and unincorporated places with >2,500 inhabitants defined by the Census Bureau.³ In 2003, 48.3% of the world's population lived in urban areas.⁴ By 2030 in more developed regions of the world, such as the United States, 80.8% of the population will reside in the city.⁵ As the masses continue to flow into the city, our nation and world continue to adopt an urban lens in all facets of life. According to Edward Soja, professor of Urban Planning at the University of California, Los Angeles, "As we enter the new millennium, the field of urban studies has never been so robust, so expansive in the number of subject areas and scholarly disciplines involved with the study of cities, so permeated by new ideas and approaches...It may in fact be the best of times and the worst of times to be studying cities, for while there is so much that is new and challenging to respond to, there is much less agreement than ever before as to how best to make sense, practically and theoretically, of the new urban worlds being created."⁶ As religion and faith must "make sense" in the light of urbanization, ministry must also adapt with approaches alternative to traditional ministry.

Persons seeking to serve God in the city have encountered a disconnect between traditional ministry and the requirements for serving an urban population. Successful rural and

¹ United Nations. (2004, March). *Urban Agglomerations 2003*. Retrieved October 16, 2006, from http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/wup2003/2003urban_agglo.pdf

² Bureau of the Census. (1996, September). *World Population at a Glance: 1996 and Beyond*. Retrieved October 16, 2006, from http://www.census.gov/ipc/prod/ib96_03.pdf#search=%22urban%20population%20trends%22

³ U.S. Census Bureau. (1998, June). *Population of the 100 Largest Cities and Other Urban Places in the United States: 1790-1990*. Retrieved October 16, 2006, from <http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0027.html#urban>

⁴ United Nations, 2004.

⁵ United Nations. (2006, October). *Urban and Rural Areas 2005*. Retrieved October 16, 2006, from http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/WUP2005/2005WUP_urban_ruralchart.pdf

⁶ Soja, E. (2000). *Postmetropolis: Critical studies of cities and regions*. United Kingdom: Blackwell, xii.

suburban models fail to pervade urban culture. In a city that never sleeps, one defined hour of Sunday morning worship does not project the image of an available God. Although “we have always done it this way”, churches must be open and embrace the (possibly counter) culture of the city. In order to embrace the culture of the city, one must be connected to the gifts and needs of the people. Urban servant Shane Claiborne tells a story of squatting in an abandoned cathedral in North Philadelphia with a group of homeless mothers and children. A local church with great intentions sent a giant box of microwave popcorn to the families who did not have a microwave or much electricity. Later that week, the mafia gave bicycles to each child and a turkey to each family.⁷ The latter group was more familiar with the needs and strengths of the people, and therefore was able to more effectively support and help them. The only way to break the disconnect between the church and the city is to become immersed within the city, like the mafia. Urban ministers who have had a great impact are those that live in an inner city neighborhood amongst gangs, drugs and crime, send their children to the public school, and are committed to the community as a whole instead of a church building.

Robert D. Lupton, founder and director of Family Consultation Service, has chosen to spend his life serving his neighbors in inner city Atlanta. He writes, “The institutional church seems baffled by the changes forced upon it by urbanization. Traditional methods of ‘doing church’ are clearly losing their effectiveness in the city. Yet in spontaneous, inconspicuous ways, the God of history is fitting together new forms for the urban church -bold, compassionate forms adapted to the schedule, cultures, and special needs of the city. Almost all grow out of contact with poor and disenfranchised people. They are often multiethnic or multiracial. They are reinstituting early church practices of sharing food, homes, and material possessions with those in need.”⁸ Lupton acknowledges the need for a deeper understanding of the city by the church, and broadly refers to methods practiced by unconventional Christians immersed in the culture they serve.

As one immersed in the culture he serves, Ray Bakke, professor of ministry at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, has spent over twenty years sharing his family’s lives with people in inner city Chicago. Bakke comments that while international missionaries and ministers receive culturally specific training, there are few programs which institute the same requirements for those entering into urban ministry despite its exhibited differences.⁹ Bakke offers his theology and suggested methods for effective urban ministry in his book *Street Signs*, which include: 1. “Learn to embrace your city as your parish,” 2. “The answers to the city’s needs are found in the city and do not need to be imported from the outside,” 3. “At least 90 percent of all city people come to Christ through relationships,” 4. “We do not start with the needs of the city but rather with the signs of hope,” 5. “The basic functions of the church are the same everywhere, but the forms must be adapted to the context.”¹⁰ Following these principles does not guarantee that every city resident will come to Christ, but rather these guidelines suggest an appropriate attitude and model for effective service. Seeing the hope and resources within the city and building relationships that empower people to love one another are skills that must be learned and understood.

⁷ Claiborne, S. (2006). *The Irresistible Revolution*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 63.

⁸ Lupton, R. (1989). *Theirs is the Kingdom*. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 119.

⁹ Bakke, R. & Sharpe, J. (2006). *Street Signs: A new direction in urban ministry*. Birmingham: New Hope, 58.

¹⁰ Bakke, R. & Sharpe, J., 95, 258-261.

As we consider the increasing urbanization, it is today's youth who must learn to seek hope and practice building relationships, as they will continually find themselves in the midst of urban ministry, whether intentional or circumstantial. In a study conducted by the National Study of Youth and Religion from July 2002 to March 2003, researchers collected a comprehensive and detailed study of American adolescent religion and spirituality. According to the study, nearly three quarters of American adolescents (ages 13-17) are Christians – 52% Protestant and 23% Catholic.¹¹ 51% of youth report the importance of religious faith shaping daily life as very or extremely important and 65% of youth view God as a personal being involved in the lives of people today.¹² For those youth who practice Christianity and value the importance of religious faith shaping every day life, education pertaining to possible and appropriate expressions of Christianity in an urban environment should be recommended, particularly for adolescents unfamiliar with urban culture and issues. As the best way to serve the city is to be in the city, it is important that adolescents learn about the city while in its unique environment. Experiential learning through service trips is an acceptable method for adolescents to begin building education and awareness about urban issues, life, and ministry.

Service trips must follow an intentional method to effectively facilitate learning. The model suggested by researchers is as follows: “Most agree that the process of service-learning involves planning, action, reflection, and celebration, the content and relative stress placed on each of these components are greatly divergent”.¹³ The typical short-term service trip falls under that service-learning category of co-curricular service-learning, defined as; “the combining of service and learning outside the formal school curriculum.”¹⁴ In academic service-learning (service-learning directly connected to an academic course) there are three essential elements. “First, there is a service provided in the community, one that responds to a need that originates in the community; second, students’ academic learning is strengthened; and third, students’ commitment to civic participation, active democratic citizenship, and/or social responsibility is advanced.”¹⁵ These three fundamentals provide the foundation for adolescents to develop through service-learning.

Short-term service trips are co-curricular (unrelated to formal school curriculum), but some programs facilitate the same three elements essential in academic service-learning. The participants in this study each spent one week serving and learning through the methodology and direction of the organization Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection (DOOR). DOOR, under the auspice of the Mennonite Central Committee, is a program that responds to needs originated in the community, enlightens students of urban issues, and strives to instill a desire for social responsibility through continued service.¹⁶ Through facilitated experiences and structured reflection, DOOR presents an environment for service-learning which allows adolescents to investigate how religious faith shapes daily life in an urban environment. Participation in this program serves as an introduction to effective urban ministry by educating adolescents and encouraging them to adopt perspectives conducive to an urban lifestyle.

¹¹ Smith, C. (2005). *Soul Searching: the religious and spiritual lives of American teenagers*. New York: Oxford University Press, 31.

¹² Smith, 41.

¹³ Billig, S. (2003). *Studying Service-Learning: innovations in education research methodology*. (A. Waterman, Ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, viii.

¹⁴ Rhoads, R., & Howard, J. (Eds.). (1998). *Academic service-learning: a pedagogy of action and reflection*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2.

¹⁵ Rhoads & Howard, 3.

¹⁶ DOOR. (2006). Retrieved October 10, 2006 from, www.DOORnetwork.org

Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection: Organizational Background

DOOR has been directing service opportunities for adolescents for over twenty years. Denver Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection (DOOR) began coordinating short-term urban educational experiences in Denver in 1986 under the auspices of Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Urban Ministries, becoming an independent not for profit 501(c)-3 corporation in 1995. Since the late 1990's, multiple organizations have cooperated with the Mennonite Board of Missions to establish a DOOR program in their city. Current DOOR cities include Denver, Atlanta, Miami, San Antonio, Hollywood, and Chicago. In 2001, the cooperating agencies of DOOR changed the name to "*Discovering* Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection," to more appropriately represent the expanding network of cities.¹⁷

The experiences collected from participants in this study reflect their time in Chicago, Illinois. The DOOR program in Chicago began as Chicago Opportunities for Peace and Action (COPA) in 1994. The Mennonite Central Committee Great Lakes board, Illinois Mennonite Conference, and Central District (GC) established COPA's mission, "to provide short-term awareness-raising/service experiences in the city for youth from the MCC Great Lakes region and beyond in a way that challenges participants to reflect on systemic injustices and responsibility as people of faith."¹⁸ COPA joined DOOR in 2000 as an effort to increase efficiency in operation and publicity.

The operation of each DOOR city is impacted by a local board, comprised of individuals from the city who are active in some form of leadership, ministry or service. The local boards' responsibilities include: ensuring DOOR's mission is carried out locally, monitoring and evaluating the City Director and program, providing accountability for the City Director, and establishing, planning, and executing fiscal responsibility at the local level.¹⁹ DOOR has also instituted a minority board, comprised of all willing minority local board members. The purpose of the minority board is to discuss issues of racism within the organization and program with the goal of eliminating institutional discrimination. Each city's program is adapted to its unique environment at the discretion of the local board and full-time City Director, who is in place year round. The City Director organizes and facilitates the schedule of participants year-round, maintains relationships with the agencies participants serve with, and hires and delegates support staff as necessary. The National Director, Glenn Balzer, among other responsibilities, ensures individual city programs are united under DOOR's common faith perspective and philosophy of ministry, available in Appendix A.

The mission of DOOR is as follows: "The DOOR Network exists to provide opportunities which help inform, educate, challenge, and motivate individuals to respond to the issues and concerns facing an increasingly urban world."²⁰ Innovators and supporters of the DOOR program seek to address the changes in an urban society. Through active service, education and guided reflection activities, DOOR seeks to achieve the following purposes.

- DOOR **informs** people by exposing them in a direct way to the city. Participants will spend from one day to one year living in an urban context, working with the various

¹⁷ DOOR. (2006). Retrieved October 10, 2006 from, www.DOORnetwork.org

¹⁸ DOOR. (2006). Retrieved October 10, 2006 from, www.DOORnetwork.org

¹⁹ Balzer, G. (2006). *Local DOOR Boards Roles and Responsibilities*. Author.

²⁰ DOOR. (2006). Retrieved October 10, 2006 from, www.DOORnetwork.org

helping agencies, churches and ministries already present in the community.

- DOOR **educates** people by spending time reflecting on the strengths as well as the needs of urban people and the communities in which they live. Participants will be asked to think about their lives and lifestyles. They will also talk about how Christians can appropriately respond to poverty, racism, and injustice within an urban context.
- DOOR **challenges** people to consider Biblical responses to the issues facing the city, developing in them an awareness of the multiple ministry opportunities available both in the city and in their home town. DOOR motivates people to act in constructive, appropriate and loving ways both now and in the future, challenging individuals to consider ministry and service an essential daily part of living out their authentic Christian faith.²¹

Based upon the mission and purposes of the program, there are three main goals for adolescents spending a week in Chicago with DOOR.

- Participants will have a new awareness of the city and its people.
- Participants will have a new sense of God's presence in the city.
- Participants will have a new desire to be actively involved in ministry and service.²²

DOOR applies numerous methods in attempting to achieve these goals. From the program's home base, to service sites, to lunch bags, there is an increased awareness of participants' presence in and attitude towards the city.

Neighborhood Profile

Chicago, the nation's third largest city, is home to approximately 2.9 million residents.²³ The city is divided into a network of over 70 different neighborhoods, often defined by ethnic and cultural boundaries. The DOOR Chicago program is located in the East Garfield Park neighborhood on the west side of the city. East Garfield Park has a population of 45,647 residents and is 98% African-American.²⁴ When most participants enter East Garfield Park it is the first time they have been a minority. The median age in East Garfield Park is 27.8 years, with 64% of the population 18 years and over. 49.2% of the population is in the work force, as compared to 63.9% of total U.S. population. Similarly 33.8% of families are living below poverty in East Garfield Park compared to 9.2% of the total U.S. population.²⁵ There are 25 public and private schools in East Garfield Park, servicing 14,763 elementary, middle and high school students.²⁶ Of the population 25 years and over, 59.2% are high school graduates or higher, as compared to 80.4% of the total U.S. population. Average household size is 3.25 occupants. 86.7% of housing units are occupied; 70.7% of housing units are renter-occupied,

²¹ DOOR. (2006). Retrieved October 10, 2006 from, www.DOORnetwork.org

²² DOOR. (2006). Retrieved October 10, 2006 from, www.DOORnetwork.org

²³ U.S. Census Bureau (2006). *Population Finder: Chicago, IL*. Retrieved October 20, 2006 from, http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/SAFFPopulation?_submenuId=population_0&_sse=on

²⁴ U.S. Census Bureau. (2000). *Fact Sheet: 60624*. Retrieved October 20, 2006 from, http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en

²⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, *Fact Sheet: 60624*.

²⁶ Local School Directory (2006). *60624 Schools*. Retrieved November 15, 2006 from, http://zip.localschooldirectory.com/zip_search_result.php/zip/60624

while only 29.3% of housing units are owner-occupied. Of total households occupied, 72.1% are family households. 42.3% of total households are run by a female householder with no husband present. 21.5% of total households are a married-couple family. 49.7% of households are with people under 18 years; 26.0% of households are with people 65 years and older.²⁷

Facilities

First Church of the Brethren has hosted DOOR in East Garfield Park since 2001. The church also provides worship space for three congregations as well as day care facilities and offices for the Bethany Brethren Community Center and Crossroads Ministry - an organization which educates corporations about racial reconciliation. In 2005, First Church of the Brethren purchased a house next door and renovated it for the use of the DOOR program. The Faith House now holds the City Director's office, provides support staff housing and is able to host small groups of DOOR participants. The Faith House also provides accommodations for participants of the Mennonite Mission Network's Reaching and Discipling program.

Within the church and Faith House, DOOR has access to a full kitchen, fellowship hall, several classrooms, the sanctuary, restroom and shower facilities, as well as a gated parking lot. Other important amenities for the program include easy access to the city's elevated public transportation system, several bus routes, and Garfield Park, including the Garfield Park Conservatory.

A Week at DOOR Chicago

Throughout the 2006 summer, about 500 youth and adult sponsors came to Chicago to serve under the direction of DOOR. From May 28 through August 11, an average of 50 participants, with a typical ratio of 1 adult sponsor to 5 youth, stayed in First Church of the Brethren from Sunday evening until noon Friday. The groups represented 13 different states and 25 different congregations; generally, multiple groups participated each week. Participants slept in the balcony of the sanctuary and classrooms separated by gender. Breakfast and dinner are prepared and served at the church and supplies for bagged lunches are provided. Throughout the week, participants completed chores such as cleaning the bathrooms, trash, cleaning the fellowship hall, and meal preparation and clean-up.

Orientation

Sunday evening orientation is opened with praise and worship as well as commissioning. The city director and assistant director provide basic information about the city, the neighborhood, the program's focus, the weekly schedule, rules and also facilitate several activities to get to know the participants and their backgrounds. During the second half of the evening the youth participants meet with support staff and sponsors meet with the directors. During youth reflection, the support staff facilitates more group building activities, begins reflection, gives building tours and provides more general information about relating in the city. As a warm-up exercise, youth are read Psalm 23, and then shown artist Timothy Ladwig's illustrated, urban interpretation of the verses.²⁸ Youth are then asked to respond to questions about their expectations about the week, as well as fears and excitement generated by the city.

²⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, *Fact Sheet: 60624*.

²⁸ Ladwig, T. (1993). *Psalm Twenty-Three*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers.

As adult sponsors meet with the directors, they divide their youth into work teams, review the schedule for service sites and address other rules, concerns and expectations.²⁹

Service Sites

DOOR Chicago works with over 20 different secular and faith-based service organizations, listed in Appendix B. Participants serve with four different agencies in teams of four to six youth and a sponsor, generally guided by a support staff member. Work days range from three hours to eight hours depending on the demands of the agency. Tasks may include preparing food in a soup kitchen, being a teacher's aide at a pre-school, urban gardening, construction, or playing games at a senior center. Participants are encouraged to stretch themselves and to constantly be aware of the face of God in the city.

Each participant is given at least one day out of the week to travel to their work site by public transit, the Chicago Transportation Authority (CTA). This includes riding the bus and/or the El, Chicago's rail system. While on CTA, participants get a more personal view of the city than if they were shuttled around in their mini-vans all week. The CTA transports 1.5 million customers on an average weekday; this experience allows participants to interact with city residents outside of the service sites and take part in an every day activity for many city residents.³⁰

Throughout the week, support staff members discuss multiple issues with the participants, including gentrification and institutional discrimination within the city. Participants are informed while they are in a neighborhood in the process of gentrification, or while they are riding the El, which provides more frequent stops to the rich, North side of the city. All participants are also taken on a tour of Chinatown, one of Chicago's distinct neighborhoods. This provides another opportunity to witness and discuss the diversity within the city and the pros and cons of separation. Support staff members are also able to debrief with participants if they are distressed by panhandlers or other encounters throughout the day.


Evening Speakers and Reflections

On Monday and Tuesday after an evening meal, the participants listen to a speaker as part of reflection. All of the speakers are from Chicago and provide a variety of messages relating to calling or urban issues the participants have encountered, such as gentrification and homelessness. Appendix C includes a brief description of speakers.

Evening reflection is led by the directors and support staff members and guided by journals provided by DOOR. On Monday evening participants reflect on the call for Christians to serve and are led to discuss situations in which they felt uncomfortable. Participants are called to react to a series of quotations relating to Christian's call to service. Tuesday evening reflection focuses on relationships and interpersonal encounters which have occurred at service sites, on public transportation or within another context during the week. The evening reflections supplement education initiated during the work day and provide an opportunity for participants to develop an understanding of how they were impacted. Appendix D includes evening reflection materials.

²⁹ Dutt, K. (2006). *Sponsor Orientation*. Author.

³⁰ Chicago Transit Authority. (2006). *CTA Overview*. Retrieved November 20, 2006 from, <http://www.transitchicago.com/welcome/overview.html>



Lunch Bag

At the beginning of the week, participants are given one brown paper bag to carry their lunch in for the week. This activity is designed to bring awareness to the overall wastefulness of our society and an analogy is made to how we tend to 'throw out' people who we deem as not contributing to society. We often disregard people in the same way we disregard a paper bag when both are able to continue as productive members of society when treated respectfully and with care. This encourages participants to be thoughtful throughout the week and is a symbolic reminder that people will have a brighter future when we treat them with care, love, and respect.

Dollar Meal

On Thursday morning, the last day of the week spent at service sites, the City Director presents each participant with one dollar. They are instructed to find their own dinner after work without adding any of their own resources and are not permitted to return to the church for supplies or equipment. Money found on the street or donated, so long as the donator is fully aware of the situation, is valid. This activity is designed to make the participants think about resources, identify barriers, understand a little of what it is like to worry about your next meal and become more aware of a situation facing millions of people every day, including many of the people they met within the past week.

Final Reflection

The final reflection of the DOOR week takes place Thursday evening and Friday morning. Thursday evening the entire group gathers at a public park on Lake Michigan with a view of the skyline. Participants are led in songs of praise and worship, followed by a message based on Romans 12:1-5 and the many functions within the body of Christ. Participants are asked to verbally reflect upon whom they saw performing what function throughout the week. Participants and staff are invited to take communion and then retreat to their respective church groups for continued overall reflection.

On Friday morning reflection is opened with a song by Chris Rice, *The Face of Christ*, to encourage participants to think about where they saw the face of God in the city this week. Participants are then asked to select and share one word which describes their week (not good, bad, fine, awesome or okay). They are then instructed to construct one sentence about their week to share with the group. This activity provides an opportunity for participants to reflect on their trip as whole and prepare to share with their family and friends, who will want to hear about their experience. Participants are then directed into their respective work teams and instructed to create an action plan. This is to help them begin to incorporate what they have learned throughout the week at home. The action plan consists of something they can do individually or as a group to continue serving in their home community. As a final activity, participants are provided paper and an envelope to write a letter to themselves to tell a story, or write a verse, or even the name of a person they want to remember in several months time. The confidential letters are mailed by the city director approximately six months after the participants' week at DOOR.

As these activities combine for an intense week of serving, learning, and reflection, it is DOOR's hope that participants will take with them an increased awareness of the city and its people, a new desire to serve, and a new sense of God's presence in the city. Encounters at service sites and on CTA allow participants to connect with people in the city on several

different levels. Through guided reflection about these experiences, participants are able to connect their experiences with the work of God. The final reflective periods allows participants to consider their experiences and form a plan to apply their experiences in their home communities. To look at the effectiveness of these modalities, research was conducted to collect participants' perceptions of the city, perceptions of God in the city, and service involvement. DOOR's goals align with the suggestions of successful urban servants, so if met, it is a program which will introduce adolescents to an appropriate expression of urban faith.

Research Study

Purpose

Through interviews, this research qualitatively examines the effects of a short-term urban service trip, as implemented by DOOR Chicago, on participants' perception of the city and involvement in service. Through two interviews, the study has recorded participants' self-reported perception of change throughout the week, and then revisits participants three to four months later to glimpse at long range effects of the short-term experience.

Participants

All participants completed a week of service and reflection with DOOR Chicago between June 4, 2006 and July 28, 2006 by taking part in each of the aforementioned program activities. Eighteen adolescents between the ages of 18 and 20 were interviewed. Seven participants were male and 11 participants were female. Seven participants are from cities with a population under 5,000. Seven participants are from cities with a population between 5,000 and 50,000. Four participants are from cities with a population greater than 50,000. Participants interviewed were representative of the group at large, both in gender and hometown. The 18 participants represented 12 different churches and eight different service weeks. Fourteen of the 18 original participants completed the second interview. Ten participants were female and 4 participants were male. See Appendix E for tables.

Materials and Measurement

Materials required for the study included an informed consent waiver, a copy of the interview questions, a pen for taking notes, and a digital audio recorder. The first interview consisted of seven open-ended questions with the purpose of collecting the participants' perception of the city as well as previous, current, and expected commitment to service. Example questions include: Have you been on any other short term service or mission trips? Describe them briefly. Are you engaged in regular service activities at home? Has your week at DOOR changed the way you view the city? How? Clarifying questions were asked as needed throughout the interview. Appendix F includes a full interview schedule.

The second interview consisted of five open-ended questions with the purpose of collecting participants' long-term perceptions of service and the city. Example questions include: Has your involvement or interest in service activities changed since your participation with DOOR? If so, how? Do you have plans to participate in another short-term service or mission trip? How do you describe the city? Appendix F includes a full interview schedule.

Procedure

On the first evening of the participants' service trip, a general announcement giving the purpose of and qualifications for the study was made during youth orientation. Participants were

asked to approach the researcher throughout the week to express a desire to participate in the study. All participants who expressed an interest were interviewed. The first interview took place on Friday morning, the last day of the participants' service trip. All interviews were conducted privately in a conference room. Participants reviewed and signed the informed consent waiver, then filled in their contact information on the interview schedule. All participants agreed to be recorded. Interviews ranged from 3-8 minutes with the researcher taking notes to supplement the recording.

The second interview took place via email or telephone communication between October 20, 2006 and November 3, 2006. Participants were contacted by the researcher via email or telephone to set-up an interview time. All participants agreed to be recorded. Interviews ranged from 3-7 minutes with the researcher taking notes to supplement the recording. Participants who chose to complete the interview via email received the interview questions as an attachment and replied when convenient. When necessary, clarification was sought via email by the researcher.

Results

First Interview

Service involvement prior to DOOR. One of DOOR's goals is to instill a continued interest in service as an expression of Christian living. The majority of participants are active in service prior to working with DOOR, either at home or on other service trips. According to Smith's study on adolescent religiosity, 30% of U.S. adolescents have participated in one or more service or mission trips.³¹ The percentage of youth in this study who have previously participated on a service trip is remarkably higher, at 78%. Though trip participation is high, DOOR encourages participants to adopt service as a regular activity, instead of just an annual event. To accurately describe any change in service activities after their experience at DOOR, participants self-reported community service they took part in prior to DOOR. The majority (83%) of participants were previously active in service endeavors.

Fourteen of 18 participants interviewed have taken part in a short-term service trip prior to their experience at DOOR, including 1 participant who served with DOOR Chicago the previous summer. Of those reporting previous participation, 13 participants reported that their service trips were organized by their church, while 1 reported going on a trip through her high school. Of those participating in service trips, 3 have served internationally and 4 have served with an inner city service program. Of 18 total participants, DOOR Chicago was the first urban service experience for 14 of them.

In addition to intense, short-term service trips, 15 of 18 participants in this study volunteered within the past year in their home community. Most of those who volunteer do so through their church or school; few participants initiate volunteering independently. Eleven of 18 respondents reported that they participated in service activities organized by their church. Nine of 18 respondents participate in service either initiated by themselves, their school, or community groups such as Boy Scouts. Interviewees take numerous roles, including teacher's aide, vacation bible school helper, music lessons, church building maintenance, youth center boards, soup kitchens, retirement homes, street evangelism, 10,000 Villages, Boys and Girls Club, Salvation Army, Special Olympics and tutoring. Three of 18 respondents reported they did not volunteer at home. One participant explained, "We don't have very many opportunities in Hesston."

³¹ Smith, 53.

Most of the participants were active in service prior to their experiences at DOOR Chicago. However, their limited service in an urban environment provided DOOR with an opportunity to lay a foundation for service unique to the city. Recording participants' perception of the city after a week at DOOR expressed their reactions to the city in light of a new service experience.

Perception of city immediately following a week at DOOR. One of DOOR's goals for participants is to increase their awareness of the city and its people. Especially when traveling to the city for a service trip, many adolescents conjure a negative image of the city and feel they must bring God to the city with them. This is a dangerous concept and, according to Bakke, the best resources are those already present, not those brought from outside.³² DOOR emphasizes the strengths over the weaknesses of the city and hopes that youth will carry that image with them when they leave. Throughout the week, participants are introduced to new people, organizations, neighborhoods and urban issues in an effort to expand their knowledge and experience base. Though participants may have similar encounters, their perception of the city will differ according to past experiences as well as present processing.

As participants were interviewed at the end of their DOOR week, they were asked to describe the city. The majority of responses reflected a positive perception of the city, implying that participants leave with a hopeful impression of the city. Of 18 participants, 6 responded with positively connotated remarks, 10 were neutral or mixed and 2 descriptions were negatively connotated. Nine of the participants referred to diversity in their description of the city, while 5 participants commented on the buildings and/or size of the city. The remaining 4 participants replied in more general terms.

Positive responses often referred to the beauty participants saw in the city. One participant remarked, "[The city is an] amazing beautiful place, I love it here." Another replied, "Beautiful. I think both downtown and the West side and such are all beautiful." Other participants describe the city in the context of its people and events instead of its appearance. A participant who grew up in Kansas City intertwined and compared his previous experiences with his interactions and observations while in Chicago. "I've kind of grown up in the city. I'm a fast paced kind of person, spontaneous and on the fly with a lot of things I do. So the city is a place where the pulse of life is very active for me. It's a place where I'm comfortable with the surroundings. Most people don't like the enormity of things or so many people and they get scared about different things that can happen in those situations, but I just like the lively environment. All the different places you can go, its so diverse that sometimes you find a little joint in an alley somewhere that you just didn't know was there. And the cultures - how all the cultures mesh together and interlock. It's been really cool in Chicago because there's a lot more cultures than there are back in Kansas City area." These and similarly enthusiastic remarks made up one third of the responses.

The majority of responses describing the city were of neutral or mixed tones. Many participants reflected on the diversity of the city and several referenced their hometown in order to describe their image of the city. One participant responded, "I think there's a lot of diversity both in economic situations and in the people and in racial situations. All of that was something I hadn't been exposed to for the most part. There is some [at home] but not the extremes there are here, so that was enjoyable." Another participant replied, "It's kind of a scary place for me because I'm from a small town, but I also like the diversity and that you can see different people and experience different cultures." Other responses include: "[The city is] very large and diverse

³² Bakke & Sharpe, 258.

from community to community. You can have very different experiences that you wouldn't know if you weren't in the city," and, "Chicago is very diverse...I noticed that there are so many layers." "[The city is] busy and vibrant and diverse." These neutral and mixed reflections reference participants' typical environments as they compare those experiences to the diversity they experienced in the city.

Two participants described the city in an obviously negative tone. Both participants were from cities with a population of less than 5,000 people. Their responses were as follows: "[The city is] very close together - a little bit dirty," and "I find it noisy and busy and lots of people." The remainder of these participants' responses did not indicate a completely negative experience at DOOR.

Participants' overall perceptions of the city were generally positive or neutral at the end of their experience. Many participants noted the diversity in the city, indicating that this was something new, or at least different from their usual experiences. These observations and general awareness of the city supplement participants' understanding of how God is entwined in the city.

Perceptions of God in the city. Participants were also asked to respond to the question, "Where do you see God in the city." This question is emphasized throughout their week at DOOR, as one organizational goal is to gain "a new sense of God's presence in the city." Participants overwhelmingly reported seeing God in the people they encountered while in the city. All 18 respondents shared that they had seen the face of God in the people of the city, often referring to children they had met or other volunteers they had worked with. Additionally, participants answered that they had seen the face of God in specific organizations, such as Openlands (an urban gardening project), Missionaries of Charity and Kenwood (both soup kitchens), and St. Martins (a substance recovery house for women and their children).

Participants who reported seeing God in the children of Chicago most commonly told a story of encountering a child's acceptance or being in awe of a child's innocence and ability to play, despite surrounding circumstances. One participant reflected, "I probably saw God mostly in the children just because they still have somewhat of the innocence of a child and they're growing up in dangerous neighborhoods and different situations. There's a lot of kids out there that have tough family lives or their parents are doing drugs or alcohol or are split. Seeing the kids around this area and how they love to go to the park and play and be happy...There's a lot more energy and life and a lot more potential for hope to do its work and for them to experience the way God really is." Another participant responded, "Especially in Chicago I've seen [the face of God] a lot in children. Just their attitudes, despite their circumstances at times they are still happy and just like any other kid anywhere else." Additionally, participants are impacted when they witness child defy their stereotypes of hardened inner city residents, stating, "[I see God] a lot in the people. In the kids, I really, really like kids. Because the kids didn't have a preconceived observation that 'you look different than me' or 'you're someone I haven't met yet,' they just look at you and smile and there aren't any boundaries there. They haven't lost that innocence yet." The image of God in children stood out for multiple participants.

Another common theme in actions and observations which left participants with an image of God is the cooperation and community they witnessed while in the city. One participant stated, "I see it in the different ethnicities and diversity that can all live together and function together. When we were working with the homeless I saw it in the humility that they have when they have to ask for food." Continuing on that theme, another participant responded, "[I see God] in the people mainly, at the soup kitchens. I went to Kenwood and saw God there in the way

people were treating each other and trying to build a community.” The sense of community witnessed also impacted another participant, “Almost everywhere I went it was really cool to see the fact that people are working together who are of very different backgrounds and very different races. It was very cool to see people who were so different be able to work in the same place.” Community present in the city is identified by participants as the presence of God.

Finally, participants reported seeing the face of God in the many volunteers they encountered throughout the week. One participant witnessed God working through the community members her work team joined while gardening. “We went to Openlands and the worker had his grandsons there. They weren’t expecting to meet us and I liked how their grandfather was giving them the influence of what it means to serve without saying anything about it. It was just part of [their] grandfather’s routine and they had been there before.” Several other participants commented on the influence of volunteers in the city, stating, “I see [God] primarily in a lot of the people, especially those who give a lot of their time and energy towards trying to make things better – everyone at DOOR and everyone that I worked with throughout the week at different sites.” Other responses include, “In the huge amount of volunteers that all work to make it a better place to live in is where I saw God this week,” and, “I think in the people who are helping others.” Other participants also witnessed the presence of God in those they were blessed to serve. They reflected, “I saw [God] in the people that I served and in just random people that I saw.” “[In] the people that have very little and have quite a bit more faith than myself or many people I know.” “In all the people that we’ve met and just people who led us while we were serving and [those] who we were actually serving.” As exemplified in the previous responses, participants were aware of the presence of God in the people they encountered while in Chicago.

As indicated by where participants witnessed God in the city, at the end of a DOOR week an awareness of the city and its people pervades the participants. No matter what image participants enter the city with, all who participated in this study left with at least one instance of seeing God already there and at work in his people. To gain a better understanding of the program’s effect, participants’ perceptions at the beginning of the week must be considered.

Reported perceptions of change. In an effort to note any change in perception, participants were asked in the first interview, “Has your week at DOOR changed the way you view the city? If so, how?” Sixteen participants responded that their view of the city had changed, while 2 reported it had not. For those whose perception of the city altered, the shift was most frequently positively connotated. Self-reported changes in perception of the city most frequently reflected a new awareness of the city and its people.

Nine participants replied specifically that the week showed them a different side of the city. Frequently, participants had visited the city or a city before, but many participants reported discovering new aspects of the city. For example, one reflected, “I’ve been to Chicago before and I’ve always been exposed to the softer side of things where there’s not so much hardship and so much pain., so that showed me there were other aspects to the city, but not necessarily something to be afraid of. The bad side of town isn’t necessarily scary, it’s just different.” Additional responses include, “[My view has changed] in that I’ve never had the opportunity to see the worse parts of the city before. I hadn’t ever seen a soup kitchen or anything like that,” and, “It’s brought to my eyes that Chicago isn’t just this huge glamorous city, but it’s a lot of heart and a lot of kindness too.” As participants wrestle with the difference between their previous trips and current excursion into Chicago, many report, with relief, that they discovered reality. For example, “The only other time I ever came here was when I was on a school trip and

all I did was the touristy things. I came here and I wanted to see the actual city because I didn't get to do that before. It's not as scary as I thought it would be, so I changed my view in a positive way." Also, "I first describe the city as Chicago a fun place, you just go hang out and shop where all the rich cool people go. Now that I have experienced DOOR, I see the other part of the city which is, I would describe as still enjoyable, but its real, its reality, it's the real America that we live in." One participant did not compare her experience to the glamour of downtown like many other participants, but to her preconceived notion of cities. "When I came I thought it would be a lot worse and that the people would be a lot worse than what they really are. There are some of them that can't really help that they are in poverty." Whether it was through visiting new neighborhoods, or visiting soup kitchens instead of tourist attractions, participants were introduced to what one adolescent describes as, "... still enjoyable, but it's real, it's reality, it's the real America that we live in." Participants described their change in perception as a welcomed awakening to the truth.

Five participants specifically reported that the week opened them up to the amount of agencies and people currently serving in the city, also indicative of an increased awareness of the city and God's active presence. One returning participant reported that a second week at DOOR has as much influence as the first week over a year before. "When I came back this year I knew that there was work being done and I knew there were good things happening, but, at the same time, last year I didn't really get the full effect of it. I didn't get to interact with as many people as I did this year. I got to see more their view of things and how much they really do here. So I think this time around I got more of a personal view." Another participant was surprised by the needs he encountered, stating, "You have to be more aware of things that are happening. The food depository makes 90,000 meals a day. I don't like to think that there are that many meals that need to be made each day." Other participants were hopeful, citing the many resources they encountered. "[This week has] given me more hope that there's more good things going on," and, "I think knowing that there are tons of places to help people and to help keep people from the streets and homeless and to help them recover from their past mistakes and stuff like that." Additionally, participants allowed their interactions in the city to change their perception of how they can serve. "How many opportunities there actually are to serve. We went to a bunch of different soup kitchens and drug rehabs and just totally different things we can do to help. When I get back to Olathe I know there are those things to do, and there's probably more than I think, so it'd be good to look into that and see the need and what I can do to help." Some self-reported changes in perception indicated that experiences throughout the week had initiated a deeper awareness of and interest in service.

Several participants responded that there was no change in their view of the city or that they could not describe what or how it had changed. The two participants who reported no change lived in cities with populations greater than 50,000. Two participants reported they could not explain how their week had changed their perception of the city.

Self-reported perceptions of change require strong introspective skills and may not be one hundred percent accurate. However, participants were able to express their current state of mind regarding the city and reflect upon what they learned throughout the week. Recognizing the ongoing service or the many sides of a diverse city is a first step to participants applying what they have experienced and learned.

Daily actions and attitudes. DOOR's aim is also to present participants with a new desire to be actively involved in service and ministry. In addition to reflection throughout the week, participants are given the opportunity to form an action plan to apply what they have

learned throughout the week in their home community. In light of new interactions with the city, increased awareness of service, and an awareness of God, participants were asked if they thought their activities or daily actions would change after participating with DOOR. The majority of participants responded that their attitude would likely change, and several projected an increase in their service involvement. Several participants also responded that any change in their outlook or activities would likely fade.

Two participants responded that their actions would not change. Two participants responded that the trip may influence their thoughts or actions for a short time, but will most likely fade. A participant with previous short-term service experience reflected, "For awhile, but its hard to keep up with that after awhile because you kind of forget how you were changed, but you just keep sharpening it." Another replied, "I would say that they probably wouldn't change a whole lot, not drastically, but usually when you do go on these trips it kind of refreshes our memory that we are not the only ones here and that we do need to help people." This response reflects a temporary increase in awareness.

Seven participants responded that their outlook and/or attitude would likely change as a result of their week, stating, "I think my awareness of the small things in life will change. People's smiles and just little tiny things like that. The influence of saying 'hi' to someone on the street. I'm getting ready to go to college and it's a huge school. So just an awareness of how I walk by people and how I interact with them on a daily basis. Whether they are someone I necessarily talk to or not, there is communication there that I need to be aware of." Other responses include, "I do believe so. I think that because of this week I have grown in my faith, closer to God. My outlook has changed. I really do believe that what I have experienced is an issue in all of the United States," and, "[The week] gave me a sense of purpose that I overlooked. It felt like God was telling me there was a reason why I came to DOOR and it's not an accident that [I am] here serving other people." These participants recognized a change in their outlook and attitude which moved them to adopt a more caring demeanor.

Other participants reported that their adjusted outlook may push them into more service oriented activities as well, projecting, "I think it'll make me a lot more conscious about what I have and about the people who don't have anything. I know it'll definitely push me to get more involved in my community and all of the volunteer work that can be done there." Another participant also responded according to a call for active love. "I think so, just wanting to further glorify God with my life and in ways that are helping other people. Not so much like reading my Bible and praying- which are stuff that I need to do- but also in outward actions towards other people at school and whatnot." These respondents replied with the core of what DOOR is about – changing attitudes which influence action.

The majority of respondents reported that a change had already taken place in their attitude, and several participants projected that their DOOR experience would influence their actions in service. Without an environment saturated in service or their youth pastor looking over their shoulder, participants may or may not continually apply their changes in perception or follow through with their projected actions.

Second Interview

In recognizing that responses obtained on the last day of a service trip are influenced by a 'spiritual high' after an intense mountaintop experience, the participants were interviewed approximately three months after their experience with DOOR Chicago. The second interview was designed to note consistency in participants' perception of the city as well as compare their

involvement in service to levels reported prior to participating in DOOR and their projected involvement after participation. Fourteen of 18 original participants were available for interview approximately 4 months after their week at DOOR Chicago.

Service involvement reported 3 months after DOOR. Of 14 participants available for a second interview, 7 have been involved in some type of service since DOOR. For those students, current service is positively correlated with prior service. Six of seven participants were actively involved in service prior to coming to DOOR. All six of those participants served outside of their church or youth group in some capacity, either initiated independently or through a community group such as Boy Scouts. Of the 7 participants currently taking part in a service activity, 5 participate as instituted by their school.

For the 7 participants not actively serving, 4 expressed an interest in serving but reported time constraints as a barrier to service. A total 5 of the 7 inactive participants reported a lack of time as to why they are not currently involved in service activities.

Participants are more likely to serve if the opportunities are planned for them, such as 11 of 18 participants who previously served as part of their youth group, indicated in the first interview. Five of 7 of those serving currently are doing so through organizations which set-up the experience for the participants. All 14 participants in the second interview are attending an institute of higher education, either college or junior college. For 13 of 14 participants, it is their first year out of high school, so they are adjusting to the various and strenuous demands of college life.

Fourteen of 18 participants took part in service trips prior to DOOR. During the second interviews, 7 participants responded that they hope to participate in another trip, but do not currently have plans. Additionally, 3 participants are forming plans for another short-term service or mission trip within the year. The remaining 4 participants reported that they are unsure of future plans without including projection of a strong desire to participate in another trip.

Participants available for the second interview are not as active in service as they were prior to the first interview. Though the desire is there, time constraints and adjusting to a different, collegiate lifestyle impact their ability to serve. Those participants who are actively involved in service participate in activities initiated and organized by their institution of higher learning, either as campus-wide service events or as requirements for graduation or a specific class. Though participants have not acted upon their hopeful intentions for service as expressed immediately following their DOOR experience, participants have remained consistent in their perceptions of God's involvement in the city.

Perception of city reported 3 months after DOOR. The categories in which participants reported their perceptions had changed during their first interview were emulated in their description of the city in the second interview. This is indicative of a lasting impression of the diversity, layers, and hope they discovered in the city. When asked to describe the city, participants most frequently referred to the different side of the city that they discovered while at DOOR. Diversity was mentioned second most often. There were also references to the people the participants met and witnessed helping others in the city.

Four participants described the city referring to the 'dirty' side of Chicago and cities at large. One participant exclaimed, "I loved the city before I went to DOOR, and I love it even more now because I have seen its 'dirty' side and have seen God's work being done there." Others replied, "I used to only see the good things about the city- tall buildings, glamorous

shopping, the high society parts, but then I was also scared of being in the city because it was unfamiliar and I've heard so many horror stories about it. But after my experiences with DOOR, I've seen the harder parts of the city, but also seen the character of it. The people are not as scary as I first thought once you get a chance to know them and not treat them as inferior," and, "I used to think [the city was] just glamorous, but DOOR opened my eyes and showed me the other side. It is real life, with real people and real issues." A glimpse of hope in the midst of harsh reality is how another participant described her perception of the city. "When I think about Chicago I remember the excellent experiences that I have had there. I remember times of laziness, strolling through Millennium Park, and playing volleyball at the park near the church. But I also remember the serious problems of poverty that I witnessed. I met some truly amazing people through my DOOR experience—a young girl who gave me an unexpected hug at the homeless shelter especially. Chicago is home to tremendous wealth as well as extreme poverty. I view Chicago as a diverse city with many treasures and many challenges." A final response states, "I wasn't in Chicago just for the DOOR program, so I got to see all different sides of the city other than just the areas we were working in. I absolutely love the city; I think it's beautiful and wonderfully diverse. There are areas where the neighborhoods are rougher than others, and that's sad, but I think that even those areas have a lot of potential because the people of Chicago have a lot of heart, in my experience. There are definitely two sides to Chicago - the touristy places and the places the tourists don't know about. I got to see both and I still think Chicago is my favorite city out of all the places I've been to." As participants describe the dirty part of the city, they seem to have slipped away from their previously glamorous ideations, but still enjoy all that the city offers. Participants recall the reality of day-to-day life and still want to be in the city.

Four participants particularly noted diversity when describing the city. "The city is a place where many different ethnicities and backgrounds are represented, creating an environment of diversity. This diversity creates tensions as well as excitement." Participants generally identified the diversity as a positive attribute of the city, especially when they begin to understand the environment. "[The city is] diverse, there is a lot more to it than what you are normally shown as an outsider. Some of that is scary to me, but it's just because I don't understand. When you get to know the people scary becomes beautiful." Their introduction to diversity within the city presented participants with awareness of the depth in an urban environment.

The following descriptions imply a positive perception of the city; however, they cannot be grouped with the majority of responses as referring to diversity or various sides of the city. Statements include, "[Chicago is] as any big city, not without its faults, but lots of fun. The people we worked with were all great and we always managed to have fun wherever we went," and, "[The city is] full of life, there are so many people in the city that want to make things better." A final description of the city states, "I felt Chicago was really dirty compared to where I grew up. I didn't feel safe there the way I do where I am from." The previous response was consistent with the participant's initial description of the city.

The descriptions of the city in the second interview align with participants' reported change in perception about the city. Their perceptions remained stable, as they recall real experiences in the city and do not simply hold an image of riches and glamour or disheartening slums.

Where do you see God? As participants leave DOOR, it is the organization's goal that they will continue to see the face of God where most people do not look, and that they will allow

God in the every day to continually impact their lives. Thirteen of fourteen participants reported seeing God in people surrounding them, which is consistent with where participants saw God in the first interview. Two participants reported seeing God in the nature which surrounds them. Some reported seeing God more in religion than in the everyday. One participant responded, "I go to a catholic school, so I see a lot of God in my school. We pray before many classes, and attend church often." Other respondents reflected on seeing God in less structured environments. "[I see God] in diversity. Growing up in Hesston, Kansas, I wasn't exposed to a lot of different people. This fall I started college at the University of Kansas and there are so many different people in Lawrence from so many different worlds. It amazes me that God can and does move in each one of our lives, though we don't always know it. Because I'm new here, I've started to see God in things I would normally take for granted, for example: unexpected smiles, hugs, self-expression, diversity, families, and especially community." All participants are currently enrolled in some form of higher education (junior college, college or university). The presence of God is strongly associated with what they are currently experiencing and what they are exposed to in an academic environment. "I currently go to a Mennonite university, so it's really easy for me to see God in the people around me and in the material that I study. God is everywhere, working in the lives of my friends, answering prayers, keeping those that I love safe. I've noticed especially that God gives strength to students who are feeling weary with school work." Another participant responded, "I see God everywhere here at Hesston [College]. There is such a passion for him around here...people genuinely want to know him more. I am learning more about myself and myself in Christ by being here in a Christian community." One of the objectives of the DOOR program is to introduce participants to the concept of seeing God in the every day. As participants report such occurrences in the context of their everyday life, there is evidence of that concept. "[I see God in] people - looking at someone passing me. You can tell they've gone through a lot in their life or that they have a story - a message from God to tell me to love on them and not judge them." As participants are aware of God around them, they are more likely to experience compassion for the world around them.

Participants were also eager to tell of seeing God in people relationally close to them. Two participants replied, "In the people who care for me by accepting me for who I am, with all of my flaws. People who won't make judgments on me because of my choices and past show God's love for me, and I try to reciprocate to the people in my life," and, "I see God in my roommate. She is very understanding of everyone and wants to help those that are in need." Another participant reflected on the challenge in observing God's presence. "I always find it difficult to answer this question because a) I don't go around actively looking for God in other people unless I'm consciously reminded to, and b) I believe it is possible to see God in some form in everyone. I mean, there's the 'what you did to the least of these, you did to me' story in the Bible, which implies that God is in that girl I pass in the hallway who looks like she hasn't had a shower in a few days and that guy who sits behind me in class who is very hung over. And then there's the stereotypical answer like I see God in my pastor, or I see God in that person who just held the door open for me and smiled at me. All of these are true, so maybe the question is where *don't* I see God? I guess it's important to try to see a glimpse of God in everyone and everything." Throughout the second interview, the face of God was present in people.

Consistent with responses during the first interview, participants were most likely to see the face of God in people. Participants reported seeing God in random occurrences as well as intentional relationships, also consistent with their first interview.

Summary

The three primary objectives of DOOR as a service-learning program are for participants to: 1. increase awareness of the city and its people, 2. sense the presence of God in the city, and 3. achieve a new desire for service and ministry. If the previously stated objectives of the program are accomplished, participants will have taken a step towards understanding the practice of urban ministry. The completion of these objectives may lead to comprehension of accepted principles of urban ministry, as delineated by Bakke and successfully demonstrated by other urban servants. Based on the results of this research, DOOR appropriately educates participants and therefore begins to lay a foundation for future urban service.

The majority of participants reported that their experience at DOOR opened them to a different side of the city. As participants told of the diversity, new neighborhoods and layers, they expressed a more holistic image of the city than they had experienced prior to their DOOR week. This change in perception of the city was recognized immediately after their experiences and persisted through their second interview approximately four months later. This study did not examine the impact of specific modalities throughout the week, but, as a whole, riding public transportation, visiting a variety of neighborhoods, serving in different agencies, learning about urban issues and reflecting on all of their experiences created a lasting awareness of the city.

All participants in this study were able to describe the presence of God in the city. Additionally, all participants identified the presence of God with people they had encountered throughout the week. This implies both an increased awareness of people in the city as well as God's presence. Participants commented on the innocence of children, the dedication of volunteers, and the humility of people participants were able to serve. Several participants entwined their impression of God in the city with their description of the city in their second interview. This indicates that participants leave the short-term program with a lasting sense of God's presence in the city.

Immediately following the DOOR program, most participants indicated that a change in attitude towards service had taken place and a few participants projected that this shift in outlook would increase their commitment to service. As reported in the second interview, participation in the DOOR program did not influence participants to increase service activities. Half of participants interviewed had taken part in some form of community service after their experience at DOOR, as compared to about eighty percent of participants who were involved in service prior to coming to DOOR. There are many variables which effect participants' involvement, including 13 of 14 respondents who are in their first semester of higher education. Also, most participants who were active prior to DOOR served as part of their church or youth group. Beginning college takes most participants away from their organization or group which organized their service activities. Of seven participants who have served post-DOOR, five serve as instituted by their college or university. Of the seven participants who have served post-DOOR, six served independently (not associated with their youth group) prior to DOOR. This indicates that there is a stronger connection to the participants' overall service history than their experience at DOOR alone. Based on this connection, it should be recommended that youth pastors and leaders provide service encounters throughout the year in addition to a concentrated short-term summer experience.

Spending a week at DOOR Chicago does not prepare adolescents for immediate immersion in an urban ministry environment. DOOR does offer an appropriate service-learning foundation that increases participants' awareness of the city and its people while increasing their sense of God's presence. Not every participant in this study fell in love with the city or will

return as a resident. However, DOOR's methods of education align with current writings on urban ministry by emphasizing hope and resources within the city, building relationships through respect and embracing the city as a whole.

Suggestions for Research

Generally more research should be conducted on service-learning as well as adolescent spirituality. For organization specific future research, I would suggest gathering participants' perceptions and descriptions of the city before the start of their week at DOOR and then at the end of the week. This would more reliably report changes in observations and understanding, instead of relying on the participants' perception of changes which have occurred. I would also recommend following participants actions for a year or more. Though three months involves a longer relationship than is generally available in this program, long-term impressions and changes cannot be determined in a matter of months. Additionally, a study focusing on the impact on perception of the city and commitment to service for young adults working as summer staff would provide a completely different level of comprehension of the education and awareness the DOOR program facilitates.

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Appendix A

Guiding Principles of DOOR

Common Faith Perspective

“We at DOOR are committed to an Anabaptist/Mennonite faith. We consider Jesus as our model for living for God and the answer to human need, hostility, and violence; God commands us to respect life, love all people (even our enemies), reconcile broken relationships, and pursue justice. Our bond with other followers of Jesus transcends all racial, social, economic and national barriers. We also view the Bible as our primary guide for faith and life”

Philosophy of Ministry

“DOOR exists to challenge individuals to consider ministry and service an essential, daily part of living out their authentic Christian faith. By meeting, learning from and working with diverse urban people, participants give and receive the love that God has for each person. Through these relationships they will explore together how to be faithful to Christ's call to be "salt" and "light" in today's turbulent world. DOOR seeks to provide ministry opportunities that will be both helpful to local people and lead to a deepened understanding of faith and ministry.

Participants will explore the strengths as well as the needs of urban people and communities and will participate in various approaches to ministry in the city. The goal is that participants will have a new awareness of the city and its people, a new sense of God's presence in the city and a new desire to be actively involved in ministry and service. Participants will be encouraged to reflect on their experiences and to explore ways in which new insights gained can be applied to their situation at home and future ministry. In this way DOOR seeks to motivate the church to be actively involved in bringing to reality the Kingdom of God in the world”

Appendix B

Service Organizations

Accolade Senior – Adult Day Center
Ada Niles – Adult Day Center
Agape – Community Bible School Program
Bethany Brethren Community Center – Lunch program for youth in East Garfield Park
Bethel Mennonite Church – Building maintenance
Bishop Conway Residences – Assisted Living Facility
Cathedral Shelter – Homeless ministry (food pantry, thrift store, Christmas program, social services)
Catholic Charities – Umbrella organization for various non-profit services
Catholic Charities Commodities – Food packaging and distribution center
Chicago Mennonite Learning Center – Volunteer run elementary school
Christian Peacemaker Teams - Headquarters
City Farm – Urban vegetable garden
Cornerstone Community Center – homeless ministry (Shelters, thrift store, social services)
Deborah's Place – Women's shelter
Englewood Mennonite Church – Bible school assistance
First United Methodist Church at the Chicago Temple – Weekly lunch program
Foster Care – Social services office
Gads Hill – Head Start
Greater Chicago Food Depository – Cook County food collection and distribution center
Green Castle – Senior citizen apartments
Kenwood United Church of Christ – Daily lunch program
Little Brothers – Provides social support for senior citizens
Living Water Community Church – Assisted with bible school program
Missionaries of Charity – Daily lunch program
Openlands – Urban garden project
Salvation Army – Daily lunch service for residents
St. James – Day care and pre-school
St. Martin De Porres – Residential recovery facility for women
St. Sylvester's – Clothing collection and distribution
St. Vincent's – Clothing donation collection and distribution center
Vital Bridges – Grocery services for clients with HIV/AIDS
West Suburban Care – Food and housing assistance

Appendix C

Speakers

Brenda Matthews

A hip-hop poet shares her work and challenges participants to find their calling as men and women of God.

Men of Destiny

A group of men who met in a substance rehabilitation program and now share their testimonies through story and song.

Mary Scott Boria

An active member of the community, Mary Scott provides history and information about Chicago and East Garfield Park from her unique perspective.

Danny Lopez

A native Chicago resident, Danny leads worship and encourages participants to seek a close relationship with the Lord.

Grady and Lois Snyder

An older adult couple who are members of First Church of the Brethren. Lois grew up in East Garfield Park, and the pair candidly shares how the neighborhood has changed over the last fifty years.

Appendix D

Reflection Materials

Monday Evening Reflection

Participants are asked to read the following quotations. Participants then verbally respond to how these quotations reflect their experiences at DOOR thus far.

- "Be the change you wish to see in the world." Gandhi
- "The ultimate measure of a person is not where he or she stands in the moments of comfort and convenience, but where she or he stands in times of challenge and controversy." Martin Luther King Jr.
- "You had to decide: Am I going to change the world, or am I going to change me? Or maybe change the world a little bit, just by changing me?" Sadie Delany
- "As a Christian, I cannot not care about the environment, about homelessness and poverty, about racism and religious persecution, about justice and violence. God doesn't give me that option." Philip Yancey
- "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." Margaret Mead

Tuesday Evening Reflection

Participants are instructed to reflect upon the people they have impacted and, more so, the people who have impacted them. Participants are read the following poem and are guided to respond to the following questions

Boris and Yuki and Sarah and Sue
 And Karl and La'tanya, Marie too.
 Dreamed of the world
 And it was spinning
 And all the people
 Just talked about winning.
 The wind was burning.
 The water was churning.
 The trees were bending.
 Something was ending.
 And all the talk was "we" and "they"
 The children hugged themselves
 Waiting for the day
 When the night of the long bad dream
 Is done
 And all the family of humans
 Is one
 And being and winning are not the same
 And "we" and "they" is just a game
 And the wind is a friend that
 Doesn't fuss
 And every they is
 Actually us.

What is the purpose behind this poem? What does it mean to you?

Before coming to Chicago, how scared were you of the inner city? How scared were you to talk to someone you didn't know?

Now that you have experienced two days in Chicago, how do you feel?

What are some ways in which you have felt stretched or challenged by God?

For the past two days you have seen strange faces and met new people. Name someone that has impacted or changed your thinking. How does that person relate to the way you felt or thought before you came on this experience?

Appendix E

Participant Demographic Tables

Gender: Interview I

Female	11
Male	7

Gender: Interview II

Female	10
Male	4

Denomination: Interview I

United Church of Christ	1
Catholic	1
Mennonite	9
Methodist	2
Presbyterian	2
Mennonite Brethren	3

Denomination: Interview II

United Church of Christ	1
Catholic	1
Mennonite	8
Methodist	1
Presbyterian	2
Mennonite Brethren	1

Hometown Population: Interview I

Population < 5, 000	7
Population 5,000 – 50,000	7
Population >50,000	4

Hometown Population: Interview II

Population < 5, 000	7
Population 5,000 – 50,000	5
Population >50,000	2

Appendix F

Interview Schedule

Reflections of adolescents participating in a short-term urban mission experience

Interview I

Age: _____

Approximate Population of Hometown: _____

1. Why did you come to DOOR?
2. Have you been on any other short term service or mission trips? Describe them briefly.
3. Are you engaged in regular service activities at home?
4. How do you describe the city?
5. Where do you see God in the city?
6. Has your week at DOOR changed the way you view the city? How?
7. Do you think your activities or daily actions will change because of participating with DOOR this week?

Interview II

1. Have you thought about your experiences at DOOR since you left Chicago? If so, how often?
2. Has your involvement or interest in service activities changed since your participation with DOOR? If so, how?
3. Do you have plans to participate in another short-term service or mission trip?
4. How do you describe the city?
5. Where do you see God in your town/school?

Throughout Interview I and II, additional clarifying questions of the same nature may be asked.