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Reading Reflection #6

*Helping, Fixing of Serving/ Sit down, Be quiet, Pay Attention/ To Hell with Good Intentions*

The three articles discuss different aspects of “service.” Before reading these articles, I never realize how many things fall under the umbrella of “service.” I had always thought that volunteer work counted as service. However, these article discussed things as the service that a doctor provides or of that a teacher provides. In class, as well, someone had mentioned waiters or Military or police service. I had never considered these as services, despite their names.

Another thing I found interesting about the class discussion was when high school community service was brought up. I would say about half the class had raised their hands when the question was asked if they had a required community service and for many of them since it was forced upon them, did not like it. I can understand this, since if anyone is forced to do something that they are not interested in can result in negative feeling towards it. In the beginning, I felt this way towards Service Learning, I felt I like I was giving up time that I could be using to do other work or hobbies. In the end, it is only 30 hours of my life that I’m dedicating to help the student at my site. I really started to enjoying teaching them and helping with homework and learning more about the kids.

Looking at Illich’s article, I disagree with the statement “You will not help anybody by your good intentions.” I have good intentions with teaching the student at my site about Japanese language and culture. I want them to learn that there is more to world and it’s vastly different, while focusing on Japan. I can understand where the author is coming from, since the article is about an organization that helps out in Mexico. In this case, if people went there to help, without

understanding the culture and language, things may happen that the native people do not want. However, I don't not believe that all good intentions cause harm. If a person goes in understanding the situation, the people, and community then they have a chance to really know what needs to be done.

This is why I enjoyed Remen's statement of "of "When you help, you see life as weak. When you fix, you see life as a broken. When you service, you see life as whole." The article had more positive feeling towards service and with serving I feel like you need a positive mind set, and come into the situation not judging. However, the first part of the statement, I don't think should be put into a negative light. It's hard to avoid using the words "helping" or "fixing," because in some situations things are just broken and need help. I understand that the author wants people to as everyone is equal and I feel this is a good message to spread, but I find that difficult to do. This is the point that Illich was trying to make and I can see that, but that doesn't mean the situations could not use the assistances.

In the end, the solution for both these author's arguments I believe is Sigmon's article. In this article, Sigmon talks about the service that teachers provides their students and makes the comment "My hope for institutions is that they will seek to become distinctive serving and learning organizations, contributing to the well-being of all who are touched by their processes, service, and products." I feel that it is a full circle. If students are taught from beginning, through school, that there needs to be a positive, open-mind attitudes, as well understand and knowledge of the situations then more beneficial and appropriate solutions can be made for the best of each party. It is the service that teachers provides, that make students better servers to their communities and other.