suffering, to discern the causes of extreme suffering and also the forces that put
some at risk for human rights abuses, while others are shielded from risk."27
On the one hand, as Bergman notes, students "had no hand in constructing
the systems of historical and global inequality that they are beginning to recognize
benefitted and harmed different populations disproportionately."28 And yet,
yet, they have and continue to benefit from the effects and ongoing persistence
of these systems. Personal participation on the global economic structure is the first
point of compartmentalization. Am I supporting slavery by buying this shirt
or DVD player? This cup of coffee or chocolate bar? This is a legitimate and
necessary question and yet one we do not want to have to face every time we
walk into a store. At the same time, it is often a question we cannot answer. It
is impossible for us to identify the origin of all the components and every point on
the supply chain when we pick up a box of cereal at the supermarket. Modern
slavery reveals the complexity of social structures as well as the ever present
challenge of navigating what we should know, what we can know, and what we
cannot know. The task of gaining the truth about the labor conditions of
those producing specific products is overwhelming, and thus we are more willing to
accept as evidence and certainty unverified corporate assertions of conflict and
slavery free products.

While it did open students' eyes to a hard reality, Slaveryfootprint and individual
student research alone did not prove sufficient to move many students to a genuine
connection with the persons on the other end of products. Their research was
often easily ended with official statements from a corporation. A 2014 Norwegian
web reality mini-series "Deadly Fashion," also provides a helpful resource for
confronting a frequent disconnect between corporate policies and supply chain
realities.29 In the web series, three Norwegian young adults travel to Cambodia
to experience standard of living and working conditions of Cambodian factory
workers making clothes sold in Norway. This web series, course readings, in
class discussions and a fair trade game were necessary supplements building
on the experience of slavery footpring and student research. Through a Life as
a Coffee Farmer29 game, groups competed responding to common challenges
faced by poor coffee farms in Nicaragua and trying to successfully get to market
days. As with the other online simulations, once students made choices they
learned of the likely consequences for their farm, crops, and income. Connecting
fair trade cooperatives and organized micro-lending to slavery footprint helped
give some students, who otherwise had deflected the hard questions, a framework
for entering an otherwise overwhelming reality.

Yet, this particular topic and simulation demonstrated both the necessity
of experience and vulnerability as well as the need to recognize that learning
solidarity is a developmental process that is ongoing. Simulations provide an
experiential opening within contexts where personal face to face encounters
may not be possible; however, learning solidarity is not like learning a scientific
theorem. We do not learn solidarity and then simply move onto mastering other
concepts. Since solidarity is a virtue fundamentally about relationships, it is
always an ongoing process tied to relationships and living in community.

3. Academic Service Learning: Experience the Old Fashioned Way

One risk in asking students to confront poverty and oppression is that they can
fail to see the person suffering and instead only see the poverty or deprivation.
This is one of the most common arguments both for and against service
experiences as experiential learning. Without proper preparation and context,
service experiences can reinforce existing stereotypes about poverty. This is
particularly a danger with international service trips that do not connect back
with contexts in one's home community. However, when attention is paid to the
relevant context and all the communities involved, service learning is one of a
professor's best tools to help students engage in relationships and learn to see
the person and not the poverty. This is true for both service learning in the classroom
and independent week long service trips. Semester after semester, even most
students with the blasté attitude that they are "just going to serve," when they are
led to reflect on compassion, or Catholic social teaching and their experiences,
come to recognize the ways in which they have been changed by going out and
entering into another's reality.

In the beginning of the semester, there is generally widespread apprehension
and complaint among "Moral Theology of Healthcare" classes where I require
them to complete their service learning in nursing homes or other medical care
context.31 A primary complaint is that they find nursing homes, senior centers, or
engaging the sick uncomfortable. Yet, in going out into their local community and
engaging older persons in poverty or other vulnerable populations, the majority
of the students report in class the ways their own perspectives have changed.

28. Bergman, p. 69
31. Assignment details found in Appendix C
Consciously or not, they had to make themselves vulnerable in the encounter and as a result mutual participation becomes possible. Genuine encounter requires vulnerability — mutual vulnerability across gaps of privilege and respecting that not all vulnerability is morally equivalent. Without minimizing the daily risk to persons living in poverty, with serious illness, or those otherwise marginalized, students also take a risk in entering into relationship. Negatively, this vulnerability opens one up to rejection. Both attention to humility and vulnerability begin to develop attitudes to deal with discomfort which is required by solidarity. The outcome of these experiences is that it opens students to the vulnerability required to enter into solidarity.

Service learning provides real world engagement with those living in various forms of vulnerability — whether it be due to poverty, education, illness, old age, disability or youth. The universal principle of human dignity, and the foundational commitment to the preferential option for the poor, unifies the role of service learning in learning solidarity across many different sectors. In building the capacity for solidarity, “it is essential to draw near to new forms of poverty and vulnerability, in which we are called to recognize the suffering Christ, even if this appears to bring us no tangible or immediate benefits,” explains Pope Francis, “I think of the homeless, the addicts, refugees, indigenous peoples, the elderly who are increasingly isolated and abandoned and many others.”

Theologically, Christ’s radical identification with those on the margins helps us to develop spiritual practices guarding us against selfishness and self-righteousness. However, this is only successful when it begins the equal personhood of the excluded. Here service learning provides a possibility students are asked to embrace this principle and willingly risk a relationship of equal humanity. By focusing on equal human dignity, we start from a place of our shared humanity and not a moral judgment on whether the person is deserving of compassion. Adopting a posture of humility serves as a powerful corrective against sitting in judgment of the poor, for in judging those in poverty, one inevitably includes either an implicit or explicit judgment of one’s own reality as worthy.

Often in institutional contexts, service learning can be counted and judged based upon numbers, such as itemizing the number of students, hours, or meals served. This is dangerous because it can focus too much on service independent of learning about the relationships between persons. Service learning is not merely volunteering, it is experiential learning. In this way, service learning provides an opportunity to learn solidarity because it invites students into a “transformation of self” and “the potential for growing through the risk.”

In a paper entitled, “Compassion Through Getting Peed On,” one student detailed her service learning experience with developmentally delayed toddlers. Designated failure to thrive, these four year olds had not yet met their developmental milestones but were not diagnosed with other underlying conditions. In her experience, a four year old who was sitting in her lap needed to use the bathroom but did not want to give up his seat and so he simply peed on my student. Reflecting on compassion as an ethical theory from class, the student moved beyond the horror at being soiled in urine to trying to imagine the event from the child’s perspective. This child so valued the time sitting on her lap listening to a story that he did not want to lose this caring attachment and therefore peed on her lap. This process and experience was transformative for the student and built solidarity between the college student and a young child. Willing to take the risk, she entered into that little boy’s reality even though it left her profundely uncomfortable. This openness to the other is only possible through experience. Compassion and solidarity are acquired only through practice.

Conclusion: Once Shopping Is Ruined, What’s Next?

At the start of this article, I proposed that ruining shopping by removing the thrill of the bargain opened the door to solidarity and that experience is a necessary component in this process. The moral grappling with the reality of sweatshops and modern slavery in the garment, chocolate or other industries, while shopping is an example of engaging moral discomfort and moral vulnerability. It is comfortable to choose ignorance, ignoring the connection between worker conditions thousands of miles away and the shirt I wish to buy. It is comfortable to retreat into indifference in a culture that prioritizes individual choice, even if I acknowledge the problem of modern slavery, it remains abstract and something I cannot change anyway. These stances represent the culture of indifference that Pope Francis repeatedly condemns. In contrast, Pope Francis calls all people of good will to build a culture of encounters for peace and justice in solidarity with those on the margins. Collectively, it is necessary for us to join together for social action across differences. This can only be done through experiencing the mutual vulnerability of the one human family.

When habitually part of moral reflection, adopting the stance of moral vulnerability can help give individuals, like my struggling student, a framework within which to self-critically examine his own participation in structures of marginalization and inequality without glossing over the conflict or pretending

---

32. Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium, 269.

33. Bergman, p. 89
to solve it. Advocates for social justice, notes Paul Farmer, “Often if these individuals are privileged people like me, they understand that they have been implicated, either directly or indirectly, in the creation or maintenance of this structural violence. They feel indignation, but also humility and penitence.”

In doing so, we nurture an openness to encounter in which “solidarity is a spontaneous reaction by those who recognize that the social function of property and universal destination of goods are realities which come before private property.”

Modern slavery and human trafficking are transnational complex structures of violence. It is impossible to significantly tackle this as merely a collection of individuals, they require collaboration. For my students, realizing the connection between low prices and low wages for workers, and critically examining their own participation in these systems, resulted in a changed evaluation of what an item was worth. Experience and the vulnerability of discomfort instigate further research and building communities for social action. Learning to be uncomfortable is a first step toward seeing everyone, including those we otherwise do not see as our brother and sister, as equally human. It is seeing the persons connected with that low bargain price that ruins shopping for my student. Imploring all people to embrace solidarity, Pope Francis issues a strong challenge to reject comfortable indifference and a strong experiential witness of embracing the vulnerability of our vulnerable humanity. Pedagogically, this can be reinforced in Catholic social teaching and social justice courses with integrative and experiential learning. For learning to be in solidarity with others, experience and vulnerability are required.


35. Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium, 189.

Appendix A:
**Experiencing Life at the Poverty Line (Course: Catholic Social Teaching)**

Step 1: Begin by writing down what you think you know about living at the poverty line, your assumptions/beliefs.

Step 2: Complete the PlaySpent simulation recording your choices and the answers.

Step 3: Write an 800 word Blog about living at the poverty line – taking into account some of the choices that you had to make. Reference at least 2 CST principles in your blog. (The record of your answers does not count as the 800 words. At the end of the blog should be a full and complete listing of your choices in the simulation.)

Note: this assignment comes after discussions of basic principles of Catholic social teaching (human dignity, discrimination, common good, and subsidiarity) and during the unit on economic justice. It is accompanied by readings on the dignity of work, economic justice, as well as, specific case study and local guest speakers on wage theft in New York. Finally, there is a significant class discussion of the PlaySpent experience.

Appendix B:
**Engaging Modern Day Slavery (Course: Catholic Social Teaching)**

This assignment has multiple steps and culminates with an in class discussion. Before you write your reflection, you should complete the course readings/videos on forced labor and human trafficking.

**Project:**

Step 1: How many slaves work for you?

Go to: [Www.Slaveryfootprint.org](http://Www.Slaveryfootprint.org)

Take the survey and Record the final answer

- write down for yourself your reactions, emotions and response to the slave number.

Step 2: Where does that come from? Tracing an item from my closet or kitchen:

Before you begin: Watch: [http://apps.npr.org/tshirt##/title](http://apps.npr.org/tshirt##/title) (you need to click through each section with the video)

Now choose an item (not a tshirt)....you are not required to identify the specific
LEARNING TO BE IN SOLIDARITY WITH: VULNERABILITY AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

“If care is the affective response to persons in need, compassion is the same response with the added notion of ‘suffering with’ the ones in need.” (Farley 39) It is a way of seeing which evokes a moral response.

“Compassion in its fullest sense is not a standing apart from the one in need; it is a sharing in the pain and suffering of a need unfulfilled, an injury not healed, an injustice not rectified. What must be added here, however, is that compassion is not only a response to need. It is a response to a person, a positive good that is in some way injured, oppressed, ravaged by pain, or simply not yet whole. Care is the form that love takes when the beloved is in need. But this means that the first response is love. It only secondly modulates into care and compassion — that is to some extent what philosophers are point to when they say that compassion includes seeing the one in need as a sharer with us in humanity.” (Farley 65)

Using the above sections from Margaret Farley’s *Compassionate Respect* as a frame — reflect on your service learning experience.

What does compassion require in your ASL experience?

How did the service experience help you understand more deeply and concretely the complexities of “suffering with” another? And how does this specific experience help shape you to treat others with compassionate respect in the future?

**Logistics:** The paper should be 3-4 pages, double spaced, 12pt times new roman font. Compassionate Respect by Margaret Farley should be used as a frame and must be quoted/cited using MLA internal citation (see above citation) *while you are allowed to use the same hours for 2 courses, you are NOT allowed to turn in the same paper. You must follow directions specifically.

**Paper Due in Class for the SERVICE LEARNING DISCUSSION CLASS**

factory --- but let’s say you love an Ann Taylor Scarf made in the Philippines.... what can you learn about a. ann taylor supply chain, b. factories in Philippines, c. what materials are used, d. lives of the people.) *Record briefly what you facts you find*

Now try and trace the origins of the item — can you identify if it was produced using slave/child labor? What have you learned? —

Step 3: Write an 800-1000 word blog on Engaging Modern Day Slavery.

In your analysis you must:

1. Very Briefly define modern slavery and state the outcome of slavery footprint
2. Summarize what you found on your item’s supply chain
3. Analyze the information and simulation experience using Catholic social teaching. (apply solidarity and at least 1 other principle, this requires defining them to apply them)
4. In addition to the 800-1000 words — a bibliography list of all websites and places you found information for your supply chain.

No more than 200-300 words can be spend describing “what you found and how.” At least 600 words must be analysis. (Final product should be 1/3 and 2/3)

**Appendix C:**

*COMPASSIONATE RESPECT Service Learning Project Directions (Course: Moral Theology of Healthcare)*

Note: Margaret Farley’s *Compassionate Respect* is read and discussed in class within the first three weeks of class and therefore students have read and discussed the text before they complete their ASL hours.

**Project:**

1. Each student will complete at least 5 hours at an approved service learning site and hours must be completed 2 weeks before the paper is due.
2. Service Learning Paper:

Margaret Farley’s book “Compassionate Respect” emphasized that: *Compassion is a powerful response to human need & suffering; but it fails if it doesn’t ask what does compassion require?*
Bibliography


*A Place at the Table*. Directed by Kristi and Silverbush, Lori Jacobson. 2012.


Abstract

Does school teach peace? School is a place where we learn values and attitudes - a transmission belt - a social institution that can generate common standards and moral ideals from how we learn (pedagogy) and what we learn (curriculum). This mixed-method analysis utilizes directive (qualitative) and summative (quantitative) content analysis to scrutinize the national curricular statements of England (Early Years Learning and Stage 1-4) to explore whether three elements common in peace education programs appear: recognition of violence (direct, structural or cultural); addressing conflict nonviolently; and, creating the conditions of positive peace. It finds limited evidence in both documents that the English National Curriculum contains content conducive to creating positive peace, minimal content that transmits techniques for transforming conflict nonviolently, and, despite abundant examples of violent acts, there is either no recognition of violence (Stage 1-4) or primarily nominal references to direct violence (Early Learning).

Introduction

In this mixed-methods study the national curricula of England (at early childhood, primary and secondary levels) is examined for three components common in peace education programs: recognition of violence (direct, structural or cultural); addressing conflict nonviolently; and, creating the conditions of positive peace.¹

In the 2011 census for England and Wales the population was listed as 53 million - 9.1 million of whom identified as non-white.² As Matthew Taylor and Hugh Muir noted in a Guardian article on May 27, 2014, there are increases in the number of English people who admit to being prejudiced, and growing concern regarding attitudes to immigrants and Islamophobia - the United Kingdom Independence Party has been gaining prominence in the country running on an anti-immigration, anti-EU platform. As there are growing concerns in regards