

Quenton Montgomery-Fletcher

JAPN320S

Reading Reflection 6

This week's articles are "To Hell with Good Intentions" by Ivan Illich, "Sit Down, Be Quiet, Pay Attention" by Robert Sigmon, and "Helping, Fixing, or Serving?" by Rachel Remen, deal with the idea of community service and how effective are people actually in their service and what are their true goals when doing community service. Both Illich and Remen feel that in modern America, many people take up the mantle of community service without taking a step back to view and help people in our own country, while either unconsciously or consciously feeling a sense of superiority to other countries and feeling the need to "help" them. As Remen states, "Helping is not a relationship between equals. A helper may see people are weaker than they are, needier than they are, and people often feel this inequality." When people go to help other countries, such as in poor African countries, Mexico, South-East Asian and etc, they do so under the pretext that they are much weaker than America and therefore are deserving of our help. But many of those people who go to do this sort of community service, do so while ignoring the plights of their own community. America has a constantly rising amount of welfare and poor destitute people in our own communities, yet many people who go to do community service choose to ignore them.

I believe the purpose of today's readings is to remind us of the poor and needy in our own communities and to help teach us that rather than outwardly, we should be looking inward into our own community first to help. It's a good thing to want to help others, but our own community should be our first priority as it's within our home. CSUMB has us do community

service to remind its students that we live within a community, and that there are many scenes of social injustice right here at our doorstep that we should be fighting first and foremost.