

Student centered strategies by **Mary Waite** to supplement Chapter 9 in the Ethics Workbook, Middle Ages: Pages 82 - 87

A. MONSTER ACTIVITY

Teacher's guide to activity- This activity makes an excellent introduction to the class as well as to communal needs present in feudal society. Class should be allowed to organize themselves as they wish (or not at all). They should be given approximately 30 minutes to develop a plan in response to the dilemma below. Students must present their plans to the rest of the class. Students' plans will tend to be outrageous... ask students to note similarities between the majority of the plans. Disregard comments such as "we all used pipe bombs" and try to get students to note that all groups work together, were willing to sacrifice individuals to achieve their goals, they had defined roles in the process. Ask students why they just didn't "take off" in different directions; why did they work together? (They should see strength in numbers). Ultimately students should see that in an unstable world, individuals tend to band together for mutual benefit. In other words, it is in their own self-interest to work with others; in fact, in some cases it is the only road to self-preservation. Ask students why some groups sacrificed other students, teachers, etc. to the monster (or at least were willing to put these individuals at risk). They will answer, in preservation of the group. A more complex question is raised when trying to understand why in some cases individuals are willing to sacrifice themselves voluntarily to the group effort.

ACTIVITY- Class is interrupted by the sounds of sirens. An announcement comes over the loudspeaker. The principal, in a grave voice, announces, "Faculty and Students, we have a terrible crisis on our hands. A man-eating monster is roaming the streets of the city of Mansfield. We have reports that 58 individuals have lost their lives at the hands of this terrible monster. Due to downed power lines and abandoned cars, the streets are impassable. Therefore, school and public buses and all other forms of public transportation are not running.

This monster is huge (but he can still fit through the halls of the high school). The local police and fire departments have been unsuccessful in their attempts to capture and stop the beast; all they have done through their efforts is to anger him more. Our latest reports say that he is rapidly approaching. You must leave now in order to save yourselves. Return to your homes as quickly as possible.

Come up with a plan to save yourselves against this terrible beast. You must jot down ideas and be ready to present your "plan" to the rest of the class.

B. FORREST GUMP: Video Clip

Teacher's guide to activity- Have students watch clip of Forrest Gump saving lives in Vietnam. Then, answer the following questions in preparation for a discussion. Students will be analyzing the inherent conflict between self-interest (preserve life) versus loyalty to particular groups. Students should also distinguish between loyalties to different groups (intimate versus large group commitments).

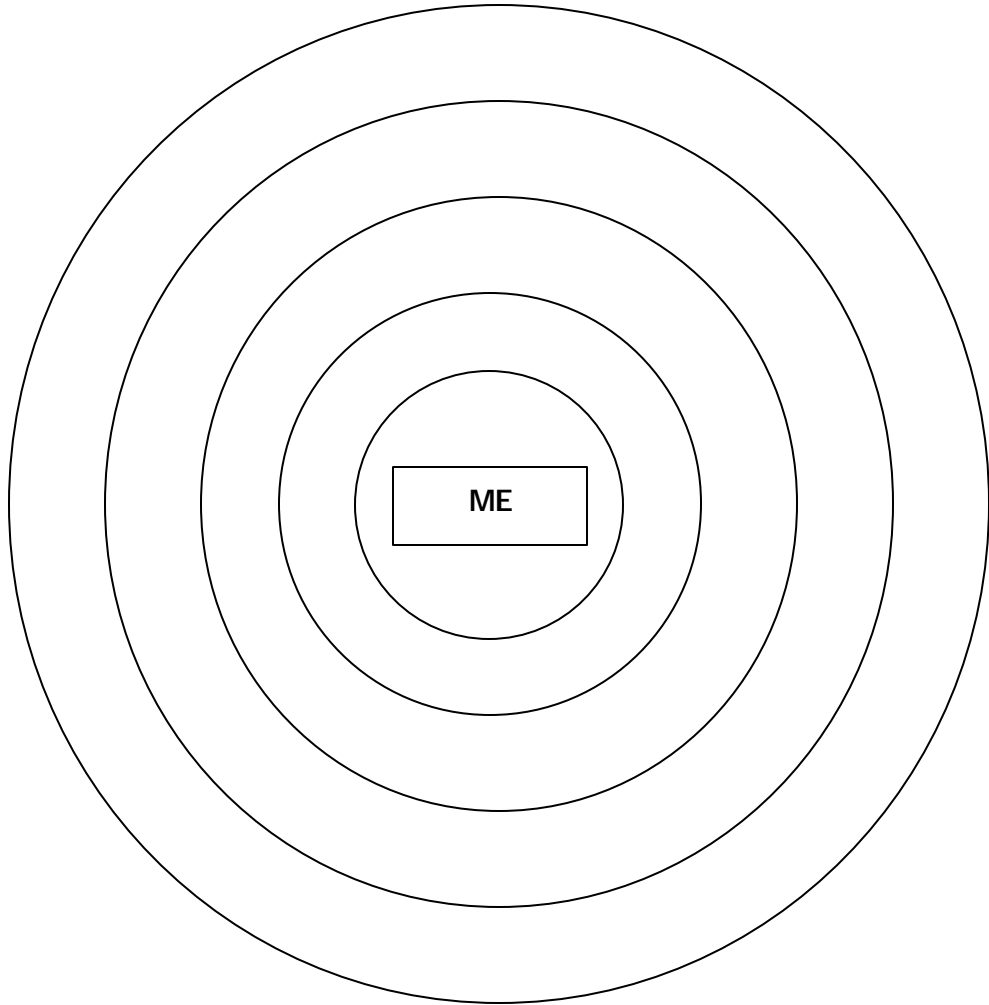
Questions for discussion-

1. How does Forrest Gump show both individualism and communalism? Cite some specific actions. Try to distinguish between loyalty to particular individuals and responsibility to the group as a whole.
2. Why wouldn't everyone have acted like Forrest Gump?

C. Circle of obligations-

Teacher's guide- Ask students to list on the concentric circle different groups in their life. Those closest to them they should place closest to themselves in the center circle. Those furthest away (government, world) should be placed further out on the circle. Then each student should rank these groups in importance (1-5) in their life. After the students have done this and ranked them in importance ask them to describe the groups in their life and their importance. (It is helpful to draw your own circle on the board so that the students can discuss this in depth together). Ask students what the last group is that they listed on this circle (opinions will vary). Question- why did students rank this group last. (Does this mean that they feel no affiliation or obligations to the world community? etc.). Now, looking at the circle, ask students why they think that Forrest Gump and others might be willing to sacrifice their lives in war, for example. Students will see that the government (larger group) envelops their family and other closer groups. In order to preserve the family, must preserve the larger groups.

Now analyze the groups on your list by placing them on the appropriate concentric circle in the chart below. The smallest and most intimate groups should be closest to you and the larger more remote groups further away.



Think about a situation in which your responsibilities to two or more of these groups conflicted and you were forced to make a choice. How did you decide?

D. JUST PRICE ACTIVITY- (SKIT)

Teacher's guide- Communalism is realized in the economic system that rose in the absence of a money-based economic system. The idea of a just price is fairly easy for students to grasp- what is just is what is fair. However, students have some difficulty applying this concept. Just price is a relative standard that changes with different people in different places. Applying these concepts to a specific skit helps to spark discussion, understanding and debate. Have students act out the various roles then prepare for discussion. (Of course, any sports team can be substituted for the Red Sox).

Getting a fair price.

Act 1

Narrator- Joe and his kids, Jenny, Bobby and Donny, are waiting in line for tickets at Fenway Park. The kids are excited to go to their first baseball game ever. Jenny is especially excited for today is her birthday. Her hero, Pedro Martinez, is pitching too!

Joe, (talking to his children), "Pedro's the best pitcher in the entire league!!! I can't wait to see him! How 'bout you kids?"

Kids, "Yeah daddy, Its going to be great!!!"

Narrator-Another fan, Brian, is waiting in line behind them.

Brian, "Taking your kids to the ball game?"

Joe, "That's the plan" (he grins at the stranger), "Well, its Jenny's special day!"

Jenny, "And my daddy's **the best!** Daddy, this is the best birthday present ever!"

Brian, smiling at the kids' obvious excitement, "Well, have a wonderful time, it sure is a great day for a ballgame"

Joe, "Thanks a lot,... you too!" The person in front of Joe is finishing up his sale, "Well kids" (turning to them) "I guess we're next"

Ticket guy, "Next!?"

Joe, stepping up to the counter, "I'd like four tickets!"

Ticket guy, "I'm afraid all we have left are upper box seats..."

Joe, (hesitating for a second), "I guess that will be oK... ummm, how much will it be?"

Ticket guy, "Four tickets at \$40.00 each. That'll be \$160.00."

Joe, "Are you kidding me? For baseball tickets? I'm sorry, I just can't do it!"

Ticket guy, "Sorry fella, but I'm just the ticket guy, I don't set the prices"

Joe, "Well, er.. thanks anyway" (he turns, face flushed to face his kids. He sighs and walks away from the ticket counter".

Jenny, Bobby and Donny tug on his arm excitedly oblivious to the slouch in his gait,

"Dad, dad," Bobby shouts, "where are we sitting dad? I'm so excited dad, Pedro, Dad! Oh, Boy, Nomar, Manny!!! Yippee!!!"

All three kids shout with glee... "We're going to a baseball game, we're going to a baseball.. !!!"

Narrator- they stop short when they finally look at their dad's face. It is pinched and drawn.

Jenny, "Daddy, what's wrong? Did we get bad seats dad?"

Joe, "No, err., that's not it... (he pauses, looking each one in the eyes) I have some bad news... we can't go to the game... the tickets were just too expensive... I hope you can understand. Jenny (looking at her), "I'll make it up to you somehow"

Jenny (tears running down her face, she stifles a cry), "that's okay Daddy. (she really wanted to go but she doesn't want Daddy to feel any worse)"

Bobby, "Its not fair... " He starts to continue but a look at his dad's face makes him stop..."Don't worry about it dad.."

Donny, "Yeah, its okay... I didn't really want to go to a stupid Red Sox game anyway.. Dumb game..."

Joe, "Now, now, don't talk like that, I know you love the Red Sox... I know, how bout we go to the Paw Sox instead? (he tries to sound cheery), Its not the Sox, but it's baseball!"

Bobby, (trying to sound enthusiastic), "That sounds great dad!"

Jenny and Donny (in unison) "that's sounds like fun!"

Narrator- "Meanwhile, Brian is stepping up to the ticket counter."

Brian, (to himself) "Wow, it's too bad about that guy and his kids... Oh well, I guess that's life." Then, to the ticket guy, "I'd like a ticket, please."

Ticket guy, "Where sir... bleachers, grandstand... (he looks at Brian's Rolex watch), perhaps something a little better?"

Brian, "How 'bout the best seats that you have in the house!"

Ticket guy, "You got it! That'll be \$400 for box seats"

Brian, "Whew! It's a good thing I just got a raise."

Narrator- Brian hands the ticket guy four hundred dollar bills out of the roll in his wallet. He gets his tickets.

Brian, "Hey thanks a lot!"

Ticket guy, "No problem, enjoy the game!"

Brian, "You'd better believe I'll enjoy it!"

Narrator- Brian turns and walks into the stadium.

Brian, "Pedro! Pedro!"

Teacher's guide- Ask students what this scene shows about Capitalism.

Then ask students how just price advocates would respond to this situation.

Have students come up with a just price response...

The Just Price Problem Continues....

Narrator- After Joe and his children got back from the PawSox game, Joe began to get angry... Why should his students have to go to a PawSox game? Why do they have to charge so much for those tickets? It just wasn't fair. The more he thought about it, the angrier he got. He decided he had to do something about it! Fight the Power through political action. Tomorrow he'd go down there and picket the management. Let's see how a bit of negative publicity makes people feel about the All-American Game!

Narrator- the next day, Joe and his kids are picketing outside an owner's meeting. Some local guys see them and think, Hey they too have had trouble getting into games. They pick up some of the extra signs Joe has brought and join in the picketing..."

Joe, "Baseball's supposed to be the American ball game..."

Picketer 1, "For all Americans, not just the rich!"

Picketer 2, "Yeah! Let the working man enjoy the sport!"

Picketer 3, "And the kids... That's what baseball's all about! A man taking his kids to a ball game!"

Joe, Picketers 1,2, and 3 and the kids, "JUST PRICE, JUST PRICE, WE WANT A JUST PRICE!"

Scene 2

Narrator- At the Interleague owner's meeting 2 weeks later... (Joe and his pals are still picketing every day... The kids have gone back to school, but others have joined the fight. In fact, the picketers have even got onto the 6 o'clock news"

Owner Bob- "We've had some negative publicity about how high ticket sales for games are becoming... its beginning to get put of hand!"

Owner Leo- "But its not as though tickets aren't selling out. Fenway's been sold out the entire season. It just doesn't make sense to drop ticket prices when there's still a demand. It's not the

American way. Plus, if we drop ticket prices, how are we going to pay for everything in the stadium, pay the players their high salaries and still have enough for ourselves?"

Owner George, "He makes a good point Bob. I'm planning to buy another house at Vail this season... If I don't make as much money, my kids are going to have to stay at our other place. You've been there (he says to Leo) the place doesn't even have a ski-in/ ski-out option... I'll never hear the end of it from my wife..."

Owner Bob, "I'm truly sympathetic... But the picketers are getting worse... It's all over the papers. Baseball's now the 'Rich Man's Game' or the 'All-American Bane'."

Owner Leo, "So let them picket. Do you think that America is going to stop paying for baseball games? I don't think so... Look at Camden Yards. Tourists fill the park every week. We don't even have to worry about the true fans..."

Narrator- Leo is interrupted by a messenger. He has a telegram in his hand.

Messenger, "Excuse me, sir, I have a telegram for you" (He hands the telegram to Owner Bob)

Owner Bob, "It's from the President of the United States"

Owners (in unison), "What's it say?"

Owner Bob, "Hold on, hold on... (He prepares himself, clears his throat), "Ok, it reads..."

Scene flashes to President Bush...

President Bush... "I have been very depressed by what I have heard recently regarding the ridiculously high prices for baseball games. It makes tickets for games cost way more than they are worth. Also it makes it too difficult for most Americans to afford to go to baseball games. By executive order (and this is supported by both houses of Congress) I am ordering you to cut down the cost of tickets to baseball games. They can be no more than \$10.00 a ticket!"

Owner George, "IS he nuts? OR is this just funny math? He can't be serious..."

President Bush, "I am very serious!"

Owner Leo, "Now we have no choice but to cut all players' salaries... They're going to quit..."

President Bush, "You must figure out how much baseball players should be paid (how hard do they work? How much do they contribute to society). Then, you must come up with one salary to pay all baseball players!"

Owner Bob, "Well of course baseball players are overpaid, but..."

President Bush, "No buts, DO IT!!!"

Owner Leo, "The players aren't going to like this!"

Owner George, "But the fans will"

SCENE 3

NARRATOR- The Yawkey Trust led by John Harrington calls together a meeting of the Red Sox Ball Club. Everyone is there- Nomar, Pedro, Trot Nixon, Jason Varitek, Manny Ramirez, Shea Hildebrand...

John Harrington, "We just got a telegram from the president"

Brian Daubach, "About what?"

John Harrington, "we're sorry, but we have to cut salaries... Ticket prices are so high that some people can't even afford to go to the games."

Manny Ramirez, "So who's salary are you going to cut?"

John Harrington, "Everybody's. The Leagues are introducing something called just price. E had to figure out what each of you needed in order to live a "baseball player's lifestyle" and at the same time wouldn't cost so much that it would be unfair to ask the fans to pay. We figured since you're so popular and so skilled that you deserved to have a nice house and a nice car..."

Nomar, "Well that depends on what you mean by a nice car..."

Pedro, "Yeah, so how much are we going to get?"

Harrington, "We figured \$300,000 was a fair price!"

Manny, "That's \$12,700,000 less than I'm making now!!"

Shea, "Yeah, but it's \$100,000 more than I'm making now."

Daubach, "What if we decide to leave the Red Sox and go somewhere else?"

Harrington, "Listen, don't blame me, it's a direct order from the president. And you can try to go somewhere else, but all the owners have agreed... its \$300,000 everywhere. You've got to figure out whether or not you want to play baseball. If you do, that's how much you're getting paid. Take it or leave it."

Nomar, Manny, Pedro, Daubach, "I guess we don't have any choice"

Shea, "Hey, it sounds great to me"

Harrington, "By the way, I've heard rumors that the federal government is planning to extend this just price system throughout society. We'll all be working based on what our services are worth.

Nomar, "Does that include baseball owners?"

Harrington, "It already does boys... We're all in this together..." (he sighs...).

Scene 4-

Narrator- The next day, under just price, the players take the field. Now, the tickets cost only \$10.00...

Teacher's guide- Ask the students the following questions...

What changes do they envision in the game as a result of imposing just price? (Who will attend? Availability of tickets? etc.)

If just price was applied throughout society, what other changes do the students envision in society? In advertising, the stadium, etc.

Ultimately, how do you think players will result to just price (their performance)

Ultimately, what do you anticipate will be fan reactions (differentiate between different kinds of fans)

Use this skit as an instrument by which to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of communism (just price basis for) and capitalism.

E. COMMUNALISM EVALUATION

Teacher's guide- Ultimately, the students should make a judgment about communalism as a means by which to judge a society.

(To prepare for this essay, students have studied communalism as seen in feudal Western Europe and as seen in Communist China. A primary reference for discussing ethical issues in Communist China was The Red Scarf Girl. The Red Scarf Girl, a text students were assigned for their summer reading, covers the experiences of a teenage girl living in China during the course of the Cultural Revolution. In much the same way as Forrest Gump, the central character of this book, Ji Li Jiang, is forced to choose between her own desires and her allegiance to two groups in her life that come into conflict- her family and her government. It makes an interesting case study of communalism- and adds an interdisciplinary approach for analyzing the communal needs of a society vs. innate self-interest).

COMMUNALISM EVALUATION:

Students must respond to the following question:

IS COMMUNALISM A GOOD OR A BAD WAY TO ORGANIZE A SOCIETY?

Use the communal societies of Medieval Europe and China as evidence to prove your ideas.

ESSAY-

RESPOND- IS COMMUNALISM A GOOD OR BAD WAY TO ORGANIZE A SOCIETY?

Use the communal societies of Medieval Europe and China as evidence to prove your ideas.

To prepare for your essay, complete the following **Prewrite**:

I. Introduction-

List the 3 standards of a communal society.

A.

B.

C.

What are the 2 communal societies that we have studied?

A.

B.

3. What is your **thesis** statement (Choose I. Circle your answer)

A. Communalism is a good way to organize a society

OR

B. Communalism is a bad way to organize a society.

4. What are the reasons (overall) for stating that Communalism is a good or a bad way to organize a society? (Your criteria)

5. How do you intend to prove that Communalism is a good or a bad way of organizing a society in your essay (What are the main points you plan to make?)

A.

B.

C.

I. PARAGRAPH 2

Explain, how was Medieval Europe a communal society? Apply the 3 standards of communalism to Medieval Europe.

A. How does the group work together for a common goal?

B. What role does each person have?

C. How are individuals forced to sacrifice themselves for the sake of the group?

2. Explain, how was China a communal society? Apply the 3 standards of communalism to China.

D. How does the group work together for a common goal?

E. What role does each person have?

F. How are individuals forced to sacrifice themselves for the sake of the group?

III. Paragraph III- Conclude, what are the advantages to a communal society? Give examples

from both Medieval Europe and Communist China.

1. Medieval Europe - advantages

A.

B.

C.

2. China - Advantages

A.

B.

C.

IV. Paragraph IV- Conclude, what are the disadvantages to a communal society? Give examples from both Medieval Europe and Communist China.

Disadvantages - Medieval Europe

A.

B.

2. Disadvantages - China

A.

B.

V. Judge; overall, how did you prove your thesis to be true?

I. What was your thesis?

2. Restate your criteria.

3. Why did the "opposite arguments" not fit your criteria?

4. Why do your arguments fit your criteria much better?

5. Overall, how have you proved your thesis to be correct based on your criteria?