**Can We Teach Empathy? Pedagogical Grappling with a Slippery Concept**

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**Defining Empathy**

1. List 2-3 crucial **Elements** of empathy
2. What are the **Indicators** of empathy?

**Reflection Questions** (for observers of role-playing)

1. What do you think was the most important issue for Aquilus (the Pelagian) in this conversation? What makes you think this?
2. Do you think the Aquilus got points across? What makes you think this?
3. Imagine yourself in Aquilus’ shoes. How do you feel about this conversation when it is over? Include in your response a specific exchange from the conversation.

**Essay Questions**:

For the essay, students responded to these questions in 1,000-1,500 words:

(1) What theological problem are you trying to address?

(2) What is your solution?

(3) Why is this solution attractive to you and other people you know?

(4) Why do you think your position was rejected by others?

**Student Writing Samples**

1. “[In our Docetic view] Jesus was able to save us from our sins because he isn’t human but a God and is able to do miracles like this due to him not being tainted by the corrupt, material world. The Docetic way of thinking has appeal because it ensures that Jesus wasn’t corrupt or doomed in his own sin like humans but rather worthy to look up to and praise”
2. “Naturally, people want to be seen as being good. We like to feel good about ourselves, and in most cases above all else we want others to perceive us as an upright person, with high morals and a high standard for an overall way of life. Pelagianism takes into account this natural human desire.”

**Modified Five Levels of Empathy** (*substantive changes in italics*)

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| Level | Modified |
| Level 1: “Divi” Past (“divi” is British slang for “thick”) | regards the behavior of those in the past as stupid and unintelligible |
| Level 2: Generalized Stereotypes | *misrepresents context* or uses conventional accounts of people’s intentions, situations, values, and goals, without reference to context |
| Level 3: Everyday Empathy | uses evidence of the historical situation *but leaves context implicit or incomplete*; often involves some form of personal projection (“What would it have been like for me if Ihad been there?”) |
| Level 4: Restricted Historical Empathy | uses evidence of the historical situation, *making the context explicit but not well-connected to historical actors’ beliefs or behaviors* |
| Level 5: Contextual Historical Empathy | considers a wider picture beyond the overt goals or intentions of people and institutions, *attempts to integrate the concerns of opposing stances, or acknowledges and explicitly connects multiple relevant contexts to historical actors’ beliefs or behaviors* |