“Nobody,” is a book written by Marc Lamont Hill about the war society is waging on the vulnerable in America. The book is aimed at enlightening the reader and making her re-think her views on the way society treats people. It shows that the community is being torn apart by this unending war and to mend this country, people must start acknowledging that there is a problem. The book highlights the unfairness of the country’s police, judicial, prison and overall government systems, but gives hope that America can win this war on the vulnerable and reclaim its lost brethren.

St. Bonaventure University was founded on the values of discovery, community and individual worth. Dr. Hill depicts a society that has lost sight of these core values but never lets the reader believe that there is no hope for the vulnerable. He shows that even though America may have lost sight of these values, it is not too late to rediscover them.

“Nobody” portrays the Franciscan value of community, and how it is slowly slipping through the cracks of cities and towns. Hill starts the book by going back to the Civil War; during this time the North was preaching equality. However, as soon as Blacks started moving into northern towns and cities, residents suddenly changed their tune and Blacks were too close for comfort. All throughout history, communities have been separated by race and ethnicity. They have never included the outsider or the vulnerable. Communities were about everyone being the same, not diverse, and this is exactly what Dr. Hill highlights in the first chapter.

Mainstream society has come to believe that black, poor and other vulnerable people do not deserve the same rights as the more privileged people. This is where the value of community has disintegrated.

Society doesn’t value diversity, or respect for others. It values how well everyone can fit into the mold of the perfect individual that has been created. Dr. Hill shows that although there are obvious problems that need immediate attention, there is still hope for the vulnerable. This is shown in groups like Black Lives Matter, Hands Up United and Lost Voices, who have helped to foster this sense of community by inviting everyone, including trans, queer and female members,
and making them feel at home. Because of people fighting to rebuild these fallen communities, America may flourish once again.

The Franciscan value of discovery is also an underlying theme throughout Dr. Hill’s book. This is an important value because discovery fosters growth in all aspects of life, including spiritual, intellectual and personal. This value is displayed in Dr. Hill’s book by allowing the reader to develop these aspects of discovery. The book is filled with overwhelming knowledge, and with knowledge comes power and growth. The reader can see into the lives of the vulnerable in a very personal experience. With the knowledge that is gained from reading this book, the reader is blessed. She can understand more thoroughly the struggles that the vulnerable face every day and gains the power to do something to change that. This value is one of the most important ones to cherish, for with discovery comes the growth of every person and as a person grows she receives the power to change the problems of the world.

Individual worth is also an important value portrayed in the book. The vulnerable of America rarely get to experience society’s respect for their individual worth. Franciscan identity is based in the belief of the God-given worth of every person. However, many people forget that those who are struggling from a poor neighborhood, or someone who has made a few mistakes, still deserve to be treated like human beings. The vulnerable people of America are often overlooked and denied their rights as citizens. We shouldn’t have to protest for the lost lives of the vulnerable, let alone ones with the mantra “Don’t Shoot.” America should never have spiraled so far as to see people being killed for running away or holding a toy gun.

These are examples of the vulnerable of America not having the same rights as the powerful. Every individual should be privy to the justice that the privileged take for granted. This may seem like an insurmountable problem, but it’s not. For all the vulnerable lives taken or mistreated, there are voices rising to speak up for them to make sure they don’t die a nobody, but are finally seen for what they are, a somebody.

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