Today we met with David Hilfiker, a physician and the author of *Not All of Us Are Saints*. When he first entered the hostile, the entire group was sitting around in a circle in the common area. Before he began talking to us, he wanted us to reposition our seats so he could see everyone. Following the repositioning of our seats, Dr. Hilfiker asked us to introduce ourselves by telling our name, where we are from, and what made us take a class on homelessness. Dr. Hilfiker gave a few comments throughout our introductions, then, after we finished, he referenced a particular story in his book about Marjime. This story was very interesting because it gave Dr. Hilfiker a different perspective on his patient. Marjime was fourteen years old and had a one and half year old son, Robert. She beat him every time he did something bad, which really bothers and frustrated Dr. Hilfiker. Although this upset Dr. Hilfiker, he couldn’t do anything about it because he was just their doctor.

Giving us a brief introduction to his personality with this story, Dr. Hilfiker then proceeded to ask us if we had any questions for him since he knew we had read his book for our class. Therefore, the questions began. Peter started us off by asking Dr. Hilfiker how he dealt with the thought that something bad would happen to his patients, but he had no control over it. Dr. Hilfiker responded very openly and told us that it was very difficult for him to deal with that fact. We learned that he is a very sensitive individual, which makes it very difficult to draw lines between his personal needs and his profession. This is where being a physician began to be a struggle for him. Through asking Dr. Hilfiker questions throughout the afternoon, we learned that he became very burnout from his practice in Minnesota and had to take an entire year off. During that year off, he went to Finland with his family, where his wife’s family lives, letting his mind rest for a while. When he returned, he pursued his wife’s suggestion that he work with the less fortunate, poor, and homeless. Therefore, he and his family moved to intercity Washington, D.C. to pursue this idea. Moving with his children’s best interest in mind, his family arrived in D.C. and began working with the poor. Furthermore, we learned that Dr. Hilfiker has his own case of depression, so his job becomes much more challenging because all his patients situations affect him in different ways. He had to accept the fact that he had needs that had to be met and when he left the office, he had to leave it there, so it didn’t affect his life.

Dr. Hilfiker then asked us if we had any additional questions, since we continually asked him about his personal experiences and what happened with this and that and so on. After hearing no other questions, Dr. Hilfiker returned to a point that he made in the beginning of his talk: the white and black populations were segregated due to social issues. He shared how the ghettos were formed through segregation—after the Civil War ended and the slaves were released, the African Americans traveled to the north looking for places to go. The whites of the north feared the African Americans and began forcing them out of places, which caused them to have to find somewhere else to live. This created Sun Down towns, where racism was extreme and African Americans were only allowed in certain areas at certain times, which lasted until the 1930’s. This wasn’t particularly interesting to me because I had learned about it in my AP US History class, but Peter and Maria found it particularly interesting and asked a variety of questions. These questions led Dr. Hilfiker to tell us about what happened later, which was when legislative powers took over and caused African Americans to result to going to a new neighborhood, the ghetto. The ghettos are particularly targeted by the criminal justice system for drugs and alcohol. Dr. Hilfiker closed with asking if there were any other questions, and, with none, he finished his talk. This was a very interesting talk and very informative to all of us. I think it would be great to talk to him again and learn more about his medical experiences.