
❖ **SOCIAL JUSTICE**

Sociology 168 ❖ **Spring 2015**

Mon.-Wed.-Fri. - 12:30 – 1:40 p.m. - Oakes 106

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My experience has led me to believe that only by wholly centering, wholly feeling,
wholly inhabiting who we are can we discover happiness or fulfillment –
and only by allowing ourselves to see what is already in front of us
can we be freed from depression and inaction.

Eve Ensler (writer, performer, activist, founder of *V-Day* and *One Billion Rising*)

This course explores sociological approaches to the pursuit and achievement of social justice. Our focus will be on process rather than content, allowing us to examine a range of approaches to achieving social justice, focusing on organized efforts in such areas as juvenile justice reform, gender equity, and environmental activism (together with several others). We begin with a brief overview of the sociological study of social justice, as well as surveying the ways in which other disciplines have approached this subject.

One focus of the course will be the individual stories of social activists, thus bringing to life a variety of relevant sociological perspectives. Courtney Martin's *Do It Anyway* offers profiles of eight members of "the new generation of activists" and poses these questions: "How do you create a meaningful life? Can one person even begin to make a difference in our hugely complex, globalized world?" Paul Rogat Loeb, longtime activist and scholar, explores "perseverance and hope in troubled times" in his newly revised anthology of essays by national and international activists – some well-known, some less familiar. Each addresses in some way the question of how social activists persist in the face of cynicism, fear, and seemingly overwhelming odds. In *Active Hope*, Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone focus on what Naomi Klein describes as a vital component often neglected in works on social change: "How do we change ourselves so that we are strong enough to fully contribute ...?" We complete our work this quarter

with this text, which offers a valuable approach to this question through an empowerment approach known as The Work That Reconnects, as it has been applied on local as well as international levels.

READINGS

These three books are available at **The Literary Guillotine** (204 Locust St., Downtown Santa Cruz, 831-457-1195). Many used copies are available, and this independent bookstore (one of the only remaining ones in Santa Cruz County) has a year-round buy-back policy.

Paul Rogat Loeb, Ed.

The Impossible Will Take a Little While: Perseverance and Hope in Troubled Times
Basic Books, 2014

Courtney E. Martin. *Do It Anyway: The new generation of activists.*
Beacon Press, 2010

Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone.

Active Hope: How to face the mess we're in without going crazy.
New World Library, 2012

Additional brief readings and resources will be announced in class throughout the quarter, and posted on eCommons. You will not be required to print these readings, although you are welcome to; it is sufficient if you read them online.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Midterm (Mon. May 4) and Final Exam (Mon. June 8)

The Midterm and Final will be in-class exams covering lectures (including discussions, films and guest speakers) and readings. Each will consist of true/false, multiple choice, and short answer questions. A study guide will be distributed ahead of time, and you may bring one page of notes with you to the exam (one 8-1/2 x 11 piece of paper; written on both sides is fine). The Final exam is not cumulative; it covers only lectures and readings after the Midterm.

Writing Assignments (more detailed explanations of these will be distributed in class):

Autobiographical Essay - due Monday, April 13

This 3-page essay asks you to reflect on those factors that have influenced your understanding and experience of social justice.

Book Review – due when the book you have chosen has been read in its entirety -

This 3-page essay is a review of one of the three assigned texts, offering you the opportunity to assess the book's contributions in a thoughtful manner, considering as well its impact on your own thinking.

Research Paper – due Wed. May 27

This 7 - 10 page paper will be on a topic of your choosing (related to lectures and readings in this course), and may take one of the following forms: An interview with a social activist, A report on an organization working in pursuit of social justice (locally, nationally, or globally); A research paper on a theme related to course material (e.g., the efficacy of digital activism).

Prospectus for Research Paper – due Mon. Apr. 27

This 1-page prospectus will describe the plan for your Research Paper, and identify any elements you would like feedback regarding; these will be returned within a week, so that you can proceed with your plans, having made any needed adjustments.

Final Creative Project - due Mon. June 1

This creative project may take any of a number of forms, and offers an opportunity to express your vision of how social justice may be worked towards and achieved.

Grading

These percentage weights will be used to calculate your final grade:

Midterm - 25%; Final - 25%; Autobiographical Essay – 10%; Book review – 10%;
Final Creative Project – 10%; Research Paper and Prospectus – 20%.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Your presence in class is essential to your work in this course; the expectation is that you will not miss class unless you are ill or are faced with an emergency. Attendance will be taken, as class size is such that both small and large group discussion are recurrent elements of the learning process. Since lectures complement and supplement, rather than reiterate, the required reading, it is also important that you complete each day's assigned readings before class. If you need to arrive late on occasion, come in through the back door and find the nearest available seat. It is always better to arrive late than to miss class entirely, although it is expected that you will make every effort to be seated by 12:30.

Note that no eating is permitted in the classroom, even before class (while you may bring in drinks, be sure to guard against spills). Those using laptop computers must sit in the aisle or in the last row, and are expected to use the laptop only to take notes. Use of phones in class for any purpose is not allowed; if you must take an emergency call, step outside. What may seem to be a personal screen moment can distract those nearest you, and clearly diverts attention from the work at hand. There are no discussion sections

available for this class, but you are encouraged to discuss course material on a regular basis with other people (students in this class, acquaintances, family, strangers, friends).

DRC ACCOMMODATION (Information from the Disability Resource Center)

If you qualify for classroom accommodations because of a disability, please get an Accommodation Authorization from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) and submit it to instructor in person within the first two weeks of the quarter. Contact DRC at 459-2089 (voice), 459-4806 (TTY), or <http://drc.ucsc.edu> for more information on the requirements and/or process.

PLAGIARISM and ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

All students are responsible for maintaining accepted standards of academic integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty are contrary to the ideals and purposes of a university, and carry serious consequences (among the possibilities: receiving a lower grade, failing a class, being placed on suspension or expelled). Please make sure you have read the full text of UCSC's policy on academic dishonesty – it is available online at www.ucsc.edu/academics/academic_integrity. You should also consult UCSC Library guides on Citing Sources and Plagiarism:

- <http://library.ucsc.edu/help/howto/citations-and-style-guides>
NetTrail: <http://nettrail.ucsc.edu/> (Section 6, Info Ethics)