

CPSY 590: Advocacy and Activism – Fall 2014

Professor Tod Sloan

email: sloan@lclark.edu hours: by appt (send email)

Course Description

This seminar provides an introduction to advocacy competencies, the psychology of activism, process skills for activists, and social movement theory. The primary objective of the course is to help counselors and therapists be more effective in support of changemakers and in their own action for social and environmental justice.

Required Texts

Starhawk, *The Empowerment Manual*

C. Morten, *Do It Anyway: The New Generation of Activists*

Required articles

Rebecca L. Toporek, Judith A. Lewis, and Hugh C. Crethar (2009), "Promoting Systemic Change through the ACA Advocacy Competencies", *Counseling and Development*, 87, 260-268. (handout)

Marian A. Lee, Tammy Jorgensen Smith, and Ryan G. Henry (2013). Power politics: Advocacy to activism in social justice counseling. *Journal for Social Action in Counseling and Psychology*, 5(3). (handout)

Suggested Readings

H. Rettig, *The Lifelong Activist*

P. Jones, *Aftershock: A Guide for Activists and Their Allies*

J. Macy, *Active Hope*

R. Solnit, *Hope in the Dark*

K. Wilber, *Integrated Life Practice*

D. Pollard, *Finding the Sweet Spot*

Extensive materials about political action (esp. direct action) on the website beautifultrouble.org

Peruse articles in issues of *Journal for Social Action in Counseling and Psychology* at jsacp.tumblr.com

Sloan, T. (2013). OccuPsy: Critical Psychology for Decolonization. *Psychoanalysis, Culture and Society*. (handout)

Requirements

- Regular preparation for and participation in discussion in each class session (notify professor of anticipated absence by email). More than one hour of absence will trigger a make-up requirement.
- For Day One: Attend at least 6 hours of the PNW Social Forum on Sept. 27. See pnwsf.org (be sure to register for at least \$10) ... Basically, you will be entering a space that demonstrates the functioning of what can be called a “community of practice” (in this case, progressive/radical activism) or perhaps a “subculture.” Your assignment is to participate authentically to the extent you choose – I would hope that at least one of the many areas of activism will resonate with you -- and, at minimum, observe the practices, assumptions, ideologies, styles, identities, and meanings that are at play in this particular gathering. After the day, write up a page of notes containing your insights, questions, and puzzles about this particular community of practice (for sharing on Day Two of class). The focus should be on the interpersonal, collective, emotional, and identity dimensions of the *process* of the day (rather than the *content* of the political issues or specific strategies and tactics discussed).
- For Day Two: If you were not able to attend the PNW Social Forum for at least 9:30-6, attend at least a couple hours of any grassroots activist group meeting or event, and be ready to report briefly to the class about what you observed and learned about activism. You can find events and meetings here: <http://portland.activatehub.org/>
- For Day Two: Find a person you know and admire for his/her motivation, stamina, courage, etc in relation to social change work and interview him/her for 10 minutes to try to understand how they came to be that way and stay in the struggle. Take notes and be ready to discuss briefly on the second day of class.
- For Day Two: Read the two articles by Lee and Toporek on advocacy in counseling. Be familiar with the basic ACA Advocacy Competencies and be ready to discuss, raise questions, and think about applications.
- For Day Two: Read *Do It Anyway* and bring notes containing several insights about activism or important questions to share with the class. Read the introduction and conclusion; and at least one of the first four case studies very carefully, and at least one from the second group of four case studies, for intensive discussion and analysis.
- For Day Three: Study the (auto)biography of a person who is known for having had an impact on any society and prepare a brief narrative story to tell (3-4 minutes) about how that person managed to have such an impact. Include: What impact did the person have? By what strategies or tactics did s/he accomplish this? What do you notice about his/her integration (or lack thereof) of the personal, political, cultural, and the professional/work dimensions of life?
- For Day Three: Read/skim Starhawk's *Empowerment Manual* and, drawing on the whole book, prepare a list of ten key practices you will try to remember to employ as you work in groups, collectives, teams.

Grading

Final grades will be based on effective participation in seminar discussion and in-class dialogues (50%) and on:

- Report on admired person (10%)
- Narrative on impactful person (20%)
- List of ten key practices for effective group process (20%)

Course Schedule

Day 1 Attend PNW Social Forum

Day 2

Debrief on Social Forum

Reports on Interviews with Admired Persons

Social Movements and Types of Activists

ACA Advocacy Competencies and other literature linking counseling and social action

Day 3

Stories of Impactful Persons

Group Process and the Individual: Key Practices

Supporting Activists

Conclusions and Evaluation