Social justice can be analyzed, just as it can be practiced and sought, from numerous worldviews. This **new seminar** on social justice can help us better understand how to think analytically about issues of justice in society—ranging from local justice issues to global justice/climate justice. We explore the genealogies of social justice worldviews—such as select classic and contemporary theories of justice (in sociological thought and in moral philosophy), ancient narratives (e.g. religious sacred texts), and social movement-based operational definitions. We learn about the social institutions which sustain social justice. Our discussions explore conceptual frameworks for social justice. We analyze social justice struggles in the face of racism-classism-religious oppression-sexism—and other major structural/cultural obstacles. Along with ongoing examination of social justice in the broadcasts of *Democracy Now* (with Amy Goodman), we engage (our life experiences and ) two good reads: *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice* (3rd edition), eds. Maurianne Adams et.al., voices from across a broad spectrum of justice concerns, and *Liberation Sociology* (3rd edition), by Joe Feagin, Hernan Vera, and Kimberley Ducey, viewing the field of sociology as an opportunity for social justice-minded intellectual/activist liberation praxis. These two books are required texts for the course and it is crucial that you read the assigned pages ahead of each week’s discussion and that you bring the pertinent text for our seminar conversations—which will include some small group time as well as full group seminar.

Calendar of Our Seminar Sessions:

**Week One**  Tuesday, Jan. 6 and Thursday, Jan. 8  Our Sociological Imagination

What is our understanding of justice? Is this understanding of justice shaped in part by the relationship we experience and recollect between personal biography and public history?

**Week Two**  Tuesday, Jan. 13 and Thursday, Jan. 15  Social Justice

What are the dimensions we think of when we try to envision the relational (social) character of justice? In preparation for our discussion this week, please read in *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice* (3rd edition): 1 - 56, 589 - 645.

**Week Three**  Tuesday, Jan. 20 and Thursday, Jan. 22  Liberation Sociology

Week Four  Tuesday, Jan. 27 and Thursday, Jan. 29  Social Justice in Classical Sociology

What understandings of social justice were at work in some “classics” of sociology? For our discussion this week please read in advance, *Liberation Sociology*: 39 – 79. What are some other major approaches to social justice as we think about this complex question in a global context?

Week Five  Tuesday, Feb. 3 and Thursday, Feb. 5  Racism and Social Justice

What do we think as we read these various perspectives on the question of racism and social justice? Read in preparation for our discussion this week, *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice*: 57 – 139.

Week Six  Tuesday, Feb. 10 and Thursday, Feb. 12  Classism and Social Justice

What do we think as we read these various perspectives on the question of classism and social justice? Read and be ready to discuss, *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice*: 141 – 228.

Week Seven  Tuesday, Feb. 17 and Thursday, Feb. 19  Religious Oppression and Social Justice; Religious Traditions and Social Justice

What do we think as we read these various perspectives on the question of religious oppression and social justice? Read in preparation for our conversation, *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice*: 229 – 315. What are some of the major religious social justice traditions as we think about the meaning of social justice in our world today?

Week Eight  Tuesday, Feb. 24 and Thursday, Feb. 26  Team Dramatizations (See details below)

Week Nine  Tuesday, Mar. 3 and Thursday, Mar. 5  Team Dramatizations (See below)

Week Ten  Tuesday, Mar. 10 and Thursday, Mar. 12  Circle of Shared Learning

This is our last week together. Each of you will be asked to share (informal circle of sharing) on Tuesday some of the highlights of discoveries you’ve made in researching and writing your paper (see guidelines below). This paper is due at the beginning of class on Tuesday, March 10. Bring print copy to class on time (2 PM), so that you can learn from each of your colleagues and likewise so they can learn from you. We will do self-evaluation and course evaluation on Thursday, March 12, but before doing so we will review what we think are the most significant things we have learned together about the social dimensions of justice.

Assignments and Basis for Evaluation of Your Contributions to Our Community of Learning:
1) Do the readings as assigned, ahead of each week, and be ready for thoughtful discussion in small and large group. Active participation is important—this includes deeply attentive listening. Regular attendance and participation are vital in this seminar, and count toward one-third of your total course grade.

2) Develop a high quality research paper. Guidelines for this paper are as follows: a) 8 to 10 pages, double-space, with all sources cited (this can be page 11) (If you are taking the course for graduate credit, the paper should be 13 to 15 pages); b) articulate what you decide to be the most significant question you can think of that has to do with social justice; ask this question and then dedicate your research and writing project to a concise and cogent answer to the question you have asked; I want to meet with each of you—when you are ready—to discuss your question and to give you some suggestions for exploring it in depth; be sure that your paper is carefully edited and polished when you submit it at the beginning of our class on Tuesday, March 10. This paper is worth one-third of your total course grade.

3) Work with members of your dramatization team (we will form teams in Week Four) to develop a thoughtful and creative mini-theatre on themes found in one of the following (we will work this out so that no two teams cover the same theme, so be flexible as we work out which team will cover which area): a) Sexism and Social Justice (see especially 317 – 371 in RDSJ Readings for Diversity and Social Justice); b) Heterosexism and Social Justice (see especially 373 – 424 in RDSJ); c) Transgender Oppression and Social Justice (see especially 425 – 459 in RDSJ); d) Ableism and Social Justice (see especially 461 – 534 in RDSJ); e) Ageism and Adultism and Social Justice (see especially 535 – 588 in RDSJ); f) Sociology in Action (see especially 135 – 197 in Liberation Sociology); g) Liberating Theory and Liberating Action (see especially 199 – 241 in Liberation Sociology). I will give you some suggestions and guidelines for this during Week Four just before you meet as your dramatization team and begin to shape what you will create and enact together later in the term (see calendar above). This dramatization is worth one-third of your total course grade.

There are many excellent sources related to the study of social justice, and we will refer to many of these (e.g. books, journal articles, websites, documentaries), but I would like you to pay close attention to Democracy Now: The War and Peace Report (available online, on Free Speech TV, on KBOO radio) with Amy Goodman. Try to take this in on a regular basis (say, three times each week) as we move through the course. We may make references to key issues being raised by DN.

My days and times available to meet are: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12 Noon – 1:45 PM, at The Energy Bar (fresh juices, pastries, soups, coffee shop), 1431 SW Park Avenue. My phone for leaving a message (at home): 503-66204210. My email address: frankfromherz@gmail.com