

Sex, Power, and Politics Section 80

WGSS 101

Fall 2024 3 Unit(s) 08/21/2024 to 12/09/2024 Modified 09/13/2024

Contact Information

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Office Hours Friday, 11 am-noon on zoom

Zoom: <https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/86089281842>

Course Description and Requisites

Multidisciplinary introduction to traditional and new images, roles, experiences, ethnic similarities and differences, and contemporary problems of American women. GE Area: S

Prerequisite(s): Completion of Core General Education and upper division standing are prerequisites to all SJSU studies courses. Completion of, or co-registration in, 100W is strongly recommended.

Letter Graded

Program Information

Welcome to this General Education course.

SJSU's General Education Program establishes a strong foundation of versatile skills, fosters curiosity about the world, promotes ethical judgment, and prepares students to engage and contribute responsibly and cooperatively in a multicultural, information-rich society. General education classes integrate areas of study and encourage progressively more complex and creative analysis, expression, and problem solving.

The General Education Program has three goals:

Goal 1: To develop students' core competencies for academic, personal, creative, and professional pursuits.

Goal 2: To enact the university's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and justice by ensuring that

students have the knowledge and skills to serve and contribute to the well-being of local and global communities and the environment.

Goal 3: To offer students integrated, multidisciplinary, and innovative study in which they pose challenging questions, address complex issues, and develop cooperative and creative responses.

More information about the General Education Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) can be found on the [GE website \(https://sjsu.edu/general-education/ge-requirements/overview/learning-outcomes.php\)](https://sjsu.edu/general-education/ge-requirements/overview/learning-outcomes.php).

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

GE Area S: Self, Society, and Equality in the U.S.

SJSU Studies courses -- Areas R, S, and V -- help students integrate knowledge between and among disciplines. In Area S courses, students study the interrelationships of individuals, racial groups, and cultural groups to understand and appreciate issues of diversity, inclusion, inequalities, and justice in the United States.

GE Area S Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of an Area S course, students should be able to:

1. describe how identities are shaped by cultural and societal influences within contexts of equality and inequality. Examples include, but are not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, religion, disability status, age, generation, regional origin, national identity, language, and intersectionalities;
2. analyze historical, economic, political, or social processes that shape diversity, equality, and structured inequalities in the U.S. and reflect on one's own identities and positions within these structures;
3. evaluate social actions which have or have not led to greater equality and social justice in the U.S.; and
4. engage in constructive interactions about social issues in the U.S. within the framework of equality and inequalities.

Writing Practice: Students will write a minimum of 3000 words in a language and style appropriate to the discipline.

Course Materials

Books

- Isaacson, Johanna. *Stepford Daughters: Weapons for Feminists in Contemporary Horror*. Common Notions, 2022.*
- Liu, Marjorie M., and Rus Wooton. *Monstress. Volume One, Awakening*. Edited by Jennifer M. Smith, Illustrated by Sana Takeda, Image Comics, Inc., 2016.*
- Meronek, Toshio, and Major. *Miss Major Speaks: Conversations with a Black Trans Revolutionary*. Verso, 2023.
- Tompkins, Kyla Wazana, et al., editors. *Keywords for Gender and Sexuality Studies*. New York University Press, 2021.*

Films/Media

- Babak Anvari, *Under the Shadow*, 2016.
- Bryan Forbes, *Stepford Wives*, 1975.
- Bong Joon Ho, *Parasite*, 2018.
- Anna Rose Holmer, *The Fits*, 2015.
- David Robert Mitchel, *It Follows*, 2014.

*Free through SJSU library.

You will need to pay to stream a few of the films required for the course. Please budget \$25-30 for streaming services.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Late Work Policy

I understand that circumstances may arise that could delay your submissions. Therefore, I do accept late work with the following stipulations:

1. Grace Period: All assignments have a 2-day grace period from the original due date. During this time, you may submit your work without any penalties or the need for an extension.
2. Please email me for an extension if you need more than two days. You will get the extension. Otherwise, if I grade an assignment and you do not request an extension, the grade for the assignment will stand.
3. End-of-Term Deadline: No late work after 12/5.

Please email me ASAP if there are any problems with links or accessing material on worksheets. I will make the necessary adjustments.

Code of Conduct

By all means, treat your fellow students and your instructor with respect. For in-person meetings, be on time, be engaged, and do your part to help make a great learning experience. Students must not use vulgar, obscene, abusive or demeaning language, writing, pictures, signs or acts in written or oral communications. Harassment in the form of name-calling, taunting, gestures, intimidation, conduct, jokes, pictures, slurs or ridicules are prohibited. I welcome differing opinions, but rudeness, bigotry, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia, etcetera is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at any time, both on my part and yours. I welcome differing opinions, but rudeness, bigotry, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia, etcetera is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at any time, both on my part and yours. Any disrespectful or threatening behavior will be reported to campus administration.

Pronoun Use

Knowing and using people's names and pronouns is a sign of respect. I encourage you to help me and your peers with proper name pronunciation and pronoun usage. Please let me know as soon as possible if your name or pronoun differs from what is listed in the course roster (MySJSU).

COMMUNICATE. COMMUNICATE. COMMUNICATE.

Ultimately, I like teaching, and I am here for you. I will accommodate you if you communicate a specific need to me before an assignment is due. However, I can't help you when you don't communicate with me. Stay on top of your work, and let me know when you hit any roadblocks, and I will certainly try to help.

Please don't alter assignments. If you need accommodations on an assignment, please contact Prof. Berney before it is due.

If you are sick, please stay home! Nothing in this course can't be given an extension or submitted online. Please prioritize taking care of yourself and informing me of any issues.

Operate with the assumption that everyone, including your professor, is trying to do their best. If a link on Canvas doesn't work, email me. I will then send reminders about assignments and extra credit opportunities.

Assignments

5 of 6 Discussion Posts. Each post is 40 points for a total of 200 points. The goal of the discussion post is to provide you with an opportunity to engage critically with the assigned readings. These readings are designed to deepen your understanding of how identities are shaped by cultural and societal influences within contexts of equality and inequality. This task is intended to help you fulfill the learning outcomes for Area S (Self, Society, and Equality in the US) by examining the interrelationships between individuals, racial groups, and cultural groups, with a particular focus on diversity, inclusion, inequalities, and justice in the United States. Through this process, you will explore how these dynamics impact our understanding of identity and social justice in the broader societal context.

6 Video Responses @ 75 points each for total of 450 points. Video responses are designed to help students fulfill objectives 2, 3, and 4 of the Area S requirement by engaging in the analysis of historical, economic, political, and social processes that shape diversity, equality, and structured inequalities in the United States. Through these responses, students will reflect on their own identities and positions within these structures, evaluate social actions that have or have not led to greater equality and social justice, and participate in constructive discussions about social issues within the frameworks of equality and inequality. Each video will ask students to engage with a particular media text and scholarly article, demonstrating their understanding and application of the scholarly framework while offering their perspective on the way of looking it presents.

5 Video Comments @ 25 points each for a total of 125 points. In addition to creating their own video responses, students will also be required to comment on another person's video for each response. These comments are an essential part of fulfilling the Area S requirement, as they encourage students to engage in meaningful dialogue and critical discussion with their peers. The comments should move beyond simple statements like "I agree," "I disagree," or "good work." Instead, students should strive to provide thoughtful, constructive feedback that engages with the content of the video, offering new insights, raising questions, or furthering the conversation in a way that deepens the analysis of the historical, economic, political, and social processes discussed.

Feminist Horror Symposium Photo Essay or Screenshot Reflections @150. This assignment offers students the option to complete either a photo essay or a screenshot reflection centered on the Feminist Horror Symposium, scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 29th at the Hammer Theatre. The photo essay option requires in-person attendance, while the screenshot reflection is an online alternative. The objective is to critically engage with the themes presented at the symposium, exploring how feminist horror intersects with cultural and societal influences, particularly in relation to equality and inequality. This assignment is designed to help students fulfill the learning outcomes for Area S (Self, Society, and Equality in the US) by analyzing the relationships between identity, culture, and justice within the framework of feminist horror. Students will connect their reflections to broader discussions of diversity, inclusion, and social justice in the United States.

Conference @ 50 points held on zoom during week 12.

Introductions & Mistakes @ 25 points. An introductory exercise that will acquaint us with one another through my mistakes.

✓ Grading Information

Grade Scale

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>A plus</i>	<i>960 to 1000</i>	<i>96 to 100%</i>
<i>A</i>	<i>930 to 959</i>	<i>93 to 95%</i>
<i>A minus</i>	<i>900 to 929</i>	<i>90 to 92%</i>
<i>B plus</i>	<i>860 to 899</i>	<i>86 to 89 %</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>830 to 859</i>	<i>83 to 85%</i>
<i>B minus</i>	<i>800 to 829</i>	<i>80 to 82%</i>
<i>C plus</i>	<i>760 to 799</i>	<i>76 to 79%</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>730 to 759</i>	<i>73 to 75%</i>
<i>C minus</i>	<i>700 to 729</i>	<i>70 to 72%</i>

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>D plus</i>	<i>660 to 699</i>	<i>66 to 69%</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>630 to 659</i>	<i>63 to 65%</i>
<i>D minus</i>	<i>600 to 629</i>	<i>60 to 62%</i>

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9 \(PDF\)](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the [Syllabus Information](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Course Schedule

Week	Topic
Part I: Feminist Genealogies	
1- 8/22	Welcome. Logistics. Hellos. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Introductions & Mistakes Post
2-8/27 & 8/29	READ: Constance Grady, "The waves of feminism, and why people keep fighting over them, explained," Vox.com; Mikki Kendall, "Solidarity is Still for White Women," from <i>Hood Feminism: Notes from the Women that a Movement Forgot</i> , 2020; Choose 2 keywords of your choice to read from <i>Keywords in Gender & Sexuality Studies</i> . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Discussion #1 - Feminisms

3 – 9/3 & 9/5	<p>READ: Isaacson, "Introduction: Class Horror is Gender Horror," from <i>Stepford Daughters: Weapons for Feminists in Contemporary Horror</i>.</p> <p>WATCH: Bryan Forbes, <i>Stepford Wives</i>, 1975.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Video Reaction #1 – Stepford Wives (1975)
4 – 9/10 & 9/12	<p>READ: Miss Major & Toshio Meronek, "Stonewall Never Happened," from <i>Miss Major Speaks: Conversations with a Black Trans Revolutionary</i>.</p> <p>+ keywords to help understand Miss Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Discussion #2 – Feminist Genealogies
<p>Part II: Unspeakable Horrors: Family & Domestic Labor</p>	
5 – 9/17 & 9/19	<p>READ: Sophie Lewis, "But I Love My Family!" + "Abolish Which Family," "A Potted History of Family Abolitionism," from <i>Abolish the Family</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Discussion #3 – Abolish the Family?
6 – 9/24 & 9/26	<p>READ: Isaacson, "Chapter 1: It's Coming from Inside/Outside the House: Horror as Care Strike," from <i>Stepford Daughters: Weapons for Feminists in Contemporary Horror</i>.</p> <p>WATCH: <i>Under the Shadow</i> (2016) or <i>Hereditary</i> (2018)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Video Reaction #2 – <i>Under the Shadow</i> or <i>Hereditary</i>
7 – 10/1 & 10/3	<p>READ: Isaacson, "Chapter 2: It's Coming from Inside the Boss's House: Horror and Waged Domestic Work," from <i>Stepford Daughters: Weapons for Feminists in Contemporary Horror</i>.</p> <p>WATCH: <i>La Llorona</i> (2019).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Video Reaction #3 – <i>La Llorona</i>
8 – 10/8 & 10/10	<p>READ: Shoniqua Roach, "The Black Living Room," <i>American Quarterly</i>, 2022.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Discussion #4 – Living Space

Part III: Service & Emotional Labor

9 – 10/15
& 10/17

READ: Isaacson, "Chapter 3: The Telltale Managed Heart: Service Labor and Emotional Labor in Contemporary Horror," from *Stepford Daughters: Weapons for Feminists in Contemporary Horror*.

WATCH: *Parasite* (2019); *Cam* (2018); or *Sorry to Bother You* (2018).

- Video Reaction #4 – Service & Emotional Labor

10 – 10/22
& 10/24

READ: TBA

- Discussion #5

11 – 10/29
& 10/31

Feminist Horror Symposium.

- Feminist Horror Symposium Photo Essay or Screenshot Reflection

12 – 11/05
& 11/07

Conferences

Part IV: Futureless Future & Feminist Solidarities

13 – 11/12
& 11/14

READ: Isaacson, "Chapter 4: Coming of Rage: Teens Entering the Futureless Future in Contemporary Horror,"+ "Coda: Become Monsters," from *Stepford Daughters: Weapons for Feminists in Contemporary Horror*.

- Discussion #6

14 – 11/19
& 11/21

WATCH: *It Follows* (2014), *Assassination Nation* (2018), *The Fits* (2015), or *The Lure* (2015).

- Video Reaction #5

15 – 11/26
& 11/28

REST. It's a traumatic holiday.

*T Day

16 – 12/3 & 12/5	READ: Marjorie Liu & Sana Takeda, <i>Monstress</i> , Volume I 2016.
Final	• DUE 12/17: Video Reaction #6 - Monstress

- = item that is due that week.