

# FEMINIST KILLJOYS & CYNICAL QUEERS

INTERSECTIONAL THEORIES OF AFFECT



KILLJOY'S KASTLE: A LESBIAN FEMINIST HAUNTED HOUSE  
BY ALLYSON MITCHELL AND DEIRDRE LOGUE

In this course, we will meet feminist killjoys, grapple with queer negativity, engage with Afro-pessimism, and encounter crip feelings. We will survey intersectional theories of affect and emotion with particular focus on cultural constructions of happiness, pessimism, joy, shame, anger, optimism, disgust, sadness, and compassion. Through our readings and discussions, we will work together to develop a critical framework to address vital questions such as how do hierarchies of sensation impact notions of ability, whose emotions are socially regulated, how do affects circulate in the media, and why do certain affects become associated with particular marginalized subject positions? We will also consider how affect and emotionality play key roles in strengthening social bonds, creating collective identities, and motivating action.

This class is designed to provide an upper-level examination of the “affective turn” in the humanities and social sciences, which has been marked by a shift in attention towards bodily sensation, structures of feeling, and modes of relationality. Readings will include work by theorists like Sara Ahmed, Lauren Berlant, Leo Bersani, Ann Cvetovich, Saidiya Hartman, Brian Massumi, José Esteban Muñoz, Sianne Ngai, and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick.

SPRING 2025  
MONDAYS 2:30-5:15PM

CAS WS 505  
DR. TESLA CARIANI