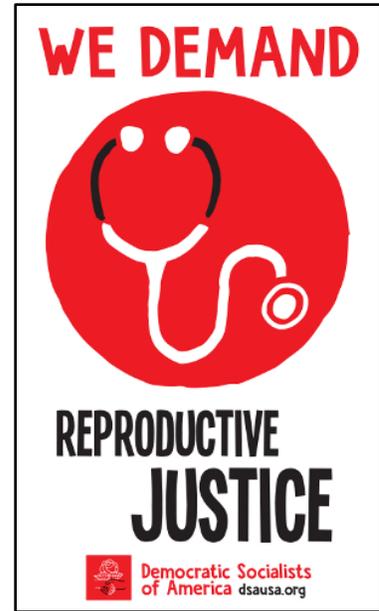


Raise Consciousness with "The Handmaid's Tale"

Hulu's 10-episode adaptation of Margaret Atwood's classic dystopian novel *The Handmaid's Tale* starts April 26. The showing, to millions of people, of a frighteningly plausible scenario involving religious fanatics and the control of women's bodies offers enormous educational opportunities that extend beyond April.

The premise of Atwood's novel is that world war and environmental catastrophe have created an economy of scarcity for an embattled United States and made the majority of people infertile. A militaristic elite has used religion and brute force to turn women into walking incubators.

Because the series begins at the end of a month of Abortion Access Bowl-A-Thons, it's an excellent opportunity to organize a community of socialist feminists to have weekly watch parties and combine chilling "entertainment" with political discussion and collective action. Here are some thoughts for your gatherings.



Successful House Party Tips

- Provide food and drinks.
- Start with a small core of people and suggest that each person bring one friend.
- Introduce yourselves to each other and ask who has done feminist activism before or is newly engaged.

Discussion Questions

1. At first glance, the government of Gilead seems to be built around religion. But what is the real goal driving its structure and practices?
2. What are the different ways the government maintains control in Gilead? How do they compare to what's happening to us today?
3. The adaptation of the novel is faithful to the language written by Atwood. Why might that be? Why is Gilead's vocabulary important?
4. Why was Offred's daughter stolen from her? Are there parallels in today's world?

Organizing Ideas

1. Research state-level abortion restriction proposals and organizations you can work with to fight them.
2. Write letters to the editor or develop and practice talking points for calling in to radio shows.
3. Make rally signs.
4. Organize an abortion speak-out with a reproductive justice framework.
5. Identify DSA members in strategic political districts and phone-bank them to ask them to call their elected officials about specific legislation.
6. Research places to table or plan a door-to-door canvass in target districts.
7. Choose an organization (or your DSA chapter's own Feminist Committee if you have one) for which to collect a little money each week.
8. Brainstorm ways to identify existing institutions (such as college campuses, religious institutions, PTAs for specific schools, libraries, or neighborhood groups) with a high proportion of women, in target districts, and then organize inside these institutions and organizations to build political pressure on elected officials.
9. Reach out to unions with a high proportion of women members, such as teachers and nurses, to begin working together.
10. Power-map the community and identify businesses that fund the Christian right. Then organize public pickets or other campaigns to shame them, including media coverage.
11. Organize clinic defense teams and/or DSAer hosts for poor and working-class women who can't afford a hotel when they come from out of town to obtain a safe abortion.

DSA local groups work with other community organizations in self-defense and solidarity actions. You can find your local DSA group at dsausa.org/chapters.

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