



WST 210:

GENDER, LABOR, AND THE SITCOM

This class will engage with the changing definition of the term “emotional labor,” that began with sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild’s original definition in *The Managed Heart* (1983) as “[paid] labor that requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others.” Overtime, it has come to refer to anything from retail workers remaining polite when speaking to rude customers, to wives doing the majority of the housework. This course will develop a genealogy of the term and its iterations in the workplace, home, and relationships. To accompany this exploration, we will be watching episodes from a variety of American sitcoms- everything from *I Love Lucy* to *Brooklyn Nine-Nine*. These sitcoms will serve to illustrate the concepts introduced in the course texts as well as to help analyze the media’s evolving perspective on gender roles in relation to the concept of emotional labor.