

# Make 'Em Laugh: A Celebration of Funny Ladies from Gilda Radner to Ali Wong



From *I Love Lucy* to recent to Ali Wong and Sarah Silverman, this course will examine the often unruly and always hilarious ladies of comedy. We will talk about humor as both culturally and historically located, inflected by ideas about race, class, gender, and sexuality. Potential screenings will include (but are not limited to) *I Love Lucy*; *Baby Cobra*; *I Love You America*; *Spy*; *The Mindy Project*; and *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*.

## **Required Technology:**

Notebook & Pen

Access to Netflix

Course reserves access: [https://library.ucsd.edu/dmr/courses/1286/Spring/2019/cat\\_87](https://library.ucsd.edu/dmr/courses/1286/Spring/2019/cat_87)

## **Assignments:**

[Lead a Discussion](#) (50%)

- [Sign-up sheet](#)

Weekly Participation (20%)

Final Reflection (30%): Write a 400-500 word reflection focusing on one theme that we've discussed this term, in relation to women and comedy. What have you learned? What struck you? What did you find most interesting? Weird? Funny?

## **Week 1: Intro to Comedy & Funny Women**

Introductions and Discussion

Recommended reading: "[Why women aren't funny](#)" (Inspiration for this class. Be warned: this article will make you angry, most likely)

Recommended: [CNN Doc: The History of Comedy](#)

## **Week 2: What is funny? How does humor work?**

Watch: Hannah Gadsby's *Nanette* (Netflix)

Read: "[Nanette is a radical, Transformative work of comedy](#)"

Recommended: "[Can Nanette bring queer storytelling the attention its due?](#)"

(Sign up for leading a discussion, click [here](#))

### **Week 3: Hilarious Histories**

Watch: *Love, Gilda* and *I Love Lucy* (“Job Switching”) (Both on course reserves)

Recommended: [Review of Love, Gilda from Vogue](#)

### **Week 4: Likable/Unlikable**

Watch: *Veep* (Pilot) & *30 Rock* (Pilot)

Read: [“Of Nasty, Unlikable Women”](#)

### **Week 5: Unruly Bodies, Part I**

Watch: *Ghostbusters* OR *Spy* (i.e. Melissa McCarthy)

Read: “Introduction” pgs 1-12 from *Unruly Woman* (Kathleen Karlyn) (Course reserves)

Recommended: “Too Fat from *Too Fat*” from *Too Slutty, Too Loud*

Recommended: *Shrill*, Pilot & Ep 2 (HuluPlus)

### **Week 6: Unruly Bodies, Part II**

Watch: Ali Wong’s *Baby Cobra* (Netflix)

Read: [“Why Ali Wong’s Baby Cobra was so explosive”](#)

Recommended: “Too Pregnant” from *Too Fat, Too Slutty, Too Loud* & [“Our modern obsession with pregnancy”](#)

Recommended: Amy Schumer’s *Growing* (Netflix)

### **Week 7: Race, Gender, & Humor, Part II**

Watch: *Margaret Cho: Beautiful*

Read: excerpts from [“Margaret Cho is Beautiful: A Comedy Manifesto”](#)

### **Week 8: Sexuality & Humor**

Watch: *Ellen*, “The Puppy Episode”

Recommended: *Relatable* (Ellen’s recent comedy special) (Netflix)

Read: excerpts from [“Pretty Funny Butch as the Girl Next Door”](#)

### **Week 9: Wrapping it up! & Your pick!**

What topics would you like to talk about? What have we not discussed/watched that you think would be fun/relevant?

(and snacks)