

# **TRANSCENDING GENDER**

**ANTHROPOLOGY 400L  
FALL 2003**

**Instructor: David Sutton  
Office Hours: Tuesday 9-11, 1-2, or by appt.  
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## **Course Description**

**How do humans become male and female in different societies. Can men become women and women become men, and what other gender possibilities exist? Is male dominance universal? What are the sources of male and female power and resistance? Do women have a separate culture? What is the relationship between gender, militarism and war? This and other questions will be explored in cross-cultural perspective. We will address these issues through an immersion in the gender systems of a number of different societies.**

## **Course Requirements:**

**One Mid-Term Examination worth 30% of your grade**

**One Final Examination worth 35% of your grade**

**There will be regular short assignments throughout the term. Buy a notebook in which to keep these assignments. These assignments will be marked on a 4-pt. scale and will count collectively for 20% of your grade.**

**Summaries: For each class you will turn in a 1-page (250 word max) summary of the reading due for that day. Each summary will be graded on a 4-point scale and collectively they will add up to 15% of your grade. While summaries are due at the beginning of class (or before), do not miss class in order to get your summary in (I will accept them for the rest of that day).**

**Attendance Attendance is required. If you anticipate schedule conflicts due to other classes, work, athletic events or other activities you are advised not to take this class because irregular attendance will negatively impact your grade. If you need to miss a class due to illness, religious observances or team participation**

**you must notify me prior to the class. Failure to come to an exam, or to bring in an exam paper by the deadline without notifying me will result in an "F" for that grade.**

**Required Books: (available at the bookstores)**

Peggy Sanday *Women at the Center*

Serena Nanda *Neither Man Nor Woman*

Margery Wolf *A Thrice-Told Tale*

Michael Herzfeld *The Poetics of Manhood*

C.R. Sutton *Feminism, Militarism, Nationalism*

**Other readings will be available for xeroxing in the anthropology reading room**

**Week 1 Introduction: Gender as as Social Construction.**

**Readings:**

**Ursula LeGuin "Is Gender Necessary? Redux"**

**Katha Pollit "Marooned on Gilligan's Island"**

**Week 2: *Gender & Power*: Is Male Dominance Universal? If so, Why? What are the sources of power and oppression?**

**Readings:**

**Michele Rosaldo "Woman, Culture & Society, an Overview."**

**Sherry Ortner "Is Male to Female as Nature is to Culture?"**

**Eleanor Leacock "The Origins of Hierarchy" and "The Jesuit Program for Colonization"**

**Leslie Marmon Silko "Yellow Woman and Beauty of the Spirit"**

**Weeks 3-4 *The View from a 'Matrifocal' Society*. How are kinship, gender and**

exchanged experienced in a relatively egalitarian society? What are the sources of conflict and cooperation between men and women?

Readings:

Peggy Sanday *Women at the Center*

Weeks 5-6 *The Ritual and the Everyday*. How are gender power, dominance and autonomy experienced in experiences of Birth, Food and the Body

Readings:

Carol Counihan "Food, Sex and Reproduction"

Robbie Davis-Floyd "Gender and Ritual: Giving Birth the American Way."

Elizabeth Chin "Ethnically Correct Dolls"

Wendy Varney "The Briar Around the Strawberry Patch"

Week 7: *Gender and Islam: Views and Stereotypes*

Elizabeth Fernea Selections from *In Search of Islamic Feminism*

Lila Abu-Lughod "Do Islamic Women Really Need Saving?"

Weeks 8-9 Are there more than two genders? How are they constructed in different societies.

Readings:

Serena Nanda *Neither Man Nor Woman*

Week 8 MIDTERM EXAM

Weeks 10-11 Constructing Feminist Stories and Feminist Ethnographies:

Readings:

Margery Wolf *A Thrice-Told Tale*

**Karen McCarthy Brown "Telling a Life"**

**Weeks 12-13 *Constructions of Masculinity*: How is masculinity experienced, lived and performed?**

**Readings:**

**Michael Herzfeld *The Poetics of Manhood*.**

**Lori Kendall "Hanging Out in the Virtual Pub: Masculinities and Relationships Online"**

**Weeks 14-15 *Gender in Global Perspectives*: Nationalism, Transnationalism and Warfare.**

**Readings:**

**C.R. Sutton *Feminism, Militarism, Nationalism***

**David Sutton "Rescripting Women's Collective Action."**

**FINAL EXAM**