

# ANSC 125: Gender, Sexuality, and Society

Spring 2023

Tues, Thurs 12:30-1:50  
Peterson 102

Professor Suzanne Brenner  
[sbrenner@ucsd.edu](mailto:sbrenner@ucsd.edu)

Office Hours (Zoom): Thursdays 4 - 5 and by appointment (Zoom or in person)

TA: Brianna Vargas ([bvargas@ucsd.edu](mailto:bvargas@ucsd.edu))

Reader: Zhané Gaillard ([zgaillard@ucsd.edu](mailto:zgaillard@ucsd.edu))



## Course Description

This course looks at the social and cultural dimensions of gender and sexuality from a cross-cultural perspective. How are ideas and practices of gender and sexuality shaped by, and how do they in turn shape, cultural values and ideologies; social institutions and social transformations; and local, national, and transnational politics and economics? We begin with the understanding that gender roles, gender differences, and ideas about gender and sexuality are strongly influenced by social and cultural factors rather than predetermined by biology. The sociocultural study of gender and sexuality focuses not on the physical differences between the sexes, but on the ways that these differences acquire meaning in particular cultural and historical contexts. It is also concerned with how gender and sexuality intersect with other social signifiers of difference such as race, class, and ethnicity, and how they serve as basic principles of social organization that are closely linked to other aspects of everyday life such as kinship and family life, politics, and economics.

## **Course Logistics, Requirements, and Grading**

Class attendance and active participation in class discussions are strongly encouraged. The lectures will also be podcast to make them available to students who are unable to attend in person due to illness or for another valid reason. (Please don't come to class if you think you might be ill.) However, please note that if regular attendance drops too low, the podcasting option might be removed in order to encourage greater class attendance. Podcasts are not intended as a regular replacement for attending class in person.

Lectures and in-class discussions will be supplemented with videos, which you should make every effort to watch, as they are an important part of the course. Videos will be shown in class so we can talk about them, but they will also be available online through Course Reserves.

Most of the readings for the course will be available online through Ares (library course reserves--<https://reserves.ucsd.edu/ares/>). One of the books, *Thai Women in the Global Labor Force*, is **not** available through Course Reserves but can be purchased or rented through the UCSD Bookstore (though might be cheaper if ordered used online; please order right away to make sure it arrives on time). You can also buy a Kindle version through Amazon. **Please try to finish the assigned readings before attending the class for which they are assigned** so that you can gain more from the lectures and participate actively in discussions.

Note that in order to access most online readings from off campus you will need to connect to Course Reserves through the VPN. If you have any trouble gaining access to the readings, **please contact the library for technical help first (the library's general number is 858-534-3336)**. If the problem can't be resolved with the library's help, please let Professor Brenner or Brianna Vargas know as soon as possible. If you encounter problems with Canvas, please seek help through the IT Service Desk at [servicedesk@ucsd.edu](mailto:servicedesk@ucsd.edu), or call (858) 246-4357, 7 AM – 10 PM weekdays and noon – 3:00 PM on weekends when classes are in session.

**Course grades** will be based on the discussion board posts (30%), the midterm exam (35%), and the final exam (35%).

### **Grading Scale:**

A+ = 97-100  
A = 93-96  
A- = 90-92  
B+ = 87-89  
B = 83-86  
B- = 80-82  
C+ = 77-79  
C = 73-76  
C- = 70-72  
D = 60-69  
F = 59 and below

**Exams:** There will be an in-class midterm and final exam (both “blue book” essay-type exams). The study guides will be posted 1 - 2 weeks before the exams. You will be given a limited choice of questions to answer, all of which will be taken from the study guide.

**Discussion board posts:** There will be five discussion board topics posted during different weeks in the quarter. You will be asked to post one comment (see below for more details) on each of these discussion boards. The post can either be an independent comment (i.e., not in response to another student) or a response to another student’s post. **Please note that only one grade per discussion board assignment can be recorded in Canvas, so each of your posts (whether independent posts or responses to other students) will need to be on different discussion boards.** These posts will be worth up to 20 points each (maximum of 100 points total for the five posts). Please pay careful attention to the due dates for these, since the discussion boards will be closed after a certain date and you will not be able to post after that time.

**The discussion board posts should be about 250 - 350 words long** (you can compose them in a separate document to check the word count, then copy them into the discussion board). In order to receive full credit for your posts, you should show that you have read the readings carefully and engaged with the content. You can do this by referring to specific ideas raised in the reading. A rubric will be posted in Canvas for the discussion boards. If you are responding to another student’s post, you should still show engagement with the reading and provide some substantial support for your position. Please be respectful in your responses.

**Academic honesty and integrity:** In general, you are encouraged to share ideas with other students. However, **all of the writing that you submit should be your own.** In accordance with UCSD’s policy, no form of academic dishonesty (e.g., cheating, plagiarism, having other students or online apps/services doing your work for you) will be tolerated. Please read the details of this policy at <https://senate.ucsd.edu/Operating-Procedures/Senate-Manual/Appendices/2>

**Updates:** Be sure to check the course website on Canvas regularly for updated course materials and class announcements. There may be minor changes to the syllabus; these will be posted and announcements will be made on the course website. Announcements will also be sent to your UCSD email address through Canvas.

**Office Hours:** Professor Brenner’s regular Zoom office hours for the course will be Thursdays 4:00 – 5:00, at a Zoom link available through Canvas. If possible, please let me know ahead of time by email that you would like to meet then (and if you have any time constraints), but I will usually be available online for drop-in meetings during that time. If you would like to meet either on Zoom or in person but are unable to do so during regular office hours, please email me to set up another appointment ([sbrenner@ucsd.edu](mailto:sbrenner@ucsd.edu)). Brianna Vargas ([bvargas@ucsd.edu](mailto:bvargas@ucsd.edu)) will also be available to meet at other times (to be announced).

**Accommodations:** We care about your well-being and want you to do as well as possible. If you have any concerns or questions about the course, we encourage you to get in touch with Professor Brenner or TA Brianna Vargas. If you are experiencing particular difficulties that might get in the way of you completing your assignments on time or fulfilling them in other ways, including but not limited to academic, health, or personal problems, please reach out to us and we will do what we can to make reasonable accommodations. Please try to make requests for extensions or other accommodations as early as possible. Students who have received accommodations from the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) should contact Professor Brenner at the beginning of the quarter to make arrangements. Our hope is that everyone can learn from and enjoy the class without it adding too much stress to your life.

**Campus mental health and general wellness support:** If you feel that you need emotional support, we strongly encourage you to contact UCSD's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). Appointments are available to all students, including by video or phone ([caps.ucsd.edu](https://caps.ucsd.edu)). Urgent appointments and 24-hour crisis counseling are available for students at 858-534-3755.

Other wellness resources can be found at <https://blink.ucsd.edu/sponsor/wellness/index.html>. Your emotional and physical health are really important, so please take care of yourself and reach out to get the support that you need.

**Respect:** Please show respect to everyone in the class, including other students, the professor, the TA and the Reader. Be civil and respectful in discussions and in your written messages. If you are experiencing any form of harassment or disrespect from others, or observe others being targeted in this way, please let the professor or TA know right away. During in-person lectures, please only use your laptop for taking notes or other uses related to the course (e.g., please don't watch TikTok videos during class – this can be distracting to others around you).

## **LECTURE AND DISCUSSION TOPICS, READINGS, VIDEOS, AND EXAMS**

**NOTE:** All readings should be completed **before** the class in which we discuss them.

### **April 4: INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE**

No assigned readings, but please start reading ahead for the upcoming sections of the course.

### **April 6: THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF WOMEN AND EARLY THEORIES OF GENDER INEQUALITY**

#### **Readings for April 6:**

- Michelle Rosaldo, "Woman, Culture, and Society"
- Sherry Ortner, "Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?"

### **April 11: GENDER AND KINSHIP (1)**

#### **Reading for April 11:**

- Margery Wolf, *Women and the Family in Rural Taiwan*, chapters 2, 3, 9, 11 (available online through Course Reserves)

### **April 13 GENDER AND KINSHIP (2)**

#### **Readings for April 13:**

- Linda Stone and Caroline James, "Dowry, Bride-Burning, and Female Power in India"
- Evelyn Blackwood, "Senior Women, Model Mothers, and Dutiful Wives: Managing Gender Contradictions in a Minangkabau Village"

### **April 18 WOMEN'S POLITICS (1)**

**IN-CLASS VIDEO: *No Longer Silent* (about Indian women's rights activists in the 1980s)**

#### **Readings for April 18:**

- Chandra Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses"
- Judith van Allen, "'Aba Riots' or Igbo 'Women's War'?"

## **April 20: WOMEN'S POLITICS (2)**

### **Readings for April 20:**

--Mary Pardo, "Mothers of East Los Angeles"

--Keisha-Khan Perry, "Geographies of Power: Black Women Mobilizing Intersectionality in Brazil"

## **April 25: MARRIAGE AND ITS ALTERNATIVES IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY (1)**

### **Readings for April 25:**

--Judith Stacey, *Unhitched*, Introduction and Chapter 1

--William Jankowiak, "Co-Wives, Husband, and the Mormon Polygynous Family"

## **April 27: MARRIAGE AND ITS ALTERNATIVES IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY (2)**

### **Reading for April 27:**

--Stacey, "Unhitching the Horse from the Carriage" (Chapter 5 in *Unhitched*)

**IN-CLASS VIDEO:** *The Women's Kingdom* and discussion about marriage and its alternatives

## **May 2: IN-CLASS MIDTERM EXAM (BRING BLUE BOOKS!)**

## **May 4: GUEST LECTURE ON REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE (BRIANNA VARGAS)**

### **Assignment for May 4:**

--Listen to the podcast "American Hysteria: An Irresistible Movement with Reproductive Justice Activist Loretta J. Ross" (\*content warning: sexual violence)

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/4XmhZssCLjKvLu1F732SU9?si=PvSzhVptT9GdHUyTaR3ktA>

--Possible additional reading to be announced

## **May 9, 11: GENDER IN LOCAL AND GLOBAL ECONOMIES**

**May 9: IN-CLASS VIDEO: *China Blue*** (NOTE: This video runs for about 88 minutes. Most of it will be shown on May 9; the rest will be shown on May 11 if time allows, or students will be asked to finish watching it on their own through Course Reserves.)

### **Reading for May 9:**

--Start reading the assigned pages in Mary Beth Mills, *Thai Women in the Global Labor Force* (pp. 1-30, 42-46, 74-146. Pp. 147-162 are optional.) (NOTE: THIS BOOK IS NOT AVAILABLE ONLINE THROUGH COURSE RESERVES. It can be purchased through the Bookstore or online.)

**May 11:** Discuss *Thai Women in the Global Labor Force* and the video *China Blue*

### **Reading for May 11:**

--Finish reading assigned chapters in Mills, *Thai Women in the Global Labor Force*

## **May 16: MASCULINITIES (1): MASCULINITY IN THE U.S.**

**Short in-class video (7 min.): *The History of Asian American Masculinity*** (<https://vimeo.com/166108107>)

### **Readings for May 16:**

--Yen Le Espiritu, "All Men Are Not Created Equal: Asian Men in U.S. History"

-- C. J. Pascoe, "'Dude, You're a Fag': Adolescent Masculinity and the Fag Discourse"

**May 18: MASCULINITIES (2): In-class discussion on masculinity**

**Reading for May 18:**

-- Start reading the assigned chapters in Marcia Inhorn, *The New Arab Man: Emergent Masculinities, Technologies and Islam in the Middle East* (Prologue, Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2)

**May 23: MASCULINITIES (3): MASCULINITY AND REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

**Reading May 23:**

-- Finish reading the assigned chapters in *The New Arab Man*

**May 25: CROSSING BOUNDARIES OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY (1)**

**Readings for May 25:**

--Charlotte Greenfield, "Should We 'Fix' Intersex Children?"  
--Padawer, Ruth, "When Women Become Men at Wellesley"  
--Possible additional reading to be announced

**May 30: CROSSING BOUNDARIES OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY (2)**

**Readings for May 30:**

--Anna Meigs, "Male Pregnancy and the Reduction of Sexual Opposition"  
--Sabine Lang, "Lesbians, Men-Women and Two Spirits"

**June 1: CROSSING BOUNDARIES OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY (3)**

**IN-CLASS VIDEO: *Visible Silence: The Unspoken Lives of Thai Tomboys, Ladies and Lesbians***

**Reading for June 1:**

--Megan Sinnott, *Toms and Dees: Transgender Identity and Female Same-Sex Relationships in Thailand* (Just read the Introduction [pp. 1 – 23] and Chapter 3 [pp. 76 – 110]).

**June 6: CROSSING BOUNDARIES OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY (4)**

**Reading for June 6:**

--Don Kulick, "The Gender of Brazilian Transgendered Prostitutes"

**June 8 (LAST CLASS): To be announced**

**IN-CLASS FINAL EXAM: Monday, June 12 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM\* (BRING BLUE BOOKS!)**

**\*Note that the final exam will be two hours (not three, as indicated in the schedule of classes)**

**COURSE READINGS**

**(All readings are available on Course Reserves except for the book by Mills.)**

1. Rosaldo, Michelle, "Woman, Culture, and Society: A Theoretical Overview." IN Michelle Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere, eds., *Woman, Culture, and Society*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974. Pp. 17-42.

2. Ortner, Sherry, "Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?" IN Rosaldo and Lamphere, eds., *Woman, Culture, and Society*. Pp. 67-87.
3. Wolf, Margery, *Women and the Family in Rural Taiwan*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. 1972.
4. Stone, Linda and James, Caroline, "Dowry, Bride-Burning, and Female Power in India." *Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol. 18, No. 2. Pp. 125-134. 1995.
5. Blackwood, Evelyn, "Senior Women, Model Mothers, and Dutiful Wives: Managing Gender Contradictions in a Minangkabau Village." IN Aihwa Ong and Michael G. Peletz, eds., *Bewitching Women, Pious Men: Gender and Body Politics in Southeast Asia*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995. Pp. 124-158.
6. Mohanty, Chandra, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses." In C. Mohanty, *Feminism without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003. Pp. 17-42.
7. Van Allen, Judith, "'Aba Riots' or Igbo 'Women's War'? Ideology, Stratification, and the Invisibility of Women." IN Nancy Hafkin and Edna Bay, eds., *Women in Africa*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976. Pp. 59-85.
8. Pardo, Mary, "Mexican American Women Grassroots Community Activists: 'Mothers of East Los Angeles.'" *Frontiers* 11(1): 1-6. 1990.
9. Perry, Keisha-Khan, "Geographies of Power: Black Women Mobilizing Intersectionality in Brazil." *Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism* 14(1): 94-120. 2016.
10. Stacey, Judith, *Unhitched: Love, Marriage, and Family Values from West Hollywood to Western China*. New York: NYU Press, 2011. (Selected chapters.)
11. Jankowiak, William "Co-Wives, Husband, and the Mormon Polygynous Family." *Ethnology* 47(3), 2008. Pp. 163-180.
12. Mills, Mary Beth, *Thai Women in the Global Labor Force: Consuming Desires, Contested Selves*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. 1999. (Selected chapters.)
13. Gururani, Shubhra, "Forests of Pleasure and Pain: Gendered Practices of Labor and Livelihood in the Forests of the Kumaon Himalayas, India." *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* 9(2): 229-243. 2002.
14. Espiritu, Yen Le, "All Men Are Not Created Equal: Asian Men in U.S. History." IN Michael Kimmel and Michael Messner, eds., *Men's Lives*, Seventh Edition. Boston: Pearson Allyn & Bacon. 2007. Pp. 21-29.
15. Pascoe, C.J., "'Dude, You're a Fag: Adolescent Masculinity and the Fag Discourse.'" *Sexualities*: 8(3): 329-346. 2005.
16. Inhorn, Marcia, *The New Arab Man: Emergent Masculinities, Technologies, and Islam in the Middle East*. Princeton University Press, 2012. (Selected chapters.)
17. Greenfield, Charlotte, "Should We 'Fix' Intersex Children?" *The Atlantic*, July 8, 2014.

18. Padawer, Ruth, "When Women Become Men at Wellesley." *The New York Times Magazine*, October 15, 2014. [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/19/magazine/when-women-become-men-at-wellesley-college.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/19/magazine/when-women-become-men-at-wellesley-college.html?_r=0)
19. Meigs, Anna, "Male Pregnancy and the Reduction of Sexual Opposition in a New Guinea Highlands Society." *Ethnology* 15: 393-407. 1976.
20. Lang, Sabine, "Lesbians, Men-Women and Two-Spirits: Homosexuality and Gender in Native American Cultures." IN Evelyn Blackwood and Saskia Wieringa, eds., *Same-Sex Relations and Female Desires: Transgender Practices across Cultures*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999. Pp. 91-116.
21. Sinnott, Megan, *Toms and Dees: Transgender Identity and Female Same-Sex Relationships in Thailand*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004.
22. Kulick, Don, "The Gender of Brazilian Transgendered Prostitutes." *American Anthropologist* 99(3): 574-585. 1997.