



January 2023

Our Males and Females

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Recommended Citation

Blizek, William L. and Blizek, Monica (2023) "Our Males and Females," *Journal of Religion & Film*: Vol. 27: Iss. 1, Article 17.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32873/uno.dc.jrf.27.01.17>

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/jrf/vol27/iss1/17>

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Our Males and Females

Abstract

This is a film review of *Our Males and Females* (2023), directed by Ahmad Alyaseer.

Keywords

Transgender

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Author Notes

William Blizek is the Founding Editor of the Journal of Religion and Film, and is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy and Religion at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He is also the editor of the *Continuum Companion to Religion and Film* (2009). Monica Blizek is a retired mental health professional.



Our Males and Females (2023), dir. Ahmad Alyaseer

This is the story of an Islamic mother and father who have come to wash the body of their deceased child in preparation for an appropriate burial. Because their son was transitioning to a woman, neither the father nor the mother is able to bring themselves to wash the body. They ask a male body washer to help them, but he refuses when he sees the body of a woman. They then ask a woman to wash the body, but she refuses when she realizes the female body is also that of a man.

We begin with the mother praying to Allah. She asks that her son be accepted, and that Allah wash him in water, snow and ice. By the end, the mother can pray that Allah accepts her child, now seen as female, and that Allah wash *her* in water, snow, and ice. She asks Allah to increase her rewards if her daughter was pious and if she was a sinner to pardon her. The mother also asks Allah to give her an abode better than her home and a family better than her own.

This is an agonizing and heart-breaking short film. While the mother acknowledges her child as a woman and prays that Allah will be accepting and forgiving of her, the father (who is

also a physician) decides that the only way to fulfill the burial ritual is to restore his son. The end result is pain for both of the parents, and it is a pain that will persist.