

Sport Cultures in the United States

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Course Description

Sport has long been configured by local, national, and international cultural processes. This course explores the intersections of sport and culture across race, region, urban space, and political boundaries. It draws on a range of sources to consider how sports shape society.

This is a workshop course. For each class, students will write a 500-word analysis of a current problem in American society drawing on historical precedent as discussed in three scholarly articles. The exercise, then, will be to consider a current problem in historical context – how did we get here from there.

The instructor will read, comment, and return each assignment before the class concerned. Clean copies of each assignment will be distributed to all students. Class exercises will focus on workshopping each student analysis for historical content, research, analysis, and writing effectiveness.

Course Format

Three-hour Seminar/Workshop.

Attendance is mandatory.

Course Goals

Students will leave the course with

- a) Tangibly superior reading, writing, and analytical skills.*
- b) An effective mastery of course themes.*
- c) The ability to apply skills and knowledge learned to a range of courses.*

Marks Breakdown

Class Written Assignments – 40%

Final Essay – 30%

Participation – 30%

Class Written Assignments

Each week, beginning in week II, students will write a 500-word analysis of a current problem in American society drawing on historical precedent discussed in three current scholarly articles or books.

Assignments are always due 48 hours before the start of class.

In class, we will workshop all written assignments.

Final Essay

The final essay will be 7–10 pages, not including notes. It will be on any topic of relevance to the course. You will draw on at least 8 strong, current sources.

Schedule

Week I

23 April

Baseball and the American Ideal

Nick Trujillo, "Hegemonic Masculinity on the Mound: Media Representations of Nolan Ryan and American Sports Culture," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 8.3 (1991): 290–308.

Lisa Glebatis Perks, "Sox and Stripes: Baseball's Ironic American Dreams," *Communication Quarterly*, 60.4 (2012): 445–464.

Gregory Ramshaw, "Living Heritage and the Sports Museum," *Journal of Sport and Tourism*, 15.1 (February 2010): 45–70.

25 April

Performing Baseball

<http://baseballhall.org>

Elaine M. Blinde and Sarah G. McCallister, "Observations in the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum: Doing Gender in Cooperstown," *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 74.3 (2003): 301–12.

Alan Klein, "Culture, Politics, and Baseball in the Dominican Republic," *Latin American Perspectives*, 22.3 (1995): 111–130.

Jane Juffer, "Who's the Man? Sammy Sosa, Latinos, and Televisual Redefinitions of the 'American' Pastime," *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 26.4 (2002): 337–359.

Week II

30 April

Boxing and Identities I – US Imperial Culture

Daniel Fridman and David Sheinin, "Wild Bulls, Discarded Foreigners, and Brash Champions: US Empire and the Cultural Constructions of Argentine Boxers," *Left History*, 12.2 (2007): 52–77.

<http://pi.library.yorku.ca/ojs/index.php/lh/article/view/15044/0>

Lara Putnam, "The Panama Cannonball's Transnational Ties: Migrants, Sport, and Belonging in the Interwar Greater Caribbean," *Journal of Sport History*, 41.3 (2015): 401–424.

2 May

Boxing and Identities II – Cultured Violence

John G. Rodwan, "The Fighting Life: Boxing and Identity in Novels by Philip Roth and Norman Mailer," *Philip Roth Studies*, 7.1 (2011): 83–96.

Leger Grindon, "The Boxing Film and Genre Theory," *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*, 24.5 (2007): 403–10.

Lynda Nead, "Stilling the Punch: Boxing, Violence and the Photographic Image," *Journal of Visual Culture*, 10.3 (2011): 305–23.

Week III

7 May

Boxing and Identities III – Commodified Blackness

Grant Farred, "When kings were (anti-?)colonials: black athletes in film," *Sport in Society*, 11.2–3 (2008): 240–52.

Kath Woodward, "Rumbles in the Jungle: Boxing, Racialization and the Performance of Masculinity," *Leisure Studies*, 23.1 (2004): 5–17.

Will Cooley, "‘Vanilla Thrillas’: Modern Boxing and White–Ethnic Masculinity," *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 34.4 (2010): 418–37.

9 May

Women and Power I – Gendered Readings

Ann Chisolm, "Incarnations and Practices of Feminine Rectitude: Nineteenth–Century Gymnastics for U.S. Women," *Journal of Social History*, 38.3 (2005): 737–63.

Dayna B. Daniels, "You Throw Like a Girl: Sport and Misogyny on the Silver Screen," *Film & History*, 35.1 (2005): 29–38.

Mark Dyreson, "Icons of Liberty or Objects of Desire? American Women Olympians and the Politics of Consumption," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 38.3 (2003): 435–60.

Week IV

14 May

Women and Power II – Sex and Race

James McKay, "Pornographic Eroticism and Sexual Grotesquerie in Representations of African American Sportswomen," *Social Identities*, 14.4 (2008): 491–504.

Jaime Schultz, "Reading the Catsuit: Serena Williams and the Production of Blackness at the 2002 U.S. Open," *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 29.3 (2005): 338–57.

Sandra Hanson, "Hidden Dragons: Asian American Women and Sport," *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 29.3 (2005): 279–312.

16 May

Masculinities

A. Klein, "Comic Book Masculinity," *Sport in Society*, 10.6 (2007): 1073–1119.

Fernando Delgado, "Golden but not Brown: Oscar De La Hoya and the Complications of Culture, Manhood, and Boxing," *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 22.2 (March 2005): 196–211.

Michael Butterworth, "Pitchers and Catchers: Mike Piazza and the Discourse of Gay Identity in the National Passtime," *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 30.2 (2006): 138–157.

Week V

21 May

Dissent

Ron Briley, "Baseball and Dissent: The Vietnam Experience," *NINE*, 17.1 (2008): 54–69.

Vijay Prashad, "Bruce Lee and the Anti-Imperialism of Kung Fu: A Polycultural Adventure," *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique*, 11.1 (2003): 51–90.

23 May

The Body

Katharina Lindner, "Bodies in Action," *Feminist Media Studies*, 11.3 (2011): 321–45.

Loïc Wacquant, "Pugs at Work: Bodily Capital and Bodily Labour among Professional Boxers," *Body & Society*, 1.1 (1995): 65–93.

Martha H. Verbrugge, "Recreating the Body: Women's Physical Education and the Science of Sex Differences in America, 1900–1940," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 71.2 (1997): 273–304.

Loïc Wacquant, "Whores, Slaves and Stallions: Languages of Exploitation and Accommodation among Boxers," *Body & Society*, 7:2–3 (2001): 181–94.