

Sport, Symbol, Society: The Cultural Study of Sports
RCAH 192 section 5 | Freshman Seminar
Berkeley Hall 119B > T 12:40-2:30

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description

Throughout history, ‘leisure’ activities have performed a principal role within all societies. An understanding of sport, as *the* most popular leisure activity, is paramount to an engaged understanding of culture, history, and contemporary society. Since both Western and non-Western cultures have used sport to maintain social, cultural, and political structures, this course will be cross-cultural and interdisciplinary in perspective. Students will be expected to think critically about sports, sporting culture, and their relationship to larger society.

We will investigate sporting activities throughout history, particularly looking at its role within society, its use as a colonial tool, how it functions to create and maintain national identities, and its role within contemporary movements of resistance. Additionally, I am interested in beginning to conceive of sport in aesthetic terms and possibly as art. By looking at sports as art, this course will introduce students to a multiplicity of approaches that re-investigate our preconceived notions of sport. Through this course, students will begin to question assumptions about sport within our society, see the historical roots of those assumptions, engage in athletic activities, and revision sports within an art historical/critical framework.

texts

Allen Guttman. *Sports: The First Five Millennia*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts, 2005.

Eduardo Galeano. *Soccer in Sun and Shadow*. New ed New York: Verso, 2003.

Dave Zirin. *Welcome to the Terrordome*. New York: Haymarket Books, 2007.

Various PDFs, available from angel.msu.edu.

grading

participation > 40%

book of vignettes > 30%

paper 1 > 15% [review of live sporting event]

paper 2 > > 15% [analysis of sporting media]

calendar

Week One | Defining Sport

None

Week Two | Anthropology of Sport

Guttman, Chapter 1

Philip Moore. “Scouting an Anthropology of Sport.” *Anthropologia* 46 (2004), 37-46.

John Bale. "Capturing the African Body?: Visual Images and Imaginative Sports." *Journal of Sport History* 25:2 (Summer 1998), 234-251.

Week Three | Early History of Sport

Guttman, Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5.

Scott T. Carroll. "Wrestling in Ancient Nubia." *Journal of Sport History* 15:2 (1998), 121-137.

Week Four | Sport as Colonialism

Guttmann, Chapters 8, 11, 15.

Eric D. Anderson. "Using the Master's Tools: Resisting Colonization through Colonial Sports." *International Journal of the History of Sport* 23:2 (March 2006), 247-266.

Week Five | Sport as Modernity

Guttman, 7, 9, 10, 14, 17.

Week Six | Economy of Sport

Zirin, Chapter 8

Adrian Budd. "Capitalism, Sport and Resistance: Reflections." *Culture, Sport, Society* 4:1 (2001), 1-18.

Week Seven | Globalization of Sport

Galeano, selections.

Peter Donnelly. "The Local and the Global: Globalization in the Sociology of Sport." *Journal of Sport & Social Issues* 20: 3 (1996): 239-257.

Week Eight | Consumption of Sporting Culture

Liz Moor. "Sport and Commodification: A Reflection on Key Concepts." *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 31:2 (May 2007), 128-142.

C. Richard King. "This is not an Indian: Situating Claims of Indianness in Sporting Worlds." *Journal of Sport & Social Issues* 28:1 (January 2004), 3-10.

Week Nine | Collecting Sporting Culture

John Bloom. *A House of Cards: Baseball Card Collecting and Popular Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1997), .

Week Ten | Sports in Art, Sports as Art

CLR James. "What is Art?" *Beyond a Boundary* (London: Hutchinson and Co, 1963), 191-206.

Wolfgang Welsch. "Sport Viewed Aesthetically, and Even as Art?" Andrew Light and Jonathan Smith, eds. *Aesthetics of Everyday Life* (New York: Columbia university, 2005), 135-155.

Week Eleven | Identities in Sport

Zirin, Chapters 2, 3, 4

Week Twelve | Identities in Sport, II

Zirin, Chapters 5, 7

Miner, "It's Gotta be the Shoes, Money!"

Week Thirteen | Nationalism + Sport

Guttman, Chapters 20, 21

Zirin, Chapter 6

Week Fourteen | Sports + Resistance

Guttman, Chapters 18, 19

Zirin, Chapters 1, 10

Week Fifteen | Discussion

None.

Week Sixteen | Final Examinations

None.