

Sports and Society
Rutgers University
Summer 2021 Session 2 (Synchronous Remote)
June 28-August 6, 2021
Tuesday and Thursday
1:00-4:40 pm

Instructor: Michael E. Allen
Office Hours: By Appointment via Canvas Conference
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Course Description

Since ancient times, sports have pervaded human life. This course explores the significance of sports in modern society. While sport is often touted as being above or outside politics it has historically been a vehicle for nation building and ideology. Through ethnographic readings and discourse analysis we will address emergent anthropological theories of power, violence, and patterns of domination through the lens of sports. This course focuses specifically on the intersection of sports with such modern social and cultural phenomena as; gender, class, race, and ethnicity; violence, health, global capitalism, politics, and nationalism.

Learning Goals and Objectives

This course will provide you with a set of fundamental academic skills, which you can utilize in your respective disciplines and future studies. Following completion of this course you will be able to accomplish the following:

- Discuss what constitutes a sport across time and space.
- Analyze how sports intersects with various social phenomenon such as gender and sexuality; race, class, and ethnicity; violence, and global capitalism.
- Assess the role of sports in nationalism and nation building.
- Demonstrate a general knowledge of the history of the theory of the anthropology of sports.
- Relate course knowledge to real world applications.
- Demonstrate critical thinking skills by producing written and verbal analyses and evaluations of academic and non-academic material.

Course readings

Required Text: *The Anthropology of Sport: Bodies, Borders, and Biopolitics*, Niko Besnier, Susan Brownell, and Thomas F. Carter, University of California Press, 2018, ISBN: 97805200289017

All other readings will be provided on the course Canvas site.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Below is a brief summary of the requirements and components that will contribute to your final grade in this course. Additional instructions and guidelines for each item will be distributed in class.

Attendance and Participation (10%)

Classes will be synchronous (live) using Canvas conference (Big Blue Button). All students are expected to attend class and participate in class discussion and assignments. If you cannot attend a class please let me know in advance. The purpose of in-class meetings is not only for me to give you additional instruction beyond the course readings, but also to exchange ideas and build these ideas as we discuss the course concepts and readings. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings.

Weekly Reading Responses and class discussion board (25%)

Everyone is responsible for writing short (1-2 double-spaced pages) weekly reading responses. You need to post your responses on the class discussion board. In addition, you need to respond to a minimum of two other of your classmates' responses. Original post is worth 4 pts, each response is worth 3 pts for a total of 10pts. Your original post should be submitted by 11:59pm, Saturday night, and your responses to classmates' posts need to be posted by 11:59pm, Monday night.

These responses need to be well written and well organized. I will be using your responses to tailor class lectures and discussion. In writing these responses I want you to consider the following. What are three significant points you learned from the readings? How do the readings relate to this week's topics and past readings? What questions do these readings provoke in your thinking?

Sports Journal Entry (25%)

As part of the course, you will keep a journal of fieldnotes of your daily observations and encounters related to sports. You will be required to submit five (each worth 10 points) journal submissions of your observations for the week (1.5-2 double spaced pages) via Canvas by 11:59pm, Monday night.

Current Sports Discourse Weekly Summary (20%)

Each week you will be responsible for finding two current news articles relating to sports and the weekly course topic. You need to post a link to the articles with a short description of the main topic of the article by 11:59pm on Tuesday night (4 points). Each week you need to use at least one source you have not used before.

Before Thursday class you need to read at least two articles posted by one or more of your classmates. During Thursday classes each student will present a short summary of the articles they posted including how the articles relate to the week's topics and two-three key takeaways from the articles (6 points).

Final Exam (20%)

The final exam will be a take home-exam consisting of three short essays you select from five provided essay questions.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 (6/29-7/5): What is a Sport? History of the Anthropology of Sports, Theories, and Popular Notions of Sports

Readings:

Besnier et al Introduction and Chapter 1 *Sport, Anthropology, and History* pp 1-38

Brownell, Susan (2008) Introduction: *Bodies Before Boas, Sport before the Laughter Left*. In: Brownell (ed.) *The 1904 Anthropology Days and Olympic Games: Sport, Race, and American Imperialism*. Lincoln and London: The University of Nebraska Press. Pp 1-58

James H. Frey and D. Stanley Eitzen (1991) Sport and Society, *Annual Review of Sociology* 17:503-522

Roger Caillois and Elaine P. Halperin (1955) The Structure and Classification of Games, *Diogenes* 3: 63-75

Assignments:

1st reading responses due on Canvas by 11:59pm, Saturday, July 3.

1st Sports Journal submission due on Canvas by 11:59pm, Monday, July 5.

Week 2 (7/6-7/12): Colonialism, and Imperialism

Readings:

Besnier et al Chapter 2 *Sport, Colonialism, and Imperialism* pp 29-70.

Baird, Katherine E. (2003) Cuban Baseball: Ideology, Politics, and Market Forces. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 29 (2):164-183

Gems, Gerald R. (2008) Anthropology Days, the Construction of Whiteness, and American Imperialism in the Philippines. In: Brownell (ed.) *The 1904 Anthropology Days and Olympic Games: Sport, Race, and American Imperialism*. Lincoln and London: The University of Nebraska Press. Pp 189-216.

Ruck, Rob (2011) Chapter 1: The Gospel of Baseball In: Ruck *Raceball: How the Major Leagues Colonized the Black and Latin Game*. Boston: Beacon Press. Pp 1-25.

Assignments:

2nd reading response due on Canvas by 11:59pm, Saturday, July 10.

2nd Sports Journal submission due on Canvas by 11:59pm, Monday, July 12.

Current sports discourse articles due on Canvas by 11:59pm, Tuesday, July 6.

Week 3 (7/13-7/19): The Body, Health, and Environment

Readings:

Besnier et al Chapter 3 *Sport, Health and the Environment* pp 71-96

Niko Besnier and Susan Brownell (2012) Sport, Modernity, and the Body, *Annual Review of Anthropology* 41:443-459.

Megan Stronach, Daryl Adair and Tracy Taylor (2014) 'Game Over': Indigenous Australian Sportsmen and Athletic Retirement, *Australian Aboriginal Studies* 2: 40-59.

Walker J. Ross, Henry Wear & Michael L. Naraine

(2020) Thinking outside the 'box': A Discussion of Sports Fans, Teams, and the Environment in the context of COVID-19, *Sport in Society*, 23 (11): 1707-1723.

Assignments:

3rd reading response due on Canvas by 11:59pm, Saturday, July 17.

3rd Sports Journal submission due on Canvas by 11:59pm, Monday, July 19.

Current sports discourse articles due on Canvas by 11:59pm, Tuesday, July 13.

Week 4 (7/20-7/26): **Race, Ethnicity, and Class**

Readings:

Besnier et al Chapter 4 *Sport, Social Class, Race, and Ethnicity* pp 97-126

Hughson, J. (2009) The Middle class, Colonialism and the Making of Sport, *Sport in Society*, 12(1): 69-84.

Mikaela J. Dufur and Seth L. Feinberg (2008) Race and the NFL Draft: Views from the Auction Block, *Qualitative Sociology*, 32:53-73.

Edwards, Harry (2017) Introduction and Afterward to the 50th Anniversary Edition. In: Edwards (2017 [1969]) *The Revolt of the Black Athlete*. Urbana, Chicago, Springfield: University of Illinois Press. Pp ix-xxx and 157-175.

Assignments:

4th reading response due on Canvas 11:59pm, Saturday, July 24.

4th Sports Journal submission due on Canvas by 11:59pm, Monday, July 26.

Current sports discourse articles due on Canvas by 11:59pm, Tuesday, July 20.

Week 5 (7/27-8/3): Sex, Gender, and Sexuality

Readings:

Besnier et al Chapter 5 *Sport, Sex, Gender, and Sexuality* pp 127-157

Brownell, Susan (1995) Sex, the Body, and History in Chinese and Western Sports. In: Brownell *Training the Body for China: Sports in the Moral Order of the People's Republic*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press. Pp 213-237.

Drury, Scarlett (2011) 'It Seems Really Inclusive in some ways, but ... Inclusive Just for People who Identify as Lesbian': Discourses of Gender and Sexuality in a Lesbian-Identified Football Club. *Soccer & Society* 12(3):421-442.

Vaczi, Mariann (2016) Dangerous Liaisons, Fatal Women: The Fear and Fantasy of Soccer Wives and Girlfriends in Spain. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 51(3):299-313

Assignments:

5th reading response due on Canvas 11:59pm, Saturday, July 31.

5th Sports Journal submission due on Canvas by 11:59pm, Monday, Aug 3.
Current sports discourse articles due on Canvas by 11:59pm, Tuesday, July 27.

Week 6 (8/4-8/6): Nation, Nationalism, and Sports in the World System

Reading:

Besnier et al Chapters 7 *Sport, Nation, and Nationalism*, Chapter 8 *Sport in the World System* and Epilogue pp 197-255

Alberto Testa* and Gary Armstrong (2007) Words and Actions: Italian Ultras and Neo-Fascism. *Social Identities* 14(4):473-490.

Assignments:

Current sports discourse articles due on Canvas by 11:59pm, Tuesday, Aug 3.

Final Exam due on Canvas by 11:59pm, Friday, Aug 6.

USEFUL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Your work in this course will be evaluated through a variety of writing assignments. For these assignments, you are allowed to use outside sources and references as long as you cite them properly. Every academic project you hand in must be based on your original work. Once your assignments are uploaded to Sakai, they will be checked through Turnitin, which is online software that conducts a thorough search of your paper for any sign of unoriginal content. Any work that you hand in without proper citation (including Wikipedia) is considered plagiarism. The violation of academic integrity is a serious misdeed with major consequences that can result in the failure of the course and suspension from the university. Please make sure to read the Academic Integrity Policy of Rutgers – <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu> – and be very careful to avoid cheating and plagiarism. Please feel free to ask me if you are not sure as to what constitutes as academic dishonesty, plagiarism, or the violation of academic integrity in general.

Special Needs and Accommodations

If you have accommodation requests based on any special need (physical, medical, or learning difficulties), please come and see me as early on in the semester as possible. For further questions and assistance regarding learning difficulties and disabilities, please feel free to contact the Office of Disability Services – <https://ods.rutgers.edu>.

Academic Support and Learning Centers

For those of you seeking further help and academic support, Rutgers offers a variety of programs through the Learning Centers located on each campus – <https://rlc.rutgers.edu>. The staff at each center will address your concerns and recommend such programs as peer tutoring, academic coaching, writing coaching, and study groups tailored to your needs.

Writing Aid and Writing Centers

I will return your writing assignments to you with written comments and detailed feedback. While I would be happy to discuss your papers with you after they have been graded and returned, and help you overcome any writing difficulty you experience, Rutgers has a wealth of resources that you can resort to if you encounter problems with regards to writing. Please contact the Writing Program – <http://wp.rutgers.edu> – and make an appointment with one of the Writing Centers on campus (they have offices on College Ave, Douglass, and Livingston) to find out more about the courses and the tutoring services that you can benefit from.