

SOAN 223: Sport & Society

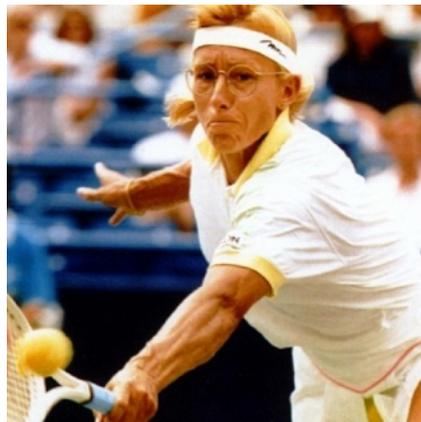
Spring Term – March 28th-June 14th 2015 – 6 credits
Tuesday & Thursday 10:10am-11:50am – Leighton Hall 402

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The American population's love of sport is matched only by the belief that it is an area not worthy of deeper thought, inquiry, or critique. This course seeks to understand this seemingly paradoxical notion that sport is both one of most powerful and least respected institutions in the modern world. To do so we will begin by working through theoretical approaches that give us a way to make social sense of these paradoxes and the phenomenon of sport itself. We will then examine the way sport intersects with and shapes our understanding of important social issues like gender, race, politics, and even the human body. During the course we will discuss (and watch documentaries) on a wide-range of sports and physical practices ranging from the mainstream (e.g., basketball), the alternative (e.g., roller derby), the artistic (e.g., dance), and the extreme (e.g., base-jumping). Students will be asked to critically reflect on their own experience playing, observing, or even disliking sport as a way to relate to the themes we read and discuss. By the end of the semester, I hope you find *Sport & Society* to be one of the most enjoyable and useful courses at the university. My goal is to have helped you:

1. Apply theory to analyze socio-cultural phenomena and understand how physical practices are socially organized.
2. Critically evaluate what role (or roles) sport plays in society.
3. Think about what physical practices teach us about contemporary social life more generally.
4. Build your ability to read and engage with complicated arguments.
5. See important connections and patterns where you had not before.
6. Improve your ability to formulate sociological questions about socio-cultural phenomena.
7. Draw upon your understanding of historical and contemporary socio-cultural phenomena to engage the world and see that the everyday is worth thinking about.
8. Apply the lessons from class in a creative manner to produce a final project that you are proud of sharing with friends and/or family.

** This is a survey course. We cannot cover all of the important theories related to physical practice, read all the great readings on sport, or discuss every exciting topic. However, if there is a particular topic or theory that excites you, let me know and I can recommend further reading.*



CONTACT INFORMATION and OFFICE HOURS

Please do not hesitate to email, visit during office hours, or make an appointment. I am happy to meet with you! If something makes it difficult for you to complete coursework on time, or you are having any difficulties with the course, please speak with me *as soon as possible* so I can help.

Kyle Green, Instructor,
227 Leighton Hall, 7199 (office phone), 612-597-2335 (cell phone)
EMAIL: kgreen@carleton.edu
Office hours: Tuesday/Thursday 12:00-1:30 and by appointment
**I am only on campus Tuesday/Thursday*

REQUIRED BOOKS and COURSE WEBSITE

The required texts are:

(1) The Sport and Society Reader. Edited by David Karen and Robert E. Washington
This book is the best collection of excerpts on sport that I have seen. While I will not assign the section introductions from the book, I recommend reading them. They are short and useful. Also, I recommend checking out some of the other readings in the book.

(2) Body & Soul: Notebooks of an Apprentice Boxer. Loic Wacquant.
A dazzling ethnographic journey into the world of the inner-city Chicago boxing gym.

(3) Testing for Athlete Citizenship: Regulating Doping and Sex in Sport. Kathryn E. Henne.
A just published examination of anti-doping regulation and gender-verification rules.

(4a) Against Football: One Fan's Reluctant Manifesto. Steven Almond.
One fan's provocative case for abandoning America's favorite pastime.

OR

(4b) Why Football Matters: My Education in the Game. Mark Almondson.
A personal reflection on America's collective passion for football.

Other required readings will be posted on the course Moodle site

Instructions for accessing the Moodle site are as follows:

1. First, log on to moodle with your username and password: <https://moodle.carleton.edu>
2. Search for our course by name and number. Please contact moodle support if you have trouble logging on: moodle@umn.edu. You will not be able to log on unless you are formally registered for the course.
3. If you have checked that you are in the course and still unable to gain access to the course website let me know and I will try to figure out a solution to the problem.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Reading Questions/Short responses (15@1%).....	15%
Applied Paper(s).....	20%
Field Notes.....	20%
In-class writing (5@1%).....	5%
Debates (3@5%).....	15%
Final Project.....	25% (5% proposal)
Participation in class.....	5%
TOTAL.....	105% + extra credit

Final Course Grades:

A	94% and above	B-	80% - 82.9%	D+	67% - 69.9%
A-	90% - 93.9%	C+	77% - 79.9%	D	63% - 66.9%
B+	87% - 89.9%	C	73% - 76.9%	F	62.9% or lower
B	83% - 86.9%	C-	70% - 72.9%		

APPLIED PAPER: On the second day of class you will choose a sport or physical practice that interests you. It can be something you have participated in, something you watch on television, or something that you simply want to learn about. During the semester you will write a paper applying the ideas we discussed in class that week and the preceding week to the sport you chose. The goal of the paper is three-fold: (1) to engage with the concepts from class and demonstrate your understanding of them; (2) to see if/how they help us understand your particular case-study; (3) to see how your particular case-study helps us understand, or even modify, the theory.

If you really want to engage with the readings from two non-consecutive weeks, you have the option of writing two 3-4 page papers instead of a single 6-7 page paper.

The papers must be submitted to the course moodle-site by **Friday at midnight**.

You will also choose your week(s) on the second day of class.

READING QUESTIONS: You are asked to bring a discussion question based on one of the readings or podcasts every class period with the exclusion of the first and last day + two days of your choosing. You will write a total of 15 reading questions. Your question should be something you would like to discuss in class that day. It can be based on a point that you really liked, an argument you disagreed with, or something you were simply confused about. Your question should include a brief engagement (about one paragraph) with the reading to provide explanation of/context for your question. You do not need to have an answer for the question.

The question must be posted to Moodle by **11:59pm the night before class**.

IN-CLASS WRITING: On five occasions you will have time in class to respond to a series of prompts I will provide. These short in-class writing assignments will give you a chance to engage with the assigned readings and demonstrate that you took the time to work through the text. They will often involve you applying the ideas to a documentary or a case-study. You will not be expected to have mastered the text. However, to receive credit it is necessary to have done the reading and be able to reference it.

FIELD NOTES: Go out into the world and observe or take-part in the sport/physical practice that you chose. Take detailed notes. Make sure to include observations on who the participants (and fans) are, what people wear, the setting, the way people interact, how you feel, and everything else you notice. Write 4 pages of vivid description that transport the reader to the site. Highlight what surprised you, what did not, and any sociologically interesting occurrences. Then write 2 pages of analysis. Apply any of the lenses discussed in this class or another course to try to start to make sense of what you saw and offer some preliminary claims. You will be graded based on the detail of your observation and your connections to class themes. Print off two-copies and bring them to class on **Thursday, May 19th**.

DEBATES: There will be three in-class debates during the semester. Potential topics are the regulation of steroids, the public-funding of sport stadiums and whether college athletes should receive payment. Each will be worth 5% of your grade.

FINAL PROJECT: As a class you will choose three contemporary issues related to sport and create a website to promote critical awareness of the issue that you are working on. This is your chance to show off your creativity, both in project choice and your application of theory. The

objective of this assignment is to delve more deeply into one of the ideas discussed in class as it relates to your sport and to do so in a way that is exciting to you. This could be making a short documentary, a photo essay, an interview project, a well-argued op-ed, or anything else you can think of. Before doing this you must first discuss your idea with me and get approval. Choose something you are excited about and that you will be proud of.

**For an example of what the final result may look like: <http://browncrimeandthecity.weebly.com>*

****Celebration of the launch of the website will occur during the final exam period***

****A complete draft of the website is due on the final day of class.***

EXTRA CREDIT

- **Show & Tell:** If you see a sport-related story in the news that is worth discussing, bring the information to class. Give us the background information and share your thoughts and earn 1% on your final grade. You can do this two times.
- **Participation (Class Discussion & Group Activities):** I believe in rewarding students for actively participating in class. You will not be punished for not participating; however, it is possible to earn up to an additional 5% on your final grade through engaging with the course materials and class activities. This can end up improving your score by one letter grade. Speak in class and actively participate in group activities. These activities will be judged on engagement with the class and readings. Don't worry about being right. No one knows exactly what the readings mean. We all learn more through conversation.

Writing

By now you most likely have noticed an emphasis on writing (and the complete absence of tests). Sociology is filled with topics and concepts that require time and space for reflection. There is rarely a *right* answer. Taking your time to compose your thoughts and present them in an understandable manner helps you improve your ability to construct an argument. Writing well is a necessary skill that will have long-term benefits in your personal and professional life. However, it is important to remember, that the point of writing is not just to prove to someone else that you have thought something through. Thus, assignments are not solely for us to assess your progress in the course, they can also be means for you to engage in and practice thinking creatively and critically about social theory. Do not feel like you have to hide uncertainty and do not hesitate to work through ideas in your paper that you are struggling with. And, do not hesitate to ask for help from me, or the writing center (<https://writingcenter.carleton.edu/>). Remember, writing is a process. The final draft of a paper (or syllabus) I write rarely resembles the first draft. Sometimes you will not really understand what you are arguing until you are most of the way done writing. Leave yourself time for changes or revision. I expect a lot and the grades I assign will reflect this.

I also expect you to follow the standard writing procedures on all of your assignments:

- use **1 inch** margins on the top, bottom, and sides
- use twelve point Times New Roman font and double space your lines
- title all of your work, and include a name (preferably your name).
- **Save paper, print on both sides. Don't include title pages. They serve no purpose.**

Finally, writing can be fun. This is your chance to share your opinion and know that someone will read it and take it seriously.

** I am always willing to explain why you received a particular grade and discuss ways to improve your future scores. Any issues related to grading must be brought to my attention prior to the last week of regular classes.**

RULES & THE CLASSROOM

Cheating: Don't do it. In my classes I make extra effort to make sure that what you are learning is useful and that you can shape the assignments to relate to something that interests you. By cheating you hurt yourself. If I find a student has cheated, I will make sure the student is punished to the fullest extent by the Academic Standing Committee. At the minimum, this will result in failing the class. If you think that you may do this, I recommend taking another class.

Class Procedure: We will be spending a lot of time together over the semester. I am guessing you do not want to sit and listen to me talk for 40 hours. It also would not be a very effective way of learning the material. For this reason, the course will be pedagogically "mixed method." I will lecture some, there will be lots of conversations, we will watch clips from documentaries, and we will have debates both formal and informal. *Please come to class prepared to participate in discussions.* I intentionally assign a reasonable amount of reading. I believe it is more important to do some reading well rather than a lot of reading poorly. Finally, learning should be interactive and fun. If that is not the case, talk to me, email me, or leave an anonymous note in my mailbox. I want to make the course work for all of you.

General Classroom Behavior:

You go to an excellent school and this is an advanced class. I am treating the course like a seminar. I expect you to participate often, engage the material both critically and constructively, and to have the highest respect for others, even if you disagree with what they say. In fact, you should disagree, just don't be a jerk.

We will be discussing a wide array of issues. Some discussions will be exciting, some will be controversial, some will be sensitive, and some will be initially boring. Respect everyone else's opinion during all types of conversations. I want the classroom environment to be comfortable for all students. Our own experiences matter in this course and aid us in understanding the social importance of sport.

If at any time you feel threatened or uneasy, please bring it to my attention via email, or in person.

I will challenge you to justify your opinion but I will never personally judge you.

We will have intellectual discussions, not petty arguments. It is my duty as an instructor to ensure that each student feels safe and respected when speaking in the classroom. *Disruptive and disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated.* If problems arise we will not spend class time solving them. You will be asked to leave and we will work on a solution after class.

Remember, both learning and teaching require humility. Be willing to share your thoughts and be willing to have that opinion changed.

Tardiness is disruptive, so be on time. If you must arrive late, make as little noise as possible. NO cell phones and NO text messaging. If a phone rings in the classroom I will assume it is an important call for me and will be happy to answer it.

Feel free to use your computer to take notes. Do not check your email, Facebook, sport scores, video game walkthroughs, fashion blogs and any other internet site. It is disruptive to other students. If you can't resist the urge to check how your fantasy basketball team is doing, sit in the back.

Reading

Some of these readings are difficult—especially the more theoretical ones. Some writing is dense to say the least and spends time alluding to arguments that you may not be familiar with

and philosophic discussions we will not spend time explaining. In short, reading academic work is not exactly intuitive and takes practice—something that we will devote a significant portion of this class to doing.

As mentioned earlier, from my perspective, it is a waste of time to assign a lot of pages of dense material if you don't have time to read them thoroughly. I will assign a manageable number of pages each day with the hope you will give your full attention and effort to them.

Here are a few tips that I hope will make the process more enjoyable:

1. Be patient with yourself. You may not understand everything the first time you read something.
2. Read key paragraphs more than once. For your first time through try to get a basic understanding of what the author is trying to say, but don't get caught up on the details. Sometimes a paragraph will only make sense when you get to the last few sentences (especially with translated German). However, before going on to the next paragraph with only a vague understanding what you just read, force yourself to go back and re-read the paragraph. You will be surprised how much more you will get from this second reading and how much your comprehension of the entire piece will increase.
3. **PUT THINGS IN YOUR OWN WORDS.** Your comprehension and memory of things increases substantially when you paraphrase things into your own words. Force yourself to try to paraphrase the key points of a piece at the end by way of a quick summary. It doesn't have to be pretty—in fact don't worry about grammar or sounding sophisticated. Just imagine what you would say to a friend about what you just read.
4. Always ask yourself why an argument matters or what is at stake.

Other Issues:

Late and Makeup Policy:

Tardiness is not accepted in other work environments and will not be accepted in this class.

Late homework and papers will lose a full letter grade for every day it is late unless there is documented illness/other emergency. If it is an emergency, please see me individually. **Homework sent by email will not be accepted.**

Attendance:

Attendance is essential to the learning process and contributes greatly to your understanding. I highly recommend that you come to all classes; however, I believe the choice should be yours. For this reason, daily attendance will not be taken.

If you miss any classes, it is *your responsibility* to find out what you missed. Find a responsible fellow classmate whose notes you can borrow. It is reasonable to assume that anything assigned to you and discussed in class could aid you in the writing the papers.

All in-class activities cannot be made up.

Excused absences are at my discretion. Absences due to illness, family emergency, university business or similar situations may be excused with appropriate supporting documentation.

Persons failing to provide adequate documentation will not be excused from any in-class assignments they may have missed. Letting me know in advance is *always* better.

Disclaimer:

While I believe that it is important to treat the syllabus as a contract between us, I also reserve the right to make minor changes in the course as I see necessary. That said, I will do my best to maintain the syllabus as-is and if changes need to be made, I will alert the class in a timely and appropriate manner.

RESOURCES

Note that there are many more resources available! If you need anything, please ask!

- *The Student Writing Center* helps students with many aspects of writing, including getting started, making revisions, organizing ideas for the paper, proofreading, editing, and general writing skills. Located in 420 4th Libe - <https://writingcenter.carleton.edu/>.
- *The Speakeasy* is a student-staffed resource designed to assist you with class presentations, comps talks, and other speech-related events. Located at 314 Libe - go.carleton.edu/speakeasy.
- *Disability Services for Students* – Carleton College is committed to providing accommodations to students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Disability Services, Andy Christensen, at 222-4464 or anchrist@carleton.edu, to begin the process. I encourage you to contact me to discuss any individual needs for accommodations. I am very open to working with you to make the class as positive an experience as possible. The sooner you talk to me, the easier this will be to accomplish.
- **Get to know your professors/Free Lunch** – Carleton will pay for you to take two professors per term to lunch at the college dining hall. This is a great chance for you to get to know one of your instructors, talk about whatever interests you, and even get advice for what happens after you graduate.

SCHEDULE + DUE DATES

readings & assignments are listed the day that they are due

All non-textbook readings can be found on Moodle. These readings are marked by [M]

WEEK 1: An Introduction

Tuesday (3/31): What is Sociology? Studying Sport?

**Film: King of Kong*

Thursday (4/2): What is Sport?

N. Elias “An Essay on Sport and violence” [M]

C. Geertz “Deep Play: notes on the Balinese Cockfight” [M]

A. Jacobs “Chirps and Cheers”

D. Chambliss “The Mundanity of Excellence

D. F. Wallace “Tennis Player Michael Joyce’s Professional Artistry as a Paradigm for Certain Stuff about Choice, Freedom, Discipline, Joy, Grotesquerie, and Human Completeness.” [M]

**Film: King of Kong*

WEEK 2: Theorizing Sport & Modernity

Tuesday (4/7): Modern Sport

E. Dunning “The dynamics of modern sport”

R. Lipsyte “Varsity syndrome: the unkindest cut”

A. Tomlinson, A. Markovits, and C. Young “Mapping sports spaces”

J. Segrave “sport as escape” [M]
J Bale excerpt from *Sport Geography* [M]
**Film: Two Ball Games*

Thursday (4/9): Sport and Class

P. Bourdieu “Distinction”
P. Bourdieu “Sport & Social Class” [M]
J. S. L. Lopes “Class, ethnicity, and color in the making of Brazilian football”
D. Andrews, Pitter, Zwick, and Ambrose “Soccer, Race, and Suburban Space” [M]
Bring ideas for the final project to class!

WEEK 3: Sport, Politics, and The Public Good

Tuesday (4/14): Sport & Politics

K. Green & D. Hartmann “Sport & Politics”:
<http://thesocietypages.org/papers/politics-and-sport/>
B. Carrington “Sport, Masculinity, and Black Cultural Resistance” [M]
K. Candaele & P. Dreier “Where are the jocks for justice” [M] (*In-class writing*)
S. Brownell “Symbols of State Power: Stadiums and National Identity in Beijing” [M]

Thursday (4/16): The Political Economy of Professional Sports & Building Community

Divide up readings with your group + Podcast
K. Delaney & R. Eckstein “Public Dollars, Private Stadiums, and Democracy” [M]
A. Zimbalist “May the best team win: making baseball competitive” [M]
D. Morris & D. Kraker “Rooting the home team” [M]
B. O’Keefe & J. Schlosser “America’s fastest growing sport” [M]
N. Trujillo & B. Krizek “Emotionality in the Stands and in the Field” [M]
R. Giulianotti “Supports, followers, fans, and flaneurs: a taxonomy of spectator identities in football” [M]
Freakonomics - Olympian Economics
DEBATE #1 – FINANCING PUBLIC STADIUMS

WEEK 4: Sport, Defining, & Reproducing

Tuesday (4/21): Disciplining the Sporting Body

R. Pringle & P. Markula “Knowledge and truth: Discursive construction of the fit and healthy body” & “Exercise: Discipline into docile bodies” [M]
Susan Brownell “Historical Overview: Sports, the Body, and the Nation” & “Training the Body for China: Civilization, Discipline, and Social Order [M]
K. Henne *Testing for Athlete Citizenship - Chapter 1*,
Film: Bigger, Stronger, Faster
Final project check in

Thursday (4/23): “Natural” Bodies

K. Henne *Testing for Athlete Citizenship - Chapter 2, 3*
M. Sokolove “In Pursuit of Doped Excellence”
M. George “Making sense of muscle” [M]
Film: Bigger, Stronger, Faster
Final project work day

WEEK 5: Gendered Expectations

Tuesday (4/28): Proper Gendered Performances

D. Hartmann “The Sanctity of Sunday football: why men love sports”

R. W. Connell “An Iron Man”

M. Messner “Barbie Girls versus Sea Monsters: Children Constructing Gender

L. Grindstaff & E. West “Cheerleading and the gendered politics of sport”

S. Brownell “Sex, the Body, and History in Chinese and Western Sports”

Submit Proposal for FINAL PROJECT

Thursday (4/30): Separate but Equal?

D. Brake “Separate but Equal”

Title IX - Look at some of the articles and videos on this site:

<http://espn.go.com/espnw/title-ix/> - be prepared to talk about what you learned

Final project work day

WEEK 6: Sport, Sex, and Sexuality

Tuesday (5/5): Sexuality

S. Cahn “From the ‘muscle moll’ to the ‘butch’ ballplayer: mannishness, lesbianism, and homophobia in US women’s sport”

E. Blinde & D. Taub “Women athletes as falsely accused deviants: managing the lesbian stigma

David Leonard on Jason Collins – *Office Hours* podcast -

<http://thesocietypages.org/officehours/2013/05/10/david-leonard-on-jason-collins/>

*** In class discussion & readings – Sex Sells – WNBA & WMMA**

Field note check in/work day

Thursday (5/7): Sex and Enforcing the Binary

K. Henne *Testing for Athlete Citizenship – Chapter 4, 6*

C. Cooky & S. Dworkin - <http://thesocietypages.org/specials/sex-testing/>

Film: 100% Woman - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r0AIUHQDtqs>

DEBATE #2 – Performance Enhancing Drugs? or Boys AND Girls Sports

WEEK 7: Sport and Race

Tuesday (5/12): Race Matters

P. Miller “The anatomy of scientific racism”

M. Gladwell “The sports taboo”

G. Bederman “Manliness and civilization”

D. Hartmann “Sport as a contested terrain”

D. Hartmann “Bound by Blackness or Above It? Michael Jordan and the Paradoxes of Post-Civil Rights American Race Relations” [M]

S. Suh & K. Green “Linsanity and the Model Minority Myth” –

<http://thesocietypages.org/roundtables/linsanity-and-the-model-minority-myth/>

Thursday (5/14): Race Matters II

L. Wacquant *Body and Soul – Introduction, The Street and the Ring*

Film Unforgivable Blackness OR The Fab Five

WEEK 8: The Carnal Experience and the Feel of Sport

Tuesday (5/19): Habitus as Topic and Tool

L. Wacquant *Body and Soul – Fight Night at the Studio, “Busy” Louie at the Golden Gloves*

**Field Notes due – be prepared to talk about your experience*

Thursday (5/21): Flow and Affect

T. McLaughlin excerpt from *Give and Go: Basketball as a Cultural Practice* [M]

M. Csikszentmihalyi excerpt from *Beyond Boredom and Anxiety: Experiencing Flow in Work and Play* [M]

S.J. Saville “Playing with fear: parkour and the mobility of emotion” [M]

OR

P. Jones “Sensory indiscipline and affect: a study of commuter cycling” [M]

**Final Project check-in*

WEEK 9: Sport, to celebrate or condemn?

Tuesday (5/26): Pain & Meaning

Begin reading your football book

K. Green “Tales From the Mat: Narrating Men and Meaning Making in the Mixed Martial Arts Gym” [M]

K. Green “It Hurts So It Is Real: Sensing the Seduction of Mixed Martial Arts” [M]

M. Messner “Males athletes, injuries, and violence”

Thursday (5/28): The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

D. Kreager “Unnecessary Roughness” [M]

M. Messner “Playing center: the triad of violence in men’s sports” [M]

Edge of Sports – On Steubenville (podcast available on Moodle)

Radiolab - On Games (podcast available on Moodle)

**Film Not Just a Game*

WEEK 10: Sport, to celebrate or condemn?

Tuesday (6/2): Sport, to celebrate or condemn?

Finish reading your football book

DEBATE #3 – Football: To be or not to be?

**DRAFT of website/final project due*

FINAL EXAM (6/8 – 3:30pm) – Presentation and Celebration of Final Projects