Course Description:

This course will focus on sport as a social institution and cultural phenomenon. Using an intersectional framework, students will learn to critically assess sport in the areas of identity, education, the body; fandom and economy. The goals of the course are to understand sport as an institution, develop critical analytical skills by examining issues relevant to sport and to understand how sport is an area where inequality and power can be examined.

Required Texts:


Assignments:

(20% each) **Comparative Short Reflections on Readings**: *(due 2.25, 3.17 in class)* These short papers are comparisons, based on a student derived question from the readings, of at least 3 class readings. These should be 3 pages in length, with a bibliography of sources used and appropriately referenced in the text.

(30%) **Critical Essay** on McDonagh and Pappano, *Playing With the Boys: Why Separate is Not Equal in Sports*. The critical essay should be 5-6 pages in length and discuss subtopic or question derived from the reading. At least 4 course readings and/or external sources must be used to discuss and support the issue. *(DUE in class 4.19)*

(30%) **Critical Essay** on Burgos, *Playing America’s Game: Baseball, Latinos, and the Color Line*. The critical essay should be 5-6 pages in length and discuss subtopic or question derived from the reading. At least 4 course readings and/or external sources must be used to discuss and support the issue. *(DUE by 5.14 11 am!)*
Instructor policies

- Your consistent, on-time attendance and participation are required. Please do not attend to other activities during class (cellphones, knitting, etc.). Come prepared to actively discuss the readings assigned for that day. Please take part in discussion and be respectful to the positions of others.

- After two absences, additional absences will generally lower your final grade in the course. In case of illness or personal emergency, your absence will be excused. This policy is governed by the honor code; to report an excused absence, please contact me.

- Assignments are due IN CLASS the day they are due (unless otherwise noted). An extension will be automatically applied to all assignments until 4:00 the day they are due. After this grace period, 1/3 of a letter grade (e.g. an A would be reduced to an A-) will be deducted for each day of lateness, unless you previously have made arrangements with the instructor because of illness or emergency. Assignments are to be handed in on paper (double sided is fine)-please retain a copy of this work for yourself. Please use the Times New Roman 12pt font or an equivalent, double spaced (unless specifically instructed to use another format) and NUMBERED pages. Staple your papers before turning them in.

- You must fulfill all course obligations and complete all assignments in order to potentially receive credit for the course.

- Office Hours are listed at the top of this syllabus. Upon special request, I will meet with students at times outside of my office hours. Please see me IN PERSON to set up such an appointment.

- I receive up to 30 or more e-mails per day. Please do not expect me to reply immediately to an e-mail question or request. If something is urgent, please CALL ME in my office or signify in the e-mail header that it is urgent.

- Honor Code: This course will follow the policies described in the Oberlin College Honor Code and Honor System. Please include the statement “I affirm that I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment” in all written work. Please contact me if you have any questions about citation/referencing, or the relationship of the Honor Code to your work in this course. For more information on the Honor Code, see http://www.oberlin.edu/students/student_pages/honor_code.html.

- Students with Disabilities: If you need disability-related accommodations for your work in this course, please let me know. To receive accommodations you must do so through Student Academic Services—please contact Jane Boomer, Coordinator Office of Disability Services,
Course Goals:

1) Develop a “sociological imagination” regarding sport—how one’s own experiences can be understood in a structural context. This course is framed around Mills’ framework of the sociological imagination which emphasizes the connection between biography and history as well as the interaction of individual and society.

2) Gain knowledge of the history and origins of sport in the United States. Integral to understanding contemporary issues in sport is knowledge of the origins of sport in the United States, particularly how this development is linked to changes in other social institutions.

3) Develop an understanding of sport as a social institution: Sport often is examined as an activity, but also can be understood structurally as a social institution. It is valuable to be able to both separate the two, as well as understand how they are related.

4) Develop an ability to assess sport using a critical analytic lens. Sport is commonly understood as entertainment and leisure and often not critically assessed using social theory and empirical tools which will be emphasized in the course.

Readings (NOTE: Readings not from required texts are located on the Blackboard site for this class):

2.2 First meeting, syllabus

2.4
Karen and Washington:
Section 1 - Sport and Sociology: Meanings and Dimensions

(BB) In Smith (Sociology of Sport):
Chapter 1: Beamish-Toward a Sport Ethic: Science, Politics and Weber’s Sociology

(BB) In Giulianotti (Sport: A Critical Sociology)
Chapter 2: Weberian Trends: Meaning and Rationalization in Sport
2.9
Karen and Washington:
   Ch. 1: Bourdieu-Distinction: A Critique of the Judgement of Taste
   Ch. 2: Wacquant-The Boys Who Beat the Street

(BB) In Andrews and Silk (Sport and Neoliberalism)
   Chapter 2-Miller: A Distorted Playing Field: Neoliberalism and Sport through the Lens of Economic Citizenship

**Identities, Inequalities and Socialization**

2.11
Karen and Washington:
   Section 2- Biases and Barriers in Sport: Class, Race, Gender and Disability

(BB) In Smith (Sociology of Sport):
   Chapter 8: Hattery-Feminist theory and the study of sport: An illustration from Title IX

(BB) In Caudwell:
   Sykes: Queering theories of sexuality in sport studies

2.16
Karen and Washington:
   Ch. 3: Gladwell-The Sports Taboo
   Ch. 4: Miller-The Anatomy of Scientific Racism: Racialist Responses to Black Athletic Achievement
   Ch. 5: Gems-Sport and the Italian American Quest for Whiteness

2.18
Karen and Washington:
   Ch. 6: Messner- Barbie girls versus sea monsters: Children constructing gender
   Ch. 7: Bederman-Remaking Manhood through Race and “Civilization”
   Ch. 8: Hartmann-The Sanctity of Sunday Football: Why Men Love Sports

2.23

(BB) In Haywood and Dworkin:
   Chapter 3: A new look at female athletes and masculinity

Karen and Washington:
Ch. 9: Clark-Being ‘Good at Sport’: Talent, Ability and Young Women’s Sporting Participation

2.25 (Comparative Reflection #1 Due in Class)

Karen and Washington:
Ch. 10: Connell-An Iron Body: The Body and Some Contradictions of Hegemonic Masculinity
Ch. 21: Carrington-Sport, Masculinity, and Black Cultural Resistance

(BB) In Sage (Sociology of Sport):
Chapter 11: Denham-Masculinities and the Sociology of Sport: Issues and Ironies in the 21st Century

3.1

(BB) In Sartore-Baldwin (Sexual Minorities in Sports)
Chapter 4-Bezuvis: Transsexual and Intersex Athletes

(BB) In Caudwell:
Symons and Hemphill: Transgendering sex and sport in the Gay Games
Lock: Heterosexual femininity: the painful process of subjectification


Karen and Washington:
Ch. 32: Blinde and Taub-Women Athletes as Falsely Accused Deviants: managing the Lesbian Stigma

3.3

Karen and Washington:
Ch. 11: Le Clair-Transformed Identity: From Disabled Person to Global Paralympian


**Education, Stratification and Politics**

3.8

(BB) Staurowsky, Ellen J. “‘You Know, We Are All Indian’ Exploring White Power and Privilege


3.10

(BB) In Smith (Sociology of Sport):
Chapter 5: The Promise of an Education: Truth or Lie
Chapter 9: Social and Cultural Capital: Race, School Attachment, and the Role of High School Sports


Karen and Washington:
Ch. 30: Kreager-Unnecessary Roughness? School Sports, Peer Networks, and Male Adolescent Violence

3.15


(BB) In Anderson (In the Game):
Ch. 9 The Center of Masculine Production: Gay Athletes in Professional Sports

Karen and Washington:
Ch. 22: Gay Games or Gay Olympics? Implications for Lesbian Inclusion

3.17-3.31 (3.17-Comparative Essay #2 Due in Class)

McDonagh and Pappano, Playing With the Boys: Why Separate is Not Equal in Sports (entire text)

3.19-3.27 Spring Break
4.5

Karen and Washington:
Section 5-Breaking the Normative Rules
Ch. 28: Messner-Male Athletes, Injuries, and Violence
Ch. 29: Walton- The Sprewell/Carlesimo Episode: Unacceptable Violence or Unacceptable Victim?

4.7

(BB) In Clotfelter:
Chapter 2: Priorities

(BB) In Smith (Sociology of Sport):
Chapter 6: Institutional Logics Theory: Examining Big-Time College Sport

Karen and Washington:
Ch. 15: Suggs-Football, Television and the Supreme Court: How a Decision 20 Years Ago Brought Commercialization to the World of College Sport

Economy, Culture, Media and Globalization

4.12

(BB) In Smith (Race, Sport and the American Dream):
Chapter 6: The Athletic Industrial Complex

Karen and Washington:
Section 3: The Social Bonds Generated by Sports: Fandom, Community and Media
Section 4: The Political Economy and the Politics of Sports: Dynamics and Diffusion

4.14

Karen and Washington:
Ch. 14: Morris and Kraker-Rooting the Home Team: Why the Packers Won’t Leave—and Why the Browns Did
Ch. 16: Rowe-Money, Myth and the Big Match: The Political Economy of the Sports Media
Ch. 18: Zagnoli and Radicchi- The Football Fan Community as a Determinant Stakeholder in Value Co-creation

4.19 (McDonagh & Pappano Essay Due in Class)

Karen and Washington:
Ch. 13: Grasmuck-Something about Baseball: Gentrification, “Race Sponsorship” and Competing Class Cultures in Neighborhood Boys’ Baseball
Ch. 19: Baird-Cuban Baseball: Ideology, Politics and Market Forces
4.21-4.28

Burgos: *Playing America’s Game: Baseball, Latinos, and the Color Line*- entire text

5.3

Karen and Washington:
- Section 6: Globalization and Sport
- Ch. 33: McGuire-Theorizing Sport in the Global Process
- Ch. 35: Markovits-The Global and the Local in our Contemporary Sports Culture

5.5

Karen and Washington:
- Ch. 34: Poli-The Denationalization of Sport-De-ethnicization of the Nation and Identity De-territorialization
- Ch. 37: Carter-What Happens While the Official Looks Away? Citizenship, Transnational Sports Migrants and the Circumvention of the State

Wrap-up, Course Evaluations

5.14 *(Burgos Essay Due by 11 am!)*