

York University
Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies
Department of Sociology
AS/SOCI 3670A 3.0 – Sociology of Sport
Summer (S1) 2024

Course Director: Tracy Supruniuk
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Office Hour: Wednesdays 9:30 am to 10:30 am via Zoom using the following Zoom ID and password:

ID#: 480 122 3789

Paaword: Marx

Lecture Time and Location: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:30am to 2:30pm. This is a blended course, which means that some lectures will be in person, and some will be online. All online lectures, with one exception, will be synchronous (live). Please refer to the course readings list located at the end of this syllabus for a schedule of which lectures are in-person and which ones are online. Normally, lectures will not be recorded.

In-person lectures will be held in SLH B. Online lectures are accessed through a zoom link located on eClass.

Prerequisite: None

Course Description

“There is no apolitical sport.”

Ernst Bloch, *The Hope Principle*.

Sport is a popular form of entertainment and yet it is an often neglected area of sociological inquiry. The purpose of this course is to critically analyse the various aspects of sport as it exists in the contemporary world. Through a sociological lens we will examine the ways in which sport reproduces inequality. In particular, we will look at sport in relation to class, race, gender, and sexuality. Other related themes we will look at include the political economy of sport, violence, and nationalism. We will also look at the ways in which people use sport to resist exploitation and injustice.

Course Specific Learning Outcomes: As related to depth, breadth, application, and limits of knowledge, and a development of communication skills.

- To develop knowledge of key sociological concepts and theories related to sport.

- To introduce students to empirical studies on the topic of sport and the different methodologies used to examine sport sociologically.
- To assist students in developing a critical analysis of sport in ways that examine taken for granted assumptions about sport.
- To help students develop effective communication skills so that they may write and speak about sport using the analytical tools introduced in lectures, readings and class discussions.
- To require students to think about sport within historical, economic, political and cultural contexts, paying attention to the relationship between sport and class, gender, sexuality and race.
- To get students to apply what they learn in class to their own experiences with sport.

Required Course Text

All readings can be found on the eClass site for this course.

Assignments and Grading

Midterm – May 23 rd	25%
Final Test – June 13 th	35%
Commentaries (3 x 10%)	30%
Participation	10%

Participation Mark

Attendance and participation are crucial for doing well in this course. Please come to class prepared having done the weekly readings, and ready to ask questions and discuss the week's topics. Participation marks are based on the discussion forum set up on eClass. For the eClass discussion forum, students must post a minimum of five questions throughout the term on five different readings (one question per reading). You can't post questions on a reading you chose for the commentary assignment. Questions must be posted before the topic has been covered in lecture. Additionally, students can also gain participation marks with additional questions, and by answering and discussing the posted questions of others. Participation is evaluated more on quality rather than quantity. This means that your questions and comments should reflect an active engagement with the course readings and topics.

* Please note that I will not be recording lectures, which means that attendance is essential to doing well in this course. If you miss a lecture, try and get notes from another student.

Commentaries

You are required to write three separate commentaries on any three of the **highlighted readings** listed in this syllabus. You have the option to write a fourth commentary (on one of the highlighted readings). If you choose to hand in 4 commentaries, the top three marks will go towards your final grade. Commentaries are to be one page long (300-350 words), double-spaced, 12 font with regular margins.

Your commentaries should include the following:

- Begin with a brief summary (2 or 3 sentences) of the reading indicating the main argument.
- Provide a critical analysis of the author's position. Please note that to be critical does not always mean to be negative. It might be the case that you agree with the author's main arguments. In either case, you need to support your assessment by referring to the strengths and/or weaknesses of the author's arguments.
- Construct a question that links the reading to other issues not necessarily discussed by the author.

Commentaries that have a title page or go beyond the one page limit will not be accepted. Commentaries are due before the start of lecture on the day that the reading is assigned. Late submissions will not be accepted. Please submit your commentaries as a word file on the Turnitin submission link on the eClass site for this course.

Makeup Tests

Makeup tests are only allowed in cases where a student missed a test due to illness or a death in the family. Students are required to provide documentation such as a doctor's note or copy of a death certificate in order to write the makeup test. Students who miss a test and do not provide this documentation will receive a zero grade on the test.

Course Policy on Students' Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

In this course, all work should be completed by you and you alone. As such, you are expressly prohibited from using any generative artificial intelligence (AI), such as ChatGPT or Grammarly.com, to help you complete any of your work for this course (e.g. tests; assignments; presentations; essay outlines, etc.). If you do not know whether an online resource or tool can be used in this course, please contact me for guidance. Any use of generative AI in this course will be considered a breach of the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty. More specifically, using text-generating tools (such as ChatGPT) would be considered to be cheating (Senate Policy, section 2.1.1) and using image-generating tools (such as DALL-E) would be considered to be plagiarism (Senate Policy, section 2.1.3). For more information, please review AI Technology and Academic Integrity: Information for Students: <https://www.yorku.ca/unit/vpacad/academic-integrity/ai-technology-academic-integrity/>

Academic Honesty

It is the responsibility of students to familiarize themselves with York University's Senate Policy on Academic Honesty. You can find this at the following address:

<http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=69>

There is also a tutorial on academic integrity at this address:

http://www.yorku.ca/tutorial/academic_integrity/

Email Policy

In general, questions should be asked in lecture or during my office hour. Email should be used only in the case of an emergency.

Students Requiring Accommodations

For students who require assistance please notify me at the beginning of the course. Follow this link for York University's policy regarding academic accommodation for students with disabilities.

<http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=68>

York Policy on Religious Accommodations

Please notify the course director at the beginning of the course if any of the tests or assignment due dates conflict with important dates in your religion. An alternative time will be worked out with students according to their individual needs.

Student Conduct

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the university student conduct policies. Follow this link for additional information.

http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/senate_cte_main_pages/ccas.htm

Recording Lecture

Students may not create audio, video, or camera recordings of classes with the exception of those students requiring an accommodation for a disability. Those who have obtained permission are not authorized to disseminate their recordings. Students creating unauthorized recordings of lectures violate an instructor's intellectual property rights and the Canadian Copyright Act. Students violating this agreement will be subject to disciplinary actions under the Student Code of Conduct and Discipline.

Sharing/Selling Academic Work

Please do not post any course material from this course to any other websites. Students creating unauthorized audio recordings of lectures, or copies of assigned work, violate an instructor's intellectual property rights, and the Canadian Copyright Act. Copying this material for distribution (e.g., uploading material to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a charge of misconduct according to York's Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty, and/or legal consequences for copyright violations. Students may not publish, post on an Internet site, sell, or otherwise distribute any course materials or work

without the instructor's express permission. Course materials should only be used by students enrolled in this course.

Readings

May 7 Course Introduction (**lecture is in-person**)

*Please make sure to attend this lecture. I will review the course syllabus and most of what you need to know about this course. If you can't attend this class, you will have to get notes from another student.

May 9 The Historical Development of Modern Sport (**lecture is online**)

Poulter, Gillian. "Snowshoeing and Lacrosse: Canada's Nineteenth-Century 'National Games'." *Culture, Sport, Society*. vol.6, no. 2-3, 2003, pp. 293-320.

May 14 Gendered Bodies and Sport Part I (**lecture is in-person**)

Pastor, Aaren. "Unwarranted and Invasive Scrutiny: Caster Semenya, Sex-Gender Testing and the Production of Woman in 'Women's' Track and Field." *Feminist Review*. vol. 122, no. 1, 2019, pp. 1-15.

Film: Renee (2011), Director: Eric Drath (shown in class)

May 16 Gendered Bodies and Sport Part II (**lecture is online**)

Curry, Timothy Jon. "Fraternal Bonding in the Locker Room: A Profeminist Analysis of Talk about Competition and Women." *Sociology of Sport Journal*. 8 (1991): 119-135.

Film: Friday Night Tykes, Season 1, Episode 1 (2014) (shown in class)

May 21 Sexuality and Sport (**lecture will be recorded (asynchronous) and posted on eClass**)

Feliciano Ortiz, Raúl J. and Eddy Francisco Alvarez Jr. "'And in the Rainbow Corner': Orlando Cruz and Performances of Masculinity, Homonormativity, and Liberation." *Latino Studies*. vol. 22, 2023, pp. 64-83.

Fair, Brian. "Constructing Masculinity through Penetration Discourse: The Intersection of Misogyny and Homophobia in High School Wrestling." *Men and Masculinities*. 14.4 (2011): 491-504.

May 23 Midterm Test – Good Luck! (**In-person**)

May 28 “Race” and Racism in the World of Sport (**lecture is in-person**)

Pardy, Brett. “The White Settler Imagination of Hometown Hockey.” *Canadian Ethnic Studies*. vol. 53, no. 3, 2021, pp. 103-120.

Keaton, Ajhanai C.I., et al. “Brittney Griner, Intersectionality, and ‘Woke Politics’: A Critical Examination of Brittney Griner’s Return to the United States.” *Sociology of Sport Journal*. Nov 8, 2023. <file:///C:/Users/polka/Downloads/ssj-article-10.1123-ssj.2023-0090.pdf>. Accessed 6 May 2024.

May 30 Violence and Sport (**lecture is online**)

Boyle, Ellexis. “Requiem for a ‘Tough Guy’: Representing Hockey Labour, Violence and Masculinity in *Goon*.” *Sociology of Sport Journal*. 31. (2014): 327-348.

Nowinski, Christopher. “Football’s Concussion Crisis.” *Head Games: Football’s Concussion Crisis*. East Bridgewater, MA: The Drummond Publishing Group, 2007. 1-10.

Film: *Head Games* (2012), Director: Steve James (shown in class)

June 4 Political Economy and Professional Sports (**lecture is in-person**)

Kalman-Lamb, Nathan. 2019. “Athletic Labor and Social Reproduction.” *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 43(6): 515-530.

Zirin, Dave. 2014. “Neoliberal Trojan Horses and Sporting Shock Doctrines.” In *Brazil’s Dance with the Devil: The World Cup, the Olympics, and the Fight for Democracy*. Chicago: Haymarket Books, 147-171.

June 6 Nationalism and Sport (**lecture is online**)

Aladejebi, Funke, et al. “We The North”? Race, Nation, and the Multicultural Politics of Toronto’s First NBA Championship.” *Journal of Canadian Studies*. vol. 56, no. 1, 2022, pp. 1-34.

Barsocchini, Robert J.. “Historian Gerald Horne Explains Why No One

Should Stand for the National Anthem.”

<http://www.counterpunch.org/2016/09/05/historian-gerald-horne-explains-why-no-one-should-stand-for-the-national-anthem/>

June 11

Athletes, Agency and Resistance (**lecture is online**)

Bass, Amy. “Whose Broad Stripes and Bright Stars? Race, Nations and Power at the 1968 Mexico City Olympics.” *Sports Matters: Race, Recreation, and Culture*. Eds. John Bloom and Michael Nevin Willard. New York: New York University Press, 2002. 185-208.

Agyemang, Kwame J. A., et al. “‘Agitate! Agitate! Agitate!’: Sport as a Site for Political Activism and Social Change.” *Organization*. vol. 27, no.6, 2020, pp. 952-968.

June 13

Final Test (**In-person**)