SPORTS AND SOCIAL CHANGE

COMM 387: Sports and Social Change
4 Units

Spring 2018 – Tuesdays/Thursdays – 12.30-1.50pm
Section: 20592R
Location: ASC 204

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Office: ASC G4
Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:20am-12:20pm, or by appointment
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“Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire, it has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. It speaks to youth in a language they understand. Sport can create hope, where once there was only despair. It is more powerful than governments in breaking down racial barriers. It laughs in the face of all types of discrimination.”

Nelson Mandela, 2000

“Serious sport has nothing to do with fair play. It is bound up with hatred, jealousy, boastfulness, disregard of all rules and sadistic pleasure in witnessing violence. In other words, it is war minus the shooting.”

George Orwell, 1945

I. Course Description

Sports and Social Change introduces students to key debates around social change, identity and politics in the world of sports. Over the past four decades, as the social significance of sport has increased, the sociology of sport has emerged to become a significant sub-discipline of sociology. Scholars within the sociology of sport have drawn on a wide range of theoretical perspectives to understand the enduring appeal of sporting practices, as well as the various processes of conflict, control and power in and around the institutions of sport. This course examines the main perspectives in the sociology of sport in order to better understand the complex and contradictory relationship between sport and society and addresses the following fundamental questions: Why do people play sports? Do all people across the globe play the same sports in the same ways? Is sport a microcosm of society? To what extent do sports matter in our daily lives? Are sports and politics separate or interrelated? Do sports help to produce social change, if so how, and in what ways? The course examines various topics and issues such as gender and representation, sexuality and homophobia, commercialization and college sport, race and inequality, the Olympics
and mega events, and sport and nationalism. The course is thus interested in social change in sports as well as social change through sports.

**Sports and Social Change** will be relevant to those with an interest in both sociological theory and contemporary sporting cultures. Please note: you do not have to be a fan or consumer of sports to take this course, you just need an interest in making sense of social change and a desire to better understand how social theory can be used to make sense of contemporary social issues. The course will be challenging for some in terms of requiring students to think again about some of our taken-for-granted assumptions that many have about sport, which, on closer inspection, may be more complex than we first assumed. The sociological approach taken in this course enables us to better appreciate both the potential and failure of contemporary sporting cultures to be truly open to all and why sports inspire the passions of millions.

**II. Overall Learning Objectives and Assessment**

By the end of this course students will:

- Be given the tools to develop a critical sociological imagination.
- Have a better understanding of the definitions and meanings of “sport” and “social change”.
- Be able to use social theory to make sense of social problems.
- Have a more complex understanding of social change in sports.
- Have a more complex understanding of social change through sports.

**III. Description of Assignments**

Students will be assessed in three ways. (1) A mid-term exam based upon the lecture and readings from the first half of the course. (2) A critical book review (6-8 pages). (3) A final end of course exam based upon the second half of the course readings and lectures.

**IV. Grading**

**a. Breakdown of Grade**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term exam (Thursday 8th March)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical book review (6-8 pages)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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**b. Grading Scale**

Sample grading scale provided below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95 to 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 to less than 95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>85 to less than 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80 to less than 85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>75 to less than 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>70 to less than 75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>65 to less than 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>60 to less than 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>55 to less than 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>50 to less than 55</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>45 to less than 50</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>40 to less than 45</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
c. Grading Standards

A book review awarded an “A” grade:

- Provide an accurate biography of the author.
- Support all assertions with carefully evaluated academic evidence.
- Draw upon the ideas and arguments already discussed in class and the readings, as well as referencing other texts (academic books and journal articles) where relevant.
- Entice the reader with an interesting and well written opening paragraph.
- Develop a critical analysis throughout that goes beyond merely being descriptive.
- Keep to length, being well written and neither repetitive nor missing out important parts of the overall argument.
- Summarize the key parts of the book clearly, use selective quotes well, makes interesting observations.
- There should be an absolute minimum of technical errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, referencing and factual mistakes.

A book review awarded a “B” grade:

- Provide an accurate biography of the author.
- Most assertions are supported with academic evidence.
- Draw upon the ideas and arguments discussed in class and the readings, including referencing other relevant texts.
- Entice the reader with an interesting and well written opening paragraph.
- Is generally descriptive but shows signs of critical reading.
- Keeps to in length being neither repetitive nor missing out important parts of the overall argument.
- Summarize the key parts of the book clearly, use selective quotes well, makes interesting observations.
- There may be some technical weaknesses, e.g. errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, referencing and very minor factual mistakes, but these are not significant and overall the review provides a good overview of the book.

A book review awarded a “C” grade:

- A biography is provided but lacks sufficient detail.
- Most assertions are not supported with carefully evaluated academic evidence.
- There is no or very limited reference to the ideas and arguments discussed in class or the readings and no referencing of other relevant texts.
- The opening paragraph is not well written and does little to entice the reader to read further.
- Presents an argument but not in a sophisticated way.
- The review keeps to length but is repetitive in places, descriptive throughout with minimal critical discussion.
- The summary of the book is not clear or well done, quotes are used but not in an effective way, some attempt to make wider observations/connections.
- There are many technical weaknesses, e.g. errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, referencing and the odd factual mistake. The review makes sense but appears not to have been proof-read very closely.
A book review awarded a “D” grade:
- There is either no biography or what is there is inaccurate and limited.
- There is no opening paragraph to entice the reader.
- The review is either too short or too long.
- The level of discussion is superficial, based on anecdotes and non-academic sources though there is some evidence of an intellectual engagement.
- There are significant weaknesses throughout, e.g. technical errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, referencing, and many factual mistakes, which significantly impede the reader.
- The summary of the book is poorly done, there are few quotations and the connections between the quotes and the summary is not clear.
- In short, it appears that not much time was given to the review.

A book review awarded a “F” grade:
- There is no biography or what is there is inaccurate.
- The review is either way too short or too long.
- There is no opening paragraph.
- The level of discussion is superficial and based upon anecdotes and non-academic sources, with no evidence of an intellectual engagement.
- There are considerable weaknesses throughout, e.g. technical errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, referencing, and significant factual mistakes which significantly impede the reader.
- The summary of the book is unclear, lacking in sufficient detail, with few if any attempts to broaden the discussion, the selected quotes are poorly chosen or non-existent.
- The final impression is that the review was rushed and not completed with any care or attention.

V. Assignment Submission Policy
A. All assignments are due on the dates specified. Lacking prior discussion and agreement with the instructor, late assignments will automatically docked 50% of the points awarded. If you know you need extra time, contact me at least two days before the assignment is due.
B. Assignments must be submitted via a hard copy to Professor Carrington, not via email.
C. Every student must give a presentation. Failure to do so will result in an incomplete for this course.

VI. Required Readings and Supplementary Materials
The following texts are required readings for the book review. Essential readings will be made available at least two weeks before class via Blackboard. This course requires extensive and committed reading, each and every week. You should only take this course if you are able to dedicate the time for weekly readings.

You should select one of the three books to review. Choose the book that interests you the most. I strongly recommend that you purchase your preferred book at the start of the course, read it closely over the new next few weeks, and aim to finish your review well before the deadline: Thursday March 22nd. Do not leave it until the last moment to finish it and turn it in! Further details on what the Book Review should include can be found on Blackboard.

Choose one of these three texts:
VII. Laptop Policy
Bring a pen, paper, a present mind, and use your laptop and smart phone before class starts and after – but not during.

Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (15 weeks: 1/8/18 – 4/27/18)
**Friday, January 26:** Last day to register and add classes  
**Friday, January 26:** Last day to drop a class without a mark of “W,” except for Monday-only classes, and receive a refund  
**Tuesday, January 30:** last day to drop a Monday-only class without a mark of “W” and receive a refund  
**Friday, February 23:** Last day to drop a course without a mark of “W” on the transcript. [Please drop any course by the end of week three (or the week three equivalent for short sessions) to avoid tuition charges.]  
**Friday, April 6:** Last day to drop a class with a mark of “W”

VIII. Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown
*Important note to students*: Be advised that this syllabus is subject to change – and probably will change – based on the progress of the class, news events, and/or guest speaker availability. I am happy to take into consideration absences and extensions for religious Holy Days. Please let me know at the start of the semester if you will miss classes or need extra time due to religious observance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Topics/Daily Activities</th>
<th>Readings and Homework</th>
<th>Deliverable/Due Dates</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Tue: 1/9 - Introduction  
Thur: 1/11 - Syllabus | Introduction to “Sports and Social Change”                                             | Sport “Facts” and the Sociological Imagination                                      | In class True or False test and discussion |

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<tr>
<th>Week 2</th>
<th>Topics/Daily Activities</th>
<th>Readings and Homework</th>
<th>Deliverable/Due Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Tue: 1/16  
Thur: 1/18 | Introduction to Sociology and the Sociology of Sport | **On Blackboard:** *Carrington and Andrews (2013) “Sport as Escape, Struggle and Art”.*  
Further readings on the Sociology of Sport: Dave Zirin (2008) *A People’s History of Sports in the United States* (New Press) provides a polemical and readable account that shows why sports matter in understanding society and why “sports” and “politics” can’t be easily separated. | Read before class |

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<tr>
<th>Week 3</th>
<th>Topics/Daily Activities</th>
<th>Readings and Homework</th>
<th>Deliverable/Due Dates</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Tue: 1/23  
Thur: 1/25 | Social Theory and Social Change | **On Blackboard:** *Beddie (2013) “Chapter 4: Introduction to sociological theories of sport in modern society”.* | Read before class |

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<tr>
<th>Week 4</th>
<th>Topics/Daily Activities</th>
<th>Readings and Homework</th>
<th>Deliverable/Due Dates</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Tue: 1/30  
Thur: 2/1 | Class, Social Struggle and Marxism | **On Blackboard:** *Ritchie (2010) “Marxism”.*                                      | Read before class |
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<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Tue: 2/20</td>
<td>Thur: 2/22</td>
<td>Gender, Sexuality and sport</td>
<td>On Blackboard: Messner (2002) “Chapter 5: Contesting the Center: Just do what?”.</td>
<td>Read before class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Tue: 2/27</td>
<td>Thur: 3/1</td>
<td>Nationalism, Sport and the State</td>
<td>On Blackboard: Goksoyr (2010) “Chapter 16: Nationalism”.</td>
<td>Read before class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Tue: 3/6 – Revision session</td>
<td>Thur: 3/8 – Mid-term test</td>
<td>Mid-term exam</td>
<td>In class discussion; mid-term papers due</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates: 3/12-3/16</td>
<td>No Classes</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
<td></td>
<td>Finish book reviews</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Tue: 3/20</td>
<td>Thur: 3/22</td>
<td>Film: Friday Night Lights</td>
<td>Hand in Book Review during class on Thursday March 22rd</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Tue: 4/3</td>
<td>Thur: 4/5</td>
<td>Race, protests and sports</td>
<td>On Blackboard: Carrington (2017) “Raced Bodies and Black Cultural Politics” (Routledge Handbook of Physical Cultural Studies).</td>
<td>Read before class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Tue: 4/10</td>
<td>Thur: 4/12</td>
<td>The Olympics and mega events: From London to LA</td>
<td>On Blackboard: Boykoff (2014) “Understanding the Olympic Games” (Activism and the Olympics) and “LA is</td>
<td>Read before class</td>
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about to discover that democracy and the Olympics don’t mix” (2017).

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tue: 4/17</td>
<td>Conclusion, exam preparation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Course Evaluations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thur: 4/19</td>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td></td>
<td>Date: For the date and time of the final for this class, please consult the Spring 2018 Final Exam Schedule.</td>
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**Weekly Schedule**

Week 14:
- **Tuesday, 4/17**
  - Readings: Globalization, sport and social change
  - Notes:

Week 15:
- **Tuesday, 4/24**
  - Readings: Conclusion, exam preparation
  - Notes:

**Final Exams Dates: 5/4**
- Final exam
- Notes:

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**Guide to Further Reading:**
Students should regularly consult the main journals that carry articles on sociology and sport, particularly the Sociology of Sport Journal (SSJ), the Journal of Sport and Social Issues (JSSI), the International Review for the Sociology of Sport (IRSS), and the journal of Leisure Studies (LS). In addition, the following books will provide useful contextual information for this course:

Montez de Oca, J. 2013. Discipline and Indulgence: College Football, Media and the American Way of Life during the Cold War, Rutgers University Press.

IX. Policies and Procedures
Additional Policies
I expect you to attend every class (even though attendance is not part of your grade – I will be at each class, so should you). I also expect you to have completed the readings ahead of time, and to come to class willing to engage the materials, critically challenge each other in a respectful manner, to focus only on the class materials during class (no checking twitter, Facebook or any other non-class distractions), and to be ready and willing to think hard and reflect on your prior positions and worldviews. Let me know ahead of time if you need to miss a class. Do not plagiarize (see below), do not steal books from the library (or write in pen inside them), do not talk over or be dismissive of your peers’ views even if you disagree with what they are saying. Do come to class ready to learn, to be creative, to develop as an intellectual and writer, and, above all, do come to class prepared to think sociologically about sports writing.

Internships
The value of professional internships as part of the overall educational experience of our students has long been recognized by the School of Journalism. Accordingly, while internships are not required for successful completion of this course, any student enrolled in this course that undertakes and completes an approved, non-paid internship during this semester shall earn academic extra credit herein of an amount equal to 1 percent of the total available semester points for this course. To receive instructor approval, a student must request an internship letter from the Annenberg Career Development Office and bring it to the instructor to sign by the end of the third week of classes. The student must submit the signed letter to the media organization, along with the evaluation form provided by the Career Development Office. The form should be filled out by the intern supervisor and returned to the instructor at the end of the semester. No credit will be given if an evaluation form is not turned into the instructor by the last day of class. Note: The internship must by unpaid and can only be applied to one journalism class.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems
a. Academic Conduct
Plagiarism
Presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words - is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards https://scampus.usc.edu/b/11-00-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/.

USC School of Journalism Policy on Academic Integrity
The following is the USC Annenberg School of Journalism’s policy on academic integrity and repeated in the syllabus for every course in the school:

“Since its founding, the USC School of Journalism has maintained a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found plagiarizing, fabricating, cheating on examinations, and/or purchasing papers or other assignments faces sanctions ranging from an ‘F’ on the assignment to dismissal from the School of Journalism. All academic integrity violations will be reported to the office of Student Judicial Affairs & Community Standards (SJACS), as per university policy, as well as journalism school administrators.”

In addition, it is assumed that the work you submit for this course is work you have produced entirely by yourself, and has not been previously produced by you for submission in another course or Learning Lab, without approval of the instructor.

b. Support Systems

Student Counseling Services (SCS) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255
Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Sexual Assault Resource Center
For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: sarc.usc.edu

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086
Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. equity.usc.edu

Bias Assessment Response and Support
Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

The Office of Disability Services and Programs
Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. dsp.usc.edu

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710
Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Diversity at USC
Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. diversity.usc.edu

USC Emergency Information
Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. emergency.usc.edu
USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime. Provides overall safety to USC community. dps.usc.edu

X. About Your Instructor
Ben Carrington is an Associate Professor in the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. Prior to joining Annenberg, Professor Carrington taught in the Department of Sociology at the University of Texas at Austin and before that he worked at the University of Brighton in England. Professor Carrington studies a broad range of topics generally concerned with mapping the circulation and reproduction of power within contemporary post/colonial societies. More specifically, he is interested in how ideologies of race shape - and are themselves shaped by - cultural forms, practices and identities and how popular culture is often a key site of both cultural resistance and domination. His work examines the mass media and sport as way to understand key sociological dimensions of everyday life such as personal and communal identity and national identifications as well as focusing on how racialized, gendered and classed social structures constrain and enable social life.