



**JOUR 574: Sports and Society**  
**3 Units**

**Spring 2021 – Tuesdays – 2-4:30 p.m.**

**Section:** 21638D

**Location:** ANN 305 & online

**Instructor: Alan Abrahamson**

**Office:** G21D ASC

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays after class, or by appointment

**Email:**

**I. Course Description**

In 1968, the American sprinters Tommie Smith and John Carlos famously raised their fists atop the Olympic podium. They were promptly expelled from the Mexico City Games.

In the years since, the International Olympic Committee enacted what is called Rule 50. It bans the display of “political, religious or racial propaganda” in any Olympic venues, particularly the podium.

On Dec. 10, 2020, in conjunction with International Human Rights Day, the Protests and Demonstrations Steering Committee of the Team USA Council on Racial and Social Justice declared that “denying the right of respectful demonstrations to athletes, particularly those from historically underrepresented and marginalized groups, runs counter to the Olympic and Paralympic values.”

The same day, the chief executive of the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee, Sarah Hirshland, released a letter to American athletes that said the organization would not sanction an athlete who took part in a peaceful protest at the Games: “It is critical to state unequivocally that human rights are not political, and peaceful calls for equity and equality must not be confused with divisive demonstrations.”

Here is the but – Rule 50 still stands, and the IOC has evidenced little to no intent to change it.

Whatever the USOPC may say, or not, the Americans are but one of 206 nations invited to a Games.

This story – like many others at the intersection of race and social justice – is due to play out over the course of this semester. The Tokyo Games are due to begin July 23.

Sport offers a prism unlike any other into virtually every facet of the world around us: politics, economics, business, culture and more. Indeed, it sometimes allows us an entrée into people, places and things that so-called “hard” news simply can’t, or won’t, because sport – like music – offers a way for people to communicate that is, or at least, can be universal.

That’s what this course is about: writing and reporting about everything and anything in our world through the touchstone of sport.

**II. Overall Learning Objectives and Assessment**

- To refine the print and multimedia skill set that sets apart today's working sports journalist
- To begin developing the individual brand that is the key to success in today's ultra-competitive sports journalism marketplace
- To develop a working understanding of what sport is and, simultaneously, what the differing cultures of sport are and why they matter in today's complex world
- To appreciate the history of sport while contemplating its multi-faceted future
- To gain perspective, context and background on a variety of issues in which sport intersects with other areas of society
- To appreciate that while sport is "play" it is simultaneously "work" and "business," too

You will be expected to review the *Los Angeles Times* and *New York Times* sports sections every day, and to watch at least one edition nightly of ESPN's "SportsCenter" or similar highlights show.

You will be expected to use Twitter as a news feed. If you are not on it, we will spend some time during the first class to make sure everyone in class has a Twitter handle. We will spend some time discussing – indeed, emphasizing – the instructor's three suggested guidelines for posting to Twitter.

The idea of reading and watching so much is to become immersed in the culture of sports. As Deion Sanders said in his Pro Football Hall of Fame enshrinement speech, "If your dream ain't bigger than you, there's a problem with your dream."

To that end, you will be expected to launch your own sports-themed blog, and to contribute to it regularly.

You will also be expected over the course of the semester to turn in two lengthier written assignments – or, with the instructor's assent, multimedia projects.

### **III. Description of Assignments**

#### **1. The blog**

You will launch your own sports-themed blog. Whatever free content management system you prefer is fine. You will be expected to contribute to that blog at least once weekly. More often would be preferred. Short items of 250 to 300 words would be ideal. Longer pieces, if the mood or interest strikes, would of course be welcomed.

Launching the blog jump-starts each student's identity in the marketplace – to write, or post videos, or both, on whatever it is that is the thing, or things, of interest to him or her. It could be football. Or *futbol*. It could be statistics or lists or analysis. It could be commentary. The important thing is to be out there.

#### **2. Written or multimedia assignments**

In addition to the regular blogging, you will write two (2) assignments of at least 1500 words or produce two (2) multimedia projects. Alternatively, you may produce one (1) written assignment and one (1) multimedia project. The first of the two assignments will be due mid-semester, the second at semester's end.

## IV. Grading

### a. Breakdown of Grade

Assignment	% of Grade
Blogging	30%
Assignment 1	30%
Assignment 2	30%
Class participation	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: there is no final exam

### b. Grading Scale

95% to 100%: A	80% to 83%: B-	67% to 69%: D+
90% to 94%: A-	77% to 79%: C+	64% to 66%: D
87% to 89%: B+	74% to 76%: C	60% to 63%: D-
84% to 86%: B	70% to 73%: C-	0% to 59%: F

### c. Grading Standards

- An “A” grade means you have a full grasp of the concept are doing exceptional work. That work is completed on time, and with minimal editing. You exhibit professionalism.
- A “B” or below means you need more extensive editing, miss deadline or don’t grasp the concept – or otherwise show in your work or effort that it is not up to the highest professional standards.
- A “C” means you turned the story in, albeit with a minimal amount of effort. The work is done, but requires a fair amount of editing. It is clear you might not have done in-depth reporting or research, and the assignment does not meet professional standards.
- A “D” requires excessive rewriting, features numerous errors and should not have been submitted.

- An “F” fails to meet the major criteria of the assignment, is late, contains numerous errors or both. Your copy should not contain any errors in spelling, style, grammar and facts. Note: any factual error will lead to an **automatic F**. Why? Accuracy is the first law of journalism. The following are some other circumstances that would warrant a grade of “F” and potential USC/Annenberg disciplinary action:
- Fabricating a story or making up quotes or information.
- Plagiarizing a script/article, part of a script/article or information from any source.
- Staging video or telling interview subjects what to say.
- Using video shot by someone else and presenting it as original work.
- Shooting video in one location and presenting it as another location.
- Using the camcorder to intentionally intimidate, provoke or incite a person or a group of people to elicit more “dramatic” video.
- Promising, paying or giving someone something in exchange for doing an interview either on or off camera.
- Missing a deadline.

#### IV. Assignment Submission Policy

- A. Class meets Tuesdays. All assignments are due at 11 p.m. the Sunday prior. Example: for the class that meets Jan. 26, that week’s assignment is due 11 p.m. Jan 24.
- B. Lacking prior discussion and agreement with the instructor, late assignments will earn an **automatic F**. In the real world, late assignments can – indeed, will – get you fired. Best to learn this lesson in school.
- C. Assignments must be submitted via Blackboard. There are no paper submissions in this course. It is entirely electronic.
- D. Assignments must be submitted in Microsoft Word. No other application will do. If you file in Text format, or Pages, or some other word processing application, it will result in an **automatic F**.
- E. The two written assignments must contain, in the top left corner, these three items, on separate lines: your name, the due date, the course name (JOUR 574). In addition, those two assignments must also start with a byline and, when appropriate, a dateline. Failure to adhere to these elemental rules will also mean an **automatic F**.
- F. This course maintains a strict adherence to the Associated Press Stylebook. Please become familiar with it.

→ Students are encouraged to submit their work for consideration to Annenberg Media or the Daily Trojan, or pitch it to mainstream media outlets. Visit <http://bit.ly/SubmitAnnenbergMedia> for more information about that submission and review process and email Daily Trojan news editors at [dt.city@gmail.com](mailto:dt.city@gmail.com) for more on how to pitch your work to the campus newspaper.

#### V. Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

- Abdul-Jabbar, Kareem. *Coach Wooden and Me: Our 50-year friendship On and Off the Court*. New York. Grand Central Publishing, 2017.
- Carroll, Pete, with Roth, Yogi, and Garin, Kristoffer A. *Win Forever: Live, Work and Play like a Champion*. New York: Penguin Group 2010.
- *2020 AP Stylebook*: ([https://libproxy.usc.edu/login?url=http://www.apstylebook.com/usc\\_edu/](https://libproxy.usc.edu/login?url=http://www.apstylebook.com/usc_edu/))  
**NOTE: USC STUDENTS HAVE FREE ONLINE ACCESS. CLICK LINK)**

## **VI. Laptop Policy**

All undergraduate and graduate Annenberg majors and minors are required to have a PC or Apple laptop that can be used in Annenberg classes. Please refer to the **Annenberg Digital Lounge** for more information. To connect to USC's Secure Wireless network, please visit USC's **Information Technology Services** website.

## **VII. Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (15 weeks: 1/15/2021 – 4/30/2021; Final Exam Period: 5/5-12/2021)**

**Friday, February 5:** Last day to register and add classes for Session 001

**Friday, February 5:** Last day to drop a class without a mark of "W," except for Monday-only classes, and receive a refund for Session 001

**Tuesday, February 9:** Last day to drop a Monday-only class without a mark of "W" and receive a refund for Session 001

**Friday, March 5:** Last day to drop a course without a mark of "W" on the transcript for Session 001. Mark of "W" will still appear on student record and STARS report and tuition charges still apply. [Please drop any course by the end of week three (or the 20 percent mark of the session) to avoid tuition charges.]

**Friday, March 5:** Last day to change pass/no pass to letter grade for Session 001. [All major and minor courses must be taken for a letter grade.]

**Friday, April 9:** Last day to drop a class with a mark of "W" for Session 001

## **VIII. Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown**

### **Course schedule**

This is a course about sports and society but the instructor is a working sports writer and it is a sports writer's culture that will infect this class. Thus, as ever, the schedule is subject to revision as news develops.

### **Week One – January 19**

What is sport? Is it something kids do on a playground? Does it have to have rules? Referees? Does it need to be commercial? Does it need to have commercial breaks? A commissioner?

Is chess a sport? Breakdancing – just added to the Paris 2024 Summer Games? Are video games – or in the parlance, esports -- sport? What about surfing? Is mountain climbing a sport? What about the X Games – are the disciplines in that made-for-TV event sports? Are the ones that include motorcycles different than the ones that include skateboards? If so, why and how?

Meanwhile, there are those who still want to make like the sports department is just about toys. That is, in a word, naïve. There are more national Olympic committees than there are nation states in the United Nations. How to start defining sport's place in our complex modern landscape?

**Watch one from this assortment of movies:**

Hoop Dreams  
Raging Bull  
Fight Club  
Bend It Like Beckham  
The Natural  
Bull Durham  
The Fighter  
North Dallas Forty  
Jerry Maguire  
Chariots of Fire  
Personal Best  
A League of Their Own  
Moneyball  
Rocky  
White Men Can't Jump  
Seabiscuit  
Riding Giants  
Miracle

As a bonus, also watch (just for fun):

Caddyshack [greatest movie of all time?]  
Slapshot

**Read:**

Michael Mandelbaum. *The Meaning of Sports*. pp. 1-26  
[http://www.amazon.com/Meaning-Sports-Michael-Mandelbaum/dp/1586483307/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1342187201&sr=1-1&keywords=mandelbaum+%22meaning+of+sports%22](http://www.amazon.com/Meaning-Sports-Michael-Mandelbaum/dp/1586483307/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1342187201&sr=1-1&keywords=mandelbaum+%22meaning+of+sports%22)

Ellis Cashmore. *Making Sense of Sports*. 2005. pp. 1-17.  
[http://www.amazon.com/dp/0415552214/ref=rdr\\_ext\\_tmb#reader\\_0415552214](http://www.amazon.com/dp/0415552214/ref=rdr_ext_tmb#reader_0415552214)

Todd Boyd. "Anatomy of a Murder: O.J. and the Imperative of Sports in Cultural Studies" in *Out of Bounds: Sports, Media, and the Politics of Identity* Aaron Baker and Todd Boyd eds. 1997. pp. vii-ix.  
[http://www.amazon.com/Out-Bounds-Sports-Politics-Identity/dp/025321095X/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1342188067&sr=1-1&keywords=sports+media+politics+identity#reader\\_025321095X](http://www.amazon.com/Out-Bounds-Sports-Politics-Identity/dp/025321095X/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1342188067&sr=1-1&keywords=sports+media+politics+identity#reader_025321095X)

Maurice Roche. *Mega-Events and Modernity: Olympics and Expos in the Growth of Global Culture*. pp. 1-8  
[http://www.amazon.com/Megaevents-Modernity-Olympics-Growth-Culture/dp/0415157129/ref=sr\\_1\\_2?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1342187493&sr=1-2&keywords=mega-events+modernity#reader\\_0415157129](http://www.amazon.com/Megaevents-Modernity-Olympics-Growth-Culture/dp/0415157129/ref=sr_1_2?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1342187493&sr=1-2&keywords=mega-events+modernity#reader_0415157129)

Barry Smart. "Not playing Around: Global Capitalism, Modern Sport and Consumer Culture" in *Globalization and Sport*. Richard Giulianotti and Roland Robertson eds. 2007. pp. 6-27

[http://www.amazon.com/Globalization-Sport-Richard-Giulianotti/dp/1405162694/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1342187966&sr=1-1&keywords=Globalization+and+Sport#reader\\_1405162694](http://www.amazon.com/Globalization-Sport-Richard-Giulianotti/dp/1405162694/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1342187966&sr=1-1&keywords=Globalization+and+Sport#reader_1405162694)

Matt Scott: no pain no gain – real sport hurts

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/olympics/9429505/Matt-Scott-no-pain-no-gain-real-sport-hurts.html>

Johan Huizinga. *Homo Ludens*. Beacon, 1955. pp. 46, 71-75

H.G. Bissinger. *Friday Night Lights: a town, a team, a dream*, Addison-Wesley, 1990. pp. 23-37

Sewell Chan, New York Times, Oct. 15, 2015, "Competitive Bridge is not a Sport, a British Court Rules," <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/16/sports/competitive-bridge-is-not-a-sport-a-british-court-rules.html>

## **Week Two – January 26**

### **Should Doping be Legalized?**

Lance Armstrong's final Tour de France victory came in 2005. Looking at the Top 10 finishers in that 2005 Tour, and excluding Armstrong: six of the other nine at some point in their career tested positive, served a suspension or were significantly linked to an anti-doping investigation. See [bit.ly/knGwMd](http://bit.ly/knGwMd). What is the significance?

### **Read:**

John Hoberman. *Mortal Engines: the science of performance and the dehumanization of sport*. Free Press, 1992 pp 1-32.

Andy Miah. *Genetically Modified Athletes: Biomedical ethics, gene doping and sport*. Routledge, 2004. pp. 12-31.

Paul Kimmage. *Rough Ride: behind the wheel with a pro cyclist*. Yellow Jersey Press, 1998 pp. 178-86

Lance Armstrong with Sally Jenkins. *Every Second Counts*. Broadway, 2003.

David Walsh. *From Lance to Landis: Inside the American doping controversy at the Tour de France*. Ballantine, 2007. pp. 72-82.

David Walsh. *From Lance to Landis: Inside the American Doping Controversy at the Tour de France*. Ballantine. 2007. pp. 226-247, 288-289

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/23/sports/research-finds-wide-doping-study-withheld.html?ref=sports>

<https://www.wada-ama.org/en/resources/world-anti-doping-program/independent-commission-report-1>

“Game of Thrones’: The Mountain Actor Hafthor Julius Bjornsson Comes Clean About Using Steroids, <https://popculture.com/tv-shows/2019/04/15/game-of-thrones-mountain-actor-hafthor-julius-bjornsson-comes-clean-using-steroids/>

### **Week Three – February 2**

Lance Armstrong, Statement, Aug. 23, 2012, <http://lancearmstrong.com/news-events/lance-armstrongs-statement-of-august-23-2012>

Lance Armstrong Receives Lifetime Ban, U.S. Anti-Doping Agency Statement, Aug. 24, 2012 <http://www.usada.org/media/sanction-armstrong8242012>

Joe Lindsey, Texas Fold ‘Em, The Boulder Report, Aug. 24, 2012, <http://bicycling.com/blogs/boulderreport/2012/08/24/texas-fold-em/>

Lance Armstrong drops this fight. Why? 3 Wire Sports, Aug. 24, 2012, <http://3wiresports.com/2012/08/24/lance-armstrong-drops-this-fight/>

Lance Armstrong Charity Sees \$78K, ESPN.com, Aug. 25, 2012, [http://espn.go.com/olympics/cycling/story/\\_/id/8301006/lance-armstrong-foundation-sees-78k-donations-25-times-greater-normal-day](http://espn.go.com/olympics/cycling/story/_/id/8301006/lance-armstrong-foundation-sees-78k-donations-25-times-greater-normal-day)

The Lance Armstrong fallout – questions, denials and doping reactions, The Science of Sport, Aug. 27, 2012 <http://www.sportsscientists.com/2012/08/the-armstrong-fallout-thoughts-and.html>

Lance Armstrong tells cancer conference in Montreal he’s seven-time Tour de France champion, WashingtonPost.com, Aug. 29, 2012, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/lance-armstrong-tells-cancer-conference-in-montreal-hes-7-time-tour-de-france-champion/2012/08/29/1ad8e952-f23c-11e1-b74c-84ed55e0300b\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/lance-armstrong-tells-cancer-conference-in-montreal-hes-7-time-tour-de-france-champion/2012/08/29/1ad8e952-f23c-11e1-b74c-84ed55e0300b_story.html)

Lance Armstrong’s Secret is Out, Outside Magazine, Aug. 31, 2012, <http://www.outsideonline.com/outdoor-adventure/media/books/Keyes-hamilton-the-secret-race.html?page=all>

The “Reasoned Decision,” October 2012: <https://d3epuodzu3wuis.cloudfront.net/ReasonedDecision.pdf>

Sally Jenkins, Lance Armstrong’s biographer, writes in December 2012: “Why I’m not angry at Lance Armstrong,” [http://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/othersports/why-im-not-angry-at-lance-armstrong/2012/12/15/5802bcce-460e-11e2-8061-253bccfc7532\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/othersports/why-im-not-angry-at-lance-armstrong/2012/12/15/5802bcce-460e-11e2-8061-253bccfc7532_story.html)

David Walsh’s response to Sally Jenkins <http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/sport/cycling/article1178356.ece>

Buzz Bissinger: “I Was Deluded to Believe Lance Armstrong When He Denied Doping” <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2013/01/14/buzz-bissinger-i-was-deluded-to-believe-lance->

[armstrong-when-he-denied-doping.html](#)

[Forget Tiger, Lance Armstrong may pull off biggest comeback of sport's disgraced](#)  
[https://amp.theguardian.com/sport/blog/2018/sep/26/lance-armstrong-biggest-comeback-sport-disgraced?\\_twitter\\_impression=true](https://amp.theguardian.com/sport/blog/2018/sep/26/lance-armstrong-biggest-comeback-sport-disgraced?_twitter_impression=true)

### **Weeks Four, Five and Six:**

A block on race, ethnicity and national identity

It used to be said that to understand the United States you needed to understand baseball. That was a long, long time ago.

Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in baseball in 1947. Now, when it comes to basketball, the riff is so commonly accepted that it was made into a movie title: "White Men Can't Jump."

Now there's an NBA team in Oklahoma City. Oklahoma City!? The NFL plays a number of regular-season games in London; odds are there will be a team based there within 10 years. The season that wrapped up with the Lakers winning the NBA title in a COVID-19 bubble in Orlando started with a crisis with the Lakers in China triggered by a comment made by the Houston Rockets general manager over democracy in Hong Kong.

After 20 years away, the NFL during its 2016 season made its return to Los Angeles. The Rams made the Super Bowl. Now there's a brand-new stadium – that has yet to see a paying fan.

And still the United States does not field a good men's national soccer team and the men's professional soccer league, the MLS, remains decidedly minor-league (a nice way of saying "wretched"). Why such American exceptionalism?

### **Week Four – February 9**

*Out of Bounds: sports, media, and the politics of identity* / edited by Aaron Baker and Todd Boyd. Indiana University Press, 1997. pp. 123-142.

Todd Boyd. *Young, Black, rich, and famous: the rise of the NBA, the hip hop invasion, and the transformation of American culture*. Doubleday, 2003. pp. 1-18.

Al-Tony Gilmore. *Bad Nigger! The national impact of Jack Johnson*. Kennikat Press, 1975. pp. 59-72

Sterling's Fold, by Bill Simmons, Grantland, April 30, 2014 <http://grantland.com/features/sterlings-fold/>

### **Week Five – February 16**

Adrian Burgos. *Playing America's Game(s): Baseball, Latinos, and the Color Line*. University of California Press, 2007. pp. 227-242.

Andrei S. Markovits and Steven L. Hellerman. *Offside: Soccer and American exceptionalism*. Princeton University Press, 2001, pp. 52-53, 128-131, 159-161.

"Latino Cultural Assimilation, Divided Loyalties and the World Cup," Brandon Valeriano, Soccer and Society, 2012.

**Alex Williams, New York Times, April 17, 2014, Their Game, Now Ours:**

[http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/17/fashion/soccer-particularly-englands-premier-league-growing-in-popularity-in-new-york-creative-circles.html?smid=fb-nytimes&WT.z\\_sma=ST\\_TGN\\_20140417&bicmp=AD&bicmlukp=WT.mc\\_id&bicmst=1388552400000&bicmet=1420088400000&](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/17/fashion/soccer-particularly-englands-premier-league-growing-in-popularity-in-new-york-creative-circles.html?smid=fb-nytimes&WT.z_sma=ST_TGN_20140417&bicmp=AD&bicmlukp=WT.mc_id&bicmst=1388552400000&bicmet=1420088400000&)

**Keith Olbermann, April 20, 2014:** <http://awfulannouncing.com/2014/video-keith-olbermann-takes-down-the-ny-times-style-article-on-soccer.html>

David Goldblatt, Al Jazeera America, July 9, 2014, "Brazil's World Cup debacle lays bare its soccer myths": <http://america.aljazeera.com/blogs/worldcup/2014/7/9/brazil-s-world-cupdebaclelaysbarethemythsofitsoccer.html>

Wright Thompson, ESPN FC, July 9, 2014, "Scenes of defeat on the streets of Brazil," <http://www.espnfc.com/blog/wright-thompson/94/post/1940906/wright-thompson----scenes-of-defeat-on-the-streets-of-brazil>

<http://www.sbnation.com/soccer/2015/4/13/8403253/eduardo-galeano-soccer-in-sun-and-shadow-review>

### **Week Six – February 23**

Michael Oriard. *Brand NFL: Making and selling America's favorite sport*. University of North Carolina Press, 2007.pp. 1-54.

<http://www.si.com/nfl/2015/01/08/nfl-roger-goodell-ray-rice-robert-mueller-report>

[http://espn.go.com/blog/new-england-patriots/post/\\_/id/4782561/timeline-of-events-for-deflategate-tom-brady](http://espn.go.com/blog/new-england-patriots/post/_/id/4782561/timeline-of-events-for-deflategate-tom-brady)

### **Week Seven – March 2**

An examination of the role of women in the American sports landscape.

It is now nearly 50 years since the passage of Title IX, the 1972 federal law that bans sex discrimination in schools, whether in the classroom or the playing field. Perhaps no law has done more to re-shape the sports landscape in the United States. Query: is it still vital?

Going back to the 530-member team that the U.S. Olympic Committee sent to London for the 2012 Games: it consisted of 268 women and 261 men – a direct consequence of the years of influence of Title IX. The 554-member 2016 Rio team? Female: 292. Moreover, women won 50.4 percent of Team USA's Rio medals, men 46.3 percent (close readers: mixed events accounted for 3.3 percent).

So why – outside of basketball games in college-town hotbeds such as Knoxville, Tenn., or Storrs, Conn. – don't women's sports draw?

"Nostalgia for the Masculine: Onward to the past in the sports films of the Eighties," Marjorie Kibby. *Canadian Journal of Film Studies*. Spring 1998. [http://www.filmstudies.ca/journal/pdf/cj-film-studies71\\_Kibby\\_nostalgia.pdf](http://www.filmstudies.ca/journal/pdf/cj-film-studies71_Kibby_nostalgia.pdf)

Messner, M. A., Cooky, C. (2010). *Gender in Televised Sports: News and Highlights Shows, 1989-2009*. USC Center for Feminist Research. [PubMed Web Address](#)

Jessica Gavora. *Tilting the playing field: Schools, sports, sex and Title IX*. Encounter Books, 2002. [pp. 132-147]

Jere Longman, New York Times, June 18, 2013, A Push to Invigorate Women's Basketball: <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/18/sports/ncaabasketball/official-offers-ways-to-invigorate-womens-basketball.html?ref=ncaabasketball>

[http://www.laobserved.com/archive/2014/01/la\\_sparks\\_staff\\_laid\\_off.php](http://www.laobserved.com/archive/2014/01/la_sparks_staff_laid_off.php)

Juliet Macur, New York Times, April 17, 2014, Desperate League to Connect in Order to Survive: <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/18/sports/soccer/clinics-offer-national-womens-soccer-league-a-path-to-success.html?hp&r=0>

### **Weeks Eight and Nine:**

A study of the role of boxing and mixed martial arts in American culture and sport.

### **Week Eight – March 9**

There was no one like Muhammad Ali, and maybe never will be again. Why?

Dave Kindred, New York Times, March 19, 2006, Sound and Fury  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/03/19/books/chapters/sound-and-fury.html>

Ali, 74, dies in June 2016 [http://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/04/sports/muhammad-ali-dies.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/04/sports/muhammad-ali-dies.html?_r=0)

Gerald Early, "Introduction: Tales of the Wonderboy, Part One" in *The Muhammad Ali Reader*. Gerald Early ed. Ecco 1998. pp. vii-xiv.

Michael Oriard. "Muhammad Ali: The Hero in the Age of Mass Media" in *Muhammad Ali, The People's Champion*. Elliot J. Gorn ed. University of Illinois Press 1995. pp. 5-23.

Norman Mailer. "Ego" in *The Muhammad Ali Reader*. Gerald Early ed. Ecco 1998. pp. 101-122.

Hunter S. Thompson. "Last Tango in Las Vegas" in *The Muhammad Ali Reader*. Gerald Early ed. Ecco 1998. pp. 194-198.

Bob Green. "Muhammad Ali Is the Most Famous Person in the World" in *The Muhammad Ali Reader*. Gerald Early ed. Ecco 1998. pp. 217-228.

David Remnick. *King of the World: Muhammad Ali and the Rise of an American Hero*. (Random House 1998). pp. 285-291, 304-306.

### **Week Nine – March 16**

Why has mixed-martial arts overtaken boxing? What does it say about sport in the 21<sup>st</sup> century that MMA has become so popular so quickly? And boxing is in such decline?

When Conor McGregor, the UFC champ, and boxer Floyd Mayweather got it on, who got more of the purse? Why?

“The Fight Club Generation.” Douglas Quenqua. New York Times. March 14, 2012.  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/15/fashion/mixed-martial-arts-catches-on-with-the-internet-generation.html?pagewanted=all>

“Vanilla Thrillas: Modern boxing and white-ethnic masculinity.” W Cooley - *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 2010.

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/sport/other-sports/mma/anderson-silva-leg-break-watch-2969237>

<http://bleacherreport.com/articles/1912222-ufc-168-anderson-silva-surgery-breakdown-by-dr-steven-sanders>

Ronda Rousey loses: <http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/11/15/world/ap-mma-ufc-193.html>

### **Weeks Ten, Eleven and Twelve:**

A block on the phenomenon of the Olympic Games.

Two of every three people in the world watch the opening ceremony of the Summer Games. The Games, Summer and Winter, take place every two years but the movement itself is a billion-dollar-plus worldwide enterprise that's in constant motion after enduring a corruption scandal and enacting far-reaching reforms in the late 1990s; now track and field, and soccer, and the IOC itself (again), are facing their own scandals. What is it about the Games? What is their future, both near- and long-term?

Surfing and skateboarding will be on the Olympic program at the Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024 Games. Should they? Surfing will be in Tahiti, 9000 miles from Paris. Does that make sense?

Esports? In the Games – yes or no?

And this special note: Los Angeles will stage the 2028 Summer Games. That's now suddenly seven years away. What does that mean, short- and long-term?

### **Week Ten – March 23 – WELLNESS DAY: NO CLASS**

Maurice Roche. *Mega-events and modernity: Olympics and expos in the growth of global culture*. Routledge, 2000. pp. 134-150

“Toward a Theory of Olympic Internationalism,” John Hoberman. *Journal of Sport History*, 1995.

<http://www.la84foundation.org/SportsLibrary/JSH/JSH1995/JSH2201/jsh2201b.pdf>

<http://www.3wiresports.com/2015/09/16/five-for-2024-how-many-make-it-to-2017/>

### **Week Eleven – March 30**

The Olympic Games, 2nd Edition, A Social Science Perspective, K. Toohey and A.J. Veal, Cambridge 2007, chapter 4, pp. 41-84

### **Week Twelve – April 6**

Globalization and Sport / edited by Richard Giulianotti and Roland Robertson. Blackwell Publishing, 2009. pp. 94-106

The Olympic Brand is the Second Most Valuable In the World, Sports Business Daily, July 24, 2012  
<http://www.sportsbusinessdaily.com/Global/Issues/2012/07/24/Marketing-and-Sponsorship/Olympics-Brand.aspx>

### **Weeks Thirteen and Fourteen:**

When non-Americans come to the United States, they can hardly fathom that there is a parallel sports system in which stadiums and arenas are filled with thousands of people watching players play football and basketball and those players are – not professionals.

Wait – they're not?

### **Week Thirteen – April 13**

Ronald A. Smith. *Sports and freedom: The rise of big-time college athletics*. Oxford University Press, 1988. pp. 165-174

Murray Sperber. *Beer and circus: How big-time college sports is crippling undergraduate education*. Henry Holt, 2000. pp. 248-261, 272-275

### **Week Fourteen – April 20**

"The Shame of College Sports," Taylor Branch. *The Atlantic*. October 2011.  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2011/10/the-shame-of-college-sports/308643/>

"Should college athletes be paid? Why, they already are." Seth Davis  
[http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/2011/writers/seth\\_davis/09/21/Branch.rebuttal/index.html](http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/2011/writers/seth_davis/09/21/Branch.rebuttal/index.html)

[http://www.espn.go.com/pdf/2014/0326/espn\\_uniondecision.PDF](http://www.espn.go.com/pdf/2014/0326/espn_uniondecision.PDF)

[http://espn.go.com/espn/otl/story/\\_/id/10678393/nlrb-director-decision-follows-road-map-laid-northwestern-quarterback-kain-colter-legal-team](http://espn.go.com/espn/otl/story/_/id/10678393/nlrb-director-decision-follows-road-map-laid-northwestern-quarterback-kain-colter-legal-team)

<http://www.si.com/college-basketball/2015/09/30/ed-obannon-ncaa-lawsuit-appeals-court-ruling>

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/28/sports/jeffrey-kessler-envisions-open-market-for-ncaa-college-athletes.html>

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/28/sports/how-jeffrey-kesslers-lawsuit-could-change-college-sports.html>

### **Week Fifteen – April 27**

#### **The Changing Nature of Sport Media.**

When the instructor of this course was graduated from the Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism in 1980, it was his fondest hope that he could get a job with a major metropolitan daily's sports section. Such a job was a sinecure. There were writers in those jobs who, literally, died in their seats.

Those days are done. Done, done, done. Gone forever. We all have to think differently. Different, by the way, doesn't mean it's worse now than it was in 1980. It may yet be better. It was no easy thing to get a job in 1980, either.

*The Global Media Giants: The nine firms that dominate the world.* Robert McChesney, 1997. <http://www.asc.upenn.edu/courses/comm334/Docs/mcchesneygiants.pdf>

"The Globalization of Cricket: the rise of the non-West," Amit Gupta. *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 2004.

Buzzfeed, May 15, 2014, "Exclusive: Times Internal Report Painted Dire Internal Picture," <http://www.buzzfeed.com/mylestanzer/exclusive-times-internal-report-painted-dire-digital-picture>

The sportswriters's job: harder now than before? <https://www.sportsbroadcastjournal.com/the-sportswriters-job-is-it-harder-in-todays-digital-age-than-it-was-when-print-was-our-key-source-for-news/> Sports Broadcast Journal, July 14, 2020

### **Final Exam Period – May 6, 2-4 p.m.**

Summative experience

## **IX. Policies and Procedures**

### **Additional Policies**

- If we get back to in-person instruction: the instructor does not care what you wear to class, as long as what you wear is appropriate and includes shoes or sandals. No bare feet. You will be graduating and in the real world at the end of the semester. Let's dress for what's next, please.
- The instructor does not care if you make like this class is a newsroom and eat or drink whatever, within reason.
- Please bring the laptop that USC says you must have to class, each and every week.

- You will be highly encouraged to make active use of digital and multimedia formats. Suggestions would include but not be limited to web posts with photos; with an audio interview; with a video interview or audio slideshow; with a Google map, narrated slideshow, or audio, video or still photography. You will be required to file regularly to **Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram** accounts, using these platforms to enhance and to promote your reporting.
- Because the class meets only once a week, attendance has to be a priority. Religious holidays and medical/family emergencies will be excused with advance notice.
- You absolutely will be expected to participate in class discussion.

## Communication

- You are absolutely encouraged to contact the instructor outside of class for class-related issues and concerns. You have my USC email and my mobile phone. This is graduate school. You are young adults, not college kids. Please get used to dealing with me, your instructor, as an older adult with whom you will be interacting – just like the other older adults with whom you will be interacting upon graduation.

## X. 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 be unpaid and can only be applied to one journalism or public relations class.

## XI. Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

### a. Academic Conduct

#### *Plagiarism*

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 Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](http://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, [policy.usc.edu/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**

*Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call*

[studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling](http://studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling)

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call*

[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

*Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call*

[studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault](http://studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault)

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

*Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)- (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298*

[equity.usc.edu](http://equity.usc.edu), [titleix.usc.edu](http://titleix.usc.edu)

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following *protected characteristics*: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

*Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298*

[usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care\\_report](http://usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report)

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

*The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776*

[dsp.usc.edu](http://dsp.usc.edu)

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

*USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710*

[campussupport.usc.edu](http://campussupport.usc.edu)

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

*Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101*

[diversity.usc.edu](http://diversity.usc.edu)

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost’s Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

*USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call*

[dps.usc.edu](https://dps.usc.edu), [emergency.usc.edu](https://emergency.usc.edu)

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

*USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call*

[dps.usc.edu](https://dps.usc.edu)

Non-emergency assistance or information.

*Annenberg Student Success Fund*

<https://annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/resources/additional-funding-resources>

The Annenberg Student Success Fund is a donor-funded financial aid account available to USC Annenberg undergraduate and graduate students for non-tuition expenses related to extra- and co-curricular programs and opportunities.

## **XII. About Your Instructor**

Alan Abrahamson is an award-winning sportswriter, best-selling author and in-demand television analyst. In 2010 he launched his own website, 3 Wire Sports ([www.3wiresports.com](http://www.3wiresports.com)), described in James Patterson and Mark Sullivan's 2012 best-selling novel "Private Games" as "the world's best source of information about the [Olympic] Games and the culture that surrounds them."

For more, see [www.3wiresports.com/about/](http://www.3wiresports.com/about/)