

Spring 2022

COMM 499 Special Topics:

Skateboarding and Action Sports in Business, Media & Culture

#20774R - 4 units

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Day/Time : Mon & Weds, 10-11:50am

Room: ANN L101

Course Description:

"Skateboarding was the best addition to the Tokyo Olympics."

"Skateboarding made its Olympic debut at the Tokyo Games this year, bringing a refreshing change of pace to the world's biggest competition. Unlike most other Olympic events, skateboarding culture is based not in winning but in joy and individuality." Caroline Petrow-Cohen, Los Angeles Times.

"Skateboarding is the fastest-growing category within the Nike Brand currently estimated at \$390 million in business" Nike Corporation

This class examines action sports as an intersectional, interdisciplinary, participatory site of global youth culture and resistance. From Wall Street to Main Street, action sports' cultural intermediaries' drive media narratives of inclusivity and self-expression through their activities worldwide. With skateboarding and surfing's debut during Tokyo 2021, action sports have moved from 'fringe culture' to mainstays in business, media, and popular culture. The relatability of the superstars has led to action sports' (particularly skateboarding) growth into a multibillion-dollar industry and placed action sports at the center of new discussions in mental health, public diplomacy, art, culture, and community engagement. Cultural institutions such as the Smithsonian, the Kennedy Center, and the Ford Theater, along with multinational corporations Nike, Adidas, Facebook, and Louis Vuitton, all recognizes the potential to engage new audiences through action sports and attempt to capitalize on these communities' 'coolness.' But to whose ultimate ends?

While the elite and grassroots participants advocate for change via the BLM movement, women's rights, LGBTQ+, and other racial and social justice movements, they experience a collective marginalization due to outdated stereotypes and misinformation regarding safety, value, and impact action sports play in their lives. Elite and everyday participants alike experience the duality of Olympic recognition and the criminalization of their community. Comm 499: Skateboarding and Action Sports in Business Media & Culture asks the questions, 'How does this impact the way young people feel connected to broader society? What steps might ensure that all people feel understood and embraced by the institutions (cultural, governmental, and academic) to support the formation of an engaged global citizenry?

This class uses actions sports culture to examine the multiple, sometimes conflicting elements that have

historically impacted diversity issues (gender, race, and ethnicity), representation, and equity in sports, media, academia, government, and popular culture. Explored through the lens of emerging sports, it critically examines the role of media corporations, grassroots organizations, and individual agents to collaborate or co-opt the potential for action sports to create social change during their evolution into mainstream culture.

Course Objectives:

Drawing on culture, media, and business communication theories, this course explores action sports' explosive growth and potential in the United States and internationally. Many of the leaders in action sports (including corporate leaders, marketing directors, and influential athletes and artisans involved within the culture) will visit and offer real-world applications of class theory. Students will write critical papers examining the emergence and culture of action sports.

Specific Student Objectives:

1. Develop an understanding of the origins of emergent sports, apply that understanding to the history and communication of action sports, and identify new trends in media and emerging technologies for advocacy.
2. Critically discern and analyze stereotypes of action sports participants in media and determine how those images perpetuate the marginalization of action sports communities.
3. Interrogate action sports as a site for social change and community development, and place participant activism within a broader context of historic racial and social justice movements
4. Learn to distinguish and apply multiple critical theoretical frameworks to the diversity issues faced by BIPOC and LGBTQ+ communities in action sports.

Assignments:

Class participation in this course is one of the keys to success. A percentage of your grade will be determined by your ability to add to class discussion by explaining and articulating theories, topics, and readings outlined in the syllabus. Additionally, you will be marked on your competency in engaging your fellow students in critical and empathetic discussions about the subject matter.

Presentations

Students will be broken into small groups and assigned short presentations that briefly correlate the week's readings and the guest speaker's area of expertise. This will facilitate rigorous conversation and set the tone for both guests and lectures that day.

Students are expected to write two opinion papers and prepare strategic plans for both their midterm and final. These papers discuss the various topics in class, allowing you to use the lens of action sports to critically analyze the role of race, culture, diplomacy, and gender. Each paper will be 8-12 pages, and you will meet with me before pursuing your topics.

Grade Breakdown:

Participation	15
Class Presentation	10
Critical Analysis Paper 1	15
Midterm Exam	20
Critical Analysis Paper 2	20
<u>Final Exam</u>	<u>20</u>
Total Points	100

Reading List:

Required Reading: *The Cultural Politics of Lifestyle Sports* (Routledge Critical Studies in Sport) by Belinda Wheaton

Supplemental Readings: These are not required for class but offer more profound insight into classroom topics:

Action Sports and the Olympic Games- Past, Present, Future by Belinda Wheaton & Holly Thorpe

Skateboarding and the City: A Complete History by Iain Borden

Class Schedule:

Week 1: Orientation and Course Description

This week works to understand why the sports giant Nike decided to enter the multimillion-dollar 'anti'-sport arena of the action sports footwear market. What caused them to recognize the importance of the action sports market and its relevance outside the traditional market? How did action sports branding differ from mainstream sports? How has Nike leveraged the popularity of their brand ambassadors into creating a space within their new market? Discern how their approach compares to African American designer Virgil Abloh's at Louis Vuitton? Who determines authenticity vs. the 'culture vulture'?

Weekly Readings:

- *The Cultural Politics of Lifestyle Sports* by Belinda Wheaton
 - *Chapter 2: Understanding lifestyle sport revisited p. 25-37*
- Nike business overview 2015 and 2021
 - <https://news.nike.com/news/nike-inc-introduces-2015-global-growth-strategy>
 - <https://news.nike.com/news/nike-inc-reports-fiscal-2021-fourth-quarter-and-full-year-results>
- History of Nike SB-(Please read the text and watch embedded videos)
 - <https://shop.shredzshop.com/blogs/blog/history-of-nike-sb/>
- Virgil Abloh Discusses How Skateboarding Has Influenced His Career
 - <https://www.gcmiddleeast.com/culture/virgil-abloh-unpacks-his-passion-for-skateboarding>

Guest Speaker(s)

No guest this week

Week 2: Adidas: Re-appropriation, Re-invention, and Re-examination

Adidas is also a major contender in the action sports market, particularly in skateboarding. This class considers the decades of success of adidas in skateboarding developing niche skateboarding products, and cultivating a brand identity synonymous with some of skateboarding's historic cultural intermediaries. This week illuminates the flows of power operating within multinational corporations, the importance of developing an inclusive workplace from a humanitarian and business perspective, and the process and pressures faced by brand managers, marketing directors, and elite athletes during times of consent and confrontation.

Weekly Readings:

- *The Cultural Politics of Lifestyle Sports* by Belinda Wheaton
 - Chapter 3: Mapping the lifestyle sportscape p.37-49
- A message from Tyshawn Jones on racism
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JVt5qhb6VcM&ab_channel=adidasSkateboarding
- King of Pop
 - <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/29/magazine/tyshawn-jones.html>
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WINEHCMGvb0&ab_channel=adidasSkateboarding
- Adidas's Staff Disquiet Over Racism Boils Over With Calls To Investigate H.R. Chief
 - <https://www.forbes.com/sites/isabeltogoh/2020/06/17/adidas-employees-urge-investigation-into-hr-chief-amid-concerns-about-response-to-racism-complaints/?sh=379d2ff50d56>
- Adidas presents Growth Strategy 'Own the Game' until 2025
 - <https://www.adidas-group.com/en/media/news-archive/press-releases/2021/adidas-presents-growth-strategy-own-the-game-until-2025/>

Supplemental Readings

- *Exploiting a New Generation: Corporate Branding and the Co-Optation of Action Sport* by R. Rhinehart in *Youth Culture and Sport Identity, Power, and Politics* By Michael D. Giardina, Michele K. Donnelly
 - <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9780203938829-13/exploiting-new-generation-corporate-branding-co-optation-action-sport?context=ubx&refId=baee82e8-ec44-47e6-baff-84a52e7803aa>

Guest Speaker(s):

Jascha Muller- Global Director Sports Marketing - Action Sports at adidas

Cullen Poythress, Former V.P. of Marketing Action Sports Adidas U.S.

Week 3: Action Sports and Gender in popular media

This week examines how historical gender norms impacted media portrayals and opportunities for competition and support of women and girls in action sports. The discussion compares examples 'pre' and 'post' the Tokyo Olympics and investigates the intersection of race, gender, and ethnicity in constructing and marketing the identity of 'action sports' women to the public.

Weekly Readings:

- *Action Sports, the Olympic Games, and the Opportunities and Challenges for Gender Equity: The Cases of Surfing and Skateboarding* by Belinda Wheaton, Holly Thorpe in *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* p.315-337
 - <https://journals-sagepub-com.libproxy1.usc.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0193723518781230>
- Barbie condemned after releasing 'inclusive' Tokyo Olympics collection without visible Asian representation
 - <https://www.cnn.com/2021/08/09/sport/barbie-no-asian-representation-tokyo-olympics-spt-intl/index.html>
- Sky Brown Documentary -Part one
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2uHDuIH0Ybk&ab_channel=Eurosport
- Underexposed: A Woman's Skateboarding Documentary
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=U017DzwNLz8&ab_channel=YouTubeMovies

Supplemental Readings

- "Take the Slam and Get Back Up": *Hardcore Candy and the Politics of Representation in Girls' and Women's Skateboarding and Snowboarding on Television* by M.K Donnelley in *Youth Culture and Sport, Identity, Power, and Politics* edited by Michael D. Giardina, Michele K. Donnelly
 - <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9780203938829-16/take-slam-get-back-hardcore-candy-politics-representation-girls-women-skateboarding-snowboarding-television?context=ubx&refid=d90dac54-106d-42f4-aad5-fe833fb9cf1d>

Guest Speaker(s):

2021 Olympian Amelia Brodka—Director of the film 'Underexposed'—a female skateboarding documentary; founder of "Exposure," the largest women's skateboarding competition.

Week 4: Action Sports and the sport for development and peace movement

This class considers the role of action sports as tools for global development and peace-making. Examining the efforts of non-profit groups [Cuba Skate](#) in Cuba and [Skateistan](#) in Afghanistan offers insight into how NGOs work in incredibly intense environments where traditional diplomatic and development efforts stall. The class will also discuss the role gender equity and access to education play in the experiences of young people in these countries. Students will engage and evaluate the specific U.S. policies towards both countries and identify how those policies may impact the perception of the U.S. in these countries. The discussion also includes the recent efforts by [Surf Ghana](#) & The Good Push to develop the commitment to anti-racism in skateboarding and its adoption worldwide.

Weekly Readings:

- *SDP and action sports* by Thorpe, Nida Ahmad, N. Williams in *Routledge Handbook of Sport for Development and Peace* p.363-373 by Holly Collison, Simon C. Darnell, Richard Giulianotti, P. David Howe
 - <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781315455174-33/sdp-action-sports-holly-thorpe-nida-ahmad-neftalie-williams>

- DC X Cuba Skate: A Film about building a sustainable future in Cuba
 - <https://press.dxd.agency/154780-dc-x-cuba-skate-a-film-about-building-a-sustainable-future-in-cuba>
- The Skateistan Documentary trailer
 - <https://vimeo.com/369606564>
 - <https://itunes.apple.com/us/movie/skateistan/id581834482>
- Pushing against Racism
 - <https://www.goodpush.org/antiracism>

Guest Speaker(s):

Oliver Percovich—Founder of Skateistan and the Good Push Alliance

***Critical Analysis Paper 1 Due ***

Week 5: Action Sports and Advocacy

Because action sports are an emerging market, this class will focus on their role in advocacy for their constituencies. Students will learn about the creation of sports NGOs and their role in the action sports market as advocates and educators to the general populace. Students will examine legacy NGOs, the Tony Hawk Foundation/ the Skatepark Project, the Black Surfing Association, and more recent grassroots community efforts to support BIPOC communities, develop skateparks on Indigenous lands. The discussion will examine efforts by action sports advocates to reclaim public space through activism and evaluate public/private partnerships and their effect on reimagining more equitable cities of the future.

Weekly Readings:

- *The Cultural Politics of Lifestyle Sports* by Belinda Wheaton
 - *Chapter 9 Challenging Exclusion: The Black Surfing Association* p.163-180
- Meet the Navajo Nation Skateboarder Going Viral on TikTok
<https://www.teenvogue.com/story/navajo-nation-skateboarder-tiktok>
- A Cree Skateboarding Legend Grapples with the Trauma of Canada's Residential Schools (read the article and watch the embedded documentary)
 - <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/the-new-yorker-documentary/a-cree-skateboarding-legend-grapples-with-the-trauma-of-canadas-residential-schools>

Supplemental Readings

- *Creativity, Conviviality, and Civil Society in Neoliberalizing Public Space: Changing Politics and Discourses in Skateboarder Activism From New York City to Los Angeles* by Chihsin Chiu and Christopher Giamarino in *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* p. 462-492
 - <https://journals-sagepub-com.libproxy1.usc.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0193723519842219>

Guest Speaker(s):

Alec Beck—Marketing Director of the Tony Hawk Foundation/the Skatepark Project

Week 6: Action Sports Spectacles, BIPOC Heritage, and HERstories

This class compares the scope and power of the traditional sports world and the strategies used by emerging sports brands like Red bull to reach a broader audience. It critically unpacks how action sports businesses develop and maintain partnerships across international markets by creating surfing and skating events. Additionally, it addresses popular media depictions of surfing culture as a primarily 'white' space and the conflicting narratives of surfing as 'eco-friendly.' Class discussion highlights grassroots efforts by companies like the [Gnar Gnar Honeys](#) championing women's surfing in BIPOC communities.

Weekly Readings:

- *The Cultural Politics of Lifestyle Sports* by Belinda Wheaton
 - *Chapter 7: The California Beach, whiteness and the exclusion of black bodies p.121-137*
- How to Be A Sustainable Surfer
 - <https://withoutwasteshop.com/blogs/news/sustainable-surfing>
- The 'Californization' of the Olympics
 - <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/23/us/california-olympics.html>
- Surfing confronts sport's racist past after George Floyd's death
 - <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/surfing-confronts-sport-s-racist-past-after-george-floyd-s-n1231379>
- California beach seized from Black family in 1924 set to be returned to descendants
 - <https://abcnews.go.com/US/california-beach-seized-black-family-1924-set-returned/story?id=77191841>
- Black Surfers Reclaim their Place on the Waves
 - <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/08/31/sports/black-surfers.html>
 - <https://abcnews.go.com/US/california-beach-seized-black-family-1924-set-returned/story?id=77191841>

Supplemental Readings

- *Cultural Dissonance: Surfers' Environmental Attitudes and Actions* by Tommy Langseth and Adam Vyff in *Frontiers in Sport and Active Living*
 - <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8481810/>

Guest Speaker(s):

Krista Greenberg—Director of Consumer insights Red Bull

Thomas Darrick—Sr. Director, Sports Marketing, Basketball & Action Sports at Red Bull

Week 7: Action Sports and Online entertainment and disrupting the norm

This class focuses on skateboarding's most prominent ambassador, [Tony Hawk](#), and his extensive operations in the gaming and entertainment world. The discussion will include Tony Hawk's creation of one of the best-selling video games of all time, which placed skateboarding at the head of the early video game market. With the relaunch of Tony Hawk Pro Skater1+2, including greater representation of BIPOC men, women, and gender non-binary characters, this conversation centers on examining the role of video games' ability to disrupt stereotypes of the skateboarding identity among a new generation. This week's discussion allows for excavating the root causes of racial and gender bias in the

tech world and developing improvements that might create change.

Weekly Readings:

- Confronting racial bias in video games
 - <https://techcrunch.com/2020/06/21/confronting-racial-bias-in-video-games/>
- Wall Street Journal
 - <https://www.wsj.com/articles/tony-hawk-wants-to-see-skateboarding-everywhere-11599234703>
- TIME Magazine Interviews: Tony Hawk
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7hLrt5wFlm0>
- Everything you need to know about Tony Hawk's Pro skater 1+2
 - <https://www.inverse.com/gaming/tony-hawks-pro-skater-1-2-release-date-remaster>
- Lil Nas X asks where's the 'outrage' after Tony Hawk debuts blood-infused line of skateboards
 - <https://www.businessinsider.com/lil-nas-x-calls-out-critics-over-tony-hawk-blood-board-2021-8>
- Tony Hawk Teams Up with Lil Nas X For Skate Tutorial As Blood-Infused Skateboard Saga Comes To Satisfying Conclusion
 - <https://www.forbes.com/sites/michellebruton/2021/08/30/tony-hawk-teams-up-with-lil-nas-x-for-skate-tutorial-as-blood-infused-skateboard-saga-comes-to-satisfying-conclusion/?sh=540d81531259>

Guest Speaker(s):

Tony Hawk—Business-owner and Technology entrepreneur

Week 8: Midterm Review

Midterm

Week 9: Action Sports, Innovation and MIT

Drawing upon findings from the Beyond the Board Study and Yosso's (2005) framing of community cultural capital, this class focuses on the importance of cross-cultural communication. It explores how ways of knowing, in sports, might create radical change when applied to new disciplines and environments. Our guest Rodney Mullen is the 'godfather of street skateboarding,' and his innovation and impact on millions have earned him a spot as a Lemelson Fellow at the Smithsonian and MIT. This class investigates how transferring skateboarding's values and characteristics into corporate culture took Silicon Valley by storm and unpacks how action sports might offer valuable insights into cultural institutions and academic communities to create a more innovative, integrated society.

Weekly Readings:

- *Beyond the Board: Findings from the Field p.1-27* by Corwin, Z.B., Williams, N., Maruco, T., & Romero-Morales, M.
- <https://skate.pullias.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Beyond-The-Board-Findings-From-The-Field.pdf>
- Silicon Valley Has Lost Its Way. Can Skateboarding Legend Rodney Mullen Help It?

- <https://www.wired.com/2015/01/rodney-mullen/>
- Pop and 'Ollie' and Innovate
 - https://www.ted.com/talks/rodney_mullen_pop_an_ollie_and_innovate/transcript?language=en
- How to Use Pain to Become the Best in the World | Rodney Mullen on Impact Theory
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cmA55DOJrB8&ab_channel=TomBilyeu
- <https://journals.humankinetics.com/view/journals/ssj/12/3/article-p252.xml>
- Rodney Mullen discusses MIT
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6ieEHQFhZk&ab_channel=LarryKing
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L6mJc7yeKPg>
 -

Supplemental Readings

- "Disqualifying the Official: An Exploration of Social Resistance thru the Subculture of Skateboarding," by Becky Beal in *Journal of Sport and Behavior* p.252-267
 - <https://journals.humankinetics.com/view/journals/ssj/12/3/article-p252.xml>

Guest Speaker(s):

Rodney Mullen—Co-founder of World Industries, MIT and Lemelson Center fellow

*****Spring Break*****

Week 10: Action Sports the Olympics and Para-Olympics

This class's objective is to critically examine several perspectives on the role of the Olympics in supporting the action sports community and the development of new audiences. Thanks to the snowboarding community and their ability to bring new viewers to the Olympics, the Winter Olympics have flourished. Skateboarding and surfing debuted during Tokyo 2020/2021 with multiple narratives surrounding this new action sports inclusion in the Olympics Games. Here we trace the history of how these activities arrived in the Olympics and examine the impact of the Games on visibility through talks with the President and CEO of USA Olympic Skateboarding, Josh Friedberg. We dive deeply into the Para-Olympic bid for skateboarding's inclusion in Paris 2024 and LA 2028 and the need to create greater access and advocacy for athletes with disabilities.

Weekly Readings:

- *Action Sports and the Olympic Games Past, Present, Future* By Belinda Wheaton & Holly Thorpe
 - *Chapter 8: Skateboarding, the Olympics and Flexible Opposition: The Sportisation of the Anti-Sport* p. 185-197
- Terje Haakonsen---Why I still hate the Olympics
 - <https://whitelines.com/archive/features/debate/terje-haakonsen-why-i-still-hate-the-olympics.html#u5pebusqHiREk7dE.01>
- Some skateboarders don't want to see their sport in the Olympics. Here's why others say it's a positive step
 - <https://www.cnn.com/2021/08/03/sport/skateboarding-olympics-debate-spt->

[trnd/index.html](#)

- The petition to keep skateboarding out of the Olympics
 - <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/takeaction/656/763/888/>
 - <http://www.bbc.com/sport/0/olympics/27372110>
- Kanya Sesser
 - <https://argonautnews.com/no-legs-no-limits-kanya-sesser/>
- Opinion: The most refreshing sport at the Tokyo Olympics: skateboarding
 - <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2021-08-10/opinion-skateboarding-breath-of-fresh-air-olympics>

Guest Speaker(s):

Josh Friedberg—CEO of USA Skateboarding

Week 11: Action Sports and their New Role in Sports Diplomacy

This class allows students to interrogate how the U.S. government decides what types of representations, engagements, and topics are essential for the U.S. to project abroad. Students will explore the call for greater diversity within the U.S. Department of State and evaluate their incorporation of action sports as a tool for cultural diplomacy and improving mental health. Through discussions with the sports diplomacy office, students will ascertain the potential for action sports and the growing importance of non-state actors to create change, and outline future U.S. initiatives abroad.

Weekly Readings:

- *Understanding Race in Skateboarding: A Retrospection and Agenda for the Importance of Being Seen* by N. Williams in *Lifestyle Sports and Identities Subcultural Careers Through the Life Course* edited p.284-294 by Tyler Dupont, Becky Beal
 - <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9780429340505-20-25/understanding-race-skateboarding-retrospection-agendafor-importance-being-seen-neftalie-williams>
- Skateboarding Diplomacy in Cuba
 - https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/skateboard-diplomacy-a-dc-groups-plan-to-help-thaw-relations-with-cuba/2015/08/24/9d7c0754-3ab4-11e5-b3ac-8a79bc44e5e2_story.html
- The latest tool for diplomacy is skateboarding
 - <https://www.newsyp.com/stories/us-uses-skateboarding-as-cultural-diplomacy-tool/>

Guest Speaker(s):

Trina Bolton—Foreign Service Officer for Sports United, The U.S. State Department

Week 12: Creating Equity Amongst Actors and the Rise of Women and Gender non-binary skaters

This class will investigate the limits of pay equity and illuminate the need to reexamine how identity politics impacts the lives of elite action sports athletes. We will explore how women and gender non-binary skateboarders are portrayed and given equal access to participate in events. We will also consider

what is being done to improve the representation for women and gender non-binary athletes and fans with guest Mimi Knoop. Knoop is women's coach for USA skateboarding, a multi-medalist in X Games skateboarding, and the Co-Founder of the Alliance for Women in Action Sports and Hoopla Skateboards. She also led the charge in the women's boycott of the X Games to call attention to the vast disparity between the prize money of the men's and women's categories.

Weekly readings:

- *The Cultural Politics of Lifestyle Sports* by Belinda Wheaton
 - Chapter 4: Lifestyle sport, identity and the politics of difference p.50-68
- Meet Mimi Knoop, Coach for the USA Olympic Skateboarding Team
 - <https://frank151.com/meet-mimi-knoop/>
- 'We're out here, you're not alone': USA skateboarder Alana Smith tells their coming out story
 - https://www.espn.com/olympics/story/_/id/32296794/usa-skateboarder-alana-smith-tells-their-coming-story
- Unapologetically themselves: Nonbinary Olympian shares powerful message
 - <https://www.nbcnews.com/nbc-out/out-news/unapologetically-themselves-nonbinary-olympian-shares-powerful-message-rcna1520>
- 'I Couldn't Keep Putting Myself on Hold.' In Missing Out on the Tokyo Olympics, Skateboarder Leo Baker Found Himself
 - <https://time.com/6074489/leo-baker-skateboarder-transition-gender-olympics/?amp=true>
- The Skateboarders Taking Over Are Among the Youngest Olympians in Tokyo
 - <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/26/sports/olympics/skateboarding-skateboarders-tokyo-olympics.html>

Guest Speaker(s):

Mimi Knoop -U.S. Women's skateboarding Coach, Female Pro Skater and Co-Founder of the Alliance and Hoopla Skateboards

Week 13: Media Created for the People by the People.

This class utilizes Bourdieu's notion of the 'cultural intermediary' or early 'influencer' to uncover how key participants in skateboarding culture covertly and overtly lead the charge for diverse representation in front of and behind the lens. This investigation reveals how allyship developed in early skateboarding and laid the groundwork for skateboarding to grow into a global multicultural phenomenon.

Weekly Readings:

- *Colour in the lines* by N. Williams
 - Chapter 6.1-6.4 p.230-244.
<https://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10289/13741/thesis.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y>

Guest Speaker(s):

No guest speaker

*****Critical Analysis Paper 2 Due*****

Week 14: Action Sports, Commercialization of Media & Skateism: the nontraditional skateboarding magazine

This week highlights the importance of both the underground 'zine' and magazines as a historical method of communication for action sports participants before the X-Games and the Olympics. It investigates how the print medium remains a vital element of skateboarders' conversations in Europe and contrasts narratives of commercialization and 'selling' out between the U.S. and the E.U. Class discussion culminates with the editors and graphic designers of *Skateism* magazine. Their publication focused on the LGBTQ community, mental health issues and led the global conversation on racial politics in global skateboarding culture. Exploring the mission behind their business provides a new example of blurring the lines between commercialism and providing a social good. Students learn how to navigate consumer demand and business ethics while creating change and sustaining a printed format.

Weekly Readings:

- *The Cultural Politics of lifestyle sport* by Belinda Wheaton
 - *Chapter 6: Globalization, identity and race: Lifestyle sport in post-apartheid South Africa* p.99-120
- Skateism issue #6 Race in skateboarding
 - https://issuu.com/skateism/docs/issue_6
- An Open Letter by Lucy Raemers
 - <https://www.skateism.com/an-open-letter-by-lucy-raemers-from-issue-6/>

Guest Speaker(s)

Denia Kopita & Christos "Moch" Simos—Founders and Art Director for Skateism Magazine

Week 15: The Local as the Global

The final class focuses on international business, design, and management of action sports products across the globe. The course will unpack developing products for a global audience and the challenges and successes facing those in positions of power and designing for both niche and the mass consumer. Skateboarding's popularity has grown exponentially during Covid, with new consumers adopting skateboarding from age 8 to 80. This section offers insight into this demanding realm of design and production and illuminates the skills necessary to remain competitive in the action sports market. This class will give students a broad understanding of managing production, distribution, and the interworking of international trade. Students will also gain insight into product and brand management and how to uncover and gain ground in emerging markets

Weekly Readings:

- *"It Ain't Just Black Kids and White Kids": The Representation and Reproduction of Authentic "Skurban" Masculinities* by Matthew Atencio, Becky Beal, and Emily Chivers Yochim in *Sociology of Sport Journal* p. 153–172
 - <https://journals.humankinetics.com/view/journals/ssj/30/2/article-p153.xml>
- Vans Partners with BAPE to Create a Collection for Street Style Obsessed
 - <https://shop-eat-surf.com/2021/10/vans-partners-with-bape-to-create-a-collection-for-street-style-obsessed/>
- Mega-Corporations in the Skateboarding Industry

- <http://newsactivist.com/en/articles/media-ethics-winter-2017-section-18/mega-corporations-skateboarding-industry>

Guest Speaker(s):

Steve Van Doren, co-founder of Vans Shoes

Justin Reagen, V.P. of marketing for Vans Shoes

*****Final*** DATE: TBD**

Class Policies and Resources:

Late Work: All late papers will be docked one letter grade for each class period they are late. Any time after the start of the class in which the papers are due will be considered late.

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](#)." Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

The School of Communication maintains a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found responsible for plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on examinations, or purchasing papers or other assignments will be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards and may be dismissed from the School of Communication. There are no exceptions to the school's policy.

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, without approval of the instructor.

b. Support Systems

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

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

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

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, 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

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 Student Accessibility Services - (213) 740-0776

osas.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 Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710

uscsa.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

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, 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

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Annenberg Student Success Fund

<https://annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/resources/annenberg-scholarships-and-awards>

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.

About Your Instructor:

Dr. Neftalie Williams is a sociologist and USC Provost's Post-Doctoral Scholar at the Annenberg School of Communication and Journalism, and Yale Schwarzman Center Visiting Fellow in Race, Culture & Community.

He investigates global issues of race, diversity, identity, and youth empowerment, using the lens of action sports culture. The first 'Ambassador of Skateboarding,' and envoy for the U.S. Department of State, he introduced the concept of skateboarding as a tool for cultural diplomacy in both theory and practice

Williams founded "The Nation Skate," a series of public panels, lectures, skateboarding demonstrations, and media that explores the relationship between race, diversity, and diplomacy through skateboarding, academia, and popular culture. He co-founded the College Skateboarding Educational Foundation (CSEF), a non-profit dedicated to creating scholarships for young skateboarders and serves on the Boards for the Tony Hawk Foundation, Skateistan, McKinnon Center for Global Affairs, and chairs the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee for USA Skateboarding.

www.neftalie.com

