

PS395 Nationalism and Sport

Seminar Leader: Dave Braneck
Course Times: Mondays, 9:00 – 12:15
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Office Hours: by appointment

Why do sports matter? And what can sports tell us about identity, politics and society at large? This course will provide a critical examination of one of the most popular things on the planet. Particular attention will be paid to the relationship between sports and nationalism and national identity. What role does sport play in reflecting, shaping, restricting and expanding conceptions of the nation – and ideas about who belongs to it? Additionally, the course will investigate sports' role both in reacting to and shaping representations of racial, ethnic and gender identities more broadly, along with its role in a number of political and social questions at an array of levels. This includes sports' role in geopolitics and economics, its relationship to democratic participation, and its ability to foster congregation. This course will help students to analyze sports as a space for both creating and challenging social cohesion, as well as a ground for open political contestation. Students will be tasked with broadening and sharpening their understanding of sports, while placing it within a wider context of national identity, political struggle and power, while building critical knowledge and analytical skills in order to engage more seriously with sports, nationalism and wider political and social questions.

Requirements

Reading Material

- Class Reader (available at library)

Class Preparation

Please come to class fully prepared. This means thoroughly reading and engaging with the assigned texts/content. Take notes and address any questions raised in class pertaining to the texts. Do your best to prepare questions of your own about the strength and validity of the author's argument, how they chose to make their case, and how their argumentation fits with what else we've read and discussed in class.

Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the highest standards of academic integrity and expects students to adhere to these standards at all times. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

Attendance

Attendance at all classes is a crucial part of the education offered by Bard College Berlin. To account for minor circumstances, two absences from twice-per-week courses or the equivalent (e.g. one

absence from a once-per-week course) will not affect the participation grade or require documentation.

Bard College Berlin may not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes, regardless of the reasons for the absences. The full Bard College Berlin attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8.

Assignments and Grade Breakdown

Classroom Participation: 30%

This course is built on thoughtful and engaged discussion from all participants. This includes coming prepared to the course and actively participating in group and class-wide discussions and in-class projects. Students should feel comfortable voicing their views, but please be mindful and respectful of other course members while doing so. A respectful decorum is necessary, and if it feels like this is lacking at any point please do not hesitate to discuss this with the seminar leader.

Response Papers: 30%

Each student is required to write 6 single-page response papers (400 words, 1.5-spaced, 12 pt., Times New Roman) on sessions of their choice. All 6 response papers must be submitted by the 10th session, and at least 3 of these must be submitted within the first 6 classes. Response papers should consist of an abstract on one of the primary texts' core components and arguments and pose 2 critical questions of the text to be used in the following week's discussion.

Response papers MUST be submitted in print at the beginning of class.

Final Paper Proposal: 5%

A 500 word proposal for your final paper, which includes your proposed research question, an outline of your paper's objective, and the sources you intend to use to write your paper. You will receive more information about this writing assignment during the first class.

Final Paper: 35%

There will be a final writing assignment (3,000-3,500 words) due at the end of the course. You will receive further information about this writing assignment during the first class.

Policy on Late Submission of Papers

Essays that are up to 24 hours late can be downgraded up to one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where a professor agrees to accept a late assignment, it should be submitted by the new deadline agreed upon by both parties. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment. Grades and comments will be returned to students in a timely fashion. Students are also entitled to make an appointment to discuss essay assignments and feedback during instructors' office hours.

Students receive mid- and end-of-semester grades for their seminar work. Students are entitled to make an appointment with an instructor to discuss seminar participation, or may be asked to meet with the instructor at any stage in the semester regarding class progress.

Schedule

BLOCK ONE: INTRODUCTION

Class 1 – 29.01 Introduction

- Markovits and Rensmann, *Gaming the World: How Sports are Reshaping Global Politics and Culture*, 2010 (1-28)
- Eduardo Galeano, *Football in Sun and Shadow*, 1995 ('The Fan', 6-7 and 'Opiate of the People?' 32-33)
- Conor Friedersdorf, *Do Sports Matter?*, 2022 (13 pgs)

Class 2 – 05.02 Identity and Society

- Johnny Pitts, *Afropean: Notes from Black Europe*, 2019 (129-164)
- Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, 2000 (93-115)
- Anton Jäger, *From Bowling Alone to Posting Alone*, 2022 (14 pgs)
- Dylan Scott, *The Surgeon General Says Loneliness is as Deadly as Smoking*, 2023 (7 pgs)

BLOCK TWO: NATIONALISM(S)

Class 3 – 12.02 Nationalism

- Ernest Renan, *What is a Nation?*, 1882 (42 – 54)
- Anthony D. Smith, *The Origins of Nations*, 1989 (340-367)
- Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 2005 (48-57)

Class 4 – 19.02 Nationalism and Sport

- Eric Hobsbawm, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1983 (263-307)
- Jules Boykoff, *Power Games: A Political History of the Olympics*, 2016 (9-47 and 69-78)
- Eduardo Galeano, *Football in Sun and Shadow*, 1995 ('A Rolling Flag', 33- 37)
- Jacqueline Maingard, *Imag(in)ing the South African Nation: Representations of Identity in the Rugby World Cup 1995, 1997* (14 pgs)

Class 5 – 26.02 Nationalism and Sport Continued

- Dustin Y. Tsai, "A Tale of Two Croatias": *How Club Football Teams Produce Radical Regional Divides in Croatia's National Identity*, 2021 (15 pgs)
- *Many sports are adopting a more flexible approach to national identity*, 2023 (2 pgs)
- Peter Swope, *Gridiron Imperialism: How the NFL Propagandizes for the US Military*, 2021 (7 pgs)
- Elaine Teng, *The Solution to Violent Soccer Matches Is Not to Separate Enemy Nations*, 2014 (5 pgs)
- Jack Beville, *Fascism in Football: The Ugly Side of the Beautiful Game* 2020 (12 pgs)
- *WHY Özil is the most polarizing player in football*, 2019:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i6MV_LHWUSs&t=798s

Class 6 – 04.03 Identity and Sport

- Calum Jacobs, *A New Formation: How Black Footballers Shaped the Modern Game*, 2022 (119-134)

- Theresa Runstedtler, *Black Ball: Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Spencer Haywood, and the Generation that Saved the Soul of the NBA*, 2023 (127-162)
- Adrian Burgos Jr., *Playing America's Game*, Baseball, Latinos and the Color Line, 2007 (1-14)
- Jackie Robinson Was More Than a Baseball Player, 2023: <https://jacobin.com/2023/05/jackie-robinson-42-legacy-racism-civil-rights/>

Class 7 – 11.03 Colonialism and Sport

- Paul Darby, 'Let us Rally around the Flag': Football, Nation-Building, and Pan-Africanism in Kwame Nkrumah's Ghana, 2013 (26 pgs)
- Boria Majumdar and Sean Brown, *Why Baseball, Why Cricket? Differing Nationalisms, Differing Challenges*, 2007 (13 pgs)
- Manu Madan, 'It's Not Just Cricket': World Series Cricket: Race, Nation and Diasporic Indian Identity, 2000 (11 pgs)
- Grant Farred, *What's My Name: Black Vernacular Intellectuals*, 2003 (41-62)
- Eduardo Galeano, *Football in Sun and Shadow*, 1995 ('The English Invasions, 27-28)
- *Why France produces the most World Cup players*, 2018: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P55XYp2KD2Y>

BLOCK THREE: SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Class 8 – 18.03 Protest and Sport (Paper Proposals Due)

- James Montaque, *1312: Among the Ultras: A Journey with the World's Most Extreme Fans*, 2020 (259-296)
- Dave Zirin, *Fists of Freedom: An Olympic Story Not Taught in School*, 2012 (4 pgs)
- *Pink Card, Episode 3: The White Scarves*, 2022. <https://30for30podcasts.com/episodes/the-white-scarves/>
- *How Colin Kaepernick went from football star to civil rights icon*, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jdlQtjPGnSc>

SPRING BREAK – 25.03 – 01.04

Class 9 – 8.04 Gender and Sport

- Suzanne Wrack, *A Woman's Game: The Rise, Fall, and Rise Again of Women's Football*, 2022 (55-75)
- Susan K. Cahn, *Coming on Strong: Gender and Sexuality in Women's Sports*, 2015 (207-245)
- Kristen M. Galles, *Filling the Gaps: Women, Civil Rights, and Title IX*, 2004 (3 pgs)
- Sena Christian, *The Radical Potential of Women in Sports*, 2004 (3 pgs)
- Dave Zirin, *Banning Trans Athletes is Just the Beginning*, 2023 (4 pgs)
- *Arguments that trans athletes have an unfair advantage lack evidence to support*, 2023 (read or listen here: <https://www.npr.org/2023/04/09/1168858094/arguments-that-trans-athletes-have-an-unfair-advantage-lacks-evidence-to-support>)
- Musa Okwonga, *The Football Brotherhood Must Rally Around Gay Players*, 2022 (3 pgs)

BLOCK FOUR: SCALING GLOBALLY AND LOCALLY

Class 10 – 15.04 Sports and (domestic and international) Politics

- Michael Serazio, *The GOP Hates Baseball Now. But it has Always been a Conservative Sport*, 2021 (4 pgs)
- Joseph Nye Jr, *Soft Power*, 1990 (21 pgs)
- Eduardo Galeano, *Football in Sun and Shadow*, 1995 ('Tears do not flow from a Handkerchief', 128-129)
- Joseph Eaton, *Reconsidering the 1980 Moscow Olympic Boycott: American Sports Diplomacy in East Asian Perspective*, 2016 (20 pgs)
- Alyson St. Pierre, *America's Past-Time and the Art of Diplomacy*, 2018 (20 pages)
- Preethi Amaresh, *China's Stadium Diplomacy: All that Glitters is Not Gold*, 2020:
<https://diplomatist.com/2020/11/03/chinas-stadium-diplomacy-all-that-glitters-is-not-gold/>

Class 11 – 22.04 Sportswashing and Ownership

- Jules Boykoff, *Towards a Theory of Sportswashing: Mega-Events, Soft Power, and Political Conflict*, 2022 (8 pgs)
- Tony Mason, *Passion of the People? Football in South America*, 1995 (61-76)
- Catherine Palmer, *Global Sports Policy*, 2013 (145-160)
- Eduardo Galeano, *Football in Sun and Shadow*, 1995 ('Walking Advertisements' 95-96 and 'The Telecracy' 165-168)
- Jonathan Wilson, *Sportswashing and Global Football's Immense Power*, 2022 (6 pgs)
- Dave Braneck, *Billionaires and Monarchs Now Run Soccer*, 2023 (4 pgs)
- *Explaining the Bundesliga's 50 + 1 Rule* (9 pgs)
- Spencer Bokak-Lindell, *The Qatar World Cup Is Peak 'Sportswashing.' But Will It Work?*, 2022 (3 pgs)
- Argyro Elisavet Manoli, *World Cup 2022: Qatar is accused of 'sportswashing' but do the fans really care?*, 2022 (3 pgs)

Class 12 – 29.04 Labor and Place in Sport

- Robert Wheeler, *Organized Sport and Organized Labour: The Workers' Sports Movement*, 1978 (16 pgs)
- Iwebunor Okwechime and Olumide A. Adetiloye, *In Search of "Greener Pitches": African Footballers and Labor Market Migration in European Football*, 2019 (25 pgs)
- Henry Bushnell, *The USWNT Won Equal Pay. The Women's Soccer World is still Fighting*, 2023 (6 pages)
- Eduardo Galeano, *Football in Sun and Shadow*, 1995 ('The Stadium', 18-19)
- Benjamin D. Lisle, *Modern Coliseum: Stadiums and American Culture*, 2017 (1-12)
- John Lauerman; *Stadiums, Gentrification, and Displacement: A Comparative Overview of US Cities*, 2022 (1-12)

Class 13 – 6.05 Wrap up Session (Final Papers due)