

HISTORY OF SPORTS IN THE UNITED STATES

HIST 341-001

Fall 2017

3 credit hours

Instructor: Professor Chris Elzey

Location: Robinson B 203

Day: MW

Time: 1:30-2:45 p.m.

Office: Robinson B 369B

Email: celzey@gmu.edu (please use your MasonLive account when emailing)

Office Hours: M/W 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Prerequisites for the course

None

Class Contacts

1. Name and phone number/email:
2. Name and phone number/email:

The Course

History 341 explores the history of sport in the United States from the colonial period to the turn of the twenty-first century. Students will be asked to consider how sports reflected—and oftentimes shaped—attitudes about race, ethnicity, gender, class, amateurism, professionalization, international politics, and governmental policies. In addition, the course traces the development of sports. Specifically, it explores the ways in which spontaneous games played by Americans in the eighteenth and nineteenth century evolved into highly formalized and popular activities—activities that are part of the social landscape and comprise a multi-billion dollar industry.

Goals

Understanding the history of sports in America is one of the most important goals of History 341. After completing the course, students will be able to explain:

- The role of sport in American history
- How and why sports evolved from impromptu events with few rules and customs into major social and cultural activities
- The professionalization of American sports
- The history of intercollegiate sports
- The ways in which race, gender, class, ethnicity, the media and international politics both reinforced and revealed attitudes about sport
- How and why American sport segregated, and then desegregated

- The history of American athletic clubs
- How sports was used as a tool of political protest
- The international role of sport
- The ways in which sports reflected broad themes in American history

In addition, demonstrating effective and clear expression in both writing and speech is another important goal of the course.

Required Books

Readings are to be completed for the day that they are assigned in the course schedule (see below). The books are:

- Brown, Daniel James. *The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics*. New York: Viking, 2013.
- Jenkins, Sally. *The Real All Americans: The Team That Changed a Game, a People, a Nation*. New York: Broadway, 2007.
- Remnick, David. *King of the World: Muhammad Ali and the Rise of an American Hero*. New York: Vintage, 1998.
- Longman, Jere. *The Girls of Summer: The U.S. Women's Soccer Team and How It Changed the World*. New York: itbooks, HarperCollins, 2000, 2001.

You are also responsible for reading several articles and book chapters. All of these are available on Blackboard (so be sure you have access to it). As with the assignments for books, the readings are to be completed by the time you come to class. You might be quizzed on them or there might be an assignment to complete. The article/chapters are:

- Abrams, Douglas E. "The Little League Champions Benched by Jim Crow in 1955: Resistance and Reform after Brown v. Board of Education." *Journal of Supreme Court History* (2013): 51-62.
- Bowers, Matthew T. and Thomas M. Hunt. "The President's Council on Physical Fitness and the Systematisation of Children's Play in America." *International Journal of the History of Sport* (August 2011): 1496-1511.
- Breen, Timothy H. "Horses and Gentlemen: The Cultural Significance of Gambling among the Gentry of Virginia." *William and Mary Quarterly* (April 1977): 237-259.
- Brown, Ashley. "Swinging for the State Department: American Women Tennis Players in Diplomatic Goodwill Tours, 1941-59." *Journal of Sport History* (Fall 2015): 289-309.
- Davis, Amira Rose. "On the Courts of Druid Hill: Lucy Diggs Slowe and the Rise of Organized Black Tennis." In *Baltimore Sports: Stories from the Charm City*, ed. Daniel A. Nathan, 45-58. Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 2016.
- Hunt, Thomas M. "Sports, Drugs, and the Cold War: The Conundrum of Olympic Doping Policy, 1970-1979." *Olympika* (2007): 19-42.

- Moris, Dominic G. "Eugen Sandow's 'Modern' Marketing Strategies, 1887-1925." *Journal of Sport History* (Summer 2013): 193-214.
- Patterson, Alan Owen. "The Eastern European Jewish Immigrant Experience with Baseball in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century." *Modern Judaism: A Journal of Jewish Ideas and Experiences* (February 2008): 79-104.
- Schultz, Jamie. "Philadelphia's Greatest Sports Hero?: The Case for Rocky Balboa." In *Philly Sports: Teams, Games, and Athletes from Rocky's Town*, ed. Ryan A. Swanson and David K. Wiggins, 147-160. Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 2016.
- Soares, John. "Diplomacy and U.S.-Canadian Relations in the Early Trudeau Years." *Diplomatic History* (November 2016): 810-825.

Exams, Quizzes and Assignments

There are two exams. Each covers material from both the class and assigned readings. The exams will consist of identifications, and short answer and essay questions. About a week before the exam, I will post on Blackboard a list of identifications (IDs) and several essay questions. From that list, I will select several ID terms, and two essay questions, of which you will answer only one. Each exam will count for 25 percent of your grade.

There are also three short papers (each approximately 3-4 pages in length). The papers are part opinion pieces, part analysis of the books and articles we will read in class. **DO NOT MERELY SUMMARIZE THE BOOK AND ARTICLES.** I would like you to think about the book and articles and how they relate to American history. You will be graded on content, persuasiveness, grammar and overall organization. Papers must be submitted in hard copy. **NO PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED BY EMAIL.** The scores of the papers will be averaged and count for 20 percent of your grade. Papers are due the day of discussion.

Quizzes are another part of the course, and they may be announced, unannounced, or a small assignment. There will be a quiz given on the day of discussion (over that particular book). Please bring a pen or pencil, as well as writing paper, to class. Also, I will count attendance as a quiz. At the end of the semester, I will drop your lowest quiz score and calculate the average, which is worth 20 percent of your grade.

The last requirement is a group project. I will divide the class into eight groups. Two groups each will be responsible for one of the four books. One of the two groups will develop a short presentation (no more than 20 minutes) on the first half of the selected book, while the other group will do the same for the second half of the book. I would like you to include background information of the material discussed in the book (you may present the material using PowerPoint slides or Prezi) and prepare discussion questions, which are to be submitted to

me via email **NO LATER THAN TWO DAYS** before the presentation. I will subtract five points from your overall presentation grade for each day the questions are late. **YOU WILL BE GRADED ON THE PRESENTATION OF BACKGROUND MATERIAL, THE DISCUSSION THAT YOU GENERATE, AND THE QUALITY OF THE QUESTIONS.** I will post the questions that you submit on Blackboard. If you are not presenting that day, you are expected to review the questions on Blackboard and be prepared to answer them (some might even be included on the quiz).

The group project requires you to work with each other outside of class (electronically and/or in person). Each group member must speak. The project is worth the final 10 percent of your grade.

Grade Breakdown

Exams (2)	50%
Papers	20%
Quizzes and assignments	20%
Group project/presentation	10%

Grading Scale

A	93-100	B+	88-89.9	C+	78-79.9	D	60-69.9
A-	90-92.9	B	83-87.9	C	73-77.9	F	0-59.9
		B-	80-82.9	C-	70-72.9		

Missed Exams, Quizzes and Assignments

Make-up exams will only be given if you have some kind of official documentation (a doctor's note, for instance) excusing you from class. There will be no make-up quizzes. I repeat: **THERE WILL BE NO MAKEUP QUIZZES, BUT I WILL DROP YOUR LOWEST QUIZ SCORE.** Late papers and assignments will be docked 5 points for each day they are not turned in (that includes Saturdays and Sundays). So, please do your work; budget your time; and plan accordingly.

Electronic Devices

Cell phones, Smartphones, and other electronic devices that make any kind of noise are not permitted. PCs and tablets are allowed, but only for note taking. If you are seen using your PC or tablet for something other than note taking, you will forfeit your right to use that device in class.

Academic Integrity

You are to do your own work. Students who violate the Honor Code will be dealt with severely. Information on the Honor Code and what constitutes a violation can be found at the website for the Office of Academic Integrity (<http://oai.gmu.edu>).

Students with Disabilities

Accommodations for students with disabilities are available. See the webpage of the Office of Disability Services (ODS) (<http://ods.gmu.edu>), or call 993-2474 for more information.

Diversity

The course complies with George Mason's Diversity Statement, which begins: "George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth." For the full statement, see <http://ctfe.gmu.edu/professional-development/mason-diversity-statement>.

Important Drop/Add Dates

- September 5 is the final day to add or drop the course with no financial penalty.
- September 29 is the last day you can drop the course, but you will incur a financial penalty.
- October 27 is last day for selective withdrawal.

Schedule

Week 1

August 28: Introduction: Let's Get Serious: "Taking Sport Seriously"; Sports in Colonial America

Read: Start Jenkins

August 30: Games into Sports: Society and Culture, 1800-1860

Read: Breen, "Horses and Gentlemen: The Cultural Significance of Gambling among the Gentry of Virginia"; continue Jenkins

Week 2

September 4: No Class

September 6: Athletic Clubs and Amateurism

Read: Moris, "Eugen Sandow's 'Modern' Marketing Strategies, 1887-1925"; continue Jenkins

Week 3

September 11: Baseball's Early Years

Read: Patterson, "The Eastern European Jewish Immigrant Experience with Baseball in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century"; continue Jenkins

September 13: Baseball at the Turn of the Century

Read: Continue Jenkins

Week 4

September 18: **Finish Jenkins, discussion and presentation; paper due**

Read: Start Brown

September 20: Sports on College Campuses, 1880-1920

Read: Continue Brown

Week 5

September 25: Women and Sports, 1880-1920

Read: Continue Brown

September 27: Sports Heroes (and Anti-Heroes) of the 1920s

Read: Continue Brown

Week 6

October 2: Sport Heroes in the 1930s

Read: Continue Brown

October 4: Sport Heroes in the 1930s (cont.)

Read: Continue Brown

Week 7

October 10 (Tuesday): **Finish Brown, discussion and presentation; paper due**

October 11: Guest lecturer (class will meet in the Johnson Center, rm. F)

Week 8

October 16: **Exam #1**

Read: Start Remnick (this reading will not appear on exam #1)

October 18: A Separate National Pastime: the Negro Leagues

Read: Continue Remnick

Week 9

October 23: Racial Segregation in Sports

Read: Continue Remnick; Abrams, "The Little League Champions Benched by Jim Crow in 1955: Resistance and Reform after Brown v. Board of Education"

October 25: Sports during WWII

Read: Continue Remnick

Week 10

October 30: A Women's Place?: Sports and Post-WWII America

Read: Continue Remnick; Brown, "Swinging for the State Department: American Women Tennis Players in Diplomatic Goodwill Tours, 1941-59"

November 1: **Finish Remnick, discussion and presentation; paper due**

Week 11

November 6: "The Greatest": Muhammad Ali

Read: Davis, "On the Courts of Druid Hill: Lucy Diggs Slowe and the Rise of Organized Black Tennis"

November 8: Ali (cont.)

Read: Start Longman

Week 12

November 13: "The Greatest" (cont.)

Read: Continue Longman

November 15: The Bitterest of Foes: the U.S.-U.S.S.R. Cold War Rivalry in Sports

Read: Continue Longman; Hunt, "Sport, Drugs, and the Cold War"

Week 13

November 20: Bitterest of Foes (cont.)

Read: Continue Longman

November 22: Thanksgiving Break (no class)

Read: Continue Longman

Week 14

November 27: Sports in the Era of America Limitations: the 1970s

Read: Continue Longman; Schultz, "Philadelphia's Greatest Sports Hero?: The Case for Rocky Balboa"

November 29: **Finish Longman, discussion and presentation; paper due**

Week 15

December 4: Ice Wars: US and USSR Hockey

Read: Soares, "Diplomacy and U.S.-Canadian Relations in the Early Trudeau Years"

December 6: Commercialization, Globalization, and Infatuation: Sports in the New Millennium

December 13: **Exam #2** (starts at 1:30 p.m.)