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Syllabus

WESTERN UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND WOMEN'S STUDIES

GSWS 2171B OUT OF LEFT FIELD: GENDER AND SPORT

Winter 2024

Instructor: Dr. Cornel Grey

Lecture: Online, asynchronous

Email: cgrey6@uwo.ca

Zoom Office Hours: by appointment

Meeting ID:

Passcode:

Course Grader:

Email:

Zoom Office Hours:

Western University is situated on the traditional land of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lenape and Attawandaron peoples who have longstanding relationships to the region of southwestern Ontario and the City of London. Within proximity to Western, there are 3 First Nations communities: the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. In the region of southwestern Ontario, there are 9 First Nations and a growing Indigenous urban population. Western recognizes the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all 11 of the Original peoples of Turtle Island (North America) to the development of Canada.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores sport as a site through which the meanings about gender, sexuality, race, ability, citizenship, and culture are constructed and negotiated. Students will draw on feminist and queer theoretical frameworks to interrogate commonly held assumptions about the human body, while attending to the ways that popular discourses about gender, race, and biology frame our understanding of athletic performance. We will consider how sport is used to delineate membership, community and belonging. We will also examine sports' relationship to commodity culture, specifically the ways in which athletes have been positioned as celebrities and the implications this shift has had on popular culture. Possible topics include gender verification, scientific racism, nationalism, sex and athletic ability.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Account for the social, historical and political contexts that inform how and when individuals participate in competitive sports.
- Explain how social categories like gender, race, sexuality, citizenship, etc. shape athletes' experiences with competitors, fans, news media and other stakeholders on and off the court/field/track/etc.
- Evaluate media coverage of athletes using feminist, queer and critical race theories.
- Critically engage with contemporary debates in sports studies.

Correspondence Statement

The centrally administered **e-mail account** provided to students will be considered the individual's official university e-mail address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that e-mail received from the University at his/her official university address is attended to in a timely manner. You can read about the privacy and security of the UWO email accounts [here](#).

Students are encouraged to email the instructor or their tutorial leader if they have questions about the course. Students can expect a response within 48 hours during the work week. Students are not guaranteed a response over the weekend, or on holidays. Only emails using your "@uwo.ca" account will be answered.

COURSE WEBSITE

All course information, including assignments, will be posted on the course website. Go to <https://owl.uwo.ca/portal>

LATE AND OUTSTANDING ASSIGNMENTS

Late assignments will receive a 2% deduction per day. Weekends count for two days penalty. An assessment cannot be submitted after it has been returned to the class.

Students seeking academic consideration must submit a request within 28 days of the assignment deadline.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense and will be treated as such in this class. Students should refrain from presenting someone's work, ideas, opinions and/or writing as their own. Proper citation and referencing are key. Ignorance of plagiarism is not an excuse for representing someone's work as your own. I strongly encourage all students to familiarize themselves with the university's policies on academic misconduct.

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.

TURNITIN

All written assignments must be submitted through Turnitin. Access to Turnitin will be available through the OWL course website. According to university policy: “All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement currently between the University and Turnitin.com.”

ACCESSIBILITY AND WRITING SUPPORT

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Accessible Education (AE) at (519) 661-2147 or aeu@uwo.ca for any specific question regarding an accommodation or review [The policy on Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

I also encourage all students to make use of the Writing Support Centre. For further details, visit <http://writing.uwo.ca>

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

The policy on Accommodation for Religious Holidays can be viewed [here](#).

MEDICAL POLICY

I encourage students to read the Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness at the following link: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Please do not submit medical notes to the instructor or your tutorial leader. Contact your academic counsellor and we will work to develop an appropriate solution.

PROFESSIONALISM & PRIVACY

Western students are expected to follow the [Student Code of Conduct](#). Additionally, the following expectations and professional conduct apply to this course: All course materials created by the instructor(s) are copyrighted and cannot be sold/shared. Recordings are not permitted (audio or video) without explicit permission. Permitted recordings are not to be distributed.

COPYRIGHT AND AUDIO/VIDEO RECORDING STATEMENT

Course material produced by faculty is copyrighted and to reproduce this material for any purposes other than your own educational use contravenes Canadian Copyright Laws. You must always ask permission to record another individual and you should never share or distribute recordings.

SUPPORT SERVICES

The following links provide information about support services at Western University.

[Academic Counselling](#)[Appeal Procedures](#)[Registrarial Services](#)[Student Development Services](#)[Student Health Services](#)**GRADING SCHEME**

Assignments will be graded according to the scheme provided by Western University. I have copied this table below for reference:

Grade	Percentage
A+	90-100% (One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level)
A	80-89% (Superior work which is clearly above average)
B	70-79% (Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory)
C	60-69% (Competent work, meeting requirements)
D	50-59% (Fair work, minimally acceptable)
F	Below 50% or assigned when course is dropped with academic penalty.

ASSIGNMENT	DUE DATE	% OF GRADE
Discussion Posts (5% x 6, approx. 250 words each)	Biweekly on Fridays	30%
Media Analysis (7-10 min audio recording)	March 8, 2024	20%

Film Response (approximately 1000 words)	February 9 or April 5, 2024 (see OWL for details)	20%
Essay (1200-1500 words)	March 29, 2024	30%

After an assessment is returned, students should wait 24 hours to digest feedback before contacting their evaluator. Students should consult with their TA first regarding questions about their grade. To ensure a timely response, reach out within 7 days. If a student has concerns about their grade following a meeting with their TA, they are encouraged to reach out to the instructor.

ASSIGNED READINGS

Week One, January 8-12 (Constructing Sport)



Scraton, Sheila. 2018. ‘Feminism and PE: Does Gender Still Matter?’ In *The Palgrave Handbook of Feminism and Sport, Leisure and Physical Education*, edited by Louise Mansfield, Jayne Caudwell, Belinda Wheaton, and Beccy Watson, 25–42. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.

Week Two, January 15-19 (Theories in Sport Studies)



Birrell, Susan. 2000. 'Feminist Theories for Sport'. In *Handbook of Sports Studies*, edited by Jay Coakley and Eric Dunning, 61–76. London: SAGE Publications.

Roth, Amanda, and Susan A. Basow. 2004. 'Femininity, Sports, and Feminism: Developing a Theory of Physical Liberation'. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 28 (3): 245–65.

Week Three, January 22-26 (Gendered Bodies I)



Anderson, Eric. 2008. "‘I Used to Think Women Were Weak’": Orthodox Masculinity, Gender Segregation, and Sport'. *Sociological Forum* 23 (2): 257–80.

Chimot, Caroline, and Catherine Louveau. 2010. 'Becoming a Man While Playing a Female Sport: The Construction of Masculine Identity in Boys Doing Rhythmic Gymnastics'. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 45 (4): 436–56.

Week Four, January 29-February 2 (Gendered Bodies II)



Cooper, T., dir. 2021. *Man Made*. Frameline. (FILM)

Week Five, February 5-9 (Sex Testing and Gender Verification)



Sullivan, Claire F. 2011. 'Gender Verification and Gender Policies in Elite Sport: Eligibility and "Fair Play"'. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 35 (4): 400–419.

Wackwitz, Laura A. 2003. 'Verifying the Myth: Olympic Sex Testing and the Category "Woman"'. *Women's Studies International Forum* 26 (6): 553–60.

Week Six, February 12-16 (Dis/ability, Performance and Participation)

Hardin, Marie. 2007. "I Consider Myself an Empowered Woman": The Interaction of Sport, Gender and Disability in the Lives of Wheelchair Basketball Players'. *Women in Sport & Physical Activity Journal* 16 (1): 39–52.

Weaving, Charlene, and Jessica Samson. 2018. 'The Naked Truth: Disability, Sexual Objectification, and the *ESPN Body Issue*'. *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport* 45 (1): 83–100.

READING WEEK (February 19-23)

Week Seven, February 26-March 1 (College Athletics, Affirmative Action, Access)

Hextrum, Kirsten. 2021. 'The State Alignment: White Suburbia and Athletic Talent'. In *Special Admission: How College Sports Recruitment Favors White Suburban Athletes*, 60–81. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Wells, Sandy. 2012. 'Athletic Aspirations: NCAA Scholarships and Canadian Athlete'. In *Race and Sport in Canada: Intersecting Inequalities*, edited by Janelle Joseph, Simon Darnell, and Yuka Nakamura, 265–89. Toronto: Canadian Scholars's Press.

Recommended Viewing: Smith, Chris. 2021. *Operation Varsity Blues: The College Admissions Scandal*. (Netflix)

Week Eight, March 4-8 (Sexual Violence)



MacGregory, Wendy. 2018. 'It's Just a Game Until Someone Is Sexually Assaulted: Sport Culture and the Perpetuation of Sexual Violence by Athletes'. *Education & Law Journal* 28 (1): 43–73.

Messner, Michael A. 2007. 'Scoring without Consent: Confronting Male Athletes' Sexual Violence against Women (with Mark Stevens)'. In *Out of Play: Critical Essays on Gender and Sport*, 107–19. SUNY Series on Sport, Culture, and Social Relations. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Week Nine, March 11-15 (Sports Celebrity, Objectification and Pop Culture)



Mutz, Michael, and Henk Erik Meier. 2016. 'Successful, Sexy, Popular: Athletic Performance and Physical Attractiveness as Determinants of Public Interest in Male and Female Soccer Players'. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 51 (5): 567–80.

Week Ten, March 18-22 (The Aesthetics of Athletics)



Hargreaves, Jennifer. 2000. 'The Muslim Female Heroic: Shorts or Veils?' In *Heroines of Sport: The Politics of Difference and Identity*, 46–77. London and New York: Routledge.

Schultz, Jaime. 2005. 'Reading the Catsuit: Serena Williams and the Production of Blackness at the 2002 U.S. Open'. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 29 (3): 338–57.

Week Eleven, March 25-29 (Culture, Identity, Belonging)



Beitel, Garry, dir. 2016. *Cricket and Parc-Ex: A Love Story: Immigrants and Sports in a Vibrant Canadian Neighbourhood*. Reframe Films (media) Inc.

or

Entremont, Paul Émile d', dir. 2018. *Standing on the Line*. National Film Board of Canada.

Week Twelve, April 1-5 (Sport and the Nation)



Jackson, Steven J. 2004. 'Exorcizing the Ghost: Donovan Bailey, Ben Johnson and the Politics of Canadian Identity'. *Media, Culture & Society* 26 (1): 121–41.

Krebs, Andreas. 2012. 'Hockey and the Reproduction of Colonialism in Canada'. In *Race and Sport in Canada: Intersecting Inequalities*, edited by Janelle Joseph, Simon Darnell, and Yuka Nakamura, 81–105. Toronto: Canadian Scholars.