



香港中文大學人類學系
Department of Anthropology
THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG



ANTH5322

Topics in Anthropology:

**The Anthropology of Play, Folk Games,
and Modern Sports**

Course Syllabus

2025/26 – Second Term

Every effort is made to ensure all details are correct at the time of uploading. However, it may occasionally be necessary to make further revisions after the course has commenced. Please check the online course page for the most up-to-date version of this document, particularly after the Add/Drop Period. Thank you!

Lecturer: Marco Montagner (marcomontagner@cuhk.edu.hk)

Lecture: Wednesday 18:30 – 21:15 (**Venue:** WMY_405)

Course Description

In this course, students will explore different cross-cultural examples of games and sports from all over the world, introducing the role and importance of playful activities in the present and the past, in “modern” and “traditional” societies, and seeing the relationship between sports and their sociocultural setting. Through the lens of games and sports, in this we course will study how they are intertwined with topics such as moral education, violence, inequality, gender, ethnicity, health, nationalism, globalization.

This course draws on a variety of disciplines including sociology, gender studies, history, and cultural studies, but remains firmly rooted in providing you an anthropological perspective. This course will help you develop broader social perspectives and a critical understanding of the multitude of ways that play-based activities impact everyday life. By adopting a comparative perspective that considers sport/game/play/ritual practices in different locales, it will cultivate your ability to navigate the similarities and differences between your own and other cultures. By encouraging you to question the role and purpose of games and sports, I hope it will enable you to more fully participate as an individual and a citizen in local communities. Finally, through research exercises, group discussion, and sharing, the course aims to foster your intellectual, collaborative, and communication skills.

To conclude, in this course I use play, folk games, and sports as a proxy to discuss broader anthropological and sociological topics. I will mention countless practices, more often than not without explaining their rules in depth. I expect you to do the “dirty work” (wait—that should be a pleasure!) of looking further into these activities, if you are interested.

Learning outcomes

Upon completion of the course, you will be able to:

- Analyze play, games, and sports in an anthropological manner
- Understand the roles of games in “traditional” and contemporary societies
- Demonstrate the complexity and interrelatedness of games, society, and everyday life
- Critically reflect your engagement with sports as practitioner, spectator, or other roles
- Work effectively as a group to conduct a small research project and communicate research findings

Course Format

The course material will be delivered mainly in the form of lectures, discussions, and exercises. In order to derive maximum benefit from the course, students are expected to actively participate in class activities and suggested to complete the key readings before or right after attending the lecture. Additional readings will be selectively discussed in class to enrich the main course content. All mentioned readings will be uploaded online. Should you encounter problems locating a specific reading, please let me know.

Attendance

Class participation is an essential part of the learning process, and every student is expected to regularly attend and participate in lectures and tutorials discussions. Remember: we are all responsible for making the class a pleasant learning environment!

Course materials and preparation

You are expected to prepare by reading and making notes on the key reading(s) in advance of each meeting. Completing the readings in advance will help you to participate fully in the discussions, and your participation eventually contributes to your overall course grade (see below).

All required and suggested materials are uploaded to our course page. Lecture slides or other materials used during lectures will not be uploaded. Note-taking is considered a fundamental part of the learning process. If you missed a lecture, consider the additional materials required for your understanding of that week’s topic.

Course privacy and intellectual property

Students must not audio or video record class meetings without permission from the instructor (and guest speakers, when applicable). If the instructor grants permission or if the teaching team posts videos themselves, students may keep recordings only for personal use and may not post recordings on the Internet, or otherwise distribute them. These policies protect the privacy rights of instructors and students, and the intellectual property and other rights of the university.

Furthermore, sharing your academic work (e.g., reflective papers, final project videos, course slides) or course notes on sharing platforms is forbidden and will be persecuted.

Academic honesty and Plagiarism

CUHK has a policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and requires all papers to be checked by a plagiarism detection engine. Plagiarism is defined in the Regulations Governing Conduct at Examinations as the “unacknowledged use, as one’s own, of work of another person, whether or not such work has been published”. It also includes self-plagiarism, the unacknowledged use of one’s own previous work (e.g. other courses). Plagiarism is a disciplinary offense, and any student who commits the offense is liable to disciplinary action. Disciplinary actions in connection with the violation of academic honesty may result in serious consequences, such as: failing the assignment or the course, suspension of study, withdrawal of academic awards, and, potentially, discontinuation of studies at the University. Plagiarism may be handled by the individual teacher or reported to the University. Forgery of any document or certificate is also liable to disciplinary action.

Details of the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations may be found online (at: <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>). CUHK requires all papers to be checked by VeriGuide, a plagiarism detection engine. With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines, and procedures. The statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students’ uploading of the soft copy of the assignment (at this address: https://academic.veriguide.org/academic/login_CUHK.aspx). Assignments not submitted to VeriGuide will not be graded. VeriGuide allows you only one submission per paper, submit only the final version of your paper to the system. Uploading different files (or a different version of your paper) on VeriGuide in order to skip the similarity check or to delay your submission is also considered dishonest behavior and will be penalized accordingly.

Use of Generative AI

Depending on the context, AI can either enhance or impede learning. There are times when these tools might provide us with new ideas and understandings (e.g., brainstorming or getting feedback). At other points, practicing skills and synthesizing ideas on our own will be crucial for the learning process (in the classroom and beyond).

Even with the best intentions of using gen-AI, I currently perceive it as a detriment to learning, in my specific field. In the long term, AI could become a crutch if relied on: it might provide you with an easy way out for solving a problem (e.g., clearing an assignment) but also hinder your capabilities when you will be asked to solve something new. More importantly, it will hinder your development of “critical thinking,” precisely the outcome of disciplines like anthropology and sociology.

In teaching this course, I do not use any AI tools at any point of my work, and I expect the same from you when you interact in classroom settings. In this course, it is crucial that students develop their own skills and abilities to research, think critically, and communicate without the use of this technology. To maximally gain from the intentionally designed learning experiences in the course, it will be crucial that all students, or “members of the course community,” rely on personal efforts rather than the use of AI tools. In fact, in most cases here, it is the effort itself—not the product—that is most valuable!

For this course assignments, all coursework should be written in your own words. Just as you cannot take credit for others’ writing in your assignments (see section on Academic honesty and Plagiarism), you cannot use paraphrasing software (“spinbots”) or AI writing software (e.g., ChatGPT, DeepSeek), or image generation tools (Mid-Journey), and submit the output as your own. For this course, doing so would violate the university’s policy, please refer to the [CUHK ‘Use of Artificial Intelligence tools in Teaching, Learning and Assessments’ – A Guide for Students.](#)

Late/Wrong/No submission of coursework assignment

All coursework assignment due dates will not be deferred except in cases of medical emergencies or family bereavement, for which detailed written documentation must be provided. Late coursework will be docked 5 mark points per day, for a maximum of 7 days, after which the grade for that coursework will be 0 (unless in well-proven exceptional circumstances).

Technical issues are not considered acceptable reasons for lateness or for not submitting your work and will not be entertained. In the case of wrong file submissions, it is a student's responsibility to double-check and submit the correct file on time. The teacher or the tutors will not chase students for submitting coursework. Students not submitting two or more coursework items, or scoring 0 marks in two or more coursework items, will be automatically given an F (fail), even if the sum of the remaining coursework items is sufficient for a pass.

Forgery of any emergency documentation will be reported to the University Disciplinary Committee and face the same disciplinary actions as a violation of academic honesty, and may result in serious consequences such as failing the assignment or the course, suspension of study, withdrawal of academic awards, or discontinuation of studies.

Last-minute requests for deadline postponement

This course is fully coursework-based, with no centralized exams. Even so, every term, I receive requests for deadline postponement. Several were heartbreaking, others shocking (e.g., students sending me photographs of severely maimed or deceased relatives as proof). Please understand that this takes a toll on your teachers, who are not in a position to evaluate these requests objectively. For this reason, no special requests for ad hoc extension will be entertained, unless students can provide a Leave of Absence or any other supporting document approved by their home Department, Faculty, or university's special divisions. If you are a student with Special Education Needs supported by the university, it is your duty to let me know at the beginning of the course.

Free riding

In case of group projects, notify about free riders as soon as possible. Requests to remove a member will require a group assessment, and students will be asked to fill out a Peer-assessment and a Self-assessment. Requests within one week of an assignment's deadline will not be entertained, even though I will consider those to evaluate an alleged free rider's performance.

Emails

Send emails only from your university account. Do not reply to automated course announcements, or your email might get overlooked; start a new email instead. An instructor/tutor usually teaches several courses and won't remember all students: whenever you write an email, please identify yourself by name, surname, nickname (if you use that in class), SID, and the course you are taking. Your email's title should begin with the course code. Example:

Object: SOCI101 - info about the course

Dear Marco,

I am Name, Surname, Nickname if any, SID, a student from course xyz.

I would like to...

In general, I encourage students to come talk to me in person at the end of a lecture.

Early feedback requests on assignments (before deadlines)

I do not provide feedback on assignments' outlines or early drafts to avoid privileging students who feel comfortable asking compared to those who refrain from doing so. This is mainly due to cultural reasons, and, in a mixed setting like Hong Kong universities, I prefer to adopt this stance; I hope you can understand.

Instructor feedback

I aim to provide feedback on students' assignments within three weeks of submission. Please note that if your work is submitted late, it may take me longer than usual to provide you with feedback.

Student feedback

My hope is that you will enjoy the course and find its content stimulating and useful, and that it makes a positive contribution to your degree program and academic experience. However, reality may be different, and there are a few channels where you can make your voice heard:

Suggestion box: Classroom's coffee tin

Aside from the official feedback channel, I always welcome informal feedback (in person or by email) on how you are finding the course, what you like, and how you think it may be improved. For the same reason, in case you prefer to do so anonymously, during lectures I will keep a "suggestion box" in the classroom, a tin of coffee where you can always leave your feedback anonymously (starting after the Add/Drop period).

EFCS: Early Feedback Collection System

EFCS is designed to capture student feedback on individual classes in the middle of the study term to complement the end-of-term Course and Teaching Evaluation (CTE) exercise. Students will be asked to provide feedback on the following two questions regarding satisfaction with the courses: a) What are the best aspects of the course so far? b) Which aspects are most in need of improvement so far? The feedback collected will be made available the relevant course teachers a few days after the feedback collection.

CTE: Course and Teaching Evaluation

The CTE Student Feedback questionnaire is one of the ways in which CUHK courses and teaching are evaluated. Students complete this questionnaire at the end of each course. You will be given time during one of the last two classes to complete the questionnaire, as well as be reminded by e-mail. To learn more about the CTE exercise, you may visit the project website at: <https://www.cuhk.edu.hk/proj/octe/>.

Recommendation Letters

I am happy to provide recommendation letters for students applying for further studies. As a rule of thumb, you would be eligible if you completed one of my courses with a grade in the A-range. However, I consider it more important that you demonstrated to be a motivated, participative, and curious student during the semester. As a general suggestion: you do not want to ask a teacher to be your referee if s/he does not remember you from the course. I do not practice "cascade recommendation," so I expect you to motivate your choice and explain to me in detail about the specific program you are applying for and the reasons behind that. To help you, begin with these two prompts "I want to pursue postgraduate studies because...", "I am applying to this specific university because...", and "The research topic I am most interested in is..." when writing me your email.

Student wellbeing and Special Educational Needs Service (SENS) support

University is usually a time and a space of great learning and experiencing. However, I am the first to admit that life at university might get extremely complicated. If you are feeling stressed, overwhelmed, lost, anxious, depressed, or struggling with personal issues, do not hesitate to call or visit the Wellness and Counseling Centre (<https://wacc.osa.cuhk.edu.hk/>). WACC serves full-time students and it is staffed by psychologists and professional counsellors. Through the following services, the WACC assists students to overcome adjustment difficulties, derive success and satisfaction from their university experiences as well as achieve personal growth and self-enhancement. These services and many more are free and completely confidential, please check here for more details: <https://www.osa.cuhk.edu.hk/services/>. Students requiring accommodations/adjustments should contact them for assessment at the earliest possible opportunity. After reviewing individual cases, they will issue a letter of recommendations to the respective Faculties. If you have any Special educational needs, please let me know within the two first weeks of the course.

Course Assessment

Course assessment is comprised of:

1. Class participation: 20%
2. Mid-term reflection paper: 30%
3. Ethnographic project (which includes Group Presentation + Individual Report): 20+30= 50%

1. Participation

Every student is expected to regularly attend lectures and participate in discussions. A high participation score comes with active and thoughtful participation on a regular basis, showing interest as well as preparation on class materials. Participation, not simple attendance, is a fundamental part of the course.

Some lectures' final section will be dedicated to discussion, including or going beyond the reading material for that week. Ideally, you should read and think about the key-readings beforehand, to be adequately prepared. While reading, you ought to make clear the following, at least at a general level:

- What is the author's key argument
- How the author demonstrates this argument (i.e. what evidence is shown, what cases are discussed, etc.)
- How the author's argument may relate to/contrast with other established arguments or viewpoints surrounding the issue. You may find it useful (but not required) to refer to the other readings from that week, as some of the additional articles are selected exactly because they address a similar theme but from contrasting perspectives.
- What is your own assessment of the core argument, and what is its usefulness.

2. Mid-term reflection paper

Due: **8 March, 7 PM.**

Pick a recent news report or even a photo about a traditional game, a modern sport event, a trend or any play or body-movement related phenomenon. It can be from whatever media (newspaper, news outlet, social media, etc.). Describe what it is and then reflect and comment on it with reference to at least one of the course topics (note: topics, not necessarily key readings! You can relate it to some of the class discussions as well). Critically analyze by raising questions and points of discussion, do not just summarize. Students should submit the reflection paper on our course page in Microsoft Word format. You can add photos, maps or graphs if you like as an appendix, I will not count them in the page limit. Remember to add a well-thought title to your work.

Format of the reflection paper:

- Font: Times New Roman
- Font size: 12 points
- Line spacing: 1.5 line
- Margins: 1 inch (2.54 cm)
- Word count: 1800-2000 (excluding from the count the References and Appendix)
- Citation: the style is up to you, as long as you apply it consistently (e.g., APA, ASA, Chicago)

3. Ethnographic Project (incl. Group Presentation and Individual Report)

Students will conduct a small group ethnographic fieldwork, producing an Individual Report and an online Group Presentation presenting their findings. Group size is minimum 2 to maximum 4 members per group, with students selecting their groups independently.

Students forming a group will do the Group Presentation together and be assigned the same partial grade, whereas their Report will be written and graded individually. All group members will receive the same mark for the group presentation, however, in exceptional circumstances, the course teacher may reserve the right to adjust the marks awarded to individual members based on their overall contribution to the project).

These are the broad guidelines:

Pick a sport, game, practice, movement, or a playful phenomenon that you are interested in, participating in or attending a related event and conducting a short ethnographic fieldwork about it. You can be a direct participant (player, referee), a member of the audience (fan, organizer, volunteer), or an outside visitor. You can write about a sport that you know well or one that is new to you, which means you can either be an "informed insider" or a "newly arrived outsider"; both roles have pros and cons.

Do not think of an event as something “formal” (e.g., Hong Kong Marathon or Rugby Sevens): your project can be about sport/game/play-like phenomena that look implicit and unofficial (e.g., a group of runners training at the sports ground, foreign domestic workers doing yoga in Hong Kong’s public spaces, elderly playing xiangqi at a park, bettors at a Jockey Club outlet, etc.).

The main point is that you explore the chosen phenomenon through the voices of the people involved in it. You can pick one informant to go in-depth or focus on a specific topic/area and chat with several informants to explore it from different points of view.

I will discuss some methodological and ethical aspects of the ethnographic project during a specific lecture at mid-course (check the course schedule below; at least one group member must attend that lecture). Also, from mid-course onwards, after every lecture break I will open the floor for questions about the final project; chances are that other students may also have similar queries, so asking publicly helps to ensure everybody is on the same page.

This project should be something feasible over a weekend. Your presentation should include your field observations, selected quotes from interviews with informants, and a brief critical discussion. You can use some of the ideas and topics learned in this course to analyze, but referring to the class topics is not compulsory, and you should feel free to go beyond the scope of our lectures and readings. I am available to discuss your topics’ ideas early in the course for methodology and possible cues.

All group members are expected to work on all phases of the ethnographic project: from project design, fieldwork, presentation drafting, and slide preparation to the final presentation. This rounded participation in all phases of the project is also fundamental for the success of your individual report. If there are any free riders, inform me as soon as possible (complaints within the last week before the deadline will not be entertained—see “free riding” section above).

a. Group Presentation

Due: **6 May, 7 PM.** (each group member must submit the link on the relevant folder)

Groups will record their Presentation on Zoom and submit the link to our course page assignment folder. Each group member should then upload the Zoom link and password to the submission folder. Do not submit or send by email a video file, or you will be given a penalty.

Each presentation should be min. 10 max. 15 minutes long. Remember that the longer does not equal the better; stay focused and make every second meaningful. Photos and/or videos from your field site are welcome but not required; videos should last no longer than 2 minutes—unless they contain your commentary (in which case they can be as long as you need to, even the whole presentation). You must assign a title to your presentation. Although this is a video recording, your final project is not a media assignment: I do not have visual requirements for this project, and your focus should be on the anthropological aspects. Do not read, particularly if it’s an AI-generated script.

Your group presentation should include (not necessarily in this strict fashion):

1. Cover [project title; group members’ names and SID]
2. Project introduction [Introduce in simple words what this project is about]
3. Research Question (RQ). [briefly tell the reader what the question leading your project is; you will then answer it in the Discussion section]
4. Research Setting and Methodology [Tell the reader how you are going to answer the RQ: introduce the field site, why it is interesting/relevant, why you decided to pick this over others; introduce informants and why they are important to answer your question]
5. Discussion [This is the main section, where you answer the research question through your informants’ quotes and add your analysis]
6. Conclusion [briefly summarize your findings, providing directions for further research; how could we expand this project if we had more time for fieldwork?]

How to record the project presentation on Zoom?

Do not upload a video file (.mp4, .mov, etc.), all you need is a Zoom link with a password; follow these steps:

- Open Zoom and log in with your personal university account by selecting “Log in with SSO”
- Start a meeting > Click the “record” button > select “Record on the cloud” > Turn on your video and make sure you are not mute > Start your presentation
- Once finished, click the “More” button > “stop recording” or simply “end the meeting”

-Within ~20 minutes, Zoom will send the link and password to your university email account.

-Write or upload the link and password on the relevant folder online.

OR, in case you already recorded your meeting otherwise:

-Start a Zoom meeting > "share screen" > Click "record" button > "record on the cloud" > Start your video file on the shared screen > follow the same steps as above to submit.

During your Zoom presentation, use your real name and surname. Also keep your camera on; this is for plagiarism and AI-related reasons. Wear a surgical mask if it makes you feel more comfortable. No worries, anyway: no one can access your presentation since it is password-protected and I do not keep any record after grading your work to protect your informants.

b. Individual Report

Due: **4 May, 7 PM.**

The Individual Report is a written paper about your project, with a broader discussion section based on your fieldwork experience, the specific insights, or some particular aspects that you found relevant or interesting. "Discussion" section could include more opinions and words from you informants/interviewees, for example. Referencing any key readings or additional materials from our course will be highly evaluated, but it is not required. If you use any external materials, please remember to add references at the end of your Report.

Your report can replicate a similar analysis as the group presentation, or explore different aspects that were not discussed with your group mates. For example, you can explore other topics or focus on different conversations compared to those already done in the group presentation.

Overall, the report should have a similar structure as the presentation: a brief introduction where you tell the reader what is the RQ leading your project, a paragraph or two where you introduce the field site and how you conducted your project, a discussion where you answer the RQ through your observations and analysis, a conclusion where you provide directions for further development of your project, and a references section where you list the material used. However, feel free to go through the early sections very briefly, since they have been already described in the presentation; focus your report instead mainly on the discussion and conclusion section. Optionally, you can add an appendix with photos or any other material at the very end of your report; the appendix is not required and not included in the word count.

Although similarity among group members is expected, papers with copy-pasted or identical content will not be accepted. For this reason, all group members must contribute to all phases of the ethnographic project, from topic decision and planning onwards.

Format of the Report:

- File: Microsoft Word
- Font: Times New Roman
- Font size: 12 points
- Line spacing: 1.5 line
- Margins: 1inch (2.54cm)
- Word count: 1500-2000 (references and eventual appendix are excluded from the count)
- Citation: the style is up to you, as long as you apply it consistently (e.g., APA, ASA, Chicago)

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topic
1	14/1	Course introduction
2	21/1	The importance of play, games, sports
3	28/1	From “ancient games” to “modern sports”?
4	4/2	The ritual aspect of folk games
5	11/2	The moralizing mission of modern sports
	18/2	Lunar New Year Holidays (no lecture)
6	25/2	Gender and verification from ancient games till today
	4/3	Reading Week (no lecture); midterm due at the end of the week
7	11/3	The role of violence, pain, injury, and risk
8	18/3	Race, ethnicity, and social class in sports (the second part of this lecture will be about the ethnographic project)
9	25/3	Folk games case studies: Roman Harpastum, Calcio Storico Fiorentino, Kabaddi, Sepak Takraw
10	1/4	The political aspect of sports
11	8/4	National identity, nationalism and modern sports
12	15/4	Globalizing forms of playing
13	22/4	Games of the future - imagining the future of play (make-up class)

Course Outline

“Additional materials” are not required, I upload these for students who might want to explore more in-depth that week’s topic or some of the issues mentioned during that week’s lecture; they may also come handy when preparing assignments.

Week 1

- a. Hejtmanek, Katie R. 2016. “Anthropology 101: A Cultural Anthropologist Walks into a Gym”, *BarBend.com*, 25 May.
- b. Graeber, David. 2014. “What’s the Point If We Can’t Have Fun?” *The Baffler* (no. 24, Jan.).

Additional materials:

- Ocobock, Cara. 2019. “Sweating Through a Gym’s Gender Barriers”, *Sapiens*, 1 October.
- McDonald, Tom. 2016. “Dancing “My Humps” in Rural China”, *Sapiens*, 12 April (+ video)
- Xygalatas, Dimitris. 2019. “How Rituals of Pain Help Heal”, *Sapiens*, 4 October.

Week 2

- a. Fox, J. R. 1961. “Pueblo Baseball: A New Use for Old Witchcraft,” *The Journal of American Folklore* 74 (291): 9-16.
- b. Blanchard, Kendall. 2000. “The Anthropology of Sport,” In Jay Coakley and Eric Dunning, eds., *Handbook of Sports Studies*, pp. 144-156.

Additional materials:

- Prettyman, Sandra S. 2010. “Studying Sports: What can we learn, and why do we care?”
- Besnier, Niko, and Susan Brownell. 2012. “Sport, Modernity, and the Body”

Week 3

- a. Guttman, Allen. 2000. “The Development of Modern Sports.” In Jay Coakley and Eric Dunning, eds., *Handbook of Sports Studies*, pp. 248-259.
- b. Coakley, Jay J. 2009. “Sport in Society: An Inspiration or an Opiate?” In Stanley D. Eitzen, ed., *Sport in Contemporary Society: An Anthology*, pp. 16-32.

Highly recommended:

- Collins, Tony. 2013. “Sport in Capitalist Society: A Short History”

Additional materials:

- Horne, John, Alan Tomlinson, et al. 2013. “Chapter 1: Industrial Society, Social Change and Sports Culture”
- Donnelly, Peter. 2008. “Sport and Social Theory”
- Gorn, E. J. 1985. “‘Gouge and Bite, Pull Hair and Scratch’: The Social Significance of Fighting in the Southern Backcountry”

Week 4

- a. Gmelch, George. 2012. “Baseball Magic.” In James Spradley & David M. McCurdy, eds., *Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology*, pp. 348-357.
- b. Real, Michael R. 2003. “Super Bowl: Mythic Spectacle.” In Eric Dunning and Dominic Malcolm, eds., *Sport: Critical Concepts in Sociology*, pp. 187-199.

Highly recommended:

- Geertz, Clifford. 1973. "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight"

Additional materials:

- Bromberger, Christian. 1995. "Football as World-View and as Ritual"
- Dundes, Alan. 1999. "Into the End Zone for a Touchdown: A Psychoanalytical Consideration of American Football"
- Cheska, Taylor A. 1981 "Sports Spectacular: The Social Ritual of Power"
- Sciama, Lidia D. 1996. "The Venice Regatta: from Ritual to Sport"
- DeBiasi, Rocco and Pierre Lanfranchi. 1997. "The Importance of Difference: Football Identities in Italy"

Week 5

- a. Eitzen, D. Stanley. 2009. "Ethical Dilemmas in American Sport: The Dark Side of Competition." In Eitzen, D. Stanley, ed., *Sport in Contemporary Society: An Anthology* (8th ed.), pp. 161-170.
- b. Lipsyte, Robert. 2009. "Outraged over the Steroids Outrage." In Eitzen, D. Stanley, ed., *Sport in Contemporary Society: An Anthology*, 8th ed., pp. 225-227.

Highly recommended:

- Waddington, Ivan. 2000. "Doping in Sport: Towards a Sociological Understanding"

Additional materials:

- Hoffman, S. James. 2010. "Whatever Happened to Play?"
- Harding, Luke. 2005. "Forgotten Victims of East German Doping Take Their Battle to Court"
- Epstein, David. 2014. "Sports Should Be Child's Play"
- Ripley, Amanda. 2013. "The Case Against High-School Sports"
- Zivin et al. 2001. "An effective approach to violence prevention: Traditional martial arts in middle school"

Week 6

- a. Bryson, Lois. 1987. "Sport and the Maintenance of Masculine Hegemony." *Women's Studies International Forum* 10(4): 349-360.
- b. Hartmann, Douglas. 2003. "The Sanctity of Sunday Football: Why Men Love Sports." *Contexts* 2(4):13-19.

Highly recommended:

- Hargreaves, Jennifer. 1990. "Gender on the Sports Agenda," *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 25(4):287-307.

Additional materials:

- Reych, Zofia. 2017. "Climbing, Sex, And The Olympics," HuffPost
- Howe, P. David. 2003. "Kicking Stereotypes into Touch: An Ethnographic Account of Women's Rugby" (16 pp)
- Heissenberger, Stefan. 2016. "Travelling European Gay Footballers: Tournaments as an Integration Ritual"
- Sterod, Brandon. 2010. "Come Out and Play Confronting Homophobia in Sports"
- Cahn, Susan. 2010. "From 'Muscle Moll' to 'Butch' Ballplayer: Mannishness, Lesbianism, and Homophobia in US Women's Sport"
- Prettyman, Sandra S. 2010. "Jocks Rule-Girls Drool: Middle School Definitions of a Jock"
- Wheaton, Belinda. 2002. Babes on the beach, women in the surf: Researching gender, power and difference in the windsurfing culture

Week 7

- a. Messner, Michael A. 1990. "When Bodies Are Weapons: Masculinity and Violence in Sport," *International Review for the Sociology of Sports* 25(3): 203-218.

Additional materials:

- Collins, Randall. 2010. "On-Field Player Violence"
- George, Molly. 2005. "Making Sense of Muscle: The Body Experiences of Collegiate Women Athletes"
- Downey, Greg. 2010. "Throwing Like a Brazilian: On Ineptness and a Skill-Shaped Body"
- Palmer, Catherine. 2002. "'Shit Happens': The Selling of Risk in Extreme Sport"
- Wacquant, Loïc. 2001. "Whores, Slaves and Stallions: Languages of Exploitation and Accommodation among Boxers"
- Foster, Drew. 2015. "Fighters that don't Fight: The Case of Aikido and Somatic Metaphorism"

Week 8

- a. Kottak, Conrad. 1995. "Swimming in Cross-Cultural Currents." In David J. Hess and Roberto A. DaMatta, eds., *The Brazilian Puzzle: Culture on the Borderlands of the Western World*, pp. 49-58.
- b. Leite Lopes, José Sergio. 2000. "Class, Ethnicity, and Color in the Making of Brazilian Football." *Daedalus* 129:239-270. [skim only; otherwise find the abridged version in David Karen and Robert E. Washington, Eds, *The Sport and Society Reader*, pp. 72-84].

Additional materials:

- Hartmann, Douglas. 2000. "Rethinking the Relationships Between Sport and Race in American Culture: Golden Ghettos and Contested Terrain"
- Hallinan, Chris, Barry Judd. 2007. "'Blackfellas' Basketball: Aboriginal Identity and Anglo-Austrian Race Relations in Regional Basketball"
- Hoberman, John. 2000. "The Price of 'Black Dominance'"
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1978. "Sport and Social Class"
- MacClancy, Jeremy. 1996. "Sport, Identity and Ethnicity"
- Lin, Kwan Ting Maggie. 2009. "Introduction" in *Yoga in Hong Kong: Globalization, Localization, and the Fetishism of the Body* (p.143-177)

Week 9

- a. Alter, Joseph S. 2000. "Kabaddi, a National Sport of India: The Internationalism of Nationalism and the Foreignness of Indianness", In Noel Dyck, ed. 2000. *Games, Sports and Cultures*, pp. 83-115.

Additional materials:

- Tang, Wai-Man. 2023. "Intercultural education and sports: teaching kabaddi in a multicultural setting in Hong Kong," *Asian Anthropology*, 22:4, 275-292.
- Wood, Kelli. 2017. "Balls on Walls, Feet on Streets: Subversive Play in Grand Ducal Florence." *Renaissance Studies* 32(3) 365-87.
- Brown, Colin. 2006. "Sport, modernity and nation building: The Indonesian National Games of 1951 and 1953"

Week 10

- a. Foley, Douglas E. 1990. "The Great American Football Ritual: Reproducing Race, Class, and Gender Inequality." *Sociology of Sport Journal* 7:111-135.
- b. Phippen, Weston. 2016. "The Olympics Have Always Been Political," *The Atlantic*, 28 July.

Additional materials:

- Xu, Guoqi. 2008. Chapter 5: "The Sport of Ping-Pong Diplomacy"
- Rossol, Nadine. 2010. "The death of the spectacle in the mid-1930s" (only uploaded Chapter 6)
- Hodges, Andrew, and Paul Stubbs. 2016. "The Paradoxes of Politicization: Fan Initiatives in Zagreb, Croatia"
- Barmé, Geremie R. 2009. "China's Flat Earth: History and 8 August 2008"

Week 11

- a. Hogan, Jackie. 2003. "Staging the Nation, Gendered and Ethnicized Discourses of National Identities in Olympic Opening Ceremonies," *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 2003 27: 100.
- b. Besnier, Niko, and Susan Brownell. 2016. "Your Olympic Team May Be an Illusion," *Sapiens*, 4 August.

Additional materials:

- Markovits, Andrei, and Steven Hellerman. 2001. "Offside: Soccer and American Exceptionalism"
- Majumdar, Boria, and Sean Brown. 2008. "Why Baseball, Why Cricket? Differing Nationalisms, Differing Challenges"
- Sonntag, Albrecht. 2015. "Up to the Expectations? Perceptions of Ethnic Diversity in the French and German National Team"
- Markovits, Andrei S. 1990. "The Other 'American Exceptionalism': Why Is There No Soccer in the United States?"
- Longman, Jeré, Chang W. Lee. 2018. "South Korea Got the Winter Games. Then, It Needed More Olympians", *NYT*, 8 February. At: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/09/sports/olympics/south-korea-naturalized-citizens.html>

Week 12

- a. Bosco, Joseph. 2024. "Rugby Sevens, Globalization, and Cosmopolitan Nationalism: Hong Kong's Surprising Role in Rugby's Rise to Olympic Sport." In Tobias Zuser, and Lawrence Ho, Eds. *Sport in Hong Kong: Culture, Identity, and Policy*, pp. 105-135. New York: Peter Lang. (27 pages, but very light, skim only)
- b. Knight, Sam. 2022. "At Qatar's World Cup, Where Politics and Pleasure Collide. The first ten days were soccer as it is, rather than as you want it to be." *The New Yorker*, 3 December.

Additional materials:

- Appadurai, Arjun. 1996. "Playing with Modernity: The Decolonization of Indian Cricket" (24 pp, especially until page 104)
- Klein, Alan M. 2006. "Growing the Game: The Globalization of Major League Baseball." In Stanley Eitzen, ed.,
- Miller, James Andrew, Steve Eder, and Richard Sandomir. 2013. "College Football's Most Dominant Player? It's ESPN," *NYT*, 24 August. (incl. video)
- *Sport in Contemporary Society: An Anthology*, 8th ed.
- Morris, Andrew D. 2002. "'I Believe You Can Fly': Basketball Culture in Post-socialist China"
- Besnier, Niko. 2012. "The Athlete's Body and the Global Condition: Tongan Rugby Players in Japan"
- McKay, Alex. 2001. "'Kicking the Buddha's Head': India, Tibet and Footballing Colonialism"
- Dimeo, Paul. 2002. "Colonial Bodies, Colonial Sport: 'Martial' Punjabis, 'Effeminate' Bengalis and the Development of Indian Football"
- Brick, Carlton. 2004. "Misers, Merchandise and Manchester United: The peculiar paradox of the political economy of consumption"

Week 13

- a. Miah, Andy. 2010. "The DREAM Gene for the Post-human Athlete: Reducing Exercise-Induced Pain Sensations Using Gene Transfer", in Sands, R.R. & Sands, L. *The Anthropology of Sport and Human Movement: A Biocultural Perspective*, Lexington Books, pp. 327-341.
- b. Witkowski, Emma. 2012. "On the Digital Playing Field: How We 'Do Sport' With Networked Computer Games", *Games and Culture* 7(5): 349-374.

Additional materials:

- Taylor, T. L. 2012. "Raising the Stakes: E-Sports and the Professionalization of Computer Gaming"
- Szablewicz, M. 2016. "A Realm of Mere Representation? 'Live' E-Sports Spectacles and the Crafting of China's Digital Gaming Image"
- Aleksandrof, E. A. 2009. "Parkour: The Art of Movement"
- Fredericksen, E. 2002. "Architecture that Shreds"
- Andrews, Lori. 2016. "Genetics: Coitus defunctus" Review of Henry Greely's "The End of Sex and the Future of Human Reproduction," *Nature*. At: <https://www.nature.com/articles/532035a>

Wait, Marco, but why a Syllabus?...What should I do with it?

Syllabus/i is a Latin word, simply meaning "list"; in more plain words, it is an outline of your course of study. A syllabus also displays your next few months, from where the class meets to the reading materials and papers, the chronological progression of our class discussions through issues, concerns, and case studies considered meaningful to improve your "general education" background.

This syllabus is formulated with no prerequisites, and the course's main challenge is the same as other anthropological courses that try to deconstruct piece by piece socioculturally constructed human practices. Ideally, each week's topics and readings should raise questions for each class meeting to be addressed by lectures and discussions. A syllabus allows students to predict topics and concerns so that outside of classroom discussions one can set up a range of considerations with friends and peers. With plentiful readings, students are invited to also read or skim through the rest of the "additional materials," or even to look out for additional ones in our libraries. Remember, the best education coursework requires a joint effort between exciting teachers and curious students...but ultimately, you are responsible for your own education! The outcome of classes like this should be based on competence and approach rather than on the accumulation of knowledge aimed at grade-fulfilling. "Progress" in arts, humanities, and social sciences courses is mostly about critical thinking, not necessarily quantifiable or obtainable by accumulation/repetition. I look forward to meeting you in class!

Additional Textbooks and Overview Readings

Although no textbook is required for this course and you will find all the book chapters, newspapers, and other articles uploaded, The following books serve as good guide to major topics covered in the course:

- Coakley, Jay J. 2021. "Sports in society: issues and controversies" 13th Ed., New York: McGraw-Hill Education.
- Eitzen, Stanley D. 2009. "Sport in contemporary society: An anthology" 8th Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Besnier, Niko, Susan Brownell, Thomas F. Carter. 2018. "The Anthropology of Sport: Bodies, Borders, Biopolitics". Oakland, California: University of California Press.
- Sands, Robert, and Linda Sands, eds. 2010. "Anthropology of Sport and Human Movement Lanham: Lexington Books.
- Horne, John. 2013. "Understanding Sport: A Socio-cultural Analysis New York: Routledge.
- Wagg, Stephen. 2009. "Key concepts in sports studies". Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Sugden, John and Alan Tomlinson, Eds. 2013. "Power games: a critical sociology of sport London: Routledge.
- Giulianotti, Richard, Ed. 2015. "Routledge Handbook of the Sociology of Sport New York: Routledge.
- Hargreaves, Jennifer, Eric Anderson. 2014. "Routledge Handbook of Sport, Gender and Sexuality," London: Routledge.
- Aitchinson, Cara Carmichael. 2006. Sport & Gender Identities: Masculinities, Femininities, and Sexualities. Routledge: New York.
- Hoberman, Waddington, Møller. 2015. "Routledge Handbook of Drugs and Sport," London: Routledge.
- Jordan-Young, Rebecca M., and Katrina Alicia Karkazis. 2019. Testosterone: An Unauthorized Biography. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

These are more dated textbooks, but I list them here because they are among the pioneers in the field, with plenty of useful information:

- Horne, John, David J., Alan Tomlinson. 1987. "Sport, leisure, and social relations London: Routledge.
- Dyck, Noel, Ed. 2000. "Games, sports and cultures," Oxford: Berg.
- Sands, Robert, and Linda Sands, eds. 1999. "Anthropology, sport, and culture." Westport: Bergin & Garvey.
- Blanchard, Kendall. 1995. "The anthropology of sport: an introduction." Westport: Bergin & Garvey.
- Coackley, Jay and Eric Dunning. 2000. "Handbook of sport studies," London: SAGE.
- Dunning, Eric. 1999. "Sport matters: sociological studies of sport, violence, and civilization." London: Routledge
- Dunning, Eric, and Dominic Malcolm, Eds. 2003. "Sport: Critical Concepts in Sociology." London: Routledge.

Grade descriptors

Grade	Criteria for course and coursework assessment: 1) Knowledge and understanding of the topic 2) Coursework and use of course materials
A	1) Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes. 2) Coursework creatively synthesized course materials and key ideas in an original way, showing a great depth of understanding. Arguments are logical and cohesive, discussion is well-organized, and the writing is clear. All relevant course materials have been fully utilized, and additional material has been searched and meaningfully used to expand the topic.
A-	1) Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes. 2) Coursework synthesized course materials and key ideas in an original way, showing a great depth of understanding. Arguments are logical and cohesive, discussion is well-organized, and the writing is clear. Most of the relevant course materials have been fully utilized, but there are minor areas for improvement.
B-range	1) Substantial performance on all learning outcomes or otherwise an high-performance on some learning outcomes that eventually compensates for other lower-performance learning outcomes. 2) Coursework demonstrates a solid grasp of course materials and key ideas. There are some areas for improvement with respect to building a cohesive argument, organizing the discussion, communicating clearly, and/or identifying relevant evidence.
C-range	1) Adequate performance on the majority of learning outcomes, with several weaknesses. 2) Coursework shows some effort, but course materials have not been sufficiently engaged. The argument and the writing is not clear, and/or there is no evidence for statements and claims made or how they link to the broader argument. There are major areas for improvement with respect to building a cohesive argument, organizing the discussion, communicating clearly, and/or identifying relevant evidence.
D-range	1) Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes. 2) The work shows little effort to engage course materials. There are major problems with clarity of argument and writing, or to properly address the prompt.
F	1) Extremely unsatisfactory performance on most learning outcomes, and/or failure to meet specified coursework assignments. 2) Coursework completely failed to respond to the assignment prompt or have not been submitted or submitted too late.

*Please note that all marks/grades and feedback provided on assignments or on our course page may be subject to further moderation to ensure consistency across the cohort.