

CES 308
The Cultural Politics of Sport
Summer Session 2
MTWTF: 9:00 AM to 10:15 AM
Wilson Short 6

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Course Description and Objective

CES 308 is a critical examination of the sport of baseball through the lenses of race, gender, sexuality, nationalism, and criminality. Specifically, this class will examine how the sport of baseball reinforces dominant constructions of masculinity, race, gender, and nationalism and how these constructions are embodied in popular representations of the game ranging from 1869 to the present day. Using readings, film screenings, lectures and class discussions, students will be given the tools to identify and analyze these constructions in the game of baseball while also being given the tools to engage both critically and consciously with these constructions.

Course Learning Goals

- Identify and critique the dominant representation of the history of baseball and how the dominant representation erases the contributions of women and people of color
- Learn about the use of baseball as a highly effective tool of United States imperialism and colonization and how this practice still continues to this day
- Identify the false binary between softball and baseball and how softball was used as a tool to reinforce the concept of masculinity in baseball
- Learn about the creation of the origin myth of the game and how this origin myth was used to justify American exceptionalism
- Serve as a good foundation for further study in the humanities and social sciences

Required Texts

There are three books for this class:

- Alan M. Klein, *Growing the Game: The Globalization of Major League Baseball* (2006) ISBN: 978-0300136395
- Jennifer Ring, *Stolen Bases: Why American Girls Don't Play Baseball* (2013) ISBN: 978-0252079153
- Rob Ruck, *Raceball: How the Major Leagues Colonized the Black and Latin Game* (2012) ISBN: 978-0807048078

All three books can be found in the Bookie for about fifty-eight dollars new without tax. However, they can also be found online for a lot cheaper. In addition, the **Klein book can be read for free through the library as an e-book as an alternative to actually buying the book.** However, the books are essential to passing the class and due to the shortened nature of the class;

I expect that everyone will have the books by the first Friday of the semester. I will also be supplementing the readings with specific articles on Blackboard and I will require you to acquire a Netflix subscription, as I will have you watch specific documentaries at home and then come into class and discuss them.

Assignments and Evaluation

Your grade will be calculated, using a 1000-point scale consisting of the following: 15% Class Participation, 15% Question and Quotes, Paper, 15% Movie Analysis, 25% Short Paper, and 30% Critical Analysis Paper.

Class Participation (150 Points)

In a class of this size and a class of this shortened duration, showing up to class doing the readings and being properly prepared is essential in creating a good class discussion. I know that some people find public speaking to be a terrifying experience and speaking in a classroom is not exactly the easiest thing to do. There are various ways to make up for this- probably the easiest would be coming to office hours and discussing the materials one on one. I will also be tying attendance into participation, as it is impossible to participate if one is constantly gone.

Question and Quote (150 Points)

There will be daily question and quote responses due at the beginning of each class session. For the Q and Q, I want you to write down a question that you have about the reading or a question that the reading provokes from you. For the quote, I want you to find a specific quote in the daily reading that resonates with you and then I want you write about what that quote means to you and this can be really anything as long as you can tie back to the reading. I want the Q and Q to double spaced and a full-length page. I know that this seems to be a lot of writing but I hope that you find the readings fascinating enough to make this a simple process.

Movie Analysis (150 Points)

The game of baseball has surpassed the field and ended up on the silver screen as seen in the numerous baseball films and documentaries that have been produced. Every Friday of the session, I will be screening a film in class as a way to offer a new prospective on the game of baseball. With each film being screened, a two to three-page analysis will be required on the Monday following the screening. Within this analysis, I want you to analyze the film while also using the reading to place the film in its proper context

The films that I will be screening are:

A League of Their Own

Field of Dreams

Sugar

The Battered Bastards of Baseball

No-No: A Dockumentary

Short Paper (250 Points)

This assignment is a five to six-page paper on a topic of your choice that you are in interested on the game of baseball that relates back to the readings and discussions in class. For this paper, I want you to use three readings from class and three outside sources to ground your

sources. The paper will be double-spaced with 12-point Times New Roman font and 1-inch margins with either MLA or Chicago style citations.

This paper will be due on July 10th.

Critical Analysis Paper (300 Points)

See attached prompt on back of syllabus for information

Course Policies

1. **Attendance:** In a class of this size and duration, attendance is essential in understanding the readings and doing well in the class. Everyone has three free absences during the semester and two free tardies. After reaching either threshold, I will start docking twenty points from participation, as it is impossible to participate when you are not in the classroom.
2. **Technology:** All Electronic Devices must be turned off and stowed away when in class. This means all cellphones, tablets, computers, and MP3 players. By stowed away, I mean gone from your immediate person and put in a backpack, a purse, or a knapsack. If I catch you texting in class, I will ask you to leave. If your phone goes off, you have two options: first is to turn it off immediately while the second option is for me to answer it. This also applies to any objects that divert your attention from the class (newspaper, homework from another class, etc.).
3. **Discussions and Assignments:** Baseball is a game that creates intense rivalries (Giants and Dodgers, Yankees and Red Sox and finally Mariners and Padres. However, I fully expect that the discussions that will happen in this class will be in a cordial tone even if we disagree on some topics, I fully expect that everyone can engage in a respectful tone. I will not tolerate any bigotry or verbal harassment in the classroom. I reserve the right to ask you leave if I interpret either of the two occurring. Assignments must be turned in as hard copies at the beginning of class. E-mail submission or dropping papers in my mailbox is not acceptable.
4. **Contact:** Out of the three ways I have listed on this syllabus, office hours is probably the best way to get in contact with me followed by e-mail and then phone. If you e-mail me between the hours of 8 AM to 5 PM M-F, I will try my best to get back to you as soon as possible. However, if you e-mail me after those times, I might take a while. If you have any questions or concerns that cannot fit in e-mail, please come to office hours. I know it can be intimidating but I do not bite and I enjoy talking to students one on one.
5. **Disability Accommodations:** Students with Disabilities: Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please either visit or call the Access Center (Washington Building 217; 509-335-3417) to schedule an appointment with an Access Advisor. All accommodations MUST be approved through the Access Center.

6. **Academic Integrity:** Plagiarism of any kind of any assignment will not be tolerated and will result in an automatic zero on the assignment and a failing grade in the course. To ensure that this does not happen familiarize yourself with the University's definitions and policies on Academic Integrity to understand your rights and responsibilities.
(<http://academicintegrity.wsu.edu/>)
7. **Campus Safety Information:** Washington State University is committed to maintaining a safe environment for its faculty, staff, and students. Safety is the responsibility of every member of the campus community and individuals should know the appropriate actions to take when an emergency arises. In support of our commitment to the safety of the campus community the University has developed a Campus Safety Plan, <http://safetyplan.wsu.edu>. It is highly recommended that you visit this web site as well as the University emergency management web site at <http://oem.wsu.edu/> to become familiar with the information provided.
8. **About Grammar and Writing:** You are in college, which means that at this point in your academic career, you must be able to communicate coherently and effectively. In order to do that, you must be able to demonstrate a certain level of technical ability in your writing. With that in mind, here are a few goofs that will make you lose points in the written work assigned for this class:
- ✓ Calling authors by their first name. Always use their full name or their last name, and **never** their first name alone.
 - ✓ Misuse of the following words:
 - affect/effect
 - dominate/dominant
 - for/four
 - its/it's
 - quite/quiet
 - there/they're/their
 - then/than
 - to/too/two
 - weather/whether
 - woman/women
 - your/you're
 - ✓ Made up words like irregardless (it's irrespective or regardless) or supposably (it's supposedly); misspelled words like ethnicities (spelled ethnicities) or priviledge (spelled privilege); and incongruent pairing of words like "should of" (it's should've or should have).
 - ✓ Each one of these offenses (or offenses like them) will make you lose 3 points every time they appear in your work.
9. **Terminology:**
- Not "colored" people/persons but "people of color"
 - Not "the white man" but "white men" or "white males"
 - The use of either terms in your writing or in class discussions will result in a deduction of points

Tentative Schedule

Come to class prepared by doing the reading (or watching) for that day. I reserve the right to change the syllabus and I will announce that in advance.

Week 1: If We Build It, They Will Come: History and Nostalgia.

M 6/22: Introduction to the class and brief overview of the class and short lecture

T 6/23: *Ken Burns: Baseball* Inning One on Netflix and Chapter 1 in Ring

W 6/24: Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 in Ruck

TH 6/25: *Ken Burns: Baseball* Inning 7

F 6/26: “Paternity Suit” and A Question of Character” on Blackboard

Film Screening: *Field of Dreams*

Week 2: You Throw Like a Girl: Softball and Separate but Equal

M 6/29: Chapters 2 and 3 in Ring

T 6/30: Chapter 4 and 5 in Ring

W 7/1: Chapter 6 and 7 in Ring

Film Screening: *For a Leela of Their Own*

TH 7/2 Chapter 8 and 9 in Ring

F 7/3: Chapters 10 and Epilogue in Ring

Film Screening: *A League of Their Own*

Week 3: *Buscones* and Baseball: The Globalization of the Game

M 7/6: “From The Homefront to Horsehide Diplomacy” on Blackboard

T 7/7: No Class

W 7/8: Introduction and Chapter 1 of Klein

TH 7/9: Chapter 4 of Klein

F 7/10: Chapter 8 and 9 of Ruck (**Short Paper Due**)

Film Screening: *Sugar*

Week 4: Major League Players, Minor League Wages: The Negro and Minor Leagues

M 7/13: *Ken Burns Baseball* Inning 5

T 7/14: Chapter 3 and 5 of Ruck

W 7/15: No Class

TH 7/16:” I Always Wanted to See Hawaii” from *Ball Four* on Blackboard (**Paper Topics for Critical Analysis Paper Due**)

F 7/17: “The Plight of the Minor League Baseball Wage Slave”

https://sports.vice.com/en_us/article/the-plight-of-the-minor-league-baseball-wage-slave

and “An Inside Look into the Harsh Conditions of Minor League Baseball”

<http://bleacherreport.com/articles/2062307-an-inside-look-into-the-harsh-conditions-of-minor-league-baseball>

Film Screening: *The Battered Bastards of Baseball*

Week 5: Spitballs, Greenies, and BALCO: Criminality of the Game

M 7/20: *The Pitch That Killed* On Blackboard

T 7/21: “Baseball, Cheating and Tradition: Would Kant Cork His Bat?” On Blackboard

W 7/22: No Class

TH 7/23: Chapters 5, 6, 7, 11, and 12 in *Game of Shadows* on Blackboard

F 7/24: *Ken Burns: Baseball Inning Ten*

Film Screening: *No-No: A Dockumentary*

Week 6: The Future of the Game

M 7/27: Klein Chapter 8

T 7/28: Ruck Epilogue

W 7/29: No Class (Extended Office Hours)

TH 7/30: Writing Day (No Class)

F 7/31: Writing Day (No Class)

Critical Analysis Paper Due in my box at 1 PM

Critical Analysis Paper for CES 308
Due July 31th at 1:00 PM in my Mailbox

Baseball is unlike any other major sport in that it is a sport that both embraces tradition while also rejecting it outright. It is a sport that is both very parochial yet incredibly open-minded when looking at issues of race and nationality. Throughout the shortened semester, I will have briefly touched upon just the tip of the iceberg of baseball. This paper will serve as your own analysis and investigation into topics of the game that you personally find interesting that fits within the numerous differing constructions of the sport that we have discussed in class. On July 16, I want you to come into class with a one page typed out abstract of your proposed paper topic along with a preliminary bibliography. I will return these the next day with my feedback. As stated above, the paper will be due on July 31 at 1 PM and I want a hard copy of the paper deposited into my box.

- The paper will be 10 to 12 pages long, 12 pt. Times New Roman with 1 inch margins
- It will require proper citation (MLA, Chicago, and APA). I do not care which one you use as long as it is consistent
- I want you to use four outside sources along with four readings from the class as a way to ground your analysis.
- This paper will serve as the culmination of this class, therefore I expect a well written analysis with little to no grammatical or spelling errors.
- Other than these guidelines, the paper topic is up to you to find and research and I personally cannot wait to see what you find.