

## 100AC: SPORTS AND GENDER IN U.S. HISTORY

Fall 2018

105 North Gate, Tu/Th 12:30-2 p.m.

Class # 32724

Instructor: Bonnie J. Morris [drbon@gwu.edu](mailto:drbon@gwu.edu); [drbon@berkeley.edu](mailto:drbon@berkeley.edu)

Office hours: Dwinelle 2309, T/Th 11-12, and over coffee after class by signup.

Graduate Readers: Nina Haug; Natalie Novoa; Elisheya Wyle

**This course satisfies the American Cultures Requirement.**

Welcome all! This class invites you to examine the history of sex roles, race and culture in American sport, with a special emphasis on where and how women have entered full (or limited) athletic participation. Sports events, as public and televised spectacles, reinforce a range of intended politics: community pride, international competition, the ranking of public bodies, symbolic warfare, the exploitation of black talent by white ownership, the reinforcement of rewards for male strength and female marketability. In U.S. society high school and college sports have also served as access to education and social mobility while reinforcing stereotypes about race, gender, and “natural” ability. Across history, we find athletes pressured to model society’s ideological and political beliefs through their very bodies; and though the “best” bodies may set world records in an event, the winner frequentl<sub>y</sub>, returns to a society where he or she is a second-class citizen at best.

How do our attitudes about both male and female athletes reflect learned cultural biases and expectations? How are men and women, boys and girls trained to think about health, performance, and victory in athletics? What role has our media played in constructing winners and losers, idealized fitness, masculinity and femininity? And how do these questions of boundaried athleticism intersect with shifting racial codes—and women’s emergence into full public and political representation?

In line with the American Cultures mission to desegregate the history curriculum and examine the lived experiences of all communities represented at Cal, we will:

- 1) analyze the ways schools and state interests have used sport to perpetuate and exaggerate both racial difference and gendered reproductive roles. We’ll move from sacred games and the colonization of bodies in early America to the emergence of scientific racism in 19<sup>th</sup> century fitness culture and the construction of segregated recreation facilities through Jim Crow law.
- 2) apply the contexts of medical and anthropological race and health classifications to fitness and eugenics narratives, examining immigrant sports leagues and sport at historically black universities and colleges (HBUCs) as

sites of resistance. We'll also interrogate health advisories to map women's entry into formerly male-only spheres of play.

- 3) follow where and how marginalized groups of male and female athletes enter the mainstream based on government needs; we'll see approaches of "normalizing" the segregation of Native Americans and Japanese Americans, Jews and African Americans through wartime sport, Negro League and exhibition games. With the rise of Cold War era homophobia, we'll also examine the intersection of sport as heterosexism, the Olympics as a global stage for acting out notions of equal opportunity, and the narratives of closeted LGBTQ athletes before Stonewall.
- 4) inquire about double standards for sports violence and injury, for criminalizing athletes (or bringing sexual predators to justice), and ways that gendered and racialized aspects of sport are reinforced through profitable material culture: clothing brands, action toys, health foods, sneakers, and uniform logos.

Conceptually, in each period of history we'll incorporate the journeys of African American, Native American, immigrant and LGBTQ athletes in the following ways: as producers for white consumers of sports entertainment; as independent actors, coaches and managers for community-run sport programs; as communities of resistance against imposed race laws; as role models for other aspiring athletes; as public speakers using the sports platform to advocate civil rights reforms and boycotts; and as stereotyped images appearing on toy and food brands, team mascots, and in cultural messages about "normal" male and female traits. It should be implicit in the syllabus that each day will include integrated material in reference to diverse groups, with certain specific topic highlighted or dominant for the day.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES:

Each class will combine equal parts lecture and discussion, to allow for diverse perspectives: you are encouraged to reference your own experiences with gender and sport in education, recreation, in public life, and globally. During this semester, you'll also be asked to:

- know the various codes and customs restricting female and minority access to sports participation in U.S. history
- demonstrate familiarity with athletes/educators who helped change attitudes, laws and opportunities
- identify the intersection of race, class and gender in the construction of sports participation and facilities in the United States
- analyze the evolving nature of the Olympics as a global geopolitical event with overlapping ideological narratives
- identify biases and themes in media coverage of men's and women's athletics

- compare restricted country club sports and other membership-based facilities with public courts, YMCA and YMHA recreation, open vs. segregated parks and pools, and street ball
- understand and address the background of Title IX law and its ongoing applications
- analyze aspects of social diversity (ethnicity, race, socio-economic status, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, etc.) and how they affect American sports training
- explain how social categories and structures of power may affect human athletic potential
- articulate a critical account of double standards in health and fitness history
- demonstrate your familiarity with the readings and other course content through exams and short papers.

#### TEXTBOOKS:

Susan Cahn, Coming on Strong. University of Illinois Press, 2015. A full accounting of 20<sup>th</sup> century women's sports progress and backlash, including analyses of class, race and homophobia in the promotion and rules governing women's events.

Mary Corey and Mark Harnischfeger, Before Jackie: The Negro Leagues, Civil Rights and the American Dream. Paramount Market Publishing, 2014. Approaches to the legacies of Negro League baseball in terms of black management and community autonomy, with critical attention to the women of the Leagues and issues of travel in the Jim Crow South.

John Hoberman, Darwin's Athletes. Houghton Mifflin, 1997. A critical overview of scientific myths surrounding black athleticism. (Scanned; on [bcourses](#) as a pdf.)

Molly Schiot, Game Changers. Simon & Schuster, 2016. A beautifully illustrated overview of known and lesser-known women athletes.

Dave Zirin, What's My Name, Fool? Haymarket. 2005. Critical perspectives on sports as resistance in recent history, from one of America's best sports journalists.

[Shorter articles listed separately with class dates; available online or on [bcourses](#).]

#### Recommended, for further reading:

Sarah Fields. Female Gladiators. University of Illinois, 2008.

Ken Mochizuki, Baseball Saved Us. Lee & Low Books, 1995.

Nina Revoyr, The Necessary Hunger. Simon & Schuster, 1997.

William Rhoden. Forty Million Dollar Slaves. Random House, 2007.

## FILMS:

Dare to Compete: The Struggle for Women in Sports  
Doping For Gold  
In Whose Honor? Native American Mascots  
The Manzanar Fishermen's Club  
Playing for the World  
Pumping Iron II  
Unforgivable Blackness: The Rise and Fall of Jack Johnson  
When Diamonds Were a Girl's Best Friend

## COURSEWORK and EXPECTATIONS:

Please arrive on time, having read the material assigned for that day; attendance is factored into your overall grade. Your grade will begin to be affected after your third absence (exceptions will be made for athletic events.) If you are a participating Cal athlete, provide a game schedule to me early on so I can assist you in making up any work missed due to travel. Accommodations for students with disabilities will be made on an individual basis per the statement on page 5 of the syllabus. For other personal concerns not covered by the syllabus, please see me at the start of the semester; I am also happy to meet at times beyond the designated office hours. Written assignments must be completed on schedule: *no late work!*

- 1) The first paper is a short analysis of intersectional race and gender bias in sports media, due Thursday, September 20th.
- 2) There will be an in-class midterm on Thursday, October 11th. It is closed book and closed-note, covering the readings and historical material from the first month of class, with an emphasis on body classifications, wartime sport, and racial exhibition games. There will be a review in class prior to the exam.
- 3) A final exam will cover your familiarity with the following: Title IX, the globalization of sports culture, the state's political investment in fitness, and race and sex codes embedded in sports marketing.

Final grades are calculated with the first paper weighing 20% and the midterm and final paper 40% each. You will be evaluated on your ability to write at college level, with proper citations and sources. Please familiarize yourself with the university code of academic integrity: copying from the Internet, utilizing another student's paper as your own, or other violations will result in failure of the assignment. In all assignments, "I" statements are fine where appropriate, while a conversational or sarcastic tone should be saved for lively class discussion.

A+ 99-100      A 94-98  
A- 90-93      B+ 87-89

B 84-86      B- 80-83  
C+ 77-79      C 74-76  
C- 70-73      D+ 67-69  
D 64-66      D- 60-63  
F below 60

Students can elect to take the course on a Passed/Not Passed (P/NP) basis as long as they declare their decision by October 26.

### Nondiscrimination Statement

The classroom is a diverse and inclusive community. The University of California, in accordance with applicable Federal and State law and University policy, prohibits discrimination against any member of the school's community on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, citizenship, age, gender identity, pregnancy, ancestry, marital status, medical condition, physical or mental disability, or serve in the uniformed services. This nondiscrimination policy covers admission, access, and treatment in all University programs and activities.

### On Sexual Harassment

No form of harassment will be tolerated in our classroom. As UC employees, all instructors are Responsible Employees required to report incidents of sexual violence, sexual harassment or other conduct prohibited by university policy to the Title IX officer. To report sex discrimination or sexual harassment, contact Title IX Officer Denise Oldham: [ask\\_ophd@berkeley.edu](mailto:ask_ophd@berkeley.edu) or (510) 643-7985. Confidential resources available to students include the CARE Advocate Office, which serves survivors of sexual violence and sexual harassment: <http://sa.berkeley.edu/dean/confidential-care-advocate>.

### Student Disability Services

Students who need accommodation will work with the Disabled Students Program (DSP) to make the official designation and associated accommodations. If you have a letter of accommodation, you are responsible for sharing it with instructors in order to get the help you need, such as extended exam time and/or note-taking assistance. Requests for midterm proctoring are due in September.

### Technology Policies

Use of a personal laptop for note-taking purposes is acceptable. To avoid distraction to your colleagues, yourself and your professor, please do not use your cell phone during class. Emailing me is fine: please include a proper greeting ("Hello, Dr. Bon")

is acceptable) and complete sentences (proofread before you hit “send.”) I may not respond instantly but will reply within 24 hours. Please note that I cannot write references/recommendations until after you have completed the course.

### Readings and Class Topics by Calendar Date:

**PART I: Sacred games and colonized bodies: historical anchors of race, class and gender.**

Th, 8/23: First class: introduction to the subject. Make an informal list of your favorite childhood/playground games. How do we learn who is “naturally” good at which sports? What are some ways schools influence or are influenced by athletic talent as a path to popularity, favoritism, or success?

Tue, 8/28: American manhood: body attitudes in American history, from Puritan encounters with indigenous games to the “muscular Christianity” of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. READ: Nigel Barker, “Is Sport a Religion?” in *Psychology Today*, 11/11/09

Th, 8/30: Ideals of American womanhood: racial and religious roles of the “good” woman, and medical/class attitudes toward female health and behavior across the centuries, including the double standards for maternal health of white women and enslaved black women. READ: Coming on Strong, Intro-ch. 1.

Tue, 9/4: Racial classification, immigration, and the eugenics movement in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. READ: Darwin’s Athletes, Intro-ch. 1, 6, and 13, and Christopher Reardon, “American Gothic,” in *Teaching Tolerance*.

Th, 9/6: The anthropological display of the “savage” indigenous body: from Native American sports performance at the World’s Fair to the exhibit of the living man Ota Benga in the Bronx Zoo. Film in class, “Playing for the World.” READ: Geoffrey Ward, “The Man in the Zoo,” *American Heritage*, October 1992.

Tue, 9/11: Women competing in public: class issues, colleges, beauty queens and the start of basketball. READ: Coming on Strong, ch. 2-3. (LAST DAY TO ADD/DROP is tomorrow, Sept. 12<sup>th</sup>!)

Th, 9/13: The development of racial codes in Jim Crow sport and in twentieth century media. Film, “Unforgivable Blackness: the Rise and Fall of Jack Johnson.”

**READ:** Darwin's Athletes, ch. 2-3; Before Jackie, ch. 1-3; What's My Name, Fool?, ch. 1-2.

## **PART II: Turning points for inclusion, exclusion and "othering" in sports**

**Tue, 9/18: World War II: from Nazi politics at the Berlin Olympics to the internment of Japanese Americans. READ:** handouts; Coming on Strong, ch. 4 and 6; Baseball Saved Us; and Ira Berkow, "Long Overdue, Germany Recognizes a Champion," New York Times, 10/28/02. Recommended film: "The Manzanar Fishermen's Club."

**Th, 9/20: The All-American Girls Baseball League. Film:** "When Diamonds Were a Girl's Best Friend," directed by Janis Taylor (interviews with past AAGBL players.) No readings. *First paper due in class today.*

**Tue, 9/25: Postwar tensions of race and sexuality: segregation and sex roles during the Cold War era, with a focus on the Tennessee State Tiger Belles and the role of Negro Leagues baseball. READ:** Coming on Strong, ch. 5 and 7; Before Jackie, ch. 4-8; What's My Name, Fool?, ch. 3-4.

**Th, 9/27: Contesting womanhood in elite sports, from 1960s "femininity testing" and the East German scandals to Caster Semenya and today's trans athletes. Film:** "Doping For Gold." **READ:** Coming on Strong, ch. 9; and Ariel Levy, "Either/or: sports, sex, and the case of Caster Semenya," New Yorker, 11/30/09.

## **PART III: Contesting and reinforcing standards of sexuality through sports.**

**Tue, 10/2: Staying pretty, staying young, staying...white? How do performance sports including gymnastics, ice skating and ballet draw in girls? How did soccer become a game for privileged suburban youth in the U.S.? What are the rewards for youth sports? There will be an overview of sports literature aimed at children, including the role of patriotism and school loyalty. FILM:** "Kick Like a Girl." **READ:** George Vecsey, "England Battles Racism Infecting Soccer," New York Times, 2/2/03; Keith Richburg, "Fans' Racist Taunts Rattle European Soccer," Washington Post, 12/13/04.

**Th, 10/4: How muscular are white women permitted to be? This complicated question gets a workover in the film "Pumping Iron II." READ:** Gloria Steinem, "The Strongest Woman in the World."

Tu, 10/9: Review for midterm. Film in class, "Dare to Compete."

Th, 10/11; MIDTERM EXAM in class.

Tue, 10/16: Title IX, Billie Jean King, and the women's revolution of the 1970s. READ: Coming on Strong, ch. 10. You will also receive a packet of current essays on Title IX.

Th, 10/18: The uses of sexuality: to sell, to intimidate. This class positions historic fear of black manhood with the "selling" of white female sexuality in sports marketing and the media critique of black female sexuality and power. READ: Holly Thorpe, "Using Sex to Sell," Adam Kilgore, "For Rutgers Players, a Great Run Spoiled," *Washington Post*, April 2007; and Darwin's Athletes, ch. 4, 5, 8-12.

Tue, 10/23: Adjusting the body for public acceptance: extreme dieting, sports food, and the history of eating disorders. READ: Sophie Gilbert, "To the Bone," *The Atlantic*, 7/14/2017; R. Marie Griffith, "Apostles of Abstinence," in *American Quarterly* 52:4, December 2000.

Th, 10/25: Homophobia in sports culture, from abusive coaches to school policies to the first out LGBTQ athletes and the Gay Games. Film in class: "Training Rules."

Tue, 10/30: Continuing focus on sports and homophobia. READ: Coming on Strong, ch. 8; What's My Name, Fool?, ch. 8.

Th, 11/8: Special guest speaker, TBA.

**PART IV: Commercialized racism in sports marketing, scandal, and media.**

Tue, 11/13: Racial marketing in sports brands. How has the usage of Native American mascots made actual Native American athletes less visible? Film: "In Whose Honor?" READ: Amy Taxin, "Arab Mascot at Coachella Valley High," in *HuffPost Los Angeles*, 12/2/13; Bruce Anderson, "That Guy on the Helmet is Not Me," *Washington Post*, 2014; and Charles F. Springwood and C. Richard King, "'Playing Indian': Why Native American Mascots Must End," in *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 11/9/01.



**Th, 11/15:** Continued focus on sports marketing: from Olympic ads and Wheaties boxes to Nike sweatshops overseas. Who makes our sneakers? What brand names or logos were essential in your house or neighborhood? What trends do you see in brand marketing now? How has the sports market reached out to Muslim athletes? **READ:** Cynthia Enloe, "The Globetrotting Sneaker," in *Ms.*, March/April 1995; Aheda Zanetti, "I Created the Burkini," in *The Guardian*, 8/24/16.

**Tue, 11/20:** Misogyny, athletic offenders, and international conflict in our headlines. How might the media critique athletes' participation in sexual assault or violence without racializing such behavior? Where do we find female athletes criminalized? In what ways do Americans categorize opponents on the playing field now? How does "taking a knee" shift the focus to American racism as an enemy within society? **READ:** Darwin's Athletes, ch. 14, 15; Tricia Jenkins, "Do Fans Have to Cheer for America, Too?" *Washington Post*, 2/3/13; What's My Name, Fool?, ch. 6-7.

**Th, 11/22:** NO CLASS: holiday break.

**Tue, 11/27:** Special guest speaker: softball umpire Connie Wolver.

**Th, 11/29:** LAST DAY! How far have women (and men) come in the global acceptance of women's sports coverage and competition? What are the controversies ahead for gender parity in athletics? How have students changed their responses to those questions over the past 15 years? **READ:** Andrew Das, "Five top Female Players Accuse U.S. Soccer of Wage Discrimination," *New York Times*, 4/01/16, and Andrew Zimbalist, "The NCAA's Women Problem," *New York Times*, 3/26/16.

Reading/review week: Monday, 12/3 through Friday, 12/7

Your final exam will be FRIDAY, December 14<sup>th</sup> before noon. Grades will be submitted by 12/19.

#### AN INCOMPLETE LIST OF INTERESTING SPORTS FILMS

Ali  
The Babe  
The Bad News Bears  
Battle of the Sexes  
Bend it Like Beckham  
The Big Blue  
Black Swan  
The Blind Side

Blue Crush  
Brian's Song  
Bring it On  
Bull Durham  
Chakde! India! (male coach of a women's hockey team)  
The Champ  
Chariots of Fire  
Concussion  
Doping for Gold  
The Eagle Huntress  
Eight Men Out  
Endless Summer  
Field of Dreams  
Gallipoli  
Glory Road  
Heart Like a Wheel  
Heaven Can Wait  
Hoop Dreams  
Hoosiers  
Ice Castles  
Invictus  
I, Tonya  
The Karate Kid (I, II)  
A League of Their Own  
Love and Basketball  
Major League  
Moneyball  
The Natural  
Offside (women trying to attend sports events disguised as boys, in Iran)  
Olympia (the Nazi Games, Berlin 1936)  
Personal Best  
Pumping Iron (I, II)  
Raging Bull  
Remember the Titans  
Rocky (I, II, III, IV, V...)  
Semi-Tough  
Soul on Ice (black hockey players)  
Soul Surfer  
Stealing Home  
Thin Ice  
Toe to Toe (lacrosse rivalry)  
The Turning Point  
Veil of Dreams: Women's Soccer and Islamic Tradition in Iran  
When Diamonds Were a Girl's Best Friend  
White Nights  
The Wrestler