

ANTHROPOLOGY OF SPORTS

Anthropology 390-080

Spring 2008

Course Description

This course considers sports from a cross-cultural perspective. The unifying theme is how sports interact with and reflect other aspects of culture, such as economics, politics, religion, identity, gender, and change. These inter-relationships are examined in six case studies, which students will read over the course of the semester. Two case studies consider different examples of traditional sports, the Mesoamerican ballgame as documented by archaeologists and the Afgani game of buzkashi as documented by cultural anthropologists. Two other case studies look at sports and globalization through the spread of American baseball to Japan and the spread of soccer worldwide. The last two case studies are more topical, considering American sports fans and the role of race in sports.

The course will be run as a seminar with most periods devoted to discussion of issues related to the assigned readings. For good discussion everyone must come to class having done the assigned readings and prepared to talk. Students who have not read the assigned materials will be asked to leave so that they can get the reading done and so that those who remain can engage in an informed exchange of ideas. To do well, students must review their note thoroughly and consistently throughout the term and demonstrate extra effort and pride in their work for all written assignments. Students should expect to study a minimum of two to three hours for every hour spent in class.

Instructor: Jill Neitzel

e-mail: neitzel@udel.edu

Office: Munroe 107; you can also drop off messages/papers to be put in my mailbox in Munroe 135

Office Hours: Mon; Wed, Fri 10:00-11:45am; Tues, Thrs 9:45-11:45am; or see me before or after class, e-mail me, or make an appointment

Phone: 831-8755; 831-2802 is the Anthropology Dept. number where you can leave messages for me

Web Page: www.udel.edu/anthro/neitzel/

Required Textbooks

Azoy, G. Whiting – Buzkashi: Game and Power in Afganistan

Entine, Jon – Taboo: Why Black Athletes Dominate Sports and Why We're Afraid to Talk about It

Kuper, Simon – Soccer against the Enemy: How the World's Most Popular Sport Starts and Fuels Revolution and Keeps Dictators in Power

Queenan, Joe – True Believers: The Tragic Inner Life of Sports Fans

Whiting, Robert – You Gotta Have Wa

Whittington, E. Michael – The Sport of Life and Death: The Mesoamerican Ballgame
(this book is out of print; used copies available from Amazon.com)

Assignments

2 exams – total 200 pts
2 quizzes – total 50 pts
2 film reviews – total 50 pts
1 short paper – 25 pts
traditional/ancient sport poster – 100 pts
film comparison – 100 pts

NOTE: **Attendance is mandatory** and will be recorded each class period. Absent students will have 3 pts deducted from their semester point total. Exceptions will be made only for students who have legitimate excuses and who have informed the instructor in advance.

No make-ups will be given for quizzes or exams unless the student has a written excuse from the health center or has informed the instructor in advance about a legitimate, unavoidable absence.

Late assignments will have penalty points deducted. The penalties will be 3pts for after class on the due date, 5 pts for each additional day. Exceptions will be made only if the student has a written excuse from the health center or has made prior arrangements with the instructor

Grades

Grades for all assignments will be posted on Web CT (www.udel.edu/mycourses)

Semester grades will be assigned on a scale of:

	B+	87-89%	C+	77-79%	D+	67-69%		
A	93-100%	B	83-86%	C	73-76%	D	63-66%	F 0-59%
A-	90-92%	B-	80-82%	C-	70-72%	D-	60-62%	

Schedule

Assigned supplemental readings are available on the class web page (www.udel.edu/anthro/neitzel) and are listed under the date that they are due. Some readings may require a password, which is 6363.

Wed, 2/13 – introduction

Fri, 2/15– overview supplemental readings

Mon, 2/18 – overview supplemental readings

Wed, 2/20 – Buzkashi chapters 1-2

Fri, 2/22 – Buzkashi chapter 3

video: clip of buzhashi

Mon, 2/25 – Buzkashi chapters 4-5
Wed, 2/27 – Buzkashi chapters 6-epilogue
Fri, 2/29 – **DUE: film review of The Horseman**

Mon, 3/3 – **QUIZ 1**, Mesoamerican ballgame forward, intro, chapters 7-8
Wed, 3/5 – Mesoamerican ballgame chapters 1,4,9
video: clip
Fri, 3/7 – Mesoamerican ballgame chapters 5,10,11
video: clip from Apocalypto (media services DVD #3562)

Mon, 3/10 – Mesoamerican ballgame chapters 2,3,6
Wed, 3/12 – cricket supplemental readings
video: Trobriand Cricket (media services DVD #2659)
Fri, 3/14 – cricket supplemental readings
Video: Cricket and the Meaning of Life (media services DVD #3612)

Mon, 3/17 – cricket supplementary readings
Wed, 3/19 – **DUE: traditional/historic sport poster**
Fri, 3/21 – poster discussion

Mon, 3/24 – **EXAM 1**
Wed, 3/26 – Wa chapters 1-3, video segment (no class meeting)
Fri, 3/28 – Wa chapters 4-6, video segment (no class meeting)

Mon, 3/30 – NO CLASS
Wed, 4/2 – NO CLASS
Fri, 4/4- NO CLASS

Mon, 4/7 – Wa chapters 7-9
Wed, 4/9 – Wa chapters 10-epilogue
Fri, 4/11 – **DUE: short paper on Japanese baseball players in U.S.**

Mon, 4/14 – soccer prologue-chapter 5
Wed, 4/16 – soccer chapters 6-10
Fri, 4/18 – soccer chapters 11-13

Mon, 4/21 – soccer chapters 14-17
Wed, 4/23 – soccer chapters 18-postscript
Fri, 4/25 – **DUE: film review of Offsides**

Mon, 4/28 – **QUIZ 2**, True Believers prologue-chapter 1
Wed, 4/30 – True Believers chapters 2-3
video clip: from Beyond the News (Media serviced VHS #5325)
Fri, 5/2 – True Believers chapters 4-5

Mon, 5/5 – True Believers chapters 6-8

video: Mob Psychology and Crowd Control (media services VHS #4173)

Wed, 5/7 – True Believers chapters 9-10

Fri, 5/9 – Taboo chapters 1-5

Mon, 5/12 – Taboo chapters 6-10

Wed, 5/14 – Taboo chapters 11-15

Fri, 5/16 – Taboo chapters 16-20

Mon, 5/19 – Taboo chapters 21-24

Wed, 5/21 – **DUE: film comparison**

TBA – EXAM 2