Sport and English Society

SOC 321K (45555)/KIN 350 (11523)

University of Texas at Austin
Maymester 2013 Leeds, England

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Course introduction

This course uses sport as a way to understand the complex history and contemporary realities of English society. Sport holds an important place within English life, shaping its identity and the everyday lives of millions of English women and men. From the centrality of cricket in helping to mold the cultural practices and mores of the British empire, to the importance of soccer (“football”) in promoting national identities within the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, to the ways in which women and racial minorities have used sport to achieve social mobility and recognition, sport remains one of the most powerful ways to understand the changing nature of English society in the 21st century.

The course will be located in Leeds, a city in the north of England, that was once at the heart of the industrial revolution and that has been transformed into a post-industrial, urban metropolis, known more for its bars, restaurants, culture and sporting teams than the mills and factories that once made it one of Britain’s major manufacturing cities. Given this unique location, the course will explore the internal divisions around class and region that are central to understanding English (and British) identity, particularly the tensions between “the north” and “the south” and the other strong regional identities that make up England. Students will learn how and why different socio-economic classes play different sports, why some sports are played in certain parts of England and not others, and discover the British origins of American sports such as football and baseball. The course also introduces students to the ways in which sociologists have examined social identities such as race, gender, sexuality, class, and region and how these in turn help us to understand English national identity.
Course outline

Before going to Leeds the class will meet three times in the Spring 2012 semester in Austin in order to understand the course content, what to expect once in Leeds, to answer questions and concerns about the process of travelling abroad and securing visas, and to begin to think critically about the history and culture of England and the role of sport in shaping English identity. More specifically we will explore the structures of the British state, the differences between national identity and citizenship, and the class-inflected distinctions that exist in England between “the north” and “the south”.

The course is divided into four broad thematic issues, related to questions of (1) national and regional identity (2) gender (3) class and (4) race. Each topic (and therefore each week) will include (1) an overview of key sociological issues, (2) a guest lecture from a leading expert in that field that explores some of these issues in the context of Leeds, the North, and England, (3) a related film, (4) a field trip, and (5) student led presentations reflecting upon the week’s discussions and experiences. The course is designed so that students will see how the broad thematic issues that are separated into different weeks for pragmatic reasons are in fact interrelated so that by the end of the course students will have developed a sophisticated ability to understand both the complexity of English society and the importance of sport to identity, politics and everyday life in England and Britain. Students will be expected to read up to five chapters/essays each week from the course reader.

Suggested further reading on Leeds, the north, England, sport and culture:

The following novels will give you a literary insight into contemporary Englishness
Monica Ali, *Brick Lane*
Julian Barnes, *England, England*
Nick Hornby, *Fever Pitch*
Andrea Levy, *Small Island*
Caryl Phillips, *In the Falling Snow*
Zadie Smith, *White Teeth*
**Week-by-week outline**

**Saturday May 26th: Arrival at Carnegie Village, Headingley Campus, Leeds**
No class, students should familiarize themselves with the Leeds Met campus, Headingley and complete essential readings for the following week.

**Sunday May 27th Leeds: Maymester Orientation**
Fairfax 121: 10am-12noon - Welcome to Leeds: Cultural history of Leeds, Professors Ben Carrington and Max Farrar – we will also provide information on exploring “the North”.

**Tour of Leeds: 12noon-5pm** (will include distribution of bus passes, purchase and distribution of cell phones and tea time)

*Essential reading*:

* Each essential reading must be completed before each session. It is important that you read ahead and try to complete as much reading as you can before you arrive in England. Most of the formal lectures require you to have completed between one to three readings. A course reading pack with all the essential readings is available from Paradigm Books 407 West 24th Street and should be purchased before you leave for England.
Week 1 Sport and English Society: Nationalism and identity

Monday 28th May
Help Zone: 9am
We will meet at the Help Zone in the Student Union building to collect our student identification cards
**Headingley Campus, Carnegie Sports Centre: 11am**
Induction and registration at the Sports Centre

Tuesday 29th May
**Fairfax 121: 9am-12 noon, Professor Ben Carrington**
Lecture: Introduction to the sociology of nationalism and the importance of regional identity within the United Kingdom and England.
**Essential reading:**
**Headingley Campus, Carnegie library facilities tour: 1pm**

Wednesday 30th May
**Fairfax 121: 9am-12 noon, Professor Ben Carrington**
Film and discussion: *Chariots of Fire* (1981).

Thursday 31st May
**Carnegie Pavilion 335: 9am-12 noon, Professor Jonathan Long, Leeds Metropolitan University**
Guest Lecture: “England, Sport and the ‘The North’”
**Essential reading:**

Friday 1st June
**Fairfax 121: 9am-12 noon, Professor Ben Carrington**
Lecture: Summary of the sociology of nationalism and the importance of regional identity within the United Kingdom and England.
**Cricket coaching session: 1pm, square in front of Fairfax Hall, Harwood Williams**

Sunday 3rd June
**Field Trip 1: Sport and the English Game**
1: 45pm Yorkshire Carnegie County Cricket Club versus Northamptonshire Steelbacks, professional one day cricket match (40 overs) – we will meet at 1:00pm outside the Carnegie Village and walk to the ground.

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**Week 2: Sport and English Society: Gender and sexuality**

**Monday 4th June**
Fairfax 121: 9am-12 noon, Professor Ben Carrington

30 Minute Student Presentation on Field Trip 1: Sport and the English Game

Lecture: An introduction to the sociology of gender and sexuality.

Essential reading:

**Tuesday 5th June**

Fairfax 121: 9am-12 noon, Dr. Beccy Watson, Leeds Metropolitan University

Guest Lecture: “Gender, Leisure and Sport” - *Plans for second field trip.*

Essential reading:

*All students hand-in their two page summaries of Field Trip 1*

**Wednesday 6th June**

Field Trip 2: Sport, Commodification and Urban Regeneration

Fairfax, meet at 9am for departure for Manchester

Sport City, EIS arrive at 11am, brunch.

Velodrome tour 12-1pm and track session 1-2pm, depart for Old Trafford at 2:30pm.

Old Trafford, Manchester United football club, Educational talk 3pm, 3:45pm museum; 4:30pm Stadium tour; 5:30pm visit the Megastore; 6pm depart for Leeds.

**Thursday 7th June**

Fairfax 121: 9am-12 noon, Professor Ben Carrington

Film and discussion: *Green Street Hooligans* (2005).

**Friday 8th June**

30 Minute Student Presentation on Field Trip 2: Sport, Commodification and Urban Regeneration

Fairfax 121: 9am-12 noon, Professor Ben Carrington

Lecture: Summary of the sociology of gender and sexuality, and sports within England.

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Week 3: Sport and English Society: Class and Identity

Monday 11th June
Fairfax 121: 9am-12 noon, Professor Ben Carrington
Lecture: An introduction to the sociology of class and the importance of sport within English society I.
Essential reading:

All students hand-in their two page summaries of Field Trip 2

Tuesday 12th June
Fairfax 121: 9am-12 noon, Professor Ben Carrington
Lecture: An introduction to the sociology of class and the importance of sport within English society II.

All students discuss idea for final essay with Professor Carrington

Wednesday 13th June
Carnegie Pavilion 332: 9am-12 noon, Professor Karl Spracklen, Leeds Metropolitan University
Guest Lecture: “Class, Identity and Sport in England”
Essential reading:

Thursday 14th June
Fairfax 121: 9am-12 noon, Professor Ben Carrington
Film and discussion: This Sporting Life (1963). Plans for third field trip.

All students must confirm title for final essay with Professor Carrington

Friday 15th June
Field Trip 3: Cricket, Class and Nation
Fairfax, meet at 9am for departure for London
Lord’s cricket ground tour, London, 2:30pm
**Week 4: Sport and English Society: Race and ethnicity**

**Monday 18th June**
**Fairfax 121: 9am-12 noon, Professor Ben Carrington**

30 Minute Student Presentation on Field Trip 3: Cricket, Class and Nation


Essential reading:

**How to play rugby league: 1pm, square in front of Fairfax**

**Monday 18th June**

Field Trip 4: Rugby League and Northern Sports

8pm Leeds Rhinos versus Wakefield Trinity Wildcats – we will meet at **7pm outside the Carnegie Village** and walk to the ground.

**Tuesday 19th June**

30 Minute Student Presentation on Field Trip 4: Rugby League and Northern Sports

Carnegie Pavilion 335: 9am-12 noon, Dr. Aarti Ratna, Leeds Metropolitan University

Guest Lecture: “Race, Sport and English Identity”

Essential reading:

**All students hand-in their two page summaries of Field Trip 3**

**Wednesday 20th June**

**Fairfax 121: 9am-12 noon, Professor Ben Carrington**

Film and discussion: *Bend it Like Beckham* (2002).

**All students hand-in their two page summaries of Field Trip 4**

**Thursday 21st June**

No class, students should complete final essay due Friday

**Friday 22nd June**

**FINAL CLASS DAY**

**Fairfax 121: 9am-12 noon: Professor Ben Carrington**

Lecture: Conclusion to the course and summary of the key themes, course evaluations, final essay submitted, help with/advice for students who are either returning home or staying in Europe.

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Assessment criteria
There are two aspects to how the final grade is reached:

1. **40% Two page critical summary** of each field trip (each summary will be worth 10% of your final grade).

2. **60% Final synoptic ten page essay** drawing on the lectures, field trips and readings – essay title to be agreed with Professor Ben Carrington during Week 3. **Handed in on Friday June 22nd.**

Guide to further reading:
For your final essays, you should search the main journals that carry articles on sociology and sport, particularly the *Sociology of Sport Journal* (SSJ), the *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* (JSSI), the *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* (IRSS), and the journal *Leisure Studies* (LS). Hard copies of these are available in the Carnegie library and online via the UT library catalogue. In addition, the following books will provide useful information for your essays.


