SPORT AND CULTURAL STUDIES

Eliasian, Bourdieuan, Foucauldian, and Baudrillardian Excavations of Sport Culture

KNES 789E: Advanced Seminar in Kinesiology - Spring 2002

Instructor: David L. Andrews
Time: Monday 7.00-9.30pm
Office: 2318 HHP Building
Office Hours: Monday 1.00-3.00pm and by appointment

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Course Description

This course is intended to develop upon the interpretive, Cultural Studies, approach to sport culture introduced within KNES 689E. That course introduced a basic, cultural Marxist (of the distinctly dialectic variety), understanding of sport culture, in particular regard to sport’s mutually constitutive relation to the broader societal forces operating at any given time. This course introduces, and hopefully develops a nuanced understanding of the contrasting, and sometimes contradictory, theoretical positions developed by Norbert Elias, Pierre Bourdieu, Michel Foucault, and Jean Baudrillard. More specifically, these theorists are engaged in order to provide students with a more diverse and flexible array of theoretical positions from which to interpret sport culture. The course is not intended to privilege one theorist over another, rather it is hoped students will gain a broad understanding of them all, and develop a specialist interest in the theorist whose work most significantly contributes to their own research agenda.
Course Objectives

1. To highlight the necessity of cultural theory as an interpretive mechanism for understanding the structure and experience of sport culture.

2. To nurture a more expansive theoretical lexicon appropriate to the needs of interpreting sport culture.

3. To introduce the life and theoretical works of Norbert Elias, Pierre Bourdieu, Michel Foucault, and Jean Baudrillard.

4. To gain a clear and comprehensive understanding of the ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions underpinning the theories of Elias, Bourdieu, Foucault, and Baudrillard.

5. To examine how Eliasian, Bourdieuan, Foucauldian, and Baudrillardian theorizing has been mobilized to interpret various aspects of sport culture.

6. To develop and formally present sport related fledgling research projects appropriate to the ontological, epistemological, and methodological underpinnings of Eliasian, Bourdieuan, Foucauldian, and Baudrillardian theorizing.

7. To formulate an in-depth, working understanding of either Eliasian, Bourdieuan, Foucauldian, or Baudrillardian theorizing; the choice being based on the selection of the theorist whose work most significantly contributes to individual research agendas.
Course Outline

Week 1  January 28  Course Introduction
Week 2  February 4  The Necessity of Theory

Week 3  February 11  Elias I: Concepts and Theory
Week 4  February 18  Elias II: Theorising Sport
   February 22  Sport Studies Symposium on Qualitative Methods
Week 5  February 25  Elias III: Research Project Presentations

Week 6  March 4  Bourdieu I: Concepts and Theory
Week 7  March 11  Bourdieu II: Theorising Sport
Week 8  March 18  Bourdieu III: Research Project Presentations

March 25  SPRING BREAK

Week 9  April 1  Foucault I: Concepts and Theory
Week 10  April 8  Foucault II: Theorising Sport
Week 11  April 15  Foucault III: Research Project Presentations

Week 12  April 22  Baudrillard I: Concepts and Theory
Week 13  April 29  Baudrillard II: Theorising Sport
Week 14  May 6  Baudrillard III: Research Project Presentations

Week 15  May 13  Individual Tutorials
  May 20  Term Papers Due

Grading Scheme

I. Theory Essay...............................................15%  
II. Research Projects (4 x 7.5%).........................30%  
III. Theory Term Paper.....................................40%  
IV. Weekly Readings.......................................15%  

                      Grading Plan
                      100-90: A
                      89-80:  B
                      79-70:  C
                      69-60:  D
                      59- 0:  E
Course Assignments

I. Theory Essay (15% of Final Grade)

In the first week of the course you will be expected to compose a 1,500 word essay focused on the necessity of theory for the practice of cultural analysis. A number of related publications will be circulated as the starting basis for these discussions, however, you are strongly encouraged to involve yourself in appropriate library and archival research focused on this topic.

You will be expected to formally present an overview of your essay during the first part of the February 11 class session. Your presentation should last no longer than 10 minutes, and will provide the basis of a discussion on the role of cultural theory within Sport Studies.

The essays will also be submitted on February 11, and should follow, assiduously, the standard APA style and format guidelines.

II. Model Research Project Essays (4 x 7.5% of Final Grade)

For each theorist you will be expected to outline a model, sport focused, research project appropriate to the epistemological, ontological, and methodological assumptions of the particular theory in question. These model projects will be described in an essay of no more than 1,000 words, within which you will be expected to:

1. Identify the proposed research topic
2. Provide a justification for carrying out the research project
3. Outline the methods to be used in the process of data collection
4. Demonstrate the appropriateness of the chosen theory for the research topic

On the third week of each theorist you will be expected to submit written form of these essays (again following strictly APA Style and Format guidelines!). In addition you will be expected to make a 10 minute presentation outlining your project, and the rationale for utilizing the theory in question. Having listened to all presentations we will, as a group, identify the strengths and weaknesses of each, and come to some agreement as to the project most suited to the interpretive strengths and weaknesses, possibilities and limits, of the theory under scrutiny.

III. Term Paper: In-Depth Theoretical Exposition (40% of Final Grade)

During the course of the semester, it is hoped that--based on the contingencies of your unfolding research agenda--you will be drawn more explicitly to either Elias, Bourdieu, Foucault, or Baudrillard’s theorising. In light of this, the final term paper within this course is provides a forum for developing an in-depth understanding of your chosen theorist.
Your final term papers will be a minimum of 6,000 words in length (not including references) and will include the following:

1. A brief biological sketch of the theorist
2. A location of the theory within the broader field of socio-cultural theorising
3. A comprehensive examination of the main tenets of the theory
4. An awareness and riposte to the main criticisms of the theory
5. A discussion of exemplary sport related studies utilising the theory
6. A situating of your own project, and its future, in relation to the theory

Given that you will be presenting on a regular basis during the course, you will not be expected to make a formal presentation of these theoretical expositions. Once again, I stress that your papers should adhere strictly to APA Style and Format guidelines. The term papers will be due on Monday May 20.

IV. Weekly Readings (15% of Final Grade)

From advice given by some of you, and in an effort for more student involvement (this is after all an advanced doctoral seminar), I have decided to change things around this semester with regard to readings.

Firstly, your required readings will be assigned on a week-by-week basis from the course texts (mainly this semester’s, but also drawing from texts from last semester’s course). You will be given specific page numbers from these texts, and should be read and be able to summarize, and highlight the most pertinent aspects, of the assigned passages.

Secondly, you will be expected to come to class having read and summarised two of readings:

Lecture I you will be expected to obtain and summarise two readings explicitly focused on either explicating, critiquing--or preferably both--the relevant theory.

Lecture II you will be expected to obtain and summarise two readings which incorporate the relevant theory as part of a sport oriented analysis. The reading lists which follow are meant as a starting point for your searches, and you are encouraged to find, if possible, other such readings not on these lists).

You should prepare summaries of each of your two weekly readings, and circulate a copy of them to each member of the class (including myself!). Your summaries should discuss the main thrust of the reading, explicate its theoretical underpinnings, highlight and analyse key quotes (i.e. indicate to the reader why they are key!). You should also be prepared to make brief presentations of these reading summaries, which will form the basis of discussion within each lecture period. It is hoped that each student chooses different readings,
therefore I encourage you to communicate with each other to avoid duplication.

Evidently, with the instigation of the individual reading summaries, less emphasis (in quantitative terms) has been placed on required readings. However, I must stress that I will be expecting you to pay even closer attention (you need to get into the habit of “closely reading”) the passages I do assign on a weekly basis. These passages will normally be the starting point of our theoretical discussions—in many cases they will be your primary theoretical foundations—hence you should pay particularly close attention to them.

As I have intimated before, a research seminar is only successful with full and consistent participation from us all. Hence, you will be expected to come to lectures having completed all the relevant readings and assignments, and are thereby in a position to discuss from a somewhat informed position. Only through such informed dialogue is it possible for us to, both individually and collectively, develop our theoretical understandings.

Evidently a graduate seminar creates different challenges for student and instructor alike. For students there is a need to prepare assiduously for each lecture, since failure to do so is both revealing to the instructor and inhibits the development of the learning experience as a whole. As a general rule, you should be thinking of spending a minimum of 8 hours per week in preparation for each lecture. For instructors there is, of course, the need to be prepared a priori for each lecture, as well as the importance of guiding the seminar such that the relevant topics are covered in a comprehensive manner.
Course Readings

Readings will be assigned on a weekly basis from the required course texts (both from this and last semester’s texts). For Lecture II of each theorist you will choose and obtain your two weekly readings from the lists of theorist specific articles. You are certainly not restricted to readings within these lists, indeed you are encouraged to search beyond them. However, your readings must be examples of sport related research engaging the particular theory in question. The reading lists should be used as your starting point for your own exploration of the literature.

I. Required Course Texts


II. Required Course Texts from KNES 689B

III. Elias References


Dunning, E., Murphy, P., & Williams, J. (1986). Spectator violence at football matches: Towards a sociological explanation. British Journal of Sociology, XXXVIII(2), 221-244.


& C. Rojek (Eds.), *Sport and leisure in the civilizing process: Critique and counter-critique* (pp. 137-160). Toronto: University of Toronto Press.


& C. Rojek (Eds.), Sport and leisure in the civilizing process: Critique and counter-critique (pp. 121-136). Toronto: University of Toronto Press.


Waddington, I., & Murphy, P. (1992). Drugs, sport and ideologies. In E. Dunning & C. Rojek (Eds.), Sport and leisure in the civilizing process: Critique and counter-critique (pp. 36-64). Toronto: University of Toronto Press.


IV. Bourdieu References


V. Foucault References


VI. Baudrillard References


Sport and postmodern times (pp. 33-48). New York: State University of New York Press.


Pierre Bourdieu  Michiel Foucault  Jean Baudrillard  Norbert Elias
Accommodations for Students with Special Needs

The University has a legal obligation to provide appropriate accommodations for students with special needs (permanent or temporary, physical or mental). If you have a documented special need and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact the instructor as soon as possible.

Academic Integrity

Along with certain rights, students also have the responsibility to behave honorably in an academic environment. The Code of Academic Integrity will be strictly enforced. This policy is available on the web at www.inform.umd.edu/jpo.

Among other things, the Code prohibits students from cheating on exams, facilitating academic dishonesty, plagiarizing in any form, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, and forging signatures.

Any suspected abridgement of these standards will be directly referred to the Associate Chair of the Department and forwarded to the University’s Office of Judicial Affairs. Confirmation of such incidence can result in expulsion from the University.

Honor Pledge

The honor pledge was adopted by the University Senate on April 9, 2001, and approved by the President on May 10, 2001. Full implementation is effective throughout the University on the first day of the Spring 2002 semester.

The Honor Pledge is a statement undergraduate and graduate students are asked to write by hand and sign on examinations, papers, or other academic assignments not specifically exempted by the instructor. The Pledge reads:

I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment/examination.

Religious Observances

The University of Maryland System policy provides that students should not be penalized because of observances of their religious beliefs; students should be given an opportunity, whenever feasible, to make up, with a reasonable time, any academic assignment that is missed due to individual participation in religious observances. It is the student’s responsibility to inform the instructor of any intended absences for religious observance in advance, preferably within the first week of the semester.