SPORT AND THE MEDIA
SPST 3175 / JMC 3183
SPRING 2016
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12.30-1.45 pm in 3083 Main Library

Dr. Thomas Oates
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W331 Adler Journalism Building (AJB)

thomas-oates@uiowa.edu

Office hours: Tuesdays 2-3 (AJB), Wednesdays 12-2 pm (JB) and by appointment

Course description and objectives

This course reviews a variety of scholarly approaches to the convergence of commercialized media and commercialized sport. We will consider historical examples of how elite sport is encoded in various media platforms, from newspapers to radio to television to digital platforms. We will learn about the cultural and political forces shaping sport media production and will consider the meanings audiences have made of them in different historical contexts. Students will compose two short papers, complete a midterm and final examination, and participate in regular class discussions.

By the end of the semester, you should be able to:

• Understand how changing technologies have changed the presentation of commercialized sport.
• Explain how particular cultural context shapes the meanings made of sport in different historical periods.
• Appreciate how the communication of sport has been used to advance political agendas.

The objectives listed above support several of the learning goals identified by the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, including media literacy and media history. Learn more about the School of Journalism and Mass Communication’s learning goals here: http://clas.uiowa.edu/sjmc/undergraduate-programs/assessment.
**Required texts**


**Course rules and responsibilities**

- Most class meetings will involve a mix of three elements. (1) lectures, which review and further develop concepts and themes from the readings and will introduce new concepts (2) discussion, where students will exchange ideas about the course materials, and (3) screenings, where new material complementing the assigned readings will be introduced. Exams will cover material from the readings, lectures, screenings, and discussion.

- **Attendance and professionalism** – You should treat this course with the level of professionalism you would bring to a job. Your do not need to dress up, but please observe the following guidelines:

  - Be courteous and professional in your correspondence for this course, using proper grammar and proper modes of address.
  - Come prepared and be ready to contribute. Do not skip class meetings. Focus on the material when in class.
  - Do not read the newspaper, text, sleep, surf the web, pass notes, or otherwise engage in behavior that detracts your (and possibly others’) attention from the course.

In the unlikely event that you miss a class, please remember the following:

  - Absences from discussion meetings will lower your participation grade. It’s impossible to participate when you are absent, you may be out of the loop in future discussions because of something you missed.
  - Exam questions will frequently be drawn from course lectures and discussions, so it’s your responsibility to obtain notes, assignment sheets and whatever else you might have missed – do not ask me for them if you missed class. It might be a good idea to find a partner and agree to fill each other in when you miss class. Never, ever ask if you missed anything important. Assume that you did and take the necessary steps to catch up.
  - Excepting officially excused absences or other extraordinary circumstances, you will not be allowed to make up work you missed. If you are sick with the flu, please do not come to class until you are well again. You need not bring a doctor’s note in such circumstances. Instead, please use the “Absence from Class” form available here: [http://www.registrar.uiowa.edu/Student/FormsforStudents/tabid/79/Default.aspx](http://www.registrar.uiowa.edu/Student/FormsforStudents/tabid/79/Default.aspx)

- **Participation** – Participation is an important component of this course. You must make meaningful contributions to class discussion at least 5 different times in the semester. Each contribution is worth 5 points. If you choose not to speak in class, you can still earn 5 points by turning in a 150-300 word reflection on the readings and discussion that advances some point of discussion raised in class. A hard copy of this paper is due at the
beginning of the next class meeting and will be graded according to criteria detailed separately (see “Content” > “Discussion Makeup Guidelines”).

- **Reading Quizzes** – There will be several reading quizzes at the start of several class meetings this semester. Quizzes are unannounced and will last for the first seven minutes of the classes on which they are offered. Latecomers and absentees will not be offered the opportunity to make up these quizzes. Although more than 5 quizzes will be administered over the course of the semester, I will only count your five highest scores.

- **Historical Media Analysis** – In early March, you will submit a 1000-1500 word (4-5 page) paper that examines media coverage of a single sporting event prior to World War II. Details on the paper will be made available on January 28.

- **Reading Contemporary Sport Analysis** – In late April, you will submit a 1,500-2,000-word (6-8 page) essay in which you conduct a critical analysis of a single athlete celebrity (your object of study), explaining the strategies by which s/he is presented and what acknowledged and unacknowledged aims those presentations support. Details on the paper will be made available on March 24.

- **Workshops** – workshops are an important part of the writing process. Each paper includes a workshop and your participation in the workshop will be part of your grade. If you know you will miss the workshop, due to an unavoidable conflict, it is your responsibility to make up the workshop before it is due.

- **Deadlines** – Deadlines are to be treated with the utmost seriousness. Papers are due at the start of class on the date marked in the syllabus. Any late paper will be penalized one letter grade, and will be penalized an additional letter grade for each class period that passes without a submission. For example, a paper assessed as a B+, but turned in two class meetings late would receive a D+.

- **Examinations** – There will be a midterm exam, which will consist of multiple choice questions, as well as short answer, and essay portions. You are responsible for bringing a #2 pencil to the exam, and if you prefer, a pen with which to write essays and short answers. There will also be a final examination, so do not make travel plans for finals week. The date will be announced shortly, but is not yet available. The date will be posted and announced as soon as it is made public. Before each exam I will distribute a review sheet a week before the exam. All items of the exam will be drawn from the review sheet.

- **Computer responsibilities** — You are responsible for knowing how to use a computer. This includes maintaining back-up files of your work. Losing an assignment due to failure to back up a file will result in a “zero” for the assignment. You must have an uiowa.edu account and be able to receive e-mail there. Check this account regularly and forward to your primary account if necessary. All email communication for the course (both sent and received mail) must move through your uiowa.edu account. Course announcements will also be posted on ICON, so be sure to check in regularly.

- **Studying** —The Center for Teaching recommends a 2:1 ratio of time spent studying per hour in class, which translates to 5-6 hours per week for this course. You should use this time to complete and carefully review the assigned reading, review your notes on readings and lectures, complete written assignments, and prepare for exams. Some weeks will be more work-intensive than others, so plan ahead and budget your time accordingly. Start your written assignment early.
• **Academic Fraud** – We are bound by the Code of Academic Honesty, in which each of us agreed to do “my own academic work and to excel to the best of my abilities, upholding the IOWA Challenge [http://thechallenge.uiowa.edu/meet/index.html]. I promise not to lie about my academic work, to cheat, or to steal the words or ideas of others; nor will I help fellow students to violate the Code of Academic Honesty.” Attempting to disguise another’s work as your own is therefore strictly forbidden. Words that are not your own must be clearly identified by the use of quotation marks. Paraphrased material must be properly cited. We examine papers carefully for signs of plagiarism and will prosecute offenders to the fullest extent of university policies. Consciously or unconsciously plagiarizing is lazy, foolish, self-defeating, and extremely ill-advised. The University provides penalties for plagiarism ranging from disciplinary probation to dismissal from the University. We will review the proper techniques to research and write papers and tests correctly to avoid even accidental plagiarism. If you are in doubt as to whether you may be plagiarizing, ask me for help. Ignorance or indifference to these guidelines is not a defense. For more details, see www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/ix.shtml.

• **Office hours** – You should feel free to stop by during office hours to receive clarification about course concepts or assignments, discuss ideas for projects relating to the course, or just to talk about the course topic in an unstructured way. Come alone or if you prefer, with a group of classmates. Don’t be a stranger.

• **Reacting Safely to Severe Weather** – If the warning system indicates severe weather, we should immediately seek shelter in the innermost part of the building, if possible at the lowest level. Stay clear of windows and free-standing expanses. The class will reconvene after the severe weather has ended.

• **Special accommodations** – I want to hear from anyone who has a disability that may require some modification of seating, testing or other class requirements. Please contact me during my office hours, by e-mail or after class. Special academic arrangements for students with disabilities are handled in cooperation with Student Disability Services (www.uiowa.edu/~sds/). Students who feel they need special accommodations for any aspect of the course are encouraged to contact SDS and to speak with the instructor and/or TA early in the semester, so that accommodation can be made as soon as possible.

• **Conflict resolution** – Should conflict arise, please seek to resolve them with me directly. Students seeking to resolve a conflict should first contact myself, then, should the issue remain unresolved, Horace Porter (DEO, Department of American Studies). For more information, see the CLAS Student Academic Handbook at: www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/ix.shtml.

• **Sexual harassment policy** – Sexual harassment will not be tolerated. We all have a duty to report incidents of sexual harassment immediately. See the UI Comprehensive Guide on Sexual Harassment at www.uiowa.edu/~eod/policies/sexual-harassment-guide/index.html for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy. Immediately report any concerns to Professor Oates or to the DEO of American Studies, Horace Porter.

**Requirements**
The schedule of papers and tests, as well as the credit assigned to each, will be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professionalism</td>
<td>10</td>
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Reading Quizzes 25 Periodic (unannounced)
Discussion participation 25 Semi-weekly (5 @ 5 pts. each)
Midterm Exam 65 March 3
Historical Media Analysis Workshop 15 March 3
Historical Media Analysis 60 March 10
Reading Sport Workshop 15 April 21
Reading Contemporary Sport Analysis 60 April 28
Final Exam 75 Exam Week
Course total 350

A 324 and above
A- 323-314
B+ 313-303
B 302-293
B- 292-279
C+ 278-268
C 267-254
C- 253-244
D+ 243-233
D 232-219
D- 218-209
F 208 and below

Calendar

Week 1
January 19 Introductions and Syllabus Review

Week 2
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Author/Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 26</td>
<td>Michale Oriard, from “Football Narrative and the Daily Press”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Historical Event Analysis Distributed</strong></td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 2</td>
<td>Michael Real, “Super Bowl: Mythic Spectacle”</td>
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<td>February 4</td>
<td>Steve Almond, “Is It Immoral to Watch the Super Bowl?”</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
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<td>February 9</td>
<td>Bruce Evensen, <em>When Dempsey Fought Tunney</em>, pp. ix-xviii</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
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<td>February 16</td>
<td>Bruce Evensen, <em>When Dempsey Fought Tunney</em>, pp. 54-73</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 18</td>
<td>Bruce Evensen, <em>When Dempsey Fought Tunney</em>, pp. 74-123</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
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<td>February 23</td>
<td>Murray Sperber, “The Four Horsemen: Grantland Rice v. Reality”</td>
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<td>Grantland Rice. “The Four Horsemen”</td>
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<td>February 25</td>
<td>Review for Midterm</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 1</td>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
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<td>March 3</td>
<td><strong>Historical Event Analysis Workshop</strong></td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
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<td>March 8</td>
<td>David Remnick, <em>King of the World</em>, Part 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 10</td>
<td>David Remnick, <em>King of the World</em>, Part 2</td>
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<td><strong>Historical Event Analysis Due</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Spring Break: March 14-18</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
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<td>March 22</td>
<td>David Remnick, <em>King of the World</em>, Part 3-4</td>
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<td>March 24</td>
<td><strong>Reading Sport Assignment Distributed</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 29</td>
<td>Visit from Dwayne Bray of ESPN</td>
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March 31  Susan Birrell and Mary McDonald, “Reading Sport: A Methodology for Interrogating Power”

Week 11

April 5

April 7  Nancy Sperber, “Reading Between the Lines: A Discursive Analysis of the Billie Jean King vs. Bobby Riggs ‘Battle of the Sexes’”

Week 12

April 12  Leola Johnson & David Roediger, “Hertz Don’t It?: Becoming Colorless and Staying Black in the Crossover of O.J Simpson”

April 14  Cooky, Messner, and Musto, “It’s Dude Time!: A Quarter Century of Excluding Women’s Sports in Televised News and Highlight Shows”

Week 13

April 19  Howard Bryant, “Sports and Patriotism”

April 21  Reading Sport Workshop

Week 14

April 26  Jay Caspian King, “How the Daily Fantasy Sports Industry Turns Fans Into Suckers”

April 28  Brett Hutchins, “Twitter: Follow the Money and Look Beyond Sports”

Reading Sport Assignment Due

Week 15

May 3  Lawrence Wenner, “Communication and Sport, Where Art Thou? Epistemological Reflections on the Moment and Field(s) of Play”

May 5  Semester Review

Exam Week

Final Examination (TBA)