HISTORY 358 A04: TOPICS IN CANADIAN HISTORY:

HOCKEY NIGHT IN CANADA:
SPORTS AND CANADIAN IDENTITY

FALL TERM, 2012

Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:30 – 5:50 p.m.
Place: ECS (Engineering and Computer Science) 123.
Instructor: Dr E. Sager. Office: Clearihue B221. Email: ewsager@uvic.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course we study the history of Canada through the history of sport. The course is designed especially for students with no background in History: it is an introduction to the history of sports in Canada, to the history of Canada, and to the study of history in general. How did specific sports interact with changes in capitalism, culture, media, and ethnicity in Canada? What does the evolution of games and sports in Canada tell us about class, gender, and race in Canada’s history? The focus will be on historical change from pre-industrial times to the late 20th century. Sports to be studied include Aboriginal games, lacrosse, ice hockey, baseball, football, track and field, and others. The course will include the viewing and analysis of high-quality documentary films on the history of sport in Canada.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

All assignments in this course are compulsory: if you do not complete all of the assignments listed below, you cannot pass the course.

1. **Attendance** at the lectures is essential. If you miss a lecture because of illness, do not provide a note from a counselor or doctor. You are required instead to keep a Log of Absences. In this Log note the date of lectures that you missed, and the reason for your absence (usually it will be illness). You must submit this Log to Dr Sager at the end of the course. If you miss a lecture, you should consult another student to find out what you missed. Attendance will be taken in several classes.

2. **In-class quizzes.** There will be eight short multiple-choice quizzes during the term. The dates of these quizzes will not be given in advance. The quizzes will, therefore, be a partial record of attendance, and they will reward you for attendance as well as for paying attention to the lectures and the films shown in class. The quizzes are compulsory: if you do not complete at least six of them, you cannot pass the course. Your overall grade for the quizzes will be
the average of your scores for six quizzes (your best six). During the quizzes you may refer to your notes from class. It will not be possible to answer the questions by searching the web.

3. **Short essay Responses to assigned questions.** You are *not* required to write long research essays in this course. Instead, you are required to write four short Responses, or mini-essays, on assigned questions; each of these Responses must be between 500 and 600 words in length. All questions can be answered by reading the textbook; some lecture material will also be relevant. See the guidelines on Short Essay Responses below. The due dates are as follows (there will be a penalty for lateness):
   - First Response: 4 October.
   - Third Response: 15 November.
   - Fourth Response: 3 December.

4. **Final exam.** There will be an exam in the scheduled exam period between 6 December and 20 December. A good grade on the exam requires regular attendance at the lectures, good note-taking during lectures, and careful reading of the textbook. The instructor does not determine the date of the exam. Do not make travel plans until after the final exam schedule is released. Exams at a time earlier than the scheduled exam date cannot be arranged.

**GRADES**

Your final grade will be determined as follows:
- Attendance (including your Log of Absences): 15%
- Eight quizzes (the average of the scores on your best six quizzes): 25%.
- Four short essay responses: 10% each.
- Final exam: 20%.

Remember that all assignments are compulsory. If you miss any one assignment (even one of the four Responses), or if you complete fewer than 6 quizzes, your final grade will be “incomplete.”

**TEXTBOOK**

CLASS SCHEDULE

6 September: Introduction to the course.
11 September: The Sports and Games of Canada’s Native Peoples.
13 September: Sports and Games in New France.
18 September: Sport in the Colonies of British North America.
25 September: The Snow Shoe and Lacrosse Clubs of Montreal.
2 October: The Origins of Modern Team Sports.
4 October: Cricket and Baseball: What Happened and Why?
9 October: Hockey: Empires on Ice (1915-1929).
11 October: Amateurs and Professionals.
16 October: Women and Sport in Canada.
18 October: Hockey: The People’s Game (1930-1945).
23 October: Capitalism and Sport for Profit.
25 October: From Rugby to Canadian Football.
1 November: Women in Sport Since the 1920s.
6 November: Who Has the Right to Play?
20 November: The Triumph of Capitalism / Sports and Media in Canada.
27 November: Soccer in Canada (guest speakers).
29 November: Sport and the Nation.

GUIDELINES ON SHORT ESSAY RESPONSES

The purpose of these Responses is to introduce you to the experience of doing History. Historians are communicators: we communicate in speech and, above all, in writing. Historians analyze and interpret the evidence that helps us to answer questions that are often complex and challenging. The questions listed below are challenging historical questions, but they are not too difficult for you. You will learn a great deal through this assignment, about history and about concise historical communication.

A successful Response is more than just a description of what happened in the past. A good Response is a short essay that brings relevant evidence to bear on a convincing conclusion to the assigned question. Although your answers will rely on what you read in the textbook, and what you hear in lectures, you must write in your own words, and you must do more than merely summarize what the textbook says. If you use the words of another author, you must acknowledge this debt by putting those words between quotation marks and giving a footnote or endnote indicating
exactly where the quoted words are to be found. References in parentheses within the Response are NOT permitted. If you do not follow this rule you are guilty of plagiarism, and the penalties are serious (zero for the assignment, or in some cases F for the course: see the policy on academic integrity on pages 33-34 of the 2012-13 UVic Calendar). For the format of footnotes, see the sample Response below.

In preparing to write your essay, you may use sources other than the textbook if you wish. This is not a research essay, however. A Bibliography is not required. A good answer will rely on evidence in the textbook and your own analytical thinking. If you use other sources, remember to acknowledge any quoted words from those sources in the appropriate way.

Your Response must be written in good, clear prose, and it should be free of grammatical and spelling errors. Proof-read your Response carefully, and do not entrust the proof-reading task to another person. State the word count at the bottom of your Response. Remember to ensure that your Response is between 500 and 600 words, not including footnotes or endnotes.

Responses must be submitted in paper copy on or before the due date. Late submissions will be penalized at a rate of 3 percentage points per day (thus a Response that would receive an A if submitted on time will receive a B grade if submitted 3 days late).

RESPONSE QUESTIONS

For each Response, choose one question only.

RESPONSE 1. DUE 4 OCTOBER.

See Colin Howell, chapter 2.

1. Were the promoters of sports “moral entrepreneurs”?

2. What were the connections between sport and social class? (parts of chapter 3 are also relevant to this question).

3. Team sports in the late 19th and early 20th centuries were dominated by men. Why was this so? (see also pages 89-90).

RESPONSE 2. DUE 25 OCTOBER.

See Howell, chapter 3.

1. Define the historical conditions in which some sports became a capitalist business.
2. Referring to the late 1800s and early 1900s, Colin Howell says that “the sporting field in these years was more contested than consensual.” Argue in support of this proposition.

3. Why did organized sports appeal to working-class Canadians?

4. According to Howell, there was a “reimagining of sport” in the 1920s and 1930s (page 66). Argue in support of this conclusion.

RESPONSE 3. DUE 15 NOVEMBER.

See Howell, chapter 4.

1. Were spectator sports part of a “civilizing process” (p. 87)?

2. What explains the “cult of the sporting hero” (p. 95)?

3. Discuss the impact of television on the consumption of sports in Canada.

RESPONSE 4. DUE 3 DECEMBER.

See Howell, chapters 5 and 6.

1. What explains the increased participation of women in organized sports in the early 20th century?

2. According to Howell, “the physical body continues to be a site of enduring ideological conflict and resistance” (pp. 126-7). Argue in support of this conclusion.

3. Does history suggest that “building the nation through sport” (p. 131) is possible?
QUESTION: What is the connection between sport and imperialism?

Imperialism refers mainly to European dominance of other parts of the world. This domination occurred at many levels: political, economic, social and cultural.\(^1\) In Canada in the nineteenth century British imperialism was very influential. Many immigrants came from Britain, and the English Protestant elites were very proud of the British Empire and British civilization.

But what has this imperialism to do with sport? The first answer is that British immigrants brought many sports to Canada, including football (soccer), cricket, rugby, golf, tennis and curling.\(^2\) Track and field, horse racing, and rowing were also influenced by British traditions. Scottish immigrants brought their sports to Canada, including the hammer throw and caber toss.

The second answer is more complex. Sport was a way of showing loyalty to British civilization. Colin Howell states this point effectively: British sports offered up “ritualistic expressions of imperial allegiance and dominance.”\(^3\) Participating in British sports was a way of proclaiming – and also teaching - British identity and values. These values included gentlemanly behaviour, physical toughness, courage, and teamwork. The British-Canadian elites thought that “manly” sports, such as cricket and rugby, were good ways to build character and develop leadership.

Among the British elites, religion was also part of the connection between sport and imperialism. Attitudes towards sport were influenced by something called “muscular Christianity”, which refers to the idea that Christ was a kind of “tough guy,” or “the greatest scrapper that ever lived,” as one preacher put it.\(^4\) Encouraging Christian manliness in sport was one means by which the churches tried to win over boys and young men to religion. A well-known Canadian “muscular Christian” was Charles William Gordon, a Presbyterian minister who wrote novels in which many of his heroes were athletes. Another example was the YMCA – the Young Men’s Christian Association. This organization offered gymnasiums and summer camps for young men.

Imperialism did not appeal to everybody in Canada in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It appears that imperialism was a way of proclaiming superiority over others. It follows that the culture of imperialist sport was exclusionist: it was a way of saying that some people were inferior and even uncivilized. Because of their history and language, French-Canadians did not express loyalty to Britain or the Empire. “Manly” sports often excluded women. Blacks, Native people and Asian-origin immigrants were assumed to be outside British civilization, and so they were not welcomed into the sports of the English-Canadian elites. Where a sport already existed in North America, such as lacrosse, the English-Canadians tried to “civilize” it. British immigrants transformed lacrosse, applied their own rules, and excluded Native peoples from the sport. The belief was that

\(^1\) The Wikipedia article on “Imperialism” has some useful definitions.
\(^3\) Howell, 29.
\(^4\) Howell, 32.
Iroquois lacrosse players were “professional” athletes who had an unfair advantage over English-Canadian players. Also, Iroquois lacrosse players were simply not British: opening competitions to them would leave the sport “bereft of gentlemen.”

The conclusion is that imperialism was of central importance to the development of sports in Canada. For British-origin elites, a team sport was never just a game, to be played for enjoyment or the thrill of competition. Sport was a vital part of culture and part of a “civilizing” mission. Imperialist attitudes also deepened the divisions within the world of sport. There could be no broad national-level consensus around the British civilizing mission, which excluded many people or declared them to be inferior. The result was a sports culture that reflected and reinforced the many divisions within Canadian society.

Word count: 574.

**GRADING YOUR RESPONSE**

When your essay is evaluated and graded, we will use a form (see below), to be returned to you with the essay. The marker will check the appropriate box for each category. The form will show you where you have done well, and where there is room for improvement. Use this form as a checklist when you are writing your Response: have you done everything that is required?

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5 Howell, 39.
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