

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

NUMBER: INTL 4676
TITLE: Soccer & Politics

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Cas Mudde (mudde@uga.edu)
OFFICE: IA Building 324
OFFICE HOURS: Wednesdays, 2:00 – 4:00 PM, online; sign up on Elc

TERM: Fall 2024
DATE & TIME: Tu-Th, 9:35-10:50
ROOM: Journalism 501

Introduction:

Soccer, or football as it is commonly called outside of the United States, is the only truly global sports. It has an estimated 4 billion supporters, which means that about half of the world population is a soccer fan! Moreover, unlike the second-most popular sport in the world, cricket, soccer is the most popular sport in the vast majority of countries around the world. Even in the US, where it still lags the “Big Four” (football, baseball, basketball, hockey) in terms of revenue, soccer is the most-played sports by both girls *and* boys.

It is popular to argue that politics should be kept out of sports, but the reality is that politics and sports have always been connected. Given the central place of soccer in societies around the world, it should come as no surprise that politics and soccer are closely connected too. Politics influences and reflects the context in which soccer operates but soccer can also affect politics. Hence, many politicians try to use soccer for their own political gain – from buying soccer teams to flaunting their (alleged) support for them.

In this course, we will look at the intersection between soccer and politics from a global perspective. We will look at the politics *in* and *of* the sport, its clubs, and its fans. But we will also use soccer as a lens to look at important aspect of politics, such as activism, gender, nationalism, sexuality, and war. Because, as the famous Liverpool FC coach Bill Shankly used to say, “football is not a matter of life and death. It is much more important than that.”

Readings:

We will use only one book in this course, which is non-fiction literature rather than an academic text. Although there are many versions of the book, which seem largely the same, I recommend that you buy:

Simon Kuper, *Soccer against the Enemy: How the World's Most Popular Sport Starts and Fuels Revolutions and Keeps Dictators in Power*. New York: Bold Type Books, 2020, 3rd edition (SATE).

In addition to this book, various other readings will be assigned to specific classes. These texts will be made available on ELC, well ahead of the relevant class.

I will also use a few episodes of my own podcast [RADIKAAL](#), which focuses on the radical aspects of music, politics, and sports, and is available for free on almost all podcast platforms.

Course objectives:

- ★ To introduce student to the key intersections between soccer and politics, such as the use of soccer by politics and the political aspects of soccer.
- ★ To show that politics is all around us and should not be reduced to key institutions (e.g. parties, parliaments).
- ★ To better understand key concepts of politics (such as gender and nationalism).
- ★ To gain a more comprehensive understanding of politics.

Teaching Methodology:

- ★ Class discussions
- ★ Documentaries and movies
- ★ Guest lectures

Course Evaluation:

- ★ Class participation (15%)
- ★ Club report (15%)
- ★ Midterm Exam (20%)
- ★ Class Project (30%)
- ★ Final Exam (20%)

Class participation (15%): this includes the *preparation*, i.e. the reading of and the reflecting on the compulsory readings for each class, *and participation* in discussion in the classroom – and, sometimes, online on the ELC course page. You are expected to regularly participate in the class discussions in an active, civil, positive, and well-informed manner.

Club report (15%): you will write a short essay on the politics of a soccer club of your choice (max. 800 words). While no academic sources are required, the use of them is strongly encouraged (if available). The deadline is **September 10, 11:59 PM EST**. You can email the report to me.

Midterm Exam (20%): the in-class midterm exam will test your knowledge of the material that has been covered in the course up to the date of the exam (**October 3**). The midterm exam will include multiple choice and short answer questions.

Class Project (30%): The class project is the collective building of a website of (all) soccer players who have become politicians. Concretely, in terms of assessment, the project consists of two equally important parts: one group, one individual. As part of a *group* of students, you will make an inventory of (former) soccer players who became politicians in one specific region. In addition, you will write an *individual* paper on one player, in which you analyze the player's political career and put it in the broader political context of that country/region. Both projects count equally (i.e. 15% of your final grade); part of your group project grade will come from a peer evaluation. For more detailed information, see the Final Project document on Elc.

On **October 17**, you will meet with the other members of the group to discuss the first draft of the group project (i.e. on the region), which is due by **October 21**. The draft of your individual project (i.e. on a player) is due by **October, 28** (both at 11:59 PM EST).

Final Exam (20%)

You will have an in-class final exam that will assess your knowledge of all the material discussed since the Midterm. The exam will consist of multiple choice and short-answer questions as well as an essay question. Date: **December 5, 8:00 AM**.

Grading:

Letter Grade	Points
A	93 – 100 points
A-	90 – 92 points
B+	87 – 89 points
B	83 – 86 points
B-	80 – 82 points
C+	77 – 79 points
C	73 – 76 points
C-	70 – 72 points
D+	67 – 69 points
D	63 – 66 points
D-	60 – 62 points
F	59 and below

Classroom Attendance and Activity

Classroom attendance is not mandatory. **However**, there are various reasons why (regular) attendance is highly recommended. First, and foremost, students learn so much more when they come to class and participate in the class discussions. Second, participation is a significant part of your final grade and will be based *primarily* on your in-class performance (see above). Third, it is always easier to learn together than alone.

Some Specific Course Ground Rules

1. Office Hours

I hold office hours every week, for two hours. I reserve this time exclusively to be available for my students. I strongly encourage you to come to office hours, ideally early in the semester, so that we get to know each other better. Experience has taught me that students who come to office hours, even once, feel more comfortable to reach out to me if they need help and do better in class. Know that you do not need to have a “problem” to come to office hours and that I am happy to not just discuss the course but also other academic issues. You can sign-up for my office hours, which are online on **Wednesdays between 2 and 4 PM**, on the Elc course page. If you prefer to meet in person, send me an email and we’ll make it work!

2. Incompletes

It is not my practice to give incompletes. **Only** if there is a suitable reason – subject to my approval and supported by appropriate written documentation – an exception may be possible. *If you are struggling with completing assigned work, please let me know as soon as you can, so that we can work out a solution.*

3. Laptops, Tablets, Phones, etc.

[Research](#) has shown that electronic devices distract students and negatively impact their learning. Importantly, it does not only distract the student with the device but also those around them! Hence, laptops, tablets, phones, etc. are not allowed in the classroom! Be ready with pen and paper to make notes in class. If you use any of these banned devices in class, you may be asked to leave the classroom. If it happens multiple times, you will be punished with a deduction of **10 points** of your *final grade*!

4. Discussion Form and Content

I do not expect that your views on and perceptions of the (sometimes controversial) themes discussed in class are identical with those of your classmates, or me, either now or at the completion of the course. This course is a place for the free exchange of ideas. But, this should always be informed and respectful! Thus, I expect you to *challenge viewpoints* that differ from your own, but also to *substantiate your arguments* on the basis of the readings, lectures and discussions. And, please separate the academic from the personal.

5. Reference Works

If you need to use outside reference works, please consult Joel Krieger (et al.), [*Oxford Companion to Politics of the World*](#) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) as a place to start for political terms or concepts. Do not use Webster or other dictionaries for political science definitions. For outside research sources, please use Galileo.

Please do **not** use the notoriously unreliable **Wikipedia**. If you do chose to use dictionaries or Wikipedia, you indicate to me that you did not read the syllabus and will lose points on your assignment.

6. Grades

Obviously, I take the grading of assignments serious and devote a lot of time and effort to this task. Should you nevertheless believe that you deserve a different grade, please provide a **written explanation** to me *within two weeks* of receiving the grade. I will then re-grade your *whole* exam/paper and issue a “new” grade. Note that this grade can be the same, higher, or lower!

7. Emails

Please use proper etiquette when emailing me (see ELC course page). Emails with questions that can be answered by reading the syllabus will not be answered. Remember, I am a human being, who has a personal life, and works **Monday to Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM EST** (excluding holidays). Hence, I will respond to your emails during these times, irrespective when *you* send your email!

Names and Pronouns

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student’s legal name. I am eager to address you by your *preferred* name and/or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

Academic Integrity

As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University’s academic honesty policy, “A Culture of Honesty,” and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in “A Culture of Honesty” found at: <http://www.uga.edu/honesty>. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

ChatGPT

Although I am highly skeptical of the use of AI tools, for intellectual and [environmental](#) (!) reasons, I do not ban its use. However, you *must* take full responsibility for any AI-

generated materials you incorporate in your course products. *If* you include AI-generated materials in your course products, you should cite it like any other reference material. All information incorporated into course assignments must be verified, ideas must still be attributed, and facts must be true.

Visual or Audio Recording

In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Disability, students may **not** make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course.

Students who have a recording accommodation agree in writing that they:

- will use the records only for personal academic use during the specific course.
- understand that faculty members have copyright interest in their class lectures and that they agree not to infringe on this right in any way.
- understand that the faculty member and students in the class have privacy rights and agree not to violate those rights by using recordings for any reason other than their own personal study.
- will not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings. They also agree that they will not profit financially and will not allow others to benefit personally or financially from lecture recordings or other course materials.
- will erase/delete all recordings at the end of the semester.
- understand that violation of these terms may subject them to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject them to liability under copyright laws.

Disability Statement

UGA is committed to the success of all learners, and we strive to create an inclusive and accessible online environment. In collaboration with the [Disability Resource Center](#), we work with students who have documented disabilities to access reasonable accommodations and academic supports. For more information or to speak with a Disability coordinator, please call the Disability Resource Center at (706) 542-8719, TTY only phone (706) 542-8778.

Other Important Resources for Students

UGA has a vast array of resources to support students facing a variety of challenges. Please don't hesitate to come speak with me or contact these resources directly:

Office of Student Care & Outreach (coordinate assistance for students experiencing hardship/unforeseen circumstances) – 706-542-7774 or by email sco@uga.edu

Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS) - 706-542-2273 (during regular business hours) *After Hour Mental Health Crisis:* 706-542-2200 (UGA Police—ask to speak to the CAPS on-call clinician).

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention – 706-542-SAFE (Please note, faculty and staff are obligated to report any knowledge of sexual assault/relationship violence to UGA’s Equal Opportunity Office. The advocates at RSVP can provide student confidentially).

Third-Party Software and FERPA:

During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software such as a blog or wiki. While some of these are required assignments, you need **not** make any personally identifying information on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Where appropriate you may use a pseudonym or nickname. Some written assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personally identifiable/sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.

Important Dates:

September, 10	Deadline Club Report
September, 24	GT-UGA Lecture Series (at <u>3:30 PM!</u>)
October, 3	Midterm Exam (in class)
October, 17	NO CLASS (Meet with Project Group)
October, 21	Deadline Draft Group Project
October, 22	Watch Party (at 7:00 PM!)
October, 24	NO CLASS
October, 28	Deadline Draft Individual Project
November, 19	Watch Party (at 7:00 PM!)
November, 21	NO CLASS
November, 26	Deadline Class Project (Group & Individual)
December, 5	Final Exam, 8:00 AM (in class)

Finally:

THE COURSE SYLLABUS IS A GENERAL PLAN FOR THE COURSE; DEVIATIONS ANNOUNCED TO THE CLASS BY THE INSTRUCTOR MAY (AND MOST PROBABLY WILL) BE NECESSARY!

THEMATIC OUTLINE

1 – Introduction (8/15)

In this introductory class, we will discuss the intentions and outline of the course as well as our mutual expectations. We will also assess your knowledge of soccer, your favorite clubs, and the way you see the relationship between soccer and politics.

Listening:

Simon Kuper (RADIKAAAL #51)

PART I – THEORIES & PERSPECTIVES

2 – Three Discourses on Soccer (8/20)

No one doubts that soccer is important to society, but people do disagree on what its exact role in society is. The different discourses about the role of soccer in society also influence the way in which the relationship between soccer and politics is seen.

Reading:

Bar-On, Tamir (2017) “Three Soccer Discourses”, *Soccer & Society*, 18(2-3), 188-203.

3 – Globalization (8/22)

For decades the world has become more connected in terms of culture, economics, politics, and, of course, sports. This process of “globalization” obviously also affects the most popular sport on the globe, soccer, but how?

Class discussion: What, if anything, can soccer tell us about globalization?

Readings:

Croci, Osvaldo and Julian Ammirante (1999) “Soccer in the Age of Globalization”, *Peace Review*, 11(4), 499-504.

Kuper, Simon (2010) “Soccer Explains Nothing”, *Foreign Policy*, 21 July.

Waalkes, Scott (2017) “Does Soccer Explain the World or Does the World Explain Soccer? Soccer and Globalization”, *Soccer & Society*, 18(2-3), 166-180.

PART II – SOCCER AGAINST THE ENEMY (SATE)

In the next four classes we will read and discuss Simon Kuper’s “Soccer against the Enemy” (SATE) to start developing ideas on how soccer and politics can and do interact across the world.

4 – Soccer against the Enemy I (8/27)

Readings:

SATE, chapter 1-6.

5 – Soccer against the Enemy II (8/29)

Readings:

SATE, chapter 7-12.

6 – Soccer against the Enemy III (9/03)

Readings:

SATE, chapter 13-15.

7 – Soccer against the Enemy IV (9/05)

Readings:

SATE, chapter 16-20.

PART III – SOCCER & IDENTITY

8 – Gender (9/10)

In most of the world, soccer is and always has been seen as a masculine sport, to be played (exclusively or primarily) by boys and men. This is particularly the case for professional soccer. To paraphrase Abraham Lincoln’s most famous line from the Gettysburg Address, soccer is a sport of men, by men, and for men. But is it? And how does gender effect soccer?

Class discussion: Is soccer still a “men’s sport”?

Reading:

Caudwell, Jayne (2011) “Gender, Feminism, and Football Studies”, *Soccer & Society*, 12(3), 330-344.

Eskandari, Zahra Termesh (2022) “We Support Football in Our Heart:’ Female Football Fandom in Iran”, *Soccer & Society*, 23(3), 258-270.

Further Reading & Viewing:

Offside (IR, 2006), 1h 33m.

Osborne, Anne C. and Danielle Sarver Coombs (2013) “Performative Sport Fandom: An Approach to Rethorizing Sport Fans”, *Sport in Society*, 16(5), 672-681.

9 – GUEST LECTURE: Felipe Tobar (Clemson) (9/12)

Soccer is big business, not just in terms of games and merchandise, but also in terms of tourism. Many big soccer clubs have their own museums and some of these are among the main touristic attractions of their city or even country! While these museums primarily tell the story of the club, implicitly or explicitly, they also have to navigate controversial historical periods, such as authoritarian rule, and the role of the club during this period.

Reading:

Yang, Jing (2017) "Football Museums: History, Identity and Connection", *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 34(17-18), 1872-1882.

10 – Sexuality (9/17)

Although gender and sexuality are closely connected, they are different phenomena in theory and practice. Just as soccer is traditionally seen as masculine, it also has always been strongly heteronormative. Is homophobia still widespread on the terraces? Is there a difference in this respect between men and women soccer?

Class discussion: How are different sexualities visible in US soccer and how are they discussed in the media and public?

Readings:

Skogvang, Bente Ovedie and Kari Fasting (2013) "Football and Sexualities in Norway", *Soccer & Society*, 14(6), 872-886.

Magrath, Rory (2021) "Gay Male Football Fans' Experiences: Authenticity, Belonging and Conditional Acceptance", *Sociology*, 55(5), 978-994.

11 – Women Soccer (9/19)

Most of the time, when people talk about soccer, they really mean "men soccer". Even in the US, one of the few countries where women soccer outshines men soccer, it is much more common to speak of "women soccer" than of "men soccer". How has women soccer developed and what are its (continuing) challenges?

Reading:

Cox, Barbara and Shona Thompson (2003) "From Heydays to Struggles: Women's Soccer in New Zealand", *Soccer & Society*, 4(2-3), 205-224.

Valenti, Maurizio, Qi Peng and Claudio Rocha (2021) "Integration Between Women's and Men's Football Clubs: A Comparison Between Brazil, China and Italy", *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*, 13(2), 321-339.

Suggested Listening:

Tessel Middag (RADIKAAAL #73)

12 – GT-UGA Lecture Series on Soccer & Politics (9/24) – AT 3:30 PM!

We will not have regular class (at 9.35 AM). Instead, students are instead strongly encouraged to come to the first GT-UGA Lecture Series on Soccer and Politics, which will be held at 3.30 PM at a place to be determined later. The speaker is Rachel Allison (Mississippi State), who will speak about “How Fans Fall in Love with Women’s Football”. The lecture and reading are part of the course material.

Reading:

Allison, Rachel and Stacey Pope (2021) “Becoming Fans” Socialization and Motivations of Fans of the England and U.S. Women’s National Football Teams”, *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 39(3), 287-297.

13 – Race and (Anti-)Racism (9/26)

In the 1960s, one of the most famous soccer players in lily-white Europe was the Portuguese striker Eusébio. The “Black Pearl” was just the first of a long line of non-white players who would become soccer stars in majority-white countries. But this does not mean that racism is not a major problem in soccer.

Class task: Develop an effective anti-racism assignment for Atlanta United.

Reading:

Kassimeris, Christos, Stefan Lawrence and Magdalini Pipini (2022) “Racism in Football”, *Soccer & Society*, 23(8), 824-833.

Moran, Richie (2000) “Racism in Football: A Victim’s Perspective”, *Soccer & Society*, 1(1), 190-200.

Horvath, Kenneth and Jakob Rosenberg (2010) “EUROSCHOOLS 2008: The Difficult Relationship of Culture, Nation and Anti-Racism in UEFA’s Campaign Work”, *Soccer & Society*, 11(6), 829-842.

PART IV – DIPLOMACY & NATIONALISM

14 – Soccer Diplomacy (10/01)

Given its international character and popularity, it makes sense that sports in general, and soccer in particular, can be used by states as a form of “diplomacy”. This is particularly the case for big international events, like the men soccer World Cups.

Class discussion: Is soccer an effective tool for diplomacy? What are the strengths and weaknesses of “soccer diplomacy”?

Readings:

Brannagan, Paul Michael and Richard Giulianotti (2017) “Soft Power and Soft Disempowerment: Qatar, Global Sport and Football’s 2022 World Cup Finals”, *Leisure Studies*, 34(6), 703-719.

Ndlovu, Sifiso Mxolisi (2010) “Sports as Cultural Diplomacy: The 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa’s Foreign Policy”, *Soccer & Society*, 11(1-2), 144-153.

15 – MIDTERM EXAM (10/03)

16 – The 2022 Qatar Men World Cup (10/08)

As soon as the 2022 Men World Cup was awarded to the small but extremely wealthy Arab Gulf state Qatar, it was surrounded by controversy and speculation. It also triggered discussions about the relationship between soccer and politics across the globe.

Class discussion: What did the 2022 Qatar Men World Cup teach us about “sportswashing”?

Reading:

Ganji, Sarath K. (2022) “How Qatar Became a World Leader in Sportswashing”, [*Journal of Democracy*](#), November.

Listening:

CBC (2022) “[How the World Cup in Qatar Is Kicking Off a Conversation about ‘Sportswashing’](#)”, 20 November.

17 – Nationalism and National Identity (10/10)

Given the importance of soccer and the organization of tournaments based on “nationality” (or better: statehood), like the World Cup, it should come as no surprise that nationalism and soccer are closely connected. But the relationship does not only play out in national teams. Some club teams also have strong “national” connotations.

Class discussion: How are soccer and national identity related in the U.S.?

Readings:

Duerr, Glenn M.E. (2017) “Civic Integration and Ethnic Segregation? Models of Ethnic and Civic Nationalism in Club Football/Soccer”, *Soccer & Society*, 18(2-3), 204-217.

Metzger, Stefan and Özgür Özvatan (2021) “Games of Belonging: Football, Boundaries and Politics between Germany and Turkey”, *Nationalities Papers*, 48(4), 737-751.

Further Reading:

Krasnoff, Lindsay Sarah (2017) “Devolution of *Les Bleus* as a Symbol of a Multicultural French History”, *Soccer & Society*, 18(2-3), 311-319.

18 – Hooligans & Ultras (10/15)

Although violence has always been part of soccer, it only became a key element of the public image of soccer in the late 1970s, when so-called “hooligans” became the

obsession of (tabloid) media and (right-wing) politicians. More recently, the term “ultra” has become more widely used, including by fans themselves. What are “hooligans” and “ultras” and what is their relationship to soccer and to violence?

Class discussion: How can soccer solve its “hooligan problem”?

Reading:

Spaaij, Ramón (2008) “Men Like Us, Boys Like Them: Violence, Masculinity, and Collective Identity in Football Hooliganism”, *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 32(2), 369-392.

Listening:

James Montague (RADIKAAL #1)

19 – NO CLASS (10/17)

During this time, you’ll work on your group project with the other members of the group. You can use the classroom for this, if you want, but you can also meet somewhere else.

20 – WATCH PARTY – AT 7 PM IN MLC 207 (10/22)

We will watch a documentary about the Israel soccer team Beitar Jerusalem, which is known for its religious-nationalist origins and far-right support base.

Movie: [Forever Pure](#) (ISR, 2016), 1h 35m.

Listening:

Sophia Solomon (RADIKAAL #21)

21 – NO CLASS (10/24)

Because we have a longer “watch party” on Tuesday, in the evening, we will not have class on Thursday.

PART V – WHO CONTROLS SOCCER?

22 – The State (10/29)

All states control sports in some way, but many authoritarian regimes have a particularly strong interest in sports for ideological or political reasons. This applied to the totalitarian regimes of the 20th century but also to contemporary authoritarian leaders and regimes. Some leaders, like Erdogan in Turkey and Orbán in Hungary, have shown a particular interest in soccer, making the sport an important space for politics.

Class discussion: Can the state ever truly control soccer?

Readings:

Dennis, Mike and Jonathan Grix (2010) “Behind the Iron Curtain: Football as a Site of Contestation in the East German Sports ‘Miracle’”, *Sports in History*, 30(3), 447-474.
Irak, Daghan (2020) “Football in Turkey during the Erdogan Regime”, *Soccer & Society*, 21(6), 680-691.

Suggested Viewing:

Istanbul United (TR, 2014), 1h 25m

23 – Professional Associations (10/31)

Not only states govern soccer, so do professional associations at the national and supernational levels. The International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) and the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) govern soccer at the global and European level, respectively, and are both powerful and protective of their power. So, what happens when they face off with states or supernational organizations?

Class discussion: Who is more powerful in soccer, professional associations or states?

Reading:

Meier, Henk Erik, Boria Garcia, Serhat Yilmaz and Webster Chakawata (2023) “The Capture of EU Football Regulation by the Football Governing Bodies”, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 61(3), 692-711.

24 – Capitalism (11/05)

Soccer has always been closely related to capitalism and professional soccer even more. This is why many left-wing intellectuals were initially very critical of soccer. But in the last decades, money has become increasingly dominant in soccer, making some people argue that money rules “modern soccer”.

Class discussion: What role should money play in soccer?

Readings:

Eagleton, Tom (2010) “Football: A Dear Friend to Capitalism”, [*The Guardian*](#), 15 June.
Crocì, Osvaldo and Julian Ammirante (1999) “Soccer in the Age of Globalization”, *Peace Review*, 11(4), 499-504.
Welsh, John (2023) “The European Soccer League Debacle: Why Regulation of Corporate Football Is Essential”, *Soccer & Society*, 24(2), 172-189.

Listening:

BBC, [Teams and Regimes: Sportswashing in Football](#), 38 min. (radio)

25 – The Fans (11/07)

People follow (professional) soccer in different ways. In fact, many individual “soccer fans” follow soccer in very complex ways, depending on the club or league, as well as their stage in life. So-called “modern soccer” has profoundly transformed the sport, commodifying and globalizing it at unprecedented levels, and this has also changed the way in which soccer is followed.

Class discussion: Which type of “fan” is most important for (modern) soccer?

Reading:

Giulianotti, Richard (2002) “Supporters, Followers, Fans, and Flaneurs: A Taxonomy of Spectator Identities in Football”, *Journal of Sports & Social Issues*, 26(1), 25-46.

26 – Soccer in the US: Still “American Exceptionalism”? (11/12)

After several failed attempts, professional soccer has finally established itself in the U.S. in the form of Major League Soccer (MLS) – and, at a more modest level, the National Women’s Soccer League (NWSL). Although it is still common to hear that soccer is a minor(ity) sport in the country, or even that it is “un-American”, the issue of “American exceptionalism” is getting increasingly complex.

Class discussion: Is the U.S. still exceptional in terms of soccer?

Readings:

Reese, Derek (2022), “US Soccer History: 150 Years and Counting”, [World Soccer Talk](#), 28 November.

Markovits, Andrei S. and Steven L. Hellerman (2003) “Women’s Soccer in the United States: Yet Another American ‘Exceptionalism’”, *Soccer & Society*, 4(2-3), 14-29

Collet, Christian (2017) “Soccer, Politics, and the American Public: Still ‘Exceptional’?”, *Soccer & Society*, 18(2-3), 348-367.

PART VI – SOCCER AND CONFLICT: THE CASE OF COLOMBIA

27 – Colombia & Golombia (11/14)

For many decades, the South American country of Colombia was ripped apart by two, interrelated phenomena: civil war and drugs. Between drug dealers, Marxist guerrillas, the official military, and right-wing paramilitary, the Colombia population was caught in an orgy of violence. Every aspect of society was affected, including soccer.

Class discussion: Can soccer help “heal” post-conflict societies?

Readings:

Duarte Bajiña, Ricardo (2017) “Transforming Soccer to Achieve Solidarity: ‘Golombia’ in Colombia”, *Soccer & Society*, 18(2-3), 368-373.

Watson, Peter J. (2020) “No Place for a Left-Winger: The Historical Relationship Between Football and the FARC in Colombia”, *Journal of War & Culture Studies*, 13(4), 402-423.

28 – WATCH PARTY – AT 7 PM IN MLC 207! (11/19)

We will watch a documentary about soccer in Colombia, which ties the lives of the famous soccer player Andres Escobar and the infamous drug lord Pablo Escobar.

Movie: *The Two Escobars* (COL, 2010), 1h 43m

29 – NO CLASS (11/21)

Because we watched a movie on Thursday, outside of regular class hours, we will not have class on this day. I suggest everyone uses this time to work on the final project.

30 – Can Soccer Be Saved from Itself? (11/26)

Although soccer has become a multi-billion industry, with some of the highest-paid athletes in the world, criticism of the sport, and its highest organizing body FIFA, has continued to grow. So-called “modern football” may have made clubs from Manchester popular in Asia, it has also created opposition movements within its traditional heartlands, like the “punk football” club FC United of Manchester.

Class discussion: Is soccer thriving or dying?

Readings:

Brown, Adam (2008) ““Our Club, Our Rules”: Fan Communities at FC United of Manchester”, *Soccer & Society*, 9(3), 346-358.

Vukusić, Dino and Lukas Miosić (2018) “Reinventing and Reclaiming Football through Radical Fan Practices? NK Zagreb 041 and Futsal Dinamo”, *Soccer & Society*, 19(3), 440-452.