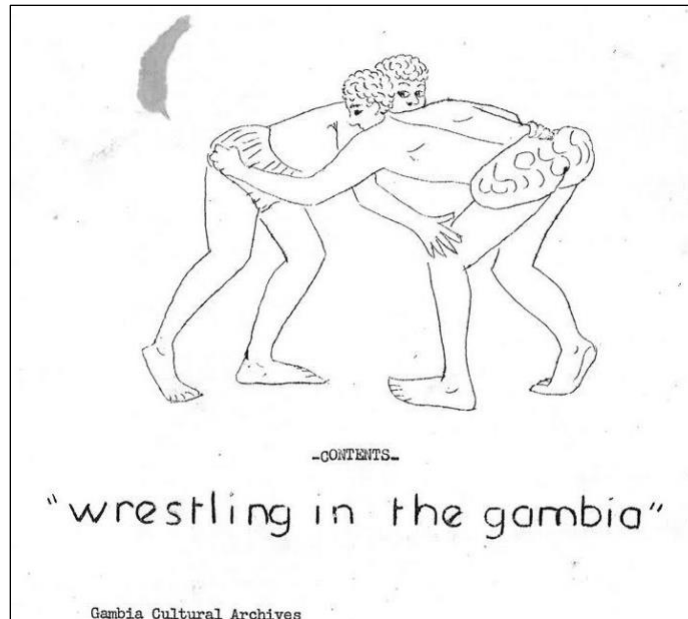


SPORT & SOCIETY IN AFRICAN HISTORY

History 830 || Spring 2024
Monday 4:10-7:00pm || 355 Old Horticulture
Prof. Peter Alegi



"The youth of Africa, by meeting together in the field of sport in one another's countries, will learn what our elders were prevented from learning—that all Africans are brothers with a common destiny."

Kwame Nkrumah (first president of Ghana)

"In a country where only men are encouraged, one must be one's own inspiration."

Tegla Loroupe (Kenyan runner)

"It doesn't matter who takes the credit, it's victory that matters."

Dennis Brutus (leader of the South African sports boycott movement)

Course Description

This graduate seminar examines why sports matter in African history. During the first two-thirds of the semester we will focus on significant historiographical trends and read some of the best recent historical scholarship on soccer (football), combat sports, running, and tennis. The final month will be devoted to writing a capstone research paper. The seminar will be guided by these major questions: Were modern sports used as a tool of European imperialism? Did Africans' adoption of European sports signal capitulation to foreign domination or did it create a space in which to fuel a quest for personal, cultural, and even political freedom? How have national, racial, ethnic, gender, community, and class identities been expressed in sports? How have governments, corporations, elites and ordinary people sought to use the popularity of sports? How have sports icons shaped ideas about honor, heroism, beauty, and sexuality? How has global capitalism changed African sport? The main objectives of the seminar are to develop specialized expertise in African sports history and to produce a journal-quality research paper.

Required Books

- Peter Alegi, *African Soccerscapes: How a Continent Changed the World's Game* [ebook via MSU library]
- Saleem Badat, *Tennis, Apartheid and Social Justice: The First Non-Racial International Tennis Tour, 1971*
- Todd Cleveland, *Following the Ball: The Migration of African Soccer Players across the Portuguese Colonial Empire, 1949–1975*
- Michelle Sikes, *Kenya's Running Women: A History*

Note: Additional required readings are in the course schedule below and available on D2L.

Attendance & Participation

Attendance is required. Students who miss more than one class meeting will fail the course (documented emergencies excepted). Meticulous preparation, on-time arrival, and active participation in class are crucial components of the seminar.

Weekly Précis & Leading Discussion

Each week students submit a 900-word summary of the readings that briefly describes authors' sources and method, main argument, and historiographical contribution. In addition, each student will lead one class discussion. In preparation for leading discussion, students must append at least five questions to their weekly précis with the goal of sustaining vigorous class discussion. The schedule of discussion leaders will be determined at our first seminar meeting.

Research Paper

The main writing assignment is a research paper between 7,000 and 8,000 words in length (25 double-spaced pages). The paper can take one of two forms: (1) a historiographical paper on sport and society focused on a particular country or topic (e.g. sports and nationalism; gender and sports; sports migration); (2) an original research paper based on primary sources. The course schedule features due dates for topics, bibliographies, research questions, outlines, and drafts. For specialized research assistance, contact Erik Ponder, Africana Librarian, 2nd floor Main Library East Wing, ponderer@msu.edu or (517) 884-0838.

Course Assessment

Grading will be based on this standard: Attendance & Participation = 20%; Précis work = 25%; Discussion Leader: 5%; Term Paper = 50%

Grading Scale: 4 (92-100) = outstanding; 3.5 (91-85) = very good; 3 (84-80) = satisfactory; 2.5 (79-75) = fair; below 2.5 = poor

Office Hours

I am available by appointment in 160D Old Hort. To schedule a Zoom meeting, send an e-mail (alegi@msu.edu) at least 24 hours in advance.

Academic Integrity and Use of AI

Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will not be tolerated. The use of generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Google Bard) is permitted in this course for the following activities: Brainstorming and refining your ideas; fine tuning your research questions; finding information on your topic; drafting an outline to organize your thoughts; and checking grammar and style. The use of generative AI tools is not permitted in this course for the following activities: writing entire sentences, paragraphs or papers of a course assignment. You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query. Your use of AI tools must be properly documented and cited in order to abide by university policies on academic integrity. When in doubt about permitted usage, please ask me for clarification. Students who violate MSU academic integrity rules may receive a penalty grade, including a failing grade on the assignment or in the course.

Statement on Differential Abilities

It is MSU's policy to try to make reasonable accommodations to facilitate learning by qualified students with documented ability-related needs. If you have such needs, contact me and the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities right away. I will do my very best to accommodate students who notify me in a timely manner with the proper documentation.

COURSE SCHEDULE

JANUARY 8: INTRODUCTION AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

Read

- Bea Vidacs, "Through the Prism of Sports: Why Should Africanists Study Sports?" *Africa Spectrum* 41, 3 (2006): 331–349
- Emmanuel Akyeampong and Charles Ambler, "Leisure in African History: An Introduction," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 35, 1 (2002): 1–16

Recommended

- Todd Cleveland, Tarminder Kaur, Gerard Akindes, eds., *Sports in Africa: Past and Present*
- William J. Baker and James A. Mangan, eds., *Sport in Africa: Essays in Social History*
- Michael J. Gennaro and Saheed Aderinto, eds., *Sports in African History, Politics, and Identity Formation*

JANUARY 15: No Class. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday.

JANUARY 22: MARTIAL SPORTS: FROM ANCIENT CONTESTS TO MODERN GAMES

Portfolio Item #1: Preliminary Topic and Preliminary Bibliography Due

Read

- James Blacking, "Games and Sport in Pre-Colonial African Societies," in Baker and Mangan, *Sport in Africa*, 3–22
- Benedict Carton and Robert Morrell, "Zulu Masculinities, Warrior Culture and Stick Fighting: Reassessing Male Violence and Virtue in South Africa," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 38, no. 1 (2012): 31–53
- Emmanuel Akyeampong, "Bukom and the Social History of Boxing in Accra: Warfare and Citizenship in Precolonial Ga Society," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 35, no. 1 (2002): 39–60
- Babacar M'Baye "Verbal and Acrobatic Strategies in Senegalese Wolof Wrestling," *Storytelling, Self, Society* 9, no. 2 (2013): 188–216

Recommended

- John Bale, *Imagined Olympians: Body Culture and Colonial Representation in Rwanda*
- Peter Benson, *Battling Siki: A Tale of Ring Fixes, Race, and Murder in the 1920s*
- Matthew Carotenuto, "Crafting Sport History Behind Bars: Wrestling with State Patronage and Colonial Confinement in Kenya," *History in Africa* 43 (2016), 289–321

- Michael Gennaro, “‘The Whole Place is in Pandemonium’: Dick Tiger Versus Gene Fullmer III, and the Consumption of Boxing in Nigeria,” *International Journal of the History of Sport* 30, no. 16 (2013): 1903–1914
- Terence Ranger, “Pugilism and Pathology: African Boxing and the Black Urban Experience in Southern Rhodesia,” in Baker and Mangan, *Sport in Africa*, 196–213

JANUARY 29: FROM “WHITE MAN’S BURDEN” TO AFRICAN SPORTS

Portfolio Item #2: Final Topic & Bibliography Due

Read

- Peter Alegi, *African Soccerscapes*, chapters 1–2
- Markku Hokkanen, “‘Christ and the Imperial Games Fields’ in South-Central Africa – Sport and the Scottish Missionaries in Malawi, 1880–1914: Utilitarian Compromise,” *International Journal of the History of Sport* 22, no. 4 (2005): 745–769
- Tadasu Tsuruta, “Simba or Yanga? Football and Urbanization in Dar es Salaam,” in Brennan et al., eds., *Dar es Salaam: Histories from an Emerging Metropolis*, 198–212
- Tamba E. M’bayo, “Soccer in Senegal: National Identity, Commercialization, and Acquisition of Wealth,” in Augustine E. Ayuk, ed., *Football (Soccer) in Africa: Origins, Contributions, and Contradictions*, 213–230

Recommended

- Hamad Ndee, “Western Influences on Sport in Tanzania: British Middle-Class Educationalists, Missionaries and the Diffusion of Adapted Athleticism,” *International Journal of the History of Sport* 27, no. 5 (2010): 905–36
- Chris Bolsmann, “The 1899 Orange Free State Football Team Tour of Europe: ‘Race’, Imperial Loyalty and Sporting Contest,” *International Journal of the History of Sport* 28, no. 1 (2011): 81–97
- Phyllis M. Martin, *Leisure and Society in Colonial Brazzaville*
- Laura Fair, “Kickin’ It: Leisure, Politics and Football in Colonial Zanzibar, 1900s–1950s,” *Africa* 67, no. 2 (1997): 224–251
- Wiebe Boer, *Story of Heroes and Epics*, 1–49

FEBRUARY 5: SPORT AND APARTHEID (PART 1)

Read

- Peter Hain and André Odendaal, “A Matter of Life and Death: Sport and Rebellion,” in *Pitch Battles: Sport, Racism and Resistance*, 130–155
- Matthew P. Llewellyn & Toby C. Rider, “Dennis Brutus and the South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee in Exile, 1966–1970,” *South African Historical Journal* 72, n. 2 (2020): 246–271
- Bruce Murray, “Politics and Cricket: The D’Oliveira Affair of 1968,” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 27, no. 4 (2001): 667–684
- Michelle Sikes, “One-Tenth of a Second Does Not Really Count: Humphrey Khosi, Olympic Ultimatums, and the Tortured Logic of the South African Athletic Union,” *Journal of Olympic Studies* 4, no. 1 (2023): 1–21

Recommended

- Peter Alegi, *Laduma! Soccer, Politics, and Society in South Africa*
- Charles Korr and Marvin Close, *More Than Just a Game: Football v Apartheid*
- John Nauright, *Long Run to Freedom: Sport, Cultures and Identities in South Africa*
- Douglas Booth, *The Race Game: Sport and Politics in South Africa*
- F. C. Cleophas, ed., *Exploring Decolonizing Themes in South African Sport History*
- Mxolisi Dlamuka, “The State, Political Identities and Harry Gwala’s Involvement in the Football Struggles in Pietermaritzburg, 1920s–1950s,” *Journal of Natal and Zulu History* 33, no. 1 (2019): 41–61

- Todd Leedy, “Racing Out of the Shadows: Black Competitive Cycling in Johannesburg and Cape Town, ca. 1900–1964, in *Sports in Africa: Past and Present*, 125–140

FEBRUARY 12: SPORT AND APARTHEID (PART 2)

Special Guest: Saleem Badat via Zoom

Portfolio Item #3: Research Questions Due

Read

- Saleem Badat, *Tennis, Apartheid, and Social Justice*

Recommended

- Eric Allen Hall, *Arthur Ashe: Tennis and Justice in the Civil Rights Era*, pp. 143–178
- Philani Nongogo, “The Struggles to Deracialize South African Sport: a historical overview” (PhD dissertation, University of Pretoria, 2016) [[link](#)]
- Cynthia F. Pelak, “Women and Gender in South African Soccer: A Brief History,” *Soccer and Society* 11, no. 1 (2010): 63–78
- Francois J. Cleophas, “Non-Racial Sport in South Africa: A Documentary Analysis of the Struggle for International Recognition, 1946–1971,” *International Journal of the History of Sport* 38, no. 10–11 (2021): 1067–1085

FEBRUARY 19: FOOTBALL, NATIONHOOD, AND PAN-AFRICANISM

Portfolio Item #4: Updated Research Questions Due

Read

- Alegi, *African Soccerscapes*, chapters 3–4
- Hikabwa D. Chipande, “Challenge for the Ball: Elites, Fans and the Control of Football in Zambia’s One-Party State, 1973–1991,” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 44, 6 (2018): 991–1003
- Paul Darby, “‘Let Us Rally Around The Flag’: Football, Nation-Building, and Pan-Africanism in Kwame Nkrumah’s Ghana,” *Journal of African History* 54 (2013): 221–246

Recommended

- Chuka Onwumechili, ed., *Africa’s Elite Football: Structure, Politics, and Everyday Challenges*
- Chuka Onwumechili and Gerard Akindes, eds., *Identity and Nation in African Football*
- Peter Alegi and Chris Bolsmann, eds., *Africa’s World Cup* [[link](#)]
- Augustine E., Ayuk, ed. *Football (Soccer) in Africa: Origins, Contributions, and Contradictions*
- Gary Armstrong & Richard Giulianotti, eds., *Football in Africa*

FEB. 26: Spring Break!

MARCH 4: EAST AFRICAN RUNNING (PART 1)

Read

- Michelle Sikes, *Kenya’s Running Women: A History*, Intro–chapter 2
- Hannah Borenstein, “Laboring Athletes, Laboring Mothers: Ethiopian Women Athletes’ Bodies at Work,” in N. Besnier, D. G. Calabrò, and D. Guinness, eds., *Sport, Migration, and Gender in the Neoliberal Age* (2021), 65–82
- Dawson McCall, “Imagining the future through running,” *Africa Is A Country*, Oct. 30, 2023 [[link](#)]

Watch: “The Town of Runners” (FILM [[link](#)])

Recommended

- John Bale and Joe Sang, *Kenyan Running*
- Roderick Willis, “A Historical Narrative of High School Athletics Amongst ‘Coloured’ Communities in Cape Town, South Africa, with Special Reference to the Western Province Senior Schools Sports Union, 1956–1972,” *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 39, no. 2 (2022): 174–92

MARCH 11: EAST AFRICAN RUNNING (PART 2)

Special Guest: Michelle Sikes via Zoom

Read

- Sikes, *Kenya's Running Women*, chapters 3–5, epilogue
- Alexis Okeowo, “Why were two female running champions killed in Kenya?” *The New Yorker*, April 10, 2023

Recommended

- Lindsay Park Pieper, *Sex Testing: Gender Policing in Women's Sports*
- Alex Hutchinson, “An Imperfect Dividing Line,” *The New Yorker*, March 27, 2015

MARCH 18: AFRICAN SPORT AS GLOBAL SPECTACLE

Read

- Alegi, *African Soccerscapes*, chapter 6 and Epilogue
- Alegi and Bolsmann, *Africa's World Cup*, introduction

Watch

- “Africa and the Olympics: Race, Gender, and Power on the Road to Tokyo” [\[link\]](#)

Recommended

- Itamar Dubinsky, *Entrepreneurial Goals: Development and Africapitalism in Ghanaian Soccer Academies*
- Solomon Waliaula and J. B. Okong'o, “Performing Luo Identity in Kenya: Songs of Gor Mahia,” in Onwumechili & Akindes, *Identity and Nation in African Football*, 83–98
- Tafadzwa Choto, Manase Kudzai Chiweshe and Nelson Muparamoto, “Football Fandom, Ethno-regionalism and Rivalry in post-colonial Zimbabwe: Case study of Highlanders and Dynamos,” *Soccer and Society* 20, no. 1 (2019): 153–167
- Hikabwa D. Chipande and Davies Banda, “Sports and Politics in Postcolonial Africa,” in M. S. Shanguhya, and T. Falola, eds., *The Palgrave Handbook of African Colonial and Postcolonial History* (2018): 1263–1283
- Daniel Haxall, “Pitch Invasion: Football, Contemporary Art and the African Diaspora,” *Soccer and Society* 16, nos. 2-3 (2015): 259–281
- Martha Saavedra, “Football Feminine—Development of the African Game: Senegal, Nigeria and South Africa,” *Soccer and Society* 4, no. 2–3 (2003): 225–53
- Gerard A. Akindes, “Football Bars: Urban Sub-Saharan Africa's 'Trans-local 'Stadiums',” *International Journal of the History of Sport* 28, 15 (2011): 2176–90
- S. Baller, G. Miescher and C. Rassool, eds., *Global Perspectives on Football in Africa*

MARCH 25: MIGRATION AND EMPIRE: LUSOPHONE AFRICA

Special Guest: Todd Cleveland via Zoom (TBC)

Portfolio Item #5: Paper Outline Due

Read

- Todd Cleveland, *Following the Ball*
- Alegi, *African Soccerscapes*, chapter 5

Recommended

- P. Darby, J. Esson, and C. Ungruhe, *African Football Migration: Aspirations, Experiences and Trajectories*
- Carl-Gustav Scott, *African Footballers in Sweden*
- Gwendolyn Oxenham, *Under the Lights and In the Dark*, pp. 195–208
- Sebastian Abbot, *The Away Game: The Epic Search for Soccer's Next Superstars*
- Gerard Akindes and Peter Alegi, “From Léopoldville to Liège: A Conversation with Paul Bonga Bonga,” in C. Onwumechili and G. Akindes, *Identity and Nation in African Football*, 254–268

- Peter Alegi, “A Biography of Darius Dhlomo: Transnational Footballer in the Era of Apartheid,” *Soccer & Society* 11, 1–2 (2010): 46–62

APRIL 1: NO CLASS. Research and writing time.

APRIL 8: NO CLASS. Research and writing time.

APRIL 15: RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS.

APRIL 22: FINAL PAPER DUE

