GSWS 320-4: Learning to “play”: Gender and Sexuality in Canadian Sport

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Lecture: Mondays 9:30 – 13:20; BLU 10921

Course Description:
Regardless of whether or not we like, participate in, or watch sport, it is firmly entrenched in the social, cultural, political, and economic structure of Canadian society. Everywhere we turn we are bombarded with messages of sport being ‘empowering’. Our central task in this course will be to ask the question, “for whom?” We will use an intersectionality framework to critically examine the social construction of gender and sexuality in Canadian sport in relation to race, class and other social hierarchies. Our Canadian focus encourages us to look critically at ourselves instead of at the ‘generalized other’. Utilizing recent Canadian, sociological and historical readings we will: problematize the assumption of hockey as ‘our’ national sport; reflect on the constructions of indigeneity and gender through First Nations’ experiences of sport in Canada; challenge the heteronormativity of Canadian sport; examine how the 2010 Olympics served to preserve hegemonic gender, race, and class ideology; and discuss how the institution of sport is structured in a way to silence sexual abuse.

Learning Outcomes:
Students will be expected to: actively participate in classroom and online discussion, be open to sharing personal experiences and/or viewpoints and accept and engage with alternative viewpoints. Students will also develop the following skills: annotating academic articles, reflecting on their own experiences participating in or watching sport, interviewing members of current sports organizations, and relating current events in Canadian sport to broader issues around gender and sexuality.

Course Texts and Courseware:
All course readings available in the GSWS 320 courseware package and on the GSWS 320 Canvas site

Course Evaluation and Assignments:

Participation 10%
Online discussions: 10%
Academic article annotations & presentation: 15%
Critical essay on sport experience: 10%
Interview with member of local sport organization: 10%
Major paper on Canadian current event: 30%
Midterm: 15%

Prerequisite: 15 units.