

Issues in Journalism: Stick to Sports (WRIT 321)

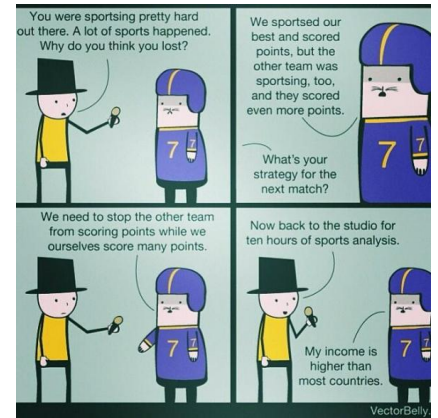
"No cheering in the press box." — Jerome Holtzman

Times/dates: 3:30-6:20pm Tuesdays, Sept – December 2020

Instructor: Tom Hawthorn

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CRN: 13065 [Click here for registration details](#)



Course description:

"Stick to sports" is the cry of the sports fan who sees sports as a diversion from day-to-day life. They are bothered by politics bleeding into the sports realm, yet those same fans somehow don't see the national anthem or military salute days as being political. Athletes have made it clear they are unwilling to "stick to sports" whether they are taking a knee or refusing to do so. This class will not be "sticking to sports."

This is an advanced lecture and discussion course on the history and future of sports writing, with an emphasis on the relationship between sports and politics, and sports and culture.

A modern sports reporter needs to know a bit about chemistry, labour law, anti-trust legislation, brain injuries, and the legal history of racial segregation, while also attaining a working knowledge of the Criminal Code. We'll look at sport as spectacle and discuss the role of sport in society—both as an escape from day-to-day realities and as an expression of society's fault lines. The evolution of sports writing in media will be a key component leading to discussions of the future of sports writing in all media by the next generation.

Our remote guests will include beat reporters, columnists and magazine writers, as well as former Olympians and student athletes. You will receive practical information on the practice of journalism, including interviewing techniques and the writing of features, and you will be expected to participate by sharing and discussing contemporary sports writing.

A knowledge of sports is not a prerequisite for this course. Curiosity is.

Course goals:

You will develop an appreciation for the craft of sports writing in the best traditions of the genre, while casting a critical eye on the myths associated with sports. You will also explore aspects of the sporting world overlooked by corporate media.

Course content:

We will briefly survey the history of sports coverage in mass media and explore critical issues through contemporary reportage—especially regarding race, gender and nationalism. We will look at the problems faced by athletes, with an emphasis on finances and health (notably concussions) and will examine the relationship between athletes and reporters.