

183B: Sports and American Culture

Jacques Barzun: "Whoever wants to know the heart and mind of America had better learn **baseball**, the rules, and reality of the game."

Instructor: Jerry Cohen
Block B: M, W, Th 9:00-9:50

Whoever wants to know the heart and mind of America, must learn not only about baseball but also about basketball and football the other two great games invented by and for Americans. All sports, amateur and professional are discussed, but these three centrally. How do sports in America reflect and thereby shape the moral codes, loyalties, personal values, character, expressive vocabulary, sense of work and play, fantasy and reality, of fans and athletes (both men and women!). How do sports, as they are played and "fancied" by Americans differ from the approach to sports in other cultures around the world? (By the way did you know that the first use of the term "fan" in America referred not to fanatics, as is often supposed, but to "fanciers" of the sporting life? That may be on the final exam, by the way.)



Texts Include:

The Natural by Bernard Malamud
From Ritual to Record by Allen Guttman
Baseball and Philosophy by Eric Bronson and Bill Littlefield
Basketball and Philosophy by Jerry L. Walls and Gregory Bassham
How Soccer Explains the World by Franklin Foer
Moneyball by Michael Lewis
Shoeless Joe by Kinsella
End Zone by Don DeLillo
Universal Baseball Association, Inc. by Robert Coover

The syllabus for AMST 183b can be found at the website for the course.
For further information contact Professor Cohen at jcohen@brandeis.edu.
Or come around to his office, Brown 310. You don't have to bring your glove.

For general questions about majoring in American Studies, contact the Undergraduate Advising Head, Professor Stephen Whitfield, at: swhitfie@brandeis.edu