HISTORY OF AMERICAN PHYSICAL CULTURE



AUBURN UNIVERSITY

KINE 3043

Dr. John D. Fair

Email: jdf0027@auburn.edu

Description: This course will focus on a social/cultural phenomenon that has become increasingly important in American life since the mid-nineteenth century. Physical culture consists of various activities people have employed to strengthen their bodies, enhance their physiques, increase their endurance, improve their health, fight against aging, and become better athletes. These endeavors will be examined within a chronological context and within the broader framework of national and international developments. The course will reveal a cross-section of American society, providing students an opportunity to examine subjects pertaining to psychology, sociology, politics, ethnic groups, women, minorities, masculinity, religion, medicine, leisure, entertainment, business, mass culture, sports, and much more.

Organization: The course is divided into three overlapping chronological segments: 1830s-1920s, 1890s-1950s, 1950s-Present

Required Readings: Jack W. Berryman, “The Art of Medicine, Motion and Rest, Galen on Exercise and Health,” *Lancet*, vol. 380 (July 21, 2012), 210-11; Harvey Green, *Fit for America, Health, Fitness, Sport and American Society* (Pantheon Books, 1986); Mark Adams, *Mr. America, How Muscular Millionaire Bernarr Macfadden Transformed the Nation through Sex, Salad, and the Ultimate Starvation Diet* (Harper Collins, 2009); and Shelly McKenzie, *Getting Physical, The Rise of Fitness Culture in America* (University Press of Kansas, 2013); and Jan Todd, “Size Matters: Reflections on Muscle, Drugs, and Sport, Iron Game History, 10 (August, 2008), 3-22.

Lectures: Each week the instructor will present three lectures of no more than 20 minutes normal reading time by power point which will include pictures and short You-Tube videos. These presentations, emphasizing the more strength-based aspects of physical culture such as weightlifting and bodybuilding, will relate to but not normally duplicate material in the readings, which is oriented more towards general health and fitness.

Course Content—Lectures and Readings:

Week One—Introduction, “Origins of Physical Culture,” and Berryman article

Week Two—“Recreation and the Strongman Era” and Green #1 & 2

Week Three—“Muscle Peddlers in the Golden Age of Sport” and Green #3 & 4

Week Four—“Bob Hoffman and the York Gang” and Green #5 & 6

Week Five—“The Olympics” and Green #7 & 8

Week Six—“The Weider Brothers” and Green #9 & 10

Week Seven—“Mr. America” and Green #11 and Epilogue

Week Eight—“Muscle Beach & the California Scene” and Adams #1-4

Week Nine—“Steroids and Powerlifting” and Adams #5-9

Week Ten—“Arnold Schwarzenegger” and Adams #10-13

Week Eleven—“Women and Minorities” and Adams #14-Epilogue

Week Twelve—“Health Clubs and Machine Fitness” and McKenzie #1 & 2

Week Thirteen—“Strongman” and CrossFit” and McKenzie #3

Week Fourteen—“Big-Time College Football” and McKenzie #4

Week Fifteen—McKenzie #5 & Epilogue and Todd article

No Final Exam but project due on December 7 of finals week.

Weekly Discussions: Each week students are required to participate in a discussion on questions relating to the readings submitted by the instructor. *Responses of 150-300 words are required for each question.* There will be two questions for which responses are required each week, each worth a possible 10 points. At least one quotation is required for each response, but quotations may not exceed 15 words and must be referenced with the *page number in parentheses* (p. 25 etc.). All responses are due by Saturday midnight. This deadline is absolute, and no late submissions will be accepted. Quality, not quantity, of responses as well as accurate information and critical thinking are important. *Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and will not be tolerated.* A first time offender will be assigned a zero for the assignment. A subsequent offence will receive a zero and be reported to the provost’s office. (15 x 20 possible weekly points = 300 possible points or 30% of the final grade)

Presentations: Every three weeks students are required to submit an original power point presentation by Saturday midnight related to some aspect (however tangential) of the material covered during the previous three weeks. All textual content must be drawn directly from internet sites and cited (*in the text*) with corresponding links in your bibliography. Related images and brief You Tube illustrations, *totaling no more than 5 minutes*, may also be included. Power point presentations, each worth a possible 60 points, must last for 12-15 minutes normal spoken reading time. They will be evaluated on content, grammar, style, and originality. Any material quoted word-for-word (over three consecutive words) must be referenced with quotation marks and the source identified in parentheses. A separate bibliographic page must be included at the end citing all quoted and paraphrased materials actually used, *not just consulted*. The bibliography should be followed by a brief statement of how your presentation relates to material covered over the previous three weeks and what you learned in preparing it. *Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and will not be tolerated.* A first time offender will be assigned a zero for the assignment. A subsequent offense will receive a zero and reported to the provost’s office. No late submissions will be accepted. (5 x 60 possible points = 300 possible points for this tri-weekly exercise)

Project: Each student is required to submit a project based on research into how and to what extent the student and his/her family (including ancestors and extended family) fit into the physical culture tradition presented in this course. Sources should include not only the student’s own personal history but related documents and interviews with family members about the personal health, exercise, fitness, and sports activities and interests in current and past generations. A minimum of ten double-spaced pages with one inch margins is required. Quotations and illustrations may be used, and all material used must be referenced both in the text and in a bibliography at the end of the essay. Grading criteria will be based on content, grammar, and style. Draft essays submitted at least a week prior to the deadline of December 7 are eligible for a free read and comments. Online tutoring is available through the Miller Writing Center at Auburn University--334-844-7475 or AuburnWrites@auburn.edu. (400 possible points for 15 weeks)

Grading Policies: Perfect on-time on-line attendance is expected for each exercise. Late work will not be accepted. However, the lowest grade any student who hasn’t plagiarized can receive (either for submitted or not-submitted work) will be half the maximum number of points possible for the assignment. In other words, 5 of a possible 10 points for each discussion question, 30 of a possible 60 points for each presentation, and 200 of a possible 400 points for the semester project.

Grading Format

Discussions 30% 300 possible points

Presentations 30% 300 possible points

Project 40% 400 possible points

Course Work and Evaluation: Students should check Canvas daily for discussion postings, e-mail messages, deadlines, and grades.

All course work will be conducted online. It is the student’s responsibility to allocate sufficient time to complete all online assignments. Planning ahead is critical to success.

Discussions and presentations will remain open only for specified dates and times. The project deadline at the end of the semester is absolute. It is the student’s responsibility to check Canvas online frequently to meet these deadlines. No make-up work will be allowed. For excused absences see the Auburn University Student Policy eHandbook (www.auburn.edu/studentpolicies).

Make-up work for excused absences must be completed within 7 calendar days. All questions with regard to assignments must be communicated to the instructor by e-mail at least two days prior to the deadline.

Students are expected to complete all assignments without any outside assistance.

A Caveat: Please be advised that as a course relating to the human body, there will occasionally be images depicting nudity and content relating to such topics as eroticism, homosexuality, and drug abuse that might make some individuals uncomfortable, but they will always be relevant to the subject matter and conveyed within historical context.

Canvas e-mail (conversations tab) is the official form of communication for this class, but students may also use my campus e-mail at jdf0027@auburn.edu.

Academic Honesty: All students must adhere to the Auburn University honesty code (Title XII) in the Student Policy eHandbook (www.auburn.edu/studentpolicies). All violations of the SGA Code will be reported to the Office of Provost for reference to the Academic Honesty Committee.

Accommodations: Students who need accommodations are asked to submit their approved accommodations electronically through AU Access and to make arrangements with the instructor during the first week of classes. Arrangements may also be made through the Office of Accessibility, 1228 Haley Center, 334-844-2096.