HISTORY OF AMERICAN PHYSICAL CULTURE



AUBURN UNIVERSITY

KINE 3043

Dr. John D. Fair

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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 by power point which will include pictures and short You-Tube videos. These presentations, which emphasize 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:

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 during finals week.

Weekly Discussions: Each week students are required to participate in a two-part on-line discussion on questions relating to the lectures and readings submitted by the instructor. Responses of 150-250 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 date of lecture (ie. Week 3B or page number (p. 129) in parentheses. Quality, not quantity, of responses as well as accurate information and critical thinking are important. All responses are due by Saturday midnight. No late submissions will be accepted. (15 x 20 possible weekly points = 300 possible total points)

Presentations: Every three weeks students are required to submit an original power point presentation by Saturday midnight related to some aspect of the material covered during the previous three weeks. Sources may include hardcopy or online publications as well as pictures and brief You Tube illustrations. Power point presentations, each worth a possible 60 points, must last for 12-15 minutes. Presentations will be evaluated on content, grammar, style, and originality. No late submissions will be accepted. (5 x 60 possible points = 300 possible total 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 at the end of the ten pages. Grading criteria will be based on content, grammar, and style. Draft essays submitted at least a week prior to the deadline 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 can receive for any activity (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, 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 benefit of any outside resources or 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.