

3. Cricket and Media: Representation of Cricket in Media

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The course is comprised of six modules.

Introduction: Course Description

We live in a society where the significance of social science in the contemporary globalized world is questioned on a day-to-day basis. The everyday is deemed to be unworthy of being discussed in academic platforms. The mainstream academic forums make a conspicuously deliberate effort to keep the discussion of topics related to popular culture at bay, particularly sports, shushing it as the ‘toy department of life’. This course attempts to go against the grain by examining, analysing and interpreting the working of Indian society and the role of media in it through the metaphor of Cricket.

“Cricket and Media: Representation of Cricket in Media” does not intend to study the technical features of cricket. On the contrary, the course approaches cricket as a representation of everything about the Indian society i.e., a symbol of the collective Indian sentiment and social whole. In the present context of omnipresent media; media plays an incontestable role in the process of producing, distributing and establishing the socio-political outlines of the contemporary Indian society. Subsequently, the modules evaluate the factors that elevates cricket beyond its inherent identity of being a game and the special treatment it receives across media. The course also investigates the manner in which the game is produced, distributed and consumed as a commodity.

“In the era of the omnipresent sports image. It is important, then, to understand the dynamics of the relationship between sport and the media. We need to be able to analyse their mutual roles as social institutions (including assessment of the traditional sports fan’s lament that ‘TV has taken over sport’)”

-David Rowe

Course Title: Cricket and Media: Representation of Cricket in Media

Course Schedule: Odd Semester (2020-21)

Course Duration: 60 hours

Testing and evaluation of “Cricket and Media: Representation of Cricket in Media” will involve examining, analysing, and evaluating the changing trends in the present-day society pertaining to sports, media and culture through writing essays, articles, presentations and active classroom participation (30Marks). Remaining 70 marks will be finalized on the basis of the marks scored in the End Semester Examination.

Course Objectives

- To provide students with a general overview of the bond between sport and media
- To develop the much-required ability to observe, critically analyse and understand the current developments in the society
- The programme intends to prepare students for the challenges offered by the consumer driven world which transforms everything into a commodity
- To introduce sports and media as an academic field of study
- To explore the role of sports and media in the breaking and making of new cultures
- To investigate and examine the politics of existing and emerging culture
- To help students attain a multidisciplinary perspective towards social discourses

Learning Outcomes

Successful completion of the proposed course would enable the students to attain:

- an ability to question what media feeds rather than blindly consume it
- the ability to decipher and interpret the working and impact of celebrity culture, stardom, advertisements and branding
- the ability to comprehend the relevance of possessing skills in the field of social science in everyday life
- the skill to critically evaluate the politics of sports and games and the so called innocent social discourses emerging out of it
- an understanding of the problems associated with mass commercialisation
- the ability to decode the ways in which a cultural phenomenon is represented across media
- an ability to understand the way the culture industry creates the need for consumption in the human psyche
- an ability to decipher the unholy relationship between cricket and media and Bollywood

Module I

Cricket as the Synecdoche of Indian Culture

Time: 10 hours

Cricket in India involves excessive emotion of the participants and spectators and it has always been highly instrumental in establishing a sense of unconditional togetherness. The game very well accommodates the Indian spirit of vibrant nationalism and the nation's unmatched craving for narratives glorifying masculinity and many other shades of India's cultural framework. Cricket represents everything about the country and the modern trends in the domain of the game evidently demonstrates what would happen when the everyday is merchandised through advertising and the media in the globalized world. Such social developments would result in the braking of existing cultures and the making of new cultures. The module examines the cultural changes instigated due to the recent developments in cricket, specifically in Indian cricket.

Readings and Viewings

- Bedi Vikram. Indian Cricket as Synecdoche for Our Times
- Joseph, Manu. India An Unnatural Cricketing Nation
- Rowe, David. Extracts from Sport, Culture and the Media the Unruly Trinity
- BBC Documentary The Empire of Cricket – India

Module II

Cricket in Writing

Time: 10 hours

In India the media space enjoyed by cricket across media outlets, such as print media, broadcast media and the new media varies in comparison with other sport due to numerous reasons. There has been an unprecedented boom in the realm of writings on cricket irrespective of the medium which in turn offers exclusive space for cricket. This module offers ample scope to investigate the factors that triggers this doubtful preference for cricket, even if they fall outside the scope of conventional academic engagement. The role of social

media journalism and the latest additions to the broad spectrum of cricket journalism which changed the way the game is played and consumed will also be analysed. Thus, this unit, through a set of carefully designed academic activities studies the relationship between sport—predominantly cricket, and media.

Readings

- Wanta, Wayne. The Coverage of Sports in Print Media
- Haigh, Gideon. Cricket and the Media: The Pantomime Horse
- Real Michael. Sports Online: The Newest Player in Media Sport
- Choudhury, Angikaar. How social media has changed the way cricket fans consume the game

Module III

Advertisement and Cricket

Time: 10 hours

Advertisement could be viewed as the factor which binds media and cricket together and the chief motivating factor behind the transformation of players into stars and brands. The intrusion of advertisement into the so-called pious space of the game in the era of neoliberalism continuously redefines the definition of stardom and to an extent the game itself. Thus, it is imperative to look at the culture of stardom and branding presently prevalent in the game and its bearings on the character and popularity of the game. Subsequently, the unit evaluates the impact of advertisement industry in the evolution of the game and on the cricket addicted Indian psyche.

Readings

- Kidambi, Prashant. Hero, celebrity and icon: Sachin Tendulkar and Indian public culture
- Nair Supriya. The great Indian cricket ad Tamasha
- Boyle, Raymond and Richard Haynes. A Sporting Triangle: Television, Sport and Sponsorship

Module IV

Representation of Cricket in Cinema

Time: 10 hours

In India, cinema remains one of the most popular forms of entertainment, and cricket the favourite sport of the majority. Cricket, to certain extent, has made use of the mainstream Indian cinema and vice versa. Indian cinema with respect to its depiction of cricket has arguably acted as an agency of representation for the so-called non-commercial version of the game and the sentiments of those who are involved in it, categorically in comparison with the other available medium. Hence, the unit looks at the way the game is represented in cinema and the way this portrayal has impacted the popularity of the game.

Viewings

- Gowariker, Ashutosh. Lagan
- Prabhu, Venkat. Chennai 600028
- Shine, Abrid 1983

Module V

Cricket as a Commodity and Performance in the Time of Live- Media

Time: 10 hours

Cricket in the age of visual culture matches the standards of a scripted performance. Cricket beyond doubt keeps the Indian masses on the hook by means of its soap-operatic appeal. It should be noted that the commercial interest of the media houses results in the making of the consumer-friendly version of cricket. Thus, the profit motive triggers the transformation of cricket from just a game to the present version of “Cricketainment”. During the time of metropolitan modernity, cricket with advent of technology has all the ingredients of a live performance. The game even functions as an alternative to cinematic experience during the time of glamorous flagship events like World Cup and IPL as they are screened at multiplexes and theatres across India. Thus, equal blending of cricket, glamour, and media the present version of cricket a commodity to be produced and consumed.

Readings

- Astill, James. “Introduction” to The Great Tamasha: Cricket, Corruption and the Turbulent Rise of Modern India
- Haigh, Gideon. Cricket and Television: Crowds and Powerlessness
- Boyle, Raymond and Richard Haynes. Power Game: Why Sport Matters to Television
- Sullivan, B. David. Broadcast Television and the Game of Packaging Sports

Module VI

Understanding the Unholy Trinity – Cricket, Media and Bollywood

Time: 10 hours

The advent of IPL has aggravated the progress of cricket beyond its natural identity of being just a game. It has revolutionized the way cricket was being played and watched. Hence, the capsule version of the game deserves to be viewed as the pinnacle of commercialization in sports. IPL added to the theatricality of the game and has Bollywoodized it beyond redemption, thus leaving the game completely into the hands of the capitalistic framework. This unit explores the shades of the aforementioned transformation and what it has cost the game. IPL ideally demonstrated the hitherto unexplored commercial prospects of cricket in India and across commonwealth by bringing together cricket and entertainment and making it “cricketainment”. The course evaluates these developments and how it symbolizes the changing culture of the country. IPL has increased the depth of addiction for cricket in India certainly for reasons that are outside the purview of the game. Thus, this unit attempts to examine the good, bad and ugly of cricket, Bollywood and media.

Readings

- Jalarajan, Sony, and Rohini Sreekumar. Bollywood Sporting Spectacles: Indian Premier League Cricket as a Bollywoodized Media Event
- Raghavendra, MK. Decoding India’s love for cricket,

Bollywood – and why we value
individual growth over team endeavours
The Indian Premier League and World
Cricket

- Majumdar, Boria.

Recommended Reading

1. Bateman, Anthony: The Cambridge Companion to Cricket
2. Haigh, Gideon: Sphere of Influence: Writings on cricket and its discontents
3. Astill, James: The Great Tamasha: Cricket, Corruption and the Turbulent Rise of Modern India
4. Nandy, Ashis: The Tao of Cricket
5. Guha, Ramachandra: A Corner of a Foreign Field
6. Sen, Ronojoy: Nation at Play: A History of Sport in India
7. Kidambi Prashant: Cricket Country: The Untold History of the First All India Team
8. Boyle, Raymond and Richard Haynes: Power play: sport, the media and popular culture
9. Rowe, David: Sport, Culture and the Media
10. Raney A. Arthur and Jennings Bryant: Handbook of Sports and Media
11. Dayan, Daniel and Elihu Kartz: Media Events: The Live Broadcasting of History
12. Boyle, Raymond: Sports Journalism: Contexts and Issues
13. Coakley, Jay and Eric Dunning: Handbook of Sports Studies
14. Wenner, A. Lawrence: Media, Sports and Society
15. Fox, Andrew: Global Perspectives on Media Events in Contemporary Society
16. Majumdar, Boria and J.A. Mangan: Cricketing Cultures in Conflict: World Cup 2003
17. Bose, Mihir: The Magic of Indian Cricket: Cricket and Society in India