

Declan Abernethy, Ph.D.

Lecturer

School of History and Sociology of Technology and Science
Georgia Institute of Technology
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Education

Ph.D. History and Sociology of Technology and Science (2025)

Georgia Institute of Technology

Dissertation: “Grass Ceiling: The United States Women’s National Soccer Team and the Fight for Equal Pay”

Committee: Johnny Smith (Chair), Mary McDonald, Daniel Amsterdam, Kirk Bowman, Jaime Schultz

Scholar Certificate (2023)

Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning Network

Graduate Certificate Tech to Teaching (2023)

Georgia Institute of Technology Center for Teaching and Learning

M.S. History and Sociology of Technology and Science (2020)

Georgia Institute of Technology

Masters paper: *Imagining a United Atlanta: Atlanta United FC, Imagined Community, and Inequality in Modern Atlanta*

Advisor: Mary G. McDonald; Reader: John M. Smith

Graduate Certificate in Science, Technology and Society (2019)

Georgia Institute of Technology

B.A. Science and Technology Studies (*Magna Cum Laude*) (2018)

Cornell University

Thesis: *Governing Bodies: Rules, Technoscience, and Athletes in Elite Competition.*

Advisor: Malte Ziewitz

Teaching Experience

Lecturer (Summer 2025 - Present)

History and Sociology of Technology and Science, Georgia Institute of Technology

- HTS 3089 Science, Technology, and Sports
 - In-person Spring 2026
 - Online Asynchronous Summer 2025
- HTS 3073 Urban Atlanta and Sporting Mega- Events
 - In-Person Spring 2026
- HTS 3085 Sociology of Sports
 - Online Synchronous and Asynchronous Fall 2025

Graduate Student Instructor (Summer 2024- Spring 2025)

History and Sociology of Technology and Science, Georgia Institute of Technology

- HTS 3089 Science, Technology, and Sports
 - In-person Spring 2025
 - Online Asynchronous Summer 2024

Teaching Assistant (2018-2024)

History and Sociology of Technology and Science, Georgia Institute of Technology

- History of Sports in America
 - Fall 2018
 - Fall 2019
 - Fall 2021
 - Spring 2021
 - Summer 2021
- Introduction to Sociology
 - Spring 2019
 - Summer 2019
 - Summer 2020
- United States History Since 1877
 - Fall 2020
 - Fall 2024

Center for Teaching and Learning, Georgia Institute of Technology

- Tech to Teaching Graduate Certificate
 - Fall 2022 through Summer 2024

Research Experience

Doctoral Researcher (2018-2025)

- Conducted intersectional feminist research on the history of the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team, examining societal impacts and policy implications through qualitative and mixed methods approaches.
- Employed Boolean search techniques, conducted interviews, and accessed physical and digital archival resources.

Research Assistant (2018-2022)

- Assisted Johnny Smith and Randy Roberts with primary source research for their book project, *The Fight of His Life: Joe Louis' Battle for Freedom During World War II*.

Publications

Book Chapters

- Abernethy, Declan James. "Hitting the Net: How Women's Soccer Scored Big Online." In *Soccer, Globalization and Innovation: The Beautiful Game in the 21st Century*, edited by Kirk Bowman and John Boyd. Routledge, 2025.
- Abernethy, Declan James, Megan Conville, and Opal McCoy Gay. "Selling the Dream of a United Atlanta: Atlanta United FC, Imagined Community, and Inequality in Modern Atlanta." In *The Performative City: An Approach to the Study of Urban Policy*. Waveland Press, 2025.

Reviews

- Abernethy, Declan James. "Review of *The Ethics of Performance Enhancing Drugs in Sports*, by Sandra McCalla. H-Sci-Med-Tech, H-Net Reviews (Forthcoming).
- Abernethy, Declan James. "Review of *Inventing for Sports*, eds. Eric Hintz and Arthur A. Daemmrich. H-Sci-Med-Tech, H-Net Reviews (August 2025). <https://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=61942>
- Abernethy, Declan James. "Review of *Beyond the Finish Line: Images, Evidence, and the History of the Photo-Finish*, by Jonathan Finn. H-Sci-Med-Tech, H-Net Reviews (May 2022). <https://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=57691>
- Abernethy, Declan James. "FIFA Uncovered (2022) Dir. by Daniel Gordon (Review)." *Journal of Sport History* 49, no. 3 (2022): 289–91.

Conference Presentations and Invited Talks

- Grass Ceiling: The History of the United States Women's National Soccer Team. *Soccer History Course at Vanderbilt University (\$350 Honorarium)*. Nashville, TN (virtual). 2024
- The Women's Games: How the 1996 Olympics Changed the Future of the US Women's National Soccer Team, *Georgia Institute of Technology Library*, Atlanta, GA. 2026.
- Grass Ceiling: The History of the United States Women's National Soccer Team. *Women's Sports Seminar at the University of Wisconsin Madison (\$300 Honorarium)*. Madison, WI (virtual). 2024
- Teaching Assistant Orientation. *Georgia Tech Center for Teaching and Learning*. Atlanta, GA (virtual). 2024
- The History of American Women's Soccer until 1999. *History of Sports in America*. Atlanta, GA. 2023
- Rad Grading: Navigating Grading as a Teaching Assistant. *Georgia Tech TA Development Academy*. Atlanta, GA. (2022, 2023).
- Grass Ceiling: The History of the United States Women's National Soccer Team. *SoccerCon*. Atlanta, GA. (2023)
- Atlanta United Football Club and the Atlanta Way (with Opal McCoy Gay and Megan Conville). *Atlanta Studies*. Atlanta, GA. (2023)
- Becoming the Poster: Mia Hamm and the Rise of Women's Soccer in the United States. *North American Society for Sport History*, Chicago, IL. (2022)
- Atlanta United: Community, Communitas, and Professional Soccer in Atlanta. *Atlanta Studies*, Atlanta, GA. (2021)
- Raising the Boom: Biomedicalizing the NFL. Presented at the *Society for the Social Study of Science* conference, New Orleans, LA.(2019)

Awards and Honors

Blended and Online Learning Design (BOLD) Graduate Fellow

- Awarded by the Provost Funds for Excellence in Graduate Studies to enable and empower graduate students to become knowledge producers through designing, developing, and contributing open educational resources (OER) for blended and online learning. (\$2,000)

Herbert P. Haley Fellowship Award

- Awarded by Georgia Institute of Technology to a small number of the Institute's most highly qualified continuing graduate students in each College. (\$4,000)

Homer Rice Award

- Awarded by the History and Sociology Graduate Committee for the graduate student who, through volunteerism, has fostered a sense of community in the School of History and Sociology, as well as broader communities. (\$1,000)

Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts Graduate Essay Competition - 2nd Place

- Raising the Boom: The NFL, Rules, and Biomedicine. (\$1,000)

Public Scholarship

Op-Eds:

- Abernethy, Mark Spencer, Declan. "Opinion — What Will Atlanta's World Cup Priorities Be?" *Atlanta Community Press Collective*, January 21, 2026.
<https://atlprescollective.com/2026/01/21/opinion-atlanta-world-cup-priorities/>.

Substack:

- Over 65 subscribers for *Grass Ceiling newsletter which examines intersection between soccer and society*.

Podcasts:

- *5 Stripe Final*: Atlanta United Sociology with Declan Abernethy

TikTok:

- *@declanonssports*: Teaching sport history and sociology. Approximately 16,500 views and 1,000 likes.

Publication Interviews

- Interview with Atlanta Journal Constitution reporter Riley Bunch on Atlanta World Cup (forthcoming)

- Interview for Kristen Bailey, “Women’s Soccer Sets Sights on Atlanta,” Georgia Tech News, December 1, 2025, <https://www.gatech.edu/news/2025/12/01/womens-soccer-sets-sights-atlanta>.

Coaching

- Varsity Soccer Coach | Drew Charter School (Atlanta, GA) (2023-Present)
 - Boys (2023-Present)
 - 2025 Boys 2A State Champions
 - 2025 Boys 2A Region 6 Champions
 - 2024 Boys 2A Elite 8 Participants
 - Girls (2025- Present)
 - 2025 Girls 2A Region 6 Champions
- Coach | Inter Atlanta FC (2022-2024)
 - U13 Girls Coach (2024)
 - U10 Girls Coach (2023-4)
 - U15 Girls Coach (2023-4)
 - U14 Girls Coach (2022-3)