

SPORT SOCIOLOGY I  
SUMMER TERM 1992  
Wednesday, 6 May 1992

Welcome back to the Sociology course. In our next few meetings I want to prepare you for your examination. Today I want to have a look at the work we have covered in the past two terms and to identify the distinctively sociological nature of our work.

I also want to return the assignment.

During your holiday, I wonder if you saw sports events in a different light. Each day in the media it seems to me that there are numerous examples of topics we have discussed. It will be a considerable break through if you recognise that our awareness of such events is mediated.

Since we last met:

you have had a break/holiday of sorts

there has been a change of government structure for sport

German athletes have been cleared of drugs charges

Arthur Ashe has announced he has Aids

End of season fixtures are being completed in association football and rugby

England has been announced as the venue for the 1996 European Soccer Championship

the Ebbw Vale Garden Festival has opened

people have died at a football game in France

These are visible, mediated events. The everyday business of your lives has gone on but is also possibly changing. The values and expectations you have may be changing and the way you relate to or interact with others may thus be changing.

The sociology of sport offers a range of perspectives on your situatedness in the daily business of living. Last week you were involved in a programme of events that possibly contrasted with the 'normal routine' of work here. As sociologists you might want to think about last week in a particular kind of way. You might focus, for example, on the social context of the week and the kinds of knowledge you used or redefined.

At its best sport sociology encourages you to make the familiar strange and the strange familiar. It does so from a disciplined perspective that can be described as social scientific. In the jargon of sociology, it should enable you to locate personal biography in a social structure.

As sport sociologists you can be reflexive about the everyday.

## SPORTS SOCIOLOGY REVISION SEMINARS

During our two terms together, we have discussed:

### 1. Introductory Lecture Wednesday, 2 October 1991

We will be trying to make some sense of the social context of sport.

#### Sociology as a disciplined enquiry

As you follow your degree course you will be encouraged to think about a variety of sciences. Sociology lays claim to being a science of society. We will discuss a number of sociological perspectives. Rather like political parties sociologists want to compete for your attention and vote. They sometimes seek to be complete accounts of social life and collect evidence in a particular kind of way. What I would like to do is to enable us to get a sense of a range of perspectives available. Gaining a sense of perspectives should encourage us to read social settings.

Let's use a practical example of this: what you think is the social significance of the Olympic Games?

1. The Greek roots of Olympism
2. The rise of the modern games
3. The significance of individual achievement
4. The role of nationalism
5. Commercialism and the role of the media
6. The content of the Olympic programme

Somewhere in your account you may have linked individuals with groups.

#### Recommended Reading:

Peter Berger            Invitation to Sociology (two chapters: Society in Man and Man in Society.)

Peter McIntosh        Sport in Society.

John Evans (ed)       Physical Education, Sport and Schooling, pages 1-10.

### SPORT SOCIOLOGY 13 November 1991

Olympism as a case study of the relationship between sport, politics and the state.

I would like to talk about the roots of Olympism as a philosophy and then contrast claims for it as either:

- i) a value system independent of state control
- ii) a vehicle for ideology

This encourages me to then look at Olympic Games after 1972 and consider whether the Olympics OUGHT to be a very special kind of event in which the youth of the world meet in a quadrennial festival of sport.

Recommended Reading:

International Review for the Sociology of Sport

Journal of Sport and Social Issues

SELECT ONE ARTICLE ON OLYMPISM TO DISCUSS.

SPORT SOCIOLOGY I  
SPRING TERM 1992

#### 1. Introduction

What was the first term about? What is the distinctiveness of sociology in your BA course? I wanted the first term to be a general exploration of the way sociologists approach sport. THREE basic concepts last term were:

- i) IDENTITY
- ii) EVIDENCE
- iii) PERSPECTIVE

Sociology offers perspectives on how identity is created, developed and maintained in society. It draws upon evidence collected from and in social settings. The kinds of explanations sociology offers depends on the way in which the relationships between the individual and society are viewed. Two key concepts in this respect are:

- i) ACTION
- ii) SYSTEM

Early sociologists of sport were criticised for restricting their sociological analysis to WITHIN sport and for failing to locate sport in a wider social and cultural context. (You may recall that this was the kind of criticism that Jenny Hargreaves and John Hargreaves made.)

We started to consider a range of perspectives last term. This term I would like to continue this both to encourage you to recognise differences in the sociology of sport and to prepare you for the assignment linked to the course. All the sociology perspectives we have dealt with and with which we will deal try to say something about the ways in which individuals like us understand the social world.

This term I want you to try to make critical use of your knowledge of perspectives (at this stage even knowing that there are different perspectives is good enough!). I would like us to explore:

- i) Play, games, sport, leisure, recreation
- ii) The development of organised sport in the UK
- iii) Structures for the organisation of sport
- iv) Sport for all and elite sport

By the end of the course I hope you will be aware of the sociological significance of sport in society and, in the terms of one of the learning outcomes of this course, be able to formulate personal views concerning sports issues. Another learning outcome is that you should be able to evaluate trends in contemporary society with respect to sports participation.

We will need to develop a sociological sense and will start to deal explicitly with some of the following sociological terms:

- i) social processes
- ii) social institutions
- iii) social status
- iv) social interaction
- v) social norms
- vi) socialisation
- vii) culture
- viii) 'normal' behaviour
- ix) 'deviant' behaviour

Do you remember Peter Berger saying that the sociologist is an inveterate snoop? What kind of snoop or detective you are in sociology depends on the conceptual tools you use.

Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1971:14) suggest in The Social Construction of Reality that:

The man in the street does not ordinarily trouble himself about what is real to him and about what he knows unless he is stopped short by some sort of problem. He takes his reality and his knowledge for granted. The sociologist cannot do this if only because of his systematic awareness of the fact that men in the street take quite different realities for granted as between one society and another. (1971:14)

They argue that 'reality' is socially constructed and that sociology must analyse the process in which this occurs.

#### A Programme for the Term

The following programme will enable us to challenge some of the reality we take for granted and develop a sense of the distinctiveness of sociology in your degree course:

- i) The games we play

- ii) Sport and its definition
- iii) Leisure and re-creation
- iv) The origins of organised sport
- v) Schooling for sport
- vi) 20th century structures of sport
- vii) The Sports Council
- viii) Participation in sport
- ix) Issues in Participation - The Female Athlete
- x) Issues in Participation - The Black Athlete
- xi) Sport as a socially constructed reality?

## SPORT SOCIOLOGY

Wednesday 22 January 1992

### Sport and Its Definition

Last week I raised with you a taxonomy of activities that ranged from GAMES to SPORTS. In today's talk I want to discuss how we define SPORT. I hope our discussion will be a framework for the consideration of leisure, recreation and organised sport in the next few weeks.

## SPORTS SOCIOLOGY 1

Wednesday 29 January 1992

### Leisure and Re-creation

At the end of last week's talk I asked if you could come to today's session equipped with a definition of leisure.

"The only trouble with being unemployed is that you never have a day off!"

I would like to build on your definitions of leisure. One way of doing so is to try to sort out whether there can be necessary and sufficient conditions for 'leisure' and 're-creation'. To help this process I would like to draw on evidence of people's life styles.

1. Can you identify your own time budget for a 'typical' day and week at College?
2. The dialectics of 'doing nothing'.
3. Leisure as a gendered concept.

### Recommended Reading

If you would like to read about some of the points I want to make in relation to 2 and 3, you could look at:

Paul Corrigan      Schooling the Smash Street Kids

Christine Griffin 'Women and Leisure' in Jennifer Hargreaves and others (ed), Sport, Culture and Ideology, (RKP 1982), 88-116.

The link with next week's talk is how Britain as the first 'sporting nation' developed cultural forms of activity that have been characterised as leisure and re-creation. Organised sport appeared in the 19th century. To get a sense of what happened then you might have a look at:

Peter McIntosh Sport in Society (1987 or 1963 editions)

The British Journal of Sports History is also a very good source. For a particular view see E Dunning and K Sheard Barbarians, Gentlemen and Players.

SPORTS SOCIOLOGY 1  
Wednesday 5 February 1992

### The Origins of Organised Sport

Last week we discussed how leisure might be defined. One of the points I was hoping to draw out was that any definition would have to say something about the relationship of leisure to work. I mentioned that the flow of experience might be a way of defining an activity. I also suggested that we should be alert to patriarchal influences in the definition of leisure.

At the end of last week's session, I suggested that the link between leisure and this week's talk is how Britain as the first 'sporting nation' developed cultural forms of activity that have been characterised as leisure and re-creation. Organised sport appeared here first in the 19th century.

By the end of today's meeting I want to have given account of how the origins of organised sport:

- i) Established Britain as 'the first sporting nation'.
- ii) Created social relationships in sport with regard to:
  - (a) what constitutes sport
  - (b) conventions about who may play: an amateur ethic
  - (c) gendered sport
- iii) Provides a model for the processes of objectification, rationalisation and bureaucratisation.
- iv) Can be used as an example of a developmental account linked to the civilising process.

In addition to the references I recommended last week, one very good source of information about this period is Peter Bailey's Leisure and Class in Victorian England (1978). He suggests that the early 19th century witnessed a break up of 'pre-industrial' culture and that traditional recreation was left in wreckage from which:



Another culture formed, better adapted to the milieu of a modern industrial society and by the last quarter of the century the British working class were settled into a new way of life. (1978:2)

### Nineteenth Century Sport

Peter McIntosh (1963, 1987) is an influential figure in the historical study of sport in Britain. His book Sport in Society has been used as a sourcebook for many courses since it was first published in 1963.

He suggests that:

- \* Aristocratic enjoyment of sport (field sports)
- \* Hunting, shooting and angling were exclusive activities
- \* Golf and cricket organised under patronage
- \* Crowd pulling sports were horse racing, prize-fighting and pedestrianism.
- \* Popular activities were spontaneous often linked to fairs but also included mob football.
- \* "It is probably not without significance that the sports which survived were those enjoying patronage of the aristocracy". (See for example Jockey Club, MCC and R&A)
- \* In the 19th century sports proliferated and were organised. Barbarians, Philistines and Populace were keys to understanding development.
- \* By end of century sport essentially Philistine in character (middle class)
- \* Process of extending sport: role of public schools and universities.
- \* Missionary zeal and muscular Christianity. Origins of soccer clubs
- \* Working class involvement in sport linked to working conditions

### Athleticism and Rational Recreation

Much of the debate about sport in the 1990s is embedded in the social and cultural roots of sport. I would like to conclude today's talk with mention of:

- \* athleticism and rational recreation as ideologies
- \* amateurism
- \* the invisibility of women in 19th century sport
- \* exclusive sport and the concept of game

SPORTS SOCIOLOGY 1  
Wednesday 26 February 1992

### Schooling for Sport

A couple of weeks ago we discussed the 'Origins of Organised Sport'. Since then you have written a sociology essay and spent a whole week reading! Today I want to take up the theme of schooling but first would like to relate your hard work on perspectives to what we are doing in this course.

Sociological perspectives theorise the ways in which societies go about and have gone about their business. Functionalist, conflict, interactionist and figurational sociologies prioritise particular sets of social relationships. Depending on your view of the world, schooling for sport takes on a range of possibilities. For example, when we discussed organised sport I suggested that:

- \* In the 19th century sports proliferated and were organised. Barbarians, Philistines and Populace were keys to understanding development.
- \* By end of century sport was essentially Philistine in character (middle class).
- \* Process of extending sport: role of public schools and universities.
- \* Missionary zeal and muscular Christianity.
- \* Working class involvement in sport linked to working conditions.

### Athleticism and Rational Recreation

I also suggested that much of the debate about sport in the 1990s is embedded in the social and cultural roots of sport and that we ought to consider:

- \* athleticism and rational recreation as ideologies
- \* amateurism as a guiding principle in sport
- \* the invisibility of women in 19th century sport
- \* exclusive sport

I think I also encouraged you to look at some curriculum history material. Some good sources are:

Eric Dunning	<u>Barbarians, Gentlemen and Players</u>
Sheila Fletcher	<u>Women First</u>
Peter McIntosh	<u>PE in England Since 1800</u>
J A Mangan	<u>Athleticism in the Victorian &amp; Edwardian Public School</u>
W Smith	<u>Stretching Their Bodies</u>

Jennifer Hargreaves has written a number of articles about girls' and womens' experience of sport in the late 19th century and you should try to follow up her work.

What I would like you to be aware of is that the sociological study of sport and physical education is about collecting and making sense of evidence. Curriculum history and life histories are important sources with which to understand how patterns of teaching, learning and participation took place.



## The Playing Fields of Eton ...

I would like us to think about how our 20th century experience of sport was structured by events over the last century. I hope your reading will fill in some of the detail in this outline:

- \* the hierarchy of public schools
- \* the concept of the 'gentleman'
- \* education for the masses as a form of social control
- \* physical and moral health
- \* opportunities for girls - Madame Osterberg
- \* urban schools and exercise
- \* drill and games
- \* PT

Social and cultural arrangements structured experience of sport. The range of legitimate activities by the end of the nineteenth century bore the imprint of social class. For some people, the quotation that "The battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton" summarises nineteenth century developments. Although the quotation may often be misused what I think it can do for us is to focus our attention on how a society:

- \* creates
- \* develops
- \* sustains
- \* changes

patterns of sport and physical education.

At the present time, the Conservative government is proposing National Curriculum guidelines for Physical Education. In them, the programmes of study are focused, at the Minister of State for Education's request, on participation. The menu from which schools and pupils will eventually choose has been drawn up in the context of an historical tradition of games playing. Critics might want to consider whether such a menu perpetuates particular models of sport.

At our next meeting I would like to discuss the organisation of sport in twentieth century Britain.

## SPORTS SOCIOLOGY

Wednesday 4 March 1992

### Twentieth Century Structures of Sport in Britain

#### Introduction

I have tried to follow a developmental structure in planning your sociology course. At present I am trying to get us towards a disciplined account of participation in sport by looking at the historical roots of sport. Last week we discussed the effect

schooling might have on sports involvement. Today I want to talk about twentieth century organisation of sport in Britain.

As sociologists, I want to encourage you to think about how and why organisations emerge, develop and persist. You might find the following references helpful:

I T Elvin	(1990)	<u>Sport and Physical Recreation</u> , Longmans
J F Coughlan	(1990)	<u>Sport and British Politics</u> , Falmer
D Howell	(1990)	<u>Made in Birmingham</u> , Queen Anne Press

One task we can accomplish is to get a sense of the structures of sport in Britain of which one commentator has written:

The organisation and administration of British sport is a complex, some would say fragmented structure, which has grown piecemeal since the middle of the 19th century.

There are three major sectors:

1. The voluntary
2. The public
3. The commercial

The Sports Council receives and channels government financed grants into sport and has a general co-ordinating function. Recently, see for example The Guardian 3 March 1992, the Sports Council has expressed concern about the funding of British sport.

I would like to spend a short time identifying some of the features of the above sectors and discuss how sociology can question and make sense of organised sport. In particular, it will be interesting to consider how sport takes place within a nation state and how ideology mediates our experience of sport.

We have discussed very briefly the organisation of sport in the nineteenth century. I think this is a good point to take up today's theme. In particular, I would like to discuss the importance to be attached to amateurism and voluntarism.

## 2. The Voluntary Sector

One estimate suggests there are 150,000 sports clubs in the UK, representing 6.5 million members in over 100 sports. These clubs are run by 500,000 voluntary officials. Do they concentrate on performance and excellence as well as promote mass involvement?

One way of responding to this question is to use your sociological expertise and undertake what we could call a modified ethnography. This should give us a micro-perspective on sport. However we may also want a macro-perspective and look at how clubs survive within current arrangements. How does government policy affect sport: a political economy of sport? For example, there is some concern that the uniform business rate and compulsory competitive tendering will recast the sporting map in the 1990s.

By relating the micro to the macro we might be able to consider how sports involvement has a social, economic and political cost. Who prioritises these? Since November 1990, the Minister for Sport (Robert Atkins) has been located within the Department of Education and Science. Within the last week, the Government has announced funds of £55 million for Manchester's bid to host the Olympic Games in 2000. This will be overseen by the Secretary of State for the Environment (Michael Heseltine).

Individual clubs are linked in governing bodies of sport. Governing bodies have been encouraged by the Sports Council to promote and develop participation in sport. In 1988 the Sports Council allocated almost 20% of its funds for development officers. Some of these posts are jointly funded by local government.

There are also a number of composite sports bodies with which you ought to be acquainted: Central Council for Physical Education (CCPR), British Olympic Association (BOA) and the National Coaching Foundation (NCF).

### 3. Public sector involvement in Sport

I want to signal here the national and local role of government in sport. We live in a nation state that through its democratic constitution makes and enforces laws. The national government allocates funds to sport directly through the Sports Council and indirectly through the funding of local government.

There is a fundamental tension here. Sports administrators want more funding for sport yet want to retain autonomy over its spending plans. Since such monies are raised by public taxation, governments have a mandate for stewardship over such monies. Once again The Guardian article 3 March 1992 is an illuminating account of this tension.

For an interesting discussion of the concept of recreational welfare see F Coalter Rational for Public Sector Investment in Leisure (Sports Council 1986).

### 4. The Sports Council

Rather than provide a detailed account of the Sports Council I am going to place some literature with these lecture notes in the Library. I would like you to have a look at this before next week. In particular, you ought to have a look at Sport in the Community (1988). For the moment I would like to provide some historical context about the emergence of the Sports Council.

## Participation in Sport

### Introduction

In our last two meetings, I have indicated some of the historical roots of twentieth century sport and we have watched a QED video 'Supertots'. My hope was that the video would provide an empirical focus for issues relating to participation. Today I want to identify some of the social influences on sports participation. To do so I want to use some of the material contained in Charles Jenkins's Sport in Society course for the National Coaching Foundation Diploma.

Sociology can encourage us to question the opportunities and constraints for PARTICIPATION in sport. We can, for example, consider how patterns of participation are influenced by age, gender, social class, ethnicity and socio-economic status. Charles Jenkins (1991:7) identifies four levels of participation in sport: foundation; participation; performance; excellence and suggests that:

Sport, even the apparently most solitary 'sport', is a social activity embedded in the culture and the social structure of society... Both the culture and the structure of society have shaped sport and patterned people's participation. (1991:6)

This patterning of participation is linked to personal circumstances, social filters and opportunity structures. In this respect, Jenkins (1991:211) argues that:

for many sports, being young, male, well educated, middle class, a car owner, a member of sporting family, with sporting friends, all tend to increase the likelihood of sports participation.

We ought to minimally consider the impact of the following on participation in sport:

- \* age and life cycle
- \* social class
- \* race and ethnicity
- \* gender
- \* ability and disability
- \* employment

### Social Influences on Sports Participation

Age and Life Cycle: a careful analysis of participation would consider how different age cohorts respond to sport and would recognise demographic trends in the population. For example, why should the so-called Wolfenden Gap persist some 30 years after it was formally identified and despite determined efforts to reduce this gap?

Social class: 'class' is an interesting and contested sociological concept. One way of defining class in this country is to use the Registrar General's categorisation of occupation. If this is used then we can say that recent evidence suggests that approximately twice as many professional people participate at sports centres than unskilled manual workers. However the RG's system is problematic. How do people acquire social class labels? What are we to make of 'social mobility'. Are there some people who do not fit into the classification? You might want to consider what kind of class model you use (if you use one at all). Is class important as a means of social differentiation? Do we need to consider the conjunction of class with other forms of differentiation such as age and gender? Can we then develop a sociological account of class position and class differences that enables us to understand differences in lifestyle, attitudes to the body and to bodily health?

Race and Ethnicity: Jenkins (1991:252) defines 'racism' as:

Practices and beliefs that restrict the opportunities in any area of living of individuals from a particular ethnic or racial group. This may be based on a belief that this group is morally, culturally, physically or intellectually inferior and leads to discriminatory practices or prejudiced attitudes.

He defines an 'ethnic group' as:

A group of people who share a common culture which differs in some ways from the culture of the majority of the host society or the dominant strata in a society.

Some commentators suggest that myths about race and ethnicity are socially constructed. One particularly strong myth is that of the natural superiority of the black athlete central to a biological account of sports participation. Such myths can be part of a process that institutionalises racism and leads to the growth of an underclass who are consigned to the lowest positions of the occupational and class structure. Some argue that in Britain there is evidence of a 'new racism' in people's consciousness. For example, the conspicuous success of black athletes contrasts with the social reality of racism. It might be that really successful black athletes are those who are assimilated into the dominant white culture. Do you recall Norman Tebbit's test for deciding who is British?

Sex and Gender: women experience inequality in opportunities to participate in sport. Jennifer Hargreaves, for example, notes:

Without doubt, men possess greater cultural power than women ... sport is a unique feature of cultural life in which women are seriously disadvantaged and where sexism is fostered.



'Sex' is the biological division of males and females. Gender is the social construction of masculinity and femininity that then is used as a means of social differentiation. We might want to consider whether sports science actually stimulates gender inequality. In this context the way we study becomes just one further example of institutionalised patriarchy. As Jenkins (1991:295) points out men have access to a wider range of sporting opportunities than women, more men take part, spend more time participating and play a greater part in delivering sporting opportunities at every level and at every stage in the life cycle. The reporting of sport also underscores this gender imbalance.

Ability and Disability: there are approximately 6.2 million people in Britain with disabilities. Only 5% of those with disabilities are under 30 years of age compared with 69% who are over 60. I want to suggest that the concept of 'disability' is yet another means of questioning participation in sport. It is also a means of questioning the importance we attach to the body in social relations.

Employment: given the present economic climate it seems sociologically prudent to signal the links between employment and participation in sport. We ought to think about how participation in sport is patterned and how policy might target the unemployed in sports provision. One eminent sociologist, Max Weber, wrote an influential account of the 'work ethic'. It was called The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. Sociologists now question whether structural unemployment, particularly that involving young people, has led to the disappearance of this 'work ethic'. You can imagine why a government might want to deal with this unemployed group in the interests of social harmony. For a detailed discussion of the issues involved you might want to have a look at Sue Glyptis's study Leisure and Unemployment (1989).

#### Recommended Reading:

You might find some of these references of some help. If they are not available, you might want to check out the sociology of sport journals and/or some of the references mentioned in earlier talks

#### Age and Life Cycle

Sports Council	(1988)	Sport in the Community
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#### Social Class

Abercrombie, N et al	(1988)	Contemporary British Society, Polity Press, Chapter 3
Veal, A J	(1979)	Sport and Recreation in England and Wales

#### Race and Ethnicity

Cashmore, E	(1982)	Black Sportsmen
Coakley, J	(1986)	Sport in Society, pp 154-157
Husbands, C (ed)	(1987)	Race in Britain
Jarvie, G (ed)	(1991)	Race and Sport



## Gender

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|----------------------------------|--------|--|
| Boutillier M &<br>SanGiovanni, L | (1983) | The Sporting Woman   |
| Deem, R                          | (198?) | Women and Leisure  |
| Kew, F (ed)                      | (1989) | Social Scientific Perspectives<br>on Sport, chapters by Margaret<br>Talbot and Jennifer Hargreaves |
| McCrone, K                       | (198?) | Gender Inequality and<br>Emancipation in Physical<br>Education                                     |
| Pannick, D                       | (1983) | Sex Discrimination in Sport  |
| Wimbush, E &<br>Talbot, M (eds)  | (198?) | Relative Freedoms: Women &<br>Leisure  |

## Ability and Disability Sports Council

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|--------|---------------------|
| (1989) | Building on Ability |
|--------|---------------------|

## Employment

- |               |        |  |
|---------------|--------|--|
| Glyptis, S    | (1989) | Leisure and Unemployment   |
| Warr, P et al | (1985) | 'The Experience of<br>Unemployment Amongst Black &<br>White Urban Teenagers',<br><u>British J. of Psychology</u> , 75-87 |