

CULTURAL STUDIES

11 FEBRUARY 1993

Meeting went ahead due to inquorate student AGM.

Students had not read!

Discussed in general terms, gender issues.

I must bring in:

Ann Oakley Taking It Like a Woman

? Iron John

Put these on 4hr loan

LECTURE EVALUATION

CULTURAL STUDIES

28 JANUARY 1993

Only half the group present. Spoke to notes for session and indicated reading. General discussion followed.

Next week:

Reading week?

Follow up assignment with Paul & Kevin

CULTURAL STUDIES
21 JANUARY 1993

THEORISING ABOUT SPORT AS A COMPONENT OF CULTURE

Good morning!

In today's meeting, I want to develop some of the points I raised last week by looking at some notes from John Hargreave's (1986) Sport, Power and Culture. I hope that by spending some time with his argument about sport-power relations we will be able to follow up some of the recommended reading.

I also would like to discuss these ideas in terms of current sporting issues:

1. 'Clashes' between Swansea and Cardiff City fans.
2. The Super Bowl
3. Wales v England rugby international

Finally, I want to share with you some preliminary material about gender issues. I hope the notes attached provide a starting point for subsequent discussions. They also link with issues raised by John Hargreaves (1986:6):

We contend that both gender divisions within this (working) class and the character of working-class culture in wider terms are significantly determined by the pattern of working-class men's leisure, and that sports, occupying as they do such a prominent place therein, help to reproduce both the class and gender divisions within the class.



1. 1924 - 1930 Foundation by Grunberg and orthodox Marxism
2. 1931 - 1950s Max Horkheimer and a pessimistic philosophy of culture
3. 1951 - 1969 Theodor Adorno and development of theory of society as social totality

The legacy of this critical theory can be characterised as a cultural analysis that is humanistic, sensitive to the problems of 20th century culture and that promotes interdisciplinary work.

One of the particular interests of critical theorists was art and literature. Both offered a challenge to totalitarian society and a way of resisting it. Max Horkheimer suggested for example that:

the masses reject the avant-garde because it disturbs their unthinking and automatic acquiescence in their manipulation by the social system: by making down-trodden humans shockingly aware of their own despair, the work of art announces a freedom which makes them fume. (quoted in Raman Selden 1984:34)

2. Implications for Sport and Leisure?

Critical theorists point out that despite the catastrophes and degradations of the twentieth century we persist in behaving as if nothing has changed. Critical theory draws upon a dialectical view of society which views development as a resolution of contradictions in society. How do you retain autonomy in a totalitarian society that imprisons the individual with a one-dimensional character?

John Hoberman (1984) in Sport and Political Ideology has discussed the contribution of 'critical theory' to understanding sport.

- * a disdain for the body enables a critical view of the cultural and political significance of the body but also limits understanding of sport
- * challenges the narcissistic view of the body (particularly during Nazi era): exuberant vitality as preparing corpses!
- * sport as vacuous emotion and a critique of physical dexterity
- * sports belong to the realm of unfreedom no matter where they are organized

John Hoberman (1984:248) asks if the above views (mainly expressed by Theodor Adorno) are more jaundiced than critical?

Developing a Critical Theory of Cultural Studies

5 December 1991

Introduction

So far this term, I have encouraged you to think about a particularly British approach to cultural studies through the work of the Centre for Cultural Studies at Birmingham. I want to introduce today another perspective on cultural studies.

In the course outline, this perspective is described as 'critical theory'.

Raman Selden (1985:34) describes critical theory as:

a wide-ranging form of social analysis which included Marxian and Freudian elements.

The term critical theory is associated with a number of theorists who worked at the Institute for Social Research founded in Germany in the 1920s. These theorists were exiled from Nazi Germany in 1933 and took up residence in the United States until 1950.

Their work, not surprisingly, is affected by their experience of both cultures. Raman Selden (1985:34) notes that:

Their analysis of modern culture was influenced by the experience of fascism which had achieved total dominance at every level of social existence in Germany. In America they saw a similar 'one-dimensional' quality in the mass culture and the permeation of every aspect of life by commercialism.

Names associated with critical theory include Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer and Herbert Marcuse. As a group these individuals are also referred to as the Frankfurt School since the Institute for Social Research was founded in Frankfurt in 1923 and returned there in 1950. It is interesting to note that Adorno and Horkheimer rarely used the term 'Frankfurt School' to characterise their work.

The term 'critical theory' was coined by Max Horkheimer in 1937. In his account of the foundations of the Frankfurt School of Social Research, Zoltan Tar (1984:9) suggests that critical theory's maxim was that the thrust towards a rational society is innate in every person. Critical theory incorporated Freudian psychoanalytic theory with its Marxian critique of western capitalism in a quest for a comprehensive and general theory of contemporary capitalist society.

Zoltan Tar's (1984:6) chronology of developments at the Institute for Social Research is in three periods:

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LECTURE EVALUATION
CULTURAL STUDIES
7 JANUARY 1992

Followed handout material and used two OHTs. Talked for
an hour or so about assignment draft. Undertook to
photocopy material for their edited version.

Talked about theorising in cultural studies and
emphasised opportunity for poster tour as their topic.

Next week two hours:

Critical Theory
Gramsci
Saussure

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Zoltan Tar's (1984:6) chronology of developments at the Institute for Social Research is in three periods:

... situate the sports activity as a cultural form in a particular context of wider influences or determinants.
(Tomlinson 1982:53)

As a means of coming to terms with is the language used by cultural theorists we explored some of the work of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in Birmingham and have drawn on some of the ideas expressed in Graeme Turner's (1990) book British Cultural Studies.

During this the Spring Term, I would like us to develop a cultural studies approach to sport and leisure that is sensitive to a range of perspectives on culture. In their discussion of a critical approach to educational research, Wifred Carr and Stephen Kimmis (1986:41) suggest that teachers build educational theory through critical reflection on their own practical knowledge. I would like to encourage us to do the same for sport and leisure in a range of cultural contexts. Fundamental to this approach is the assertion that:

Sport and leisure are historically located, social, political and problematic.

Thus the content of our course can become a fascinating area of enquiry! During the term we will need to look at:

- * the relationship between sport, leisure and culture
- * the mobilisation of national identity in sport

But in order that you have a sense of ownership of the course I suggest that we work round themes to which you bring evidence of reading and critical reflection.

Try to have a look at the recommended reading in your original course outline. But please try to browse widely!

The themes I suggest are:

Gender and access to sport and leisure
The body in culture
Nationalism and the role of the state

In addition, I want to encourage you to identify themes that interest you. The learning outcomes of the course are couched in terms of articulating, understanding and analysing. I hope that by engaging you in your own learning we can develop the kind of critical thinking that Carr and Kemmis (1986:113) note when they suggest that:

theory informs and transforms practice by informing and transforming the ways in which practice is experienced and understood.

What I am suggesting will take some work on your part. But this seems preferable to me talking at you!

I hope you enjoy the term.

1. Introduction

Good morning! Welcome back to the College. In this morning's session I want to give some feedback about your draft assignment and to look forward to the term's work.

Now that the first part of the assignment for the course is out of the way perhaps we can relax and really start to explore cultural studies in the context of sport and leisure.

Do you remember when we first met back in October. I included the following elements in a handout. With regard to the course outline, I wondered if you shared with me a desire to sort out what the following terms mean:

- * emergence of cultural forms
- * popular culture as a site for popular resistance
- * socio-cultural analysis
- * acculturation

Do you recall our first attempts to develop the concepts of society and culture? I suggested that:

It is now unlikely that you will be encouraged to think of sport as an isolated activity.

Writers like Jenny Hargreaves(1982) and Alan Tomlinson (1982) were alerting us to the cultural significance of sport almost a decade ago and identifying how cultural studies might help. I encouraged you to have a look at the kind of articles contained in Jennifer Hargreaves' (1982) Sport, Culture and Ideology and at Alan Tomlinson's (1982). Both authors encourage us to locate sport in a wider context. Jennifer Hargreaves (1982:16), for example, suggests that:

It is difficult to treat as problematic something which is taken-for-granted as manifestly apparent and to identify the hidden ways in which sport embodies social anathagonisms and may be biased and partial.

Alan Tomlinson (1982:51) notes that:

Sport cannot be seen as something set apart from other spheres of social life. A sports theory set apart from central sociological questions will be a dislocated theory, a theory of human practice out of context. Such a 'theory' fails to make the link between particularised milieu and wider public context, between biography and history.

Both would agree that in order to critically analyse our lived experience of sport we must:

The Female Athlete

1. Introduction

Last week we discussed briefly the issue of sport, the body and commodification. In today's discussion I want to suggest that even to have a title The Female Athlete indicates a particular set of relationships in sport.

Back in October when we first met I mentioned that the sociological imagination was about linking private troubles and public issues. In today's topic I want to suggest that despite the access you enjoy to sport there are gender barriers to sporting involvement and that such involvement is framed within an ideology of patriarchal relationships.

2. What is the Problem?

According to the Sports Council female participation in sport increased between the years 1962 and 1988 for both indoor and outdoor sports.

... But participation rates are still half those of males.

Margaret Talbot writing in the NCF's Coaching Focus suggests that:

Not only do fewer women than men play sport, but women play less often, and across a narrower range of sports. Class, age, education, marriage and children all have more marked effects on women's participation than on men's. Responsibilities for child care, shortage of free time, lack of personal transport and money, and low levels of self confidence are all reasons why women are less able than men to pursue sporting interests.

3. Sex, Gender, Opportunity, Power

We ought to distinguish immediately between 'sex' and 'gender'.

Sex	is the biological basis for male and female status
Gender	is the cultural construction of social expectations

We ought also to recognise that the debate about sport and gender can be at two levels.

Opportunity	debates about involvement here focus on increasing participation rates, access to resources, the profile of women's sport <u>but does not necessarily ask questions about the nature of sport itself</u> . In Michael Young's phrase this is an example of TAKING not MAKING a problem.
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If you are prepared to make sport a problem (one of those public issues of the sociological imagination) then your analysis might focus on:

sport now to challenge myths about female involvement. But myths are social constructions and have the force of history and culture behind them. I think we have to unpick this history and culture link.

Feminism is an approach that desires women to exercise more power and achieve greater autonomy. There are a range of 'feminisms' that you might one day want to follow up. Mary Boutilier and Lucinda SanGiovanni (1983) stimulated considerable debate with their book The Sporting Woman. In it they discuss four strands of feminism and how each of these has its own framework for understanding female involvement in sport.

There is now an immense literature linked to feminism and women's studies. Jennifer Hargreaves has been influential in sharing some of this literature. Other influential figures in this country have been Margaret Talbot and Rosemary Deem. My own thinking has been stimulated by:

1. The rootedness of present practice in ideologies nurtured by nineteenth century life.
2. Cultural divisions of labour.
3. Contrary examples of female success (see for example, Sheila Fletcher's account of the PE profession in Women First).
4. Feminist cultural studies.

I hope that your reading and thinking about the impact of class in the nineteenth century will have given a feel for the access that socio-economic status afforded to sport and leisure. We should be sensitive to differences within gender as well as between gender.

But it would be an oversight not to recognise the gendered barriers to participation. The Journal Of Sport History provides innumerable examples of these barriers. The interest in finding out more about women's experience has encouraged a great deal of empirical research in the past twenty years. Christine Griffin, Rachel Dixey are two good examples. More recently Quest (Autumn 1991) has provided an interesting case study of bodybuilding.

CULTURAL STUDIES

An Introduction to Gender Issues: Some Notes

1. Introduction

In today's topic, we address a fundamental issue in cultural studies: gendered cultural practice and the cultural space to be creative and to resist dominant (hegemonic?) patriarchy.

2. Gender, Access, Sport and Leisure

In a copy of a Year Two Sociology of Sport handout on the Female Athlete (attached here) I discuss the impact of gender on sport and leisure. A quote that summarises my own feelings about gender are encapsulated by Margaret Talbot:

Not only do fewer women than men play sport, but women play less often, and across a narrower range of sports. Class, age, education, marriage and children all have more marked effects on women's participation than on men's. Responsibilities for child care, shortage of free time, lack of personal transport and money, and low levels of self confidence are all reasons why women are less able than men to pursue sporting interests. (Coaching Focus, 1986)

It might be helpful to distinguish sex and gender:

Sex	is the biological basis for male and female status
Gender	is the cultural construction of social expectations

We ought also to recognise that the debate about sport and gender can be at two levels.

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Power	and the critique of the 'maleness' of sport. This kind of argument questions the whole edifice of sport and a re-visioning of sport.
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A feminist critique of the cultural forms of sport is evident in the writings of Jenny Hargreaves and in Nancy Theberge's (1985) article in Quest. She suggests that:

women's sporting practice can challenge gender inequality by challenging sexual stereotypes and patriarchal control of women's bodies. (1985:202)

I think the argument here is about using conspicuous examples of gendered sport to get at the invisible control (external and internal) experienced by women.

In Cultural Studies I think we can discuss the visible examples of this control? We can also pursue some thematic issues arising. There are increasing numbers of feminist accounts of

contest rules intended to be neutral and provide for tension/uncertainty

Parallels with theatre:

Ritual practices are involved, rich in symbolisation

Hargreaves, John (1986) Sport, Power and Culture, Polity Press, London

Cantellon, Hart (1982) Sport, Culture and The Modern State, University
& Gruneau, Richard of Toronto Press, Toronto

Gruneau, Richard (1983) Class, Sports and Social Development, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Sport has a central place in the national culture (1).

How are sports as cultural formations related to power? (1) To what extent has sport played a role in accommodating the British working class to the social order? (2)

"Power" is a relationship between agents, the outcome of which is determined by agents' access to relevant resources and their use of appropriate strategies in specific conditions of struggle with other agents. (3)

The sport-power relationship is constructed on the terrain of:

civil society	that dense network of voluntary associations and institutions that although regulated by law exist autonomously
the state	which claims the monopoly of legitimate force, provides a forum for the expression & representation of interests, and provides set of procedures for conflict resolution. (4)

What patterns of this relationship have emerged since 19th century development of sport? Can groups resist control? (6)

Class relations an unequal type of social relation tending to structure relations between major segments of the population, on the basis of their respective members' common experiences and perceptions of economic, political or cultural processes. (6)

Classes are rarely completely unified, homogenous entities. (6) Class divisions are important.

Classes are achieved effects of a continuous process. (6) For example:

"The composition and general character of the British working class has been, traditionally, affected powerfully by gender divisions which ... are reproduced by the structure of the working class family." (6)

19th C bourgeoisie power transformed into hegemony and sport implicated in this process (7).

Hegemony the achievement by a class, or by a class fraction or alliance, of leadership over the rest of society, in accordance with its perceived interests. (7)

Such a power relation is characterised by:

"the balance between the use of force and coercion on the one hand, and voluntary compliance with the exercise of power on the other" (7)

and that power relations shift to function in terms of voluntary compliance. Such power is linked to consent so that even coercion is legitimised. (7)

In these terms bourgeois hegemony is secured in part by winning over working class youth to sports (7) rather than by force.

Sport is a cultural formation (8).

Culture (9):

1. Those activities more implicated in the systematic production of meaning: the routine institutions of everyday life.
2. A 'whole way of life' of a particular group of people.

Sport-power relations must be linked to popular culture and consumer culture (9).

Relations to power depend on autonomous features of any cultural formation (10).

What are the characteristics of sport?

play no extrinsic purpose or end