

Sport and Socialization

KIN 101
Dr. Masucci

What is Socialization?

- According to the Coakley (1998): “Socialization is an active process of learning and social development that occurs as people interact with one another and become acquainted with the social world in which they live, and as they form ideas about who they are, and make decisions about their goals and behaviors”

What is Socialization? (cont.)

- Socialization on this view is not *one-way*
- People make decisions that shape their lives and the world around them
- Combination of Critical & Interactionist Theories

Functionalist Approach

Society shapes and molds the young to fit in and contribute

- People are passive learners
- Role of socialization is to learn rules and social roles
- Uses Internalization model

Functionalist Approach

Internalization model- Internalize the rules and roles of the society in which they live

- Researchers using Internalization model Focus on three things:
 1. The characteristics of those being socialized
 2. The people and institutions that did the socializing
 3. The specific outcomes of socialization

Conflict Theory Approach

People are shaped by economic factors

- *Also* can use the Internalization model
- Socialization from this perspective is to create compliant workers & eager consumers
- Those with \$ power will always try to maintain their privilege in society

Conflict Theory Approach

Researchers focus on these issues:

- How sports were organized to produce work-based, militaristic, sexist, racist orientations among players and spectators
- How people from low-income and working-class backgrounds had few opportunities to play on their own terms and in their own way
- How poor athletes lacked rights and were exploited for profits by those in power
- How people in power positions control sports to make money and maintain their own interests

New Approaches

- Since 1980's, many researchers have been combining research paradigms...
- Mixture of Critical Theory and Interactionist Theory
- Uses *Qualitative* research methods rather than *Quantitative* methods
 - “Qualitative research provides detailed descriptions of sports experiences as they occur in the larger context of people's lives; they also want more information on the meanings associated with sports participation as a cultural experience” (Coakley, 1998)

What Socialization Research Does Not Tell Us

- Not much work has been done on various ethnic groups, or class differentiated groups (high-income/low-income)
- How are sports careers linked to overall social development?
- How does sports participation affect the elderly?
- How do people make decisions about what sports to participate in?
- This kind of knowledge can help to create beneficial sports opportunities that can make sports more democratic and less exclusive (Following a critical theory model that calls for action).

Summary

- “ Socialization is a complex, interactive process through which people form ideas about who they are and how they are connected to the world around them”