


KIN 101 :: Sport in America

Why Study Sport?

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Stop and Think...

- ❖ In groups of four or five, *as comprehensively as you can*:


List all the ways that sport & physical activity impact:

- ❖ Your personal life
- ❖ Society
- ❖ Culture




Sports are Pervasive

- ❖ USA Today devotes ¼ of its coverage to sports
- ❖ Almost 1/5 of major television network time is devoted to sport
- ❖ Big Business! Total revenue of U.S. sports industry was 213 Billion (2005) – Look at all the zeros ↓
 - ❖ \$213,000,000,000.00
 - ❖ Twice the auto industry and 7X the movie industry!
- ❖ Between 18.9 Billion on ‘legal’ sports gambling
 - ❖ Including Pari-mutuels, internet, and sports books



Are Sports Important...

Hollywood thinks so!



Million Dollar Baby (2004)
4 Academy Awards. \$100,422,786

Sport is Connected to Major Spheres of Social Life

- ❖ Sport and the family
- ❖ Sport and the economy
- ❖ Sports and the media
- ❖ Sports and politics
- ❖ Sport and education
- ❖ Sport and religion

Sports *are* Important!

- ❖ Integral part of the social and cultural world that we live in.
- ❖ Can have an important impact on both the individual and society.
 - ❖ Development of behavior and actions
 - ❖ Personal relationships
 - ❖ Occupations \$\$

More Than Games...

- ❖ More than games – they are **Social Phenomena**:

“Events involving social relationships and collective action and having relevance in the social lives of particular collections of people.”

Microcosm of Society?

- ❖ Do sports mirror society or does society mirror sport?
- ❖ A little of both...
- ❖ Can be argued that many of the same issues in society are also present in our sporting institutions: Racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, ageism, etc.



Sports are important (cont.)

- ❖ Connected with important ideas and meanings in social life (ideology)
 - ❖ Ideologies: Sets of interrelated ideas that we use to give meaning to our world
 - ❖ No one “right” way to view the meaning of sport BUT certain perspectives are often considered ‘common sense’
 - ❖ Often, sport reinforces and reproduces the ideologies of people who have the most influence and power (more on this later)



Peeling Back the Layers

- ❖ We are concerned with the “deeper meaning” of sport – peeling back the layers of meaning.
- ❖ Researchers try to investigate sport to help better understand:
 - ❖ The societies in which sports exist
 - ❖ The social worlds that are created around sports
 - ❖ The experiences of individuals and groups associated with sports
 - ❖ The possibility of sport to facilitate social change