

SPORT IN SOCIETY

• WEEK 1 •

The Sociology of Sport

Sociology is the study of the **development, structure, and functioning of human society**.

- It provides useful concepts, theories, epistemology and research models/methodologies

Sports are a Social Phenomena:

Sports – related to our **social and cultural contexts** in which we live (family, economy, politics, media, education or religion).

- Sports provide stories and images are used to explain these contexts, and provide a window into culture and society.

Culture consists of the '**ways of life**' people create in a **group or society**.

- Culture is created and changed as we interact with each other regarding how to...
 - Do things and organise our lives
 - Relate to each other
 - Make sense out of our experiences

Society is the aggregate of **people living together** in a more or less **ordered community**.

- Share a sense of self-identification that distinguishes them from other people

Sociology vs. Psychology:

Sociologists study behaviour in terms of the **social conditions** and **cultural contexts** in which people live their lives.

Psychologists study behaviour in terms of **attributes and processes** that exist inside individuals.

• WEEK 3 • Studying the Past

What is history?

- History can act to challenge us in the present
- For an event/institution to have a lasting significance it has to somehow impact on Australian culture more broadly

What is culture?

Culture is used as an anthropological term to describe a society's customs, traditions and belief structures.

A sporting timeline:

Ancient Greece (1000BC – 100BC)

- Grounded in mythology and religious beliefs
- Competitors were from wealthy and respected families
- Women would be prohibited from competing or spectating at the Olympic Games
- Fairness was not as important as honour (athletes were often maimed and killed in pursuit of victory)
- There was power in being a young, wealthy and athletic Greek man

Roman Contests (100BC – 500AD)

- Roman leaders used physical contests and games to train soldiers and provide mass entertainment spectacles
- Animal fights were added to capture spectator interest
- The spectacles achieved two purposes:
 - Entertained an idle populace
 - Disposed of socially 'undesirable' people
- Other Roman sports (ball games and bathing) seldom involved quantifying athletic achievements or recording accomplishments

Differences between Sport and Religion

Sport	Religion
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tied to profane – objects and activities not connected to divine (stadiums, locker room, warm-up drills)• Goal = rewards• Involves competition• Based on a spirit of achievement and conquest	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tied to sacred – objects and activities connected with supernatural (churches, prayers and sermons)• Goal = transcendence• Based on a spirit of humility and love

Medieval Europe (500 – 1300)

- Sports consisted of folk games, played by local peasants, tournaments staged for knights and nobles
- Sports and religion were closely connected with each other

- Local ball games contained the roots for many contemporary games (little structure and rules)
- Sports activities of the upper class were distinctively different from those of the peasants
- Women did not participate (except for some peasant women)

Renaissance (1300 – 1800)

- Elites preferred dances to sports and delighted in geometric patterns of movement
- Emphasis on aesthetics, rather than achievement
- Women had few opportunities to be involved in sports (except for the upper class who occasionally played bowls, croquet, tennis and archery)
- Sports were not as intensely grounded in religious ritual and ceremony – they involved a degree of specialisation and organisation
- The idea that sport should be available to all became popular

Industrial Revolution (1780 – 1850's)

- Emergence of organised, competitive sports in England
- Changing economic climate of societies saw an increase in middle class families
- Sports were closely aligned with gambling
- Within Australian colonies, class divisions and social differences (class still exerted the same influence as two centuries previous)
- Cricket and boxing were the two most popular sports in Australia at this time

Early Modern Sport (1850's – early 1900's)

- Quantification became an important aspect of sports, including the sports record
- Sport became a lot more serious and competitive
- Relationship between sports and money grew stronger
- Sports were seen as a tool for achieving goals around national loyalty and the development of admirable character traits
- Cricket the national sport as played through the entire nation, and Aussie Rules emerged
- Economic expansion was associated with organised sports, in relation to teamwork, obedience to the rules, planning, organisation and production

• WEEK 8 •

Sport and Social Class

Social class are categories of people who share an economic position in society based on a combination of their income, wealth, education, occupation and social connections.

Social stratification are structured forms of economic inequalities that are part of the organisation of everyday social life.

Class relations are the many ways that social class is incorporated into everyday life in society.

Class ideology is a web of ideas and beliefs that people use to understand economic inequalities, identify themselves in terms of their class position and evaluate the manner in which economic inequalities are and should be integrated into the organisation of social words.

A Victorian Secondary School comparison:

Private School in inner Melbourne	Public School in Melbourne
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rowing• Snowsports• Equestrian• Water polo• APS/AGS competition• Extensive outdoor education programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interschool sports• Regular P.E. / sports classes• Limited outdoor education classes

Social demographics of non-participants:

- Those with poor proficiency in English
- Those with below average self-assessed health status
- Younger females – aged 25 to 44
- Those aged over 45
- Those with little social contact or access to transport
- Those with characteristics associated with low socio-economic status