

Sport for All : Perspectives Toward the 21st Century 展望廿一世紀的大眾體育

Dr. Christopher R. Edginton

School of Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services (Professor and Director)

University of Northern Iowa, USA

艾丁頓博士 (教授及學院主任)

美國北愛奧華大學健康、體育及休閒服務學院



摘要

東西文化的轉換所提供的大量機會使大眾生活質量得以迅速提高。工業技術的發展增加了人民的餘暇時間，也為人們提供更多的休閒活動，使人們的生活更健康 and 快樂。本文作者從不同的體育社會學觀點，探討及展望未來新紀元的大眾體育。並強調體育運動是一條重要的紐帶，它跨越時空，將傳統和社會價值相聯結。它也將繼續作為一種社會的錨鏈，固定在世界變革的大海之中，影響著個人和整個社會。

Introduction

The transformation of both Eastern and Western cultures has provided opportunities to dramatically improve the quality of life for all. Industrial and technological developments have promoted basic changes to the structure of work, leisure and other aspects of daily living. Increases in discretionary time and income, especially for those living in urban environments create new opportunities for creative fulfillment through the use of leisure. Further, the realignment of work into service, knowledge-based and/or industrial operations has created the need for greater attentiveness to well-rounded, balanced living. Today, we are presented with opportunities to promote a greater sense of well-being, happiness and fulfillment through the provision of sport, fitness and leisure opportunities for greater numbers of individuals.

At the same time that we are presented with opportunities to enrich life, we are faced with a great deal of chaos. The chaos that has emerged has occurred as a result of the tidal wave of change that is sweeping the world. As Naisbett (1996:vii) writes, "... there is a sea of change in the economic life of the world. The center of this economic change is Asia, led by The People's Republic of China." Naisbett further notes that:

Asia was once the center of the world, and now the center is returning again to Asia. What is happening in Asia is by far the most important development in the world today.

Nothing else comes close, not only for Asians, but for the entire planet. The modernization of Asia will forever reshape the world as we move toward the next millennium (Ibid:xii).

Out of chaos comes opportunity. Most of the social institutions and organizations that exist today are artifacts of a different era. Today, there is a need to reinvent or create a new set of social institutions to meet the needs of people, as was the case in American society during the beginning of the industrial revolution. Amidst the great chaos that occurs as a result of change there is a need to likewise search for the underlying structure and organization that binds society together and helps to continue to promote and maintain the fabric of our culture. Information from the sciences - chaos theory, complexity theory - can be applied to the management of sport and leisure organizations. A major theme of chaotic and complex systems is that components that may not look related may interact and influence each other (Gleick, 1987). It encourages professionals to look for the order beneath the surface chaos as we embrace the complexity that is found in human and accentuate the energies that exist within the whole.

Sports and Social Transition

During recent periods of social transition, sport has been used successfully to help society deal with the apparent chaos resulting from social change and to reveal the continuity of an underlying structure that binds society together. For example, the roots of organized sport in the United States are tied to

the social reform movement of the late 1800s and early 1900s, when there were early attempts to use sport programs to temper social concerns, especially those arising from new systems and social structures of the Industrial Revolution. Conditions occurring in Western Europe and North America as a result of the Industrial Revolution gave rise to the need for programs of social reform. Effects of the Industrial Revolution such as urbanization, child labor, poor sanitation and lack of open space, created a demand for programs that provided positive alternatives for activity. The organization of sport assisted with the transition, helping to promote continuity during times of dramatic change.

A number of organizations that emphasized sport emerged at this time in concert as a response to issues affecting society. At the turn of the century, the late 1800s, the modern Olympic movement began. Play and playground programs were started in England and the United States which emphasized organized sports for small children (Berryman, 1996:5). Organizations such as the YMCA, Boy Scouts and Boys Clubs also provided early sport programs for youth (Ibid). By the middle of the century, sport activities had become institutionalized and viewed as a part of either our governmental institutions or our voluntary nonprofit social service system. Many of these programs were directed at moral education; that is, the concern was in building the character of individuals in ways that supported citizenship and democracy, as well as physical development and fitness.

Challenges of Social Transition

Today we are faced with formidable challenges related to a social transition from the industrial era to the technological or information age. In China, the transformation is even more dramatic as modernization is moving many in society from a rural, agrarian life to an urban, industrial, knowledge-based existence. Sport and leisure professionals will be called upon to bring to bear their knowledge and expertise upon the social issues and problems that challenge society today related to this change. Many of the changes that are occurring impact the basic values of society. Some would say that we are facing a crisis in values world-wide within this generation. Haydon (n.d.), in papers from the Institute of Education, University of London, asks and responds to the question of whether we face a current crisis in values. He states:

What has developed increasingly in the modern world is the co-existence of differing values within one society . . . society lacks a shared sense of underlying values . . . If a crisis is a turning point in human affairs which calls for important judgments to be made, then with a longer historical perspective we are living through a crisis (p. 2-3).

Haydon (1993) indicates that a crisis in values is occurring and that there are various options in the face of this crisis - to give up and be overcome by it, or to formulate strategies that may have a positive influence on individuals in the face of this challenge. Sport provides an underlying structure and order to the chaos of our world. Sport participation has the potential to create an underlying positive value system within society. Because of the world-wide appeal of sport, it provides an undergirding of values that may support the values of humankind as a whole. Cooperation, competitiveness with a human face, teaming, hard work, altruism, discipline, comradeship, exuberance, joy of life, loyalty, unselfishness, and striving for excellence are among the few values that are tied to sports participation at its best. All of these values cross cultural boundaries and language.

As societies make the transformation to the technological/information age there are many challenges. First is the challenge of increased leisure time. How can leisure be best used to advance civilization? Can sport and other related activities be organized in such a way as to benefit individuals and society as a whole? Another challenge is maintaining cultural cohesion. As social institutions change, how can desirable societal values be maintained? Sport programs can contribute to the continued promotion of society values, as sport often mirrors the past by linking traditions found in the rules and regulations of sport activities to the games of the future. It is a way of extending the traditions of the past found in sports participation to those of the future. As work is realigned, what issues are faced in promoting greater fitness, group cohesion, as well as in the promotion of traditional societal values? Sport and leisure programs can assist in helping to solve all of the above problems emerging from dramatic societal change.

Sport and Leisure

Leisure is prized in all cultures. As Edginton et al. (1995:xi) has written, ". . . leisure is one of life's greatest gifts - an important dimension influencing the quality of an individual's life. Finding satisfaction within one's leisure experience promotes a sense of well being and increases one's sense of self worth." Although difficult to define, leisure provides opportunities for individuals to freely pursue experiences or activities that are of interest to the individual.

How is sport part of leisure? Several authors including Edginton et al. (1998), Kelly (1996) and Rossman (1995) all suggest that sports activities are an important area of leisure participation. For example, Kelly (1996:208) suggests that ". . . sports participation appears to be a major element in leisure." It is estimated that as much as 90 percent of American

adults engage in some form of organized sporting activity. Statistics in the United States (U.S. Bureau of Census, 1996:248) suggest that the most popular leisure activities are exercise, walking, swimming, bicycle riding, bowling, basketball, golf, and fishing - all activities that can be considered sporting or fitness-related. The extent of participation in sport-related activities during leisure tends to blur the fact that leisure may involve other types of activities.

How can sport participation benefit individuals throughout the life cycle? Sport activities appeal to individuals across the life span. For younger children sport activities promote motor development, help foster acquisition of social skills, and help them to understand social rules and order. Interestingly, participation in youth sports programs declines in early adolescence in the United States. The highest rates of participation occur on or about age 10. During adolescence, participation in organized sports, especially ones organized within the schools are important; sport activities provide opportunities for individuals to sharpen or focus skills and build self concept. Often lifetime sport skills are developed during this portion of the life cycle. Adult sporting activities help provide balance in life, as well as supporting the need for movement or activity. Lifetime sports promoting fitness are important. In later adulthood, team sport activities become less important. Sport for older adults provides opportunities for individual interests to be pursued as well as continue to promote fitness. As one can see, there are opportunities for participation in sports throughout the life span.

How can sport programs be organized for all and promoted and encouraged? In order to organize sport programs for all a comprehensive effort is required. First there is a need to establish social policy that enables the acquisition of resources to develop facilities, programs and organizations to plan, organize and implement sports programs. In the United States, such an initiative is organized primarily at the local level. In this case, sport policy becomes somewhat diffused, although it does provide for local initiative, closest to the needs of the people. Other strategies for developing policy involve creating a nation-wide or regional plan to enable the development of sport programs. For example, in Hong Kong, the Sports Development Board, in cooperation with the Urban and Regional Councils, seeks to promote a wide range of sport services as well as coordinate sporting associations. This model enables an orderly organization of sport.

A key factor in the implementation of a successful sport program is the encouragement of individuals to participate. Various strategies have been developed world-wide, including programs such as "Life Be In It" in Australia (a program later adopted in the United States), the Brazilian MOBREAL Program, and the Challenge Day program operated in Germany and Canada. Palm (1992) suggests that sports for all programs can be started at little cost. The challenge, according to Palm is to find a way to "... spread the idea fast and without much cost."

He suggests that the most effective way to communicate and promote sport for all program is through the organization of mass events followed by newspapers and magazines, brochures, television commercials, posters, radio commercials and press conferences.

How can sport participation contribute to life satisfaction through leisure? "People often think of life satisfaction as a sense of well-being, happiness or quality of life that is available to an individual (Schichman & Cooper, 1994)." Life satisfaction is measured both objectively and subjectively. From an objective standpoint, physical health is tied directly to participation in sport activities, especially those that result in higher levels of fitness. Subjective factors can include the relationship of sport participation to such variables as one's self-esteem, satisfaction with self, mood and morale. All of these can be influenced through sport participation in that it creates an environment that provides opportunities for social interaction, skill mastery, excitement, achievement, growth and development.

Sport: A Working Definition

Defining sport is not an easy task; there are a myriad of definitions. Edwards (1973:52-52) suggests that sports are "... activity having formally recorded histories and traditions, stressing physical exertion through competition within limits set in explicit and formal rules governing role and position relationships, and carried out by actors who represent or who are a part of formally organized associations having the goal of achieving valued tangibles or intangibles through defeating opposing groups." As one can see in viewing this definition, Edwards is referring to competitive, organized sports with rules and procedures that are aimed at winning or overcoming the opposition. However, this definition excludes other possibilities such as participation in sport that has rules emphasizing cooperation rather than competition, such as "New Games."

Others such as Luschen (1968) and Loy (1969) suggest that sport may be more free and open, emphasizing informal activity, playfulness and less stringent rules and procedures. However, both of these authors suggest that sport may include competition, structure, rules, procedures, mastery of motor skills and some institutional or social organization.

In viewing these and other definitions, it is evident that there are some common elements that can be found in definitions of sport. As Kelly (1996:213-14) notes, sport involves physical activity and regularity in form. The regularity is expressed in rules, procedures, acquisition of skills, and the social organization of role expectations and authority patterns. Usually, there is some measurement according to competition or performance standards/outcomes. Thus, we may think of sport as some form of organized activity requiring physical effort where there are accepted rules and procedures. Sport often excludes the more spontaneous games and activities played by children.

Sport as a Shaper of Culture

What are the ways in which sport participation serves as a shaper of culture? What social values does participation in sport activity provide for society as a whole and for individuals. The European Declaration on the Significance of Sport for Society (1995) notes that sport "1) promotes good health and well-being in society; 2) provides an important environment for education and socialization for everyone, as well as valuable opportunities for personal enjoyment, social contacts and integration; 3) contributes fundamentally, as the most popular of all voluntary activities, to the development and maintenance of democratic societies with active citizens; 4) plays a major and increasing role in the economies of countries and offers potential for economic development; and 5) is a full partner in society and thus should be considered as an essential element in policy-making, most particularly in the health, social and economic fields." It is evident that sport is an important social institution that can be tapped to help ease the transition from one era to the next. What are some of constructive themes that are often found in sport participation?

Transmission of Cultural Heritage. Participation in sport anchors individuals in the past as well as the present. It creates a way for the norms, values, rituals and customs of one generation to "speak" to another generation.

Promotion of Competition and Cooperation. Sport activities inherently requires some level of competition, usually with others. At the same time, it usually requires cooperation with others to engage in the activity, especially team members. Winning and losing, failure and success are life lessons learned through sport. Cooperative behaviors learned through "teaming" with others can also be learned behaviors.

Risk-Taking and Self-Control. Sport participation simultaneously promotes risk-taking behaviors and discipline. Often the strategy of the game requires calculated decisions that expose an individual or team to risk. At the same time, participation in sports requires discipline.

Group Problem-solving/Decision-Making. Within sports, individuals learn to work together to make group decisions and problem-solve. In this process, people learn to take part in discussion of problems - getting the facts, analyzing, evaluating, and compromising - in order to arrive at sound group decisions.

Leadership/Followership. Sports provide the necessary intimacy for individuals to achieve a sense of belonging, explore a variety of group roles (leadership and followership), cooperate with others as a team, and have input into the group's activities.

Democratic Living. Individuals also must recognize the need to live by the will of the majority, while at the same time respecting the needs of those representing the minority.

Individuals must learn to function within a democratic process, sharing their views and accepting leadership responsibilities when appropriate.

Accepting Differences. The process of learning to participate in sports as a part of a group of peers is an extremely important part of the overall life experience. Team experiences helps individuals accept differences among others; sports has a leveling effect.

Fair Play/Sportsmanship. Sports participation provides opportunities for individuals to develop a sense of fairness and empathy for others. Integrity, honesty and respect for others is promoted.

Joy, Fun, and Playful Behaviors. Sports participation produces an opportunity for pleasure, zest and joy in life. Further it provides opportunity for individuals to engage in playful behaviors, at any age, characterized by spontaneity and freedom of movement.

Unity of Mind and Body. Sports participation produces a sense of flow between the mind and body. Responses become automatic and participants may have a sense that they transcend time and space.

Persistence and Determination. Sports participation produces opportunities for individuals to develop a sense of achievement, relate to authority and persist in the face of adversity. These characteristics are transferable to other life situations.

Development of Lifelong leisure Patterns. Participation in sport helps develop lifelong leisure skills that promote health and fitness. Continued participation leads to balance in life, healthful behaviors that may result in increased life satisfaction.

Character/Moral Development. Character/moral development may occur as a result of sports participation. Individuals may acquire an understanding of the rights and feelings of others/family/friends, and continue to evolve to a genuine concern for the extended family of humanity. Individuals learn to act in a manner which is consistent with their values and the values of the larger society.

As one can see, there are many different values that may emerge as a result of sport participation. Such values can be a stronger shaper of culture, not for just a few elite athletes but for many in society.

The Quest for Equity : Participation for All

Why sports for all? Baines (1996:61) notes that sports is one of the common languages that brings us together. He notes that sport "... contribute to the quality of life for all people (Ibid)." It can serve to promote the health and physical well-being of individuals. It also contributes to the

social fabric of the culture. Again, as Baines writes, "... in sport there should be no rich, no poor ... because of its access to all ..." it represents the opportunity for equity among individuals. All can participate in sports, each to their own level of skill, interest and intensity.

Sports participation can promote equity by reducing social barriers between participating individuals. When individuals work toward a single goal, differences and distances between people may become smaller. This and other factors may be present in the sport environment. According to Amir (1976) the structure and form of many sports promotes an environment conducive to equity. He notes that the following factors, often found in sport, may reduce the perception of differences between individuals: 1) equal status; 2) positive perceptions of all team members occur; 3) activities require intragroup contact and cooperation; 4) situation involves interdependence or superordinate goals; and 5) contact is pleasant or rewarding.

Elite sport provides an opportunity for individuals with great ability and talent to have a forum for their activity. Sport participation for all should provide the same opportunities for all individuals; all should have the access to resources commensurate with their ability. That is, each individual should have resources available so that their level of skills, interests and ability can be addressed. No individual should lack the resources for their own physical activity and well-being. Such a philosophy strikes at the heart of the purpose and nature of the structure of society. Do we organize our resources to serve the few or to serve the many, or both? If we believe that everyone should have equal access, that equity should prevail, then the answer to this question is evident. In the pursuit of human happiness and well-being, it is the responsibility of the government and individuals to promote opportunity for equal access to all. Such a philosophy promotes equity and results in a greater sense of value for all.

Concluding Comments

Sport participation has provided an important tie, across time, to societal values and traditions. It continues to be a social anchor in a sea of world-wide change, impacting the well-being of both individuals and the larger society. According to Baines, "... sport is one of the five universal languages of the world - money, politics, art, sex and sport (1996:43)." Baines also notes that sport "... gives form and substance to much of our way of life. And for some, it can be a part of a philosophy of life ... sport touches us all ... be it competitive or social, organized or impromptu, team game or sole pursuit; ... sport is a part of the social round, from village to metropolis, from nation to nation."

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