
SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF CANADIAN SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

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This book is dedicated to Paulene, Heather and Emma.

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Preface

Many of our students who study the social dimensions of sport and physical activity inevitably bring their own perceptions of what these popular practices are all about. Yet, in many instances, after completing one or two sociocultural and historical courses, their perceptions change quite remarkably. For example, students learn that the opportunities to participate in sport aren't equitable; that the control of sport is in the hands of a minority, many of whom are white males of affluence; that racism in sport still exists today even though it may not be readily apparent when watching a contest on television or reading about it online; that powerful economic and political forces shape what sport is today and what it might look like in the future; and that the mass media act as a filter of what we see and how we see it.

Although *Social Dimensions of Canadian Sport and Physical Activity* has a deliberately distinctly Canadian focus, we live in a world that has never been more interconnected. Indeed, what happens in the world of sport *outside* our borders influences sport *inside* our borders. Canadians have, historically, embraced a wide range of local sport and athletic heroes, in addition to consuming copious amounts of sports content from our American neighbours via the mass media. Today, more and more Canadians follow not only the major leagues of North American sport, but teams and leagues from around the world, including the most popular European soccer leagues. For generations, meanwhile, immigrants have been bringing their sports and their ways of doing physical activity to Canada. As such, we are not simply a carbon copy of another country or an amalgamation of countries. We are uniquely Canadian and, over time, we have shaped our own cultural ideologies and our own ways of interpreting and playing sport, sometimes in competing and contradictory ways.

THE CONTENT OF THE TEXT

Social Dimensions of Canadian Sport and Physical Activity contains 15 chapters. Because the chapter sequence has been purposely coordinated, we recommend that the chapters be read consecutively. However, since their content is so distinctive, it is possible to read the chapters in an altered order. Each chapter concludes with relevant Critical Thinking Questions, Suggested Readings, and References.

In the first chapter, Drs. Jane Crossman and Jay Scherer provide an introductory foundation for understanding the social dimensions of sport and physical activity from a Canadian perspective. They describe how pervasive sport is in Canadian society and outline terms that will be used throughout the text, such as *sociological imagination*, *agency*, *social structures*, *power*, *ideology*, and *hegemony*.

In the second chapter, Dr. Ian Ritchie presents a rich overview of sociological theories that set the foundation for understanding the social world, and more specifically for our purposes the world of sport. Since it is impossible to present a complete inventory of the myriad sociological theories, he focuses on four major ones: Durkheim's *functionalism*, Marx's *conflict theory*, Mead's *symbolic interactionism*, and *critical social theories* (cultural, feminist, and critical race studies).

In Chapter 3, Dr. Don Morrow condenses Canadian sport history from the 15th century to the present day. He highlights the people who have influenced our sport history (First Nations, French, British), as well as the existing social conditions, power relations, and developments that have had such a profound effect on shaping the development of sport in Canada. Highlighted are industrial and technological changes, the evolution of sporting equipment, transitions to commercial mass sport, and the impact of the entrepreneurial spirit.

Dr. Rob Beamish, author of Chapter 4, addresses the inequalities of condition and opportunity that exist in sport today. Theories of social inequality are outlined as well as current patterns of class and sport. He points out that in Canada we endorse an unequal, performance-based rewards system. Success is linked, for example, to proximity to facilities, gender, social class, and physical ability.

In Chapter 5, Drs. Victoria Paraschak and Susan Tirone explore issues of racial and ethnic discrimination in Canadian sport. They point out that sport provides opportunities to feel pride in one's own cultural heritage. Unfortunately, the system is structured so that some individuals—that is, those of white European heritage—feel more pride than others. Poverty and access are key components that prevent ethnic minority people from fully participating in sport in Canada. The need to create equal opportunities in sport for all Canadian people (e.g., through race-structured sport systems) is a fundamental message in this chapter.

In Chapter 6, Dr. Mary Louise Adams helps us understand the current issues relevant to gender, sexuality, and sport and poses the question: Is sport really a male thing? Adams does not shy away from controversial topics such as separate events for men and women, sex testing in sport, and sport typing (certain sports are “male only”). Issues for athletes who are transgender, transsexual, gay, or lesbian are also discussed.

In Chapter 7, Drs. Ralph Wheeler, Jay Scherer, and Jane Crossman outline the current sport system in Canada for children and youth, including school, community, and private agencies. Critical issues and concerns related to organized sport for children and youth are described and include reasons for the high rate of dropout, ethical issues, sport specialization, risk of injury, parental interference, and coaches' influence. Solutions to remedy the problems posed are offered.

Chapter 8 by Dr. Jason Laurendeau focuses on sport deviance. He describes how deviance is conceptualized and differentiates deviance on and off the field of play. He covers timely topics such as drug use in sport and risk sports and points out that deviance arises out of an overly enthusiastic adoption of a set of expectations that characterizes particular activities.

Dr. Stacy Lorenz, author of Chapter 9, addresses the fact that sport is replete with violence. Theories of violence are explained along with a historical overview of how violence in sport has grown in our society. Who encourages sport violence is a question he broaches to help the reader better understand contemporary trends in sport violence committed by both players and fans. He also discusses gender and gender relations as they relate to violence.

In Chapter 10, Drs. Tim Fletcher and Duane Bratt consider the relationship between sport and educational institutions in Canada. They describe the nature and purposes of physical education in the public school system and how the curriculum has evolved. The challenges and issues inherent in Canadian interuniversity sport are outlined and include

gender equity, athletic scholarships, doping, hazing, challenging the NCAA, alumni funding, and academic achievement.

In Chapter 11, Dr. Jay Scherer explains the influence, extent, and power the media have in shaping what we know and how we think. He outlines the historical development of the televised sports-media complex in Canada and points out that sports media are replete with symbols of nationalism and militarism and other gender and racial ideologies. Sport journalism and new media technologies that will change how we view and interpret sport are also included.

Dr. Jean Harvey, in Chapter 12, focuses on the marriage between politics and sport. He provides a historical overview and reasons for the Canadian government's intervention in sport. The author outlines current federal sport policies that include programs such as the Athlete Assistance Program, Hosting Program, and the Children's Fitness Tax Credit. Also included is the controversial topic of funding for high-performance sport versus mass participation sport.

Chapter 13, written by Dr. Brad Humphreys and Professor Moshe Lander, delves into the ever-changing and multifaceted business of sport. They cover the structure and functioning of professional leagues such as the NHL, CFL, MLB, NBA, NFL, and MLS. Under the auspice of these cartels, they address a host of issues such as the costs and revenues to the owners, reserve clauses, free agency, collective bargaining agreements, work stoppages, payroll caps, ticket pricing, revenue sharing, and facility subsidies. A discussion about the costs to bid on and subsequently host the Olympic Games concludes this chapter. Students with an interest in the economic side of professional sport will find this chapter a fascinating read.

In the penultimate chapter, Dr. David Whitson lends a keen eye to how globalization affects sport along cultural, political, and economic lines. He discusses both the upside and downside to globalization, homing in on the power of transnational corporations and the global sports labour market. He points out that, thanks to electronic media, professional sport is now marketed and consumed around the globe in fascinating and contradictory ways.

Dr. Brian Wilson frames the final chapter on the future of sport on four overarching categories that have been associated with major social changes: governance, globalization, technology, and the environment. He makes 11 predictions based on the social trends from the above four categories and describes ways to use research and theory to inform intervention.

On behalf of all the contributors, we hope you enjoy reading this book—and furthermore that it provides you with a sound basis for understanding the social dimensions of sport and physical activity from a uniquely Canadian perspective.

Jane Crossman and Jay Scherer

SUPPLEMENTS

Test Item File (978-0-13-344160-4) The Test Item File includes chapter-relevant questions to help instructors create quizzes, exams, homework, and practice handouts. There are approximately 400 questions in multiple-choice format that address factual, applied, and conceptual material from the textbook. It is available from the Pearson online catalogue to instructors who adopt the textbook at <http://catalogue.pearsoned.ca>.

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Jane Crossman and Jay Scherer

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Dr. Jane Crossman is a Professor Emerita at Lakehead University where she held several administrative positions throughout her career including Chair and Graduate Coordinator of the School of Kinesiology. She taught graduate and undergraduate courses in sport sociology, research methods, and mental training. Jane's research, which pertains to the newspaper coverage of sporting events and the psychosocial dimensions of sports injuries, has been published in a number of scholarly journals. She has edited three books: *Coping with Sports Injuries: Psychological Strategies for Rehabilitation* (2001) and *Canadian Sport Sociology*, Editions 1 (2003) and 2 (2007). Jane contributed a chapter to the book *The Sport Scientist's Research Adventures* in which she gave insights into the challenges and gratification of being a researcher. Jane is on the editorial board of the *Journal of Sport Behavior* and regularly reviews for a number of journals and texts in the fields of sport sociology, sport psychology, and research methods. During sabbaticals, Jane has been a Visiting Professor at the Universities of Exeter and Brighton (UK), the University of Otago (New Zealand), Victoria University (Australia), and the University of Ulster (Northern Ireland). Jane enjoys exercising a border collie, golfing, and fiction and nonfiction writing.

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seven different Northwest Territories sport and recreation organizations and establish a direction for the new millennium. She looked at the creation of health services for the Canada Games held in Whitehorse, Yukon, in February 2007, examining the interfaces between sport and public health perspectives on such services as part of a health services legacy for these Games. Her work focuses on power relations, social construction, and the creation, reproduction, or reshaping of cultural practices through the duality of structure. She is currently expanding on that framework to incorporate a strengths perspective, which includes fostering practices of hope that enable individuals to work together to achieve broader collective goals.

Dr. Ian Ritchie is Associate Professor in the Department of Kinesiology at Brock University. Ian received his PhD in Sociology from Bowling Green State University, Ohio, where he studied classical and contemporary sociological theory. He teaches courses in sport sociology and sociology of the modern Olympic Games. Ian's research interests include performance-enhancing drug use in sport and the history of anti-doping rules, media, gender, and various aspects of the Olympic Games. In addition to several chapters in edited volumes, he co-authored (with Rob Beamish) the book *Fastest, Highest, Strongest: A Critique of High-Performance Sport* (2006) and is currently writing a manuscript on the history of the modern Olympic Games. A former Canadian varsity rower and coach, Ian now enjoys long distance trail and marathon running, golfing, cycling, curling, and various outdoor travel-related activities such as hiking and camping. Ian lives in Fenwick, Ontario, with his wife and three children.

Dr. Susan Tirone is the Associate Director of the College of Sustainability at Dalhousie University. Her administrative duties involve overseeing the Environment, Sustainability and Society program, a multi-disciplinary undergraduate program with an enrolment of over 600 students each year, and she is the academic leader of the RBC Sustainability Leadership Certificate program offered by the College of Sustainability. She co-teaches a problem-based learning course in the College, drawing upon current and topical sustainability issues in the local community to inform discussions about how people in their various roles as employers, volunteers, consumers, and engaged citizens contend with the sustainability problems we face. Susan is interested in how communities sustain their populations by welcoming new and diverse groups of immigrants. She focuses her studies on the formal and informal social support networks that facilitate a welcoming environment for new immigrants. Some of her research has delved into how sport organizations contribute to welcoming new immigrants to communities in Canada. She is cross-appointed in the Faculty of Health Professions at Dalhousie University where she has taught since 2001.

Dr. Ralph Wheeler is an Associate Professor in the School of Human Kinetics and Recreation at Memorial University. He received his PhD from the University of Alberta in 1998. His research and teaching interests include pedagogy of teaching and curriculum studies. Ralph was a successful varsity and club swim coach and his CIS teams went undefeated in Atlantic University Sport competition for four years and was ranked as high as fifth in the CIS national team rankings. He also served as provincial coordinator for the National Coaching Certification Program. Ralph has served on many provincial and national committees promoting physical education and sport, and in 2006 he was awarded

the Certificate of Honour from the Provincial Physical Education Council for his outstanding contribution to the profession. A passionate fly fisherman, he has been known to “disappear” for weeks into the Labrador wilderness in pursuit of the king of sport fish—the Atlantic salmon.

Dr. David Whitson is a Professor Emeritus in the Department of Political Science at the University of Alberta. He is co-author of *Game Planners: Transforming Canada’s Sport System* (with Donald Macintosh), *Hockey Night in Canada: Sport, Identities, and Cultural Politics* (with Richard Gruneau), and *Writing Off the Rural West: Globalization, Governments, and the Transformation of Rural Communities* (with Roger Epp), as well as numerous articles on global events and the globalization of sport and culture. In retirement, he continues to enjoy cycling and skiing and watching the world of sport.

Dr. Brian Wilson is a sociologist and Professor in the School of Kinesiology at the University of British Columbia. He is author of *Sport & Peace: A Sociological Perspective* (2012) and *Fight, Flight or Chill: Subcultures, Youth and Rave into the Twenty-First Century* (2006) as well as articles on sport, social inequality, environmental issues, media, social movements, and youth culture. His most recent work focuses on how the sport of running is used for peace promotion in Kenya and on responses to golf-related environmental concerns.