

How sport is a producer and product of my society? essay

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



How Sport is a Producer and Product of My Society? Throughout the past several weeks, many ideas have been presented about how sport is producer and product of society. I agree with all the ideas presented in this class. I believe the sport is the producer and product of society because of how sport can be influence on everything that surrounds it. Every aspect of our society is affected by sport.

Our race affects the amount of sport that we are exposed to. Our social class limits our availability to play certain kinds of sports we may want to play. Corporate America affects the way that we may respond to sport and affect our personal purchase decision. Even our gender can affect the way that we see sport and how others may see us in sports.

We may not see it but our position in society affects everything around us even sport and how available sports are to us. My race has played a huge part in my sporting life. Not directly because I have never played any sports besides field hockey in middle school, but indirectly because of the availability of all different types of sport to me. I attended a city wide college preparatory school that is predominantly black.

The school contained a variety of different sports such as football, baseball, lacrosse, tennis, swimming, badminton, volleyball, basketball, and wrestling. One thing that I always noticed was which student played which sport. My entire football team was black. A dominant portion of the swimming team was white. Our swimming team was a much better team than our football team but never was glorified like our football team. Since our school was predominately black, it always seemed like the administration always

glorified the football team more than the swimming team because the football was keeping the black males out of trouble.

For example, swim meets was always announced first during the morning announcements and the football games was always announced last with enthusiasm. According to Mike Giardina, “ Not only that but, nationwide, issues of “ race” continue to dominate the educational system in ways that cannot be so easily glossed over or encapsulated by trite oversimplifications about colorblindness, desegregation, and racial affiliation” (Giardina 2006). Race issues in the educational system are specifically shown in sports because of the segregation inside of each sport and how each sport is not multicultural. Robert M. Sellers wrote in his essay, “ African-American Student-Athletes: Opportunity or Exploitation” “ sports provide educational and career opportunities to African American athletes from underprivileged backgrounds that are often beyond the reach of some of their academically gifted, but less athletically endowed African American” (Sellers 134). Then Sellers goes on to give examples of student-athletes that were unsuccessful academically and student-athletes that used their opportunity to go to college to be a diligent student in contrary of their high school academic career.

Do NCAA Division I schools use the black athlete to reap the benefits of the athlete’s talent, but refuse to help the athlete to keep up with their classes and their grades. I am afraid so. This in return leads the black athlete to depend on their sport only.

Some African Americans have to use sports to get into the higher class of society. But what if they were not successful in school and do not get drafted by a professional team? The athlete does not have anything to fall back on. This in turn shows how an athlete's social class affects their availability to sports. Your classified social class limits your availability to a wide range of sports. When the individual is a part of the upper class, the individual has virtually unlimited access to sports.

This means that the individual can participate and/or attend any sports game no matter how much the ticket cost or how much the equipment cost. Sports such as water polo, swimming, and ballet dancing are easily attainable for the upper class. The middle class has a limited availability to sports because of the cost of the equipment and the cost of the tickets to attend sports arenas. The middle class are able to go to football games and baseball games, but cannot afford a membership to the country clubs where such sports such as polo and golf are played. The middle class cannot also afford season tickets like the upper class. The lower class, which consists of mainly minorities, is virtually restricted to upper class sports. Athletic careers are appealing to minorities because it is a way to escape from their poverty stricken neighborhoods (Messner & Sabo, 1994). They might be able to get free tickets from their elementary school, but they are not available to enjoy recreation sport like the middle class and the upper class.

Being in a certain class also affects the ability of physical education classes to show a student all different kinds of sport. For example, schools in the lower class do not have the funding to get a variety of equipment so they

can teach young students about the different kinds of sport that are available to the students. Schools in the upper class are able to show students all different types of sport so they can choose out of these types instead of being close minded about sports like the lower class student.

The lower class is limited to sports that are not very expensive because they cannot afford equipment for golf, but a football can cost as low as five dollars. According to Collins and Yeskel, " Racism and sexism were powerful social forces constricting the lives of women and people of color. However, in the post-World War II years, people of color did share in the income gains of the society, though by no means equally. Incomes of blacks, Latinos, and other non white groups remain significantly lower than that of white households" (Collins & Yeskel, 2003). This conveys how the gap between the lower class and upper class is still wide, where most minorities (non-whites) are apart of the lower class. An individual's social class location drives their ability to experience different sport (White 2008).

I agree that social class does limit a child's ability to experience different types of sport. Even though a child's social class limits a child ability to experience different types of sport, a child should never believe that sport is the only thing they can use to prosper in society. I live in a lower class area of Baltimore City. Unfortunately, there are not any playgrounds within a six block radius of my house.

All the kids I do see around my neighborhood are either running up and down the street causing chaos for the drivers that drive the street daily.

These kids do not have any respect for anybody's property and themselves. We have a basketball court which a little further than the six block radius but they are always occupied with drug deals and nodding drug addicts. Most of the kids in my neighborhood were born to teenage mothers and the father is not apart of their lives. Kids believe that sport is the only way to socially prosper only because of the glorification of the capitalism of the sport. Corporate sponsorship of youth sports creates a dangerous form of recreating a perfect human for capitalist gain.

This makes the youth sport not fun anymore but more about maximizing profit and marketing certain brands to the kids and their parents. White et al states that character education is not aimed at schools for the rich and privileged who would hardly tolerate the strictures of such obedience training and modes of authoritarianism. Educating the managerial and cultural elite cannot be grounded in the imperatives of character education, which promotes passivity rather than leadership (White et al, 2008). This conveys how education in the schools depends on the social class, which correlates with the argument of social class, where White states that character education is not taught to the " rich and privileged" because they would be offended. This also shows how the government wants to transform the underprivileged into the elite for capitalizing motives. The youth is an influencer of society and family and corporations wants to appeal to them because they would make a difference in their profit.

The fun has been taken out of these youth sports for a capitalizing effect. The corporations are helping these kids be trained for the demand of our

capitalizing world (White, 2008). With the creation of the Little League World Series and the aggressive Soccer Moms and Dads, the youth sport has put a plethora of pressure on the young athlete to be the best. Pressure like this could discourage a young athlete to dismember their sporting experience when they become an adult. Pressure like this could also cause the young athlete to believe there is not anything outside of the sport that they are successful in because the parents could put pressure on them to help the family to become apart of the rich and privileged also known as the upper class. I believe that youth sports should not have any corporate sponsorship because this takes the fun out of the recreation of sports. The purpose of recreation sports is to teach children the importance of healthy and physical activity, not the importance of winning and the capitalism of the sport.

Kids are not enjoying sports like they used to since they are relocating themselves in front of the television where they will not feel the pressure of being successful. This pressure could discourage them from participating in sport for leisure and continuing to stay fit. I did not play any sports besides playing field hockey in middle school.

Forced to stop playing field hockey because my physical education teacher was too aggressive in the sport which pushed the girls in my class became very aggressive and competitive. One day while in practice a girl wanted to make the team so bad that when we both went for the puck she pushed me down to ground causing me to be bust open my knee. I could not walk correctly for a week. The role of corporate sponsorships affects sports in the money aspect.

Sports make corporations money, period. According to neoliberal theory, the sorts of measure that Bremer outlined were both necessary and sufficient for the creation of wealth and therefore for the improved well-being of the population at large (Harvey 2006). Maximizing profit is the key purpose of the corporations.

For example, corporations will stick their seal or logo on anything that will sell and make them money. They will do this even if the product does not have anything to do with the mission of the corporation. Corporations use sport to market their brand to the audience of the games. This distracts the audience from the actual fun of the game by flashing their marketing mix filled with stimuli that the audience could respond to. You have NBA players getting million dollar contracts with Nike before they even played their first game (Lebron James). Now what would have happened if Lebron James did not become the great player that he is today? What would have happened if he was injured before the start of the season like Greg Oden? Corporations are willing to invest millions of dollars into these athletes based on the anticipation from the fans of the athlete before the start of the season so they could get their brand marketed to the fans of these athletes. I do not believe in corporate philanthropy. Corporate philanthropy is a sneaky way for corporations to market their brand.

The reality is that when corporations say that they are donating their proceeds to help some type of research they are only donating a small portion of their sales. Corporations still have to make money too.

Unfortunately, I do find myself feeding into the schemes of the corporate

philanthropy. Buying products based primarily on the cause the product is supporting feels like the right thing to do. In actuality, the consumer supports the product because only a small portion of the sales are being donated to the cause.

This class shows that the consumer should research the product before buying the product. More to the point, corporations would use some a simple pink ribbon to get profit. October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. During this month, many brands will put a pink ribbon on their product and say a portion of their proceeds will go into breast cancer research. Millions of women have died from breast cancer and their family members and friends are very passionate about helping the researchers create a cure so another family would not have to suffer from the devastating disease.

At one time the National Football League was trying to repair their masculine image by launching a campaign called "Real Men Wear Pink" to help support breast cancer research. The campaign wanted to promote an alternative version of masculinity - one that is sensitive, compassionate, and compassionate, and charitable - to that with which the NFL is more commonly associated (King 2006). So the NFL did two things: repaired their image and maximized their profit by appealing to women and getting the women to buy their NFL merchandise. Another way the NFL tries to maximize their profit by creating more teams to expand of their on economic mobility: "Many metropolitan areas are willing to significantly increase public outlays for constructing new stadiums to attract a new NFL team and, in the meantime, economic benefits from the arrival of the new team is also

anticipated by the community” (Zhang et al, 2007). Creating a new market of demand will create a profit and any corporation will hope to get their name on the stadium so they can maximize their product.

This was NFL’s way to gain a response from the women that watch the football games and create a profit from expanding their market. In sports, women have stigmas about them. Women are not supposed to be strong and very muscular. Even though women play sports just like men do, women have to still maintain their feminine qualities to even bring attention to their talent. This is because of how our culture socializes our gender beings. Hegemony creates what is supposed to be normal for women and men (King 2008). For example, women are looked down upon because they may have a more masculine body because of the sports they play. Women become victims of the media when they are more masculine than feminine.

For example, the media always criticize the Williams sisters for their grunts and aggressiveness during their tennis matches. The critics always say that the Williams sisters always intimidate their opponents with their grunts and that is why they always win. The Williams sisters are criticized for their aggression while participating in a match. Then you have some critics that will admire the Williams sisters for the structure of their bodies and their fashion taste when it comes to playing in the matches. This is how the media has feminized tennis. The female athletes that play tennis wear skin tight clothes (Serena Williams) and short skirts so it will take away from their masculine bodies. According to Jennifer Scanlon, “ Stereotypical attitudes about girls and boys, while not born in adolescence, often solidify at this age

into hard and fast rules rather than simple observations” (Scanlon 2006). In Scanlon’s article she argues that parents should buy unisex toys so their toys that appeal to their personality and does not generate stereotypical roles.

This shows the stereotypical attitude that conveys how sport adapts to women. Girls play with dolls and taught to be sensitive and caring which can be portrayed as weak characteristics. Certain sports that are played by both men and women have separate rules even though it is the same game. In the NBA, the 3 point line is farther away from the basket than the WNBA and this rule is the same in college basketball. For men it is called baseball, but for women it is called softball, another way to show a stereotypical way of a weak female. Everything that is masculine about a sport is feminized so a female can play it too.

I do not agree with the idea that a sport should be feminized for a female. A female can do anything a male can do. Automatically thinking that a female is weak is the wrong thing to do. This shows that our society is still not equal to this day. A female should be able to be recognized by the talent but not by their looks that will overlook their talent and the talent of others.

A female should not have to feminize her sport by wearing make up and wearing revealing outfits that will bring a ‘girly’ side to a very demanding sport. I do feel that the WNBA is one of the only woman sports that do not feminize their sport besides Candice Parker that cannot help her genetically blessed looks. The role of women in the Speedracer movie is switched numerous times throughout the movie. At the beginning of the movie, Ma

Racer was the only parent attending the conference with the teacher about Speed's performance in school. Pa Racer was not able to attend the conference because he was working. The two main female characters (Trixie and Ma) were always feminine when it came to the way they dressed especially when the two of them were interacting with the male characteristics.

Trixie and Ma always wore makeup and the only time the both of the female characters showed any masculinity was when both of the women were helping to fix Speed's car for the Grand Prix. Trixie showed masculinity when she took over for Togokahn in the Casa Christo race. Her driving skills were comparable to Speed's and Trixie showed that she could drive just as good as Speed. The women in the Speed Racer movie were always the companions of the men in the movie, Ma being Pa's wife and Trixie being Speed's girlfriend.

The women were also shown as the main aggressor in most of the races. Especially the first race when the girls seemed like they were trying to kill Speed. The roles of women were switched throughout the movie to show all the different roles of women and how women can be suppressed or too aggressive. It is hard for me to take a stand against this kind of globalization. Our economy depends so much on this kind of globalization to help us to over turn our economy since us as Americans are too lazy to even make our own products.

A person would have to look at the moral aspect of this global capitalism. There are families that are getting paid merely pennies to produce the products that we pay hundreds of dollars for (sneakers, etc). We are against the aspect but yet we are doing very little to fix the issue. We are toughening the immigration laws which are not allowing the people from other countries to escape these types of conditions.

Global capitalism also takes a lot from the American people even though the corporations only pay pennies on a dollar to these children that are breaking their backs to feed their families with the money they make from this child labor. The only reason people are for this form of global capitalism is because it is bringing revenue into the American economy. Money hungry Americans.

This is why a plethora of the international country secretly hates/loves us. Our business is helping their poverty stricken country but yet millions of kids are being killed if they try to escape the facilities. Our hunger for revenue supports this immoral kind of global capitalism.

To get endorsements from large corporations, an organization will exploit their athlete's talents. For example, my high school had a football star that was featured on the front of the newspaper and everything which earned my high school great national attention. The exploitation of this particular athlete earned the high school huge amounts of donations from the Alumni Association. My high school choir was way more talented than the football team and the only donation the choir earned from the Alumni Association

was an “ antique” piano that was cost less than the present piano. This situation is similar to the Danny Almonte exploitation that turned a young boy into public enemy number one of the Little League: “ In 2001, Almonte’s pitching exploits made him somewhat of a popular cultural icon in the United States (Mosher, 2001c)” (King-White 2008, pp. 2). Danny Almonte became this popular cultural icon that won the hearts of millions of American and brought the biggest viewing audience to a Little League World Series. Almonte was also particularly big because majority of the players in the Major Leagues were from his native land: Dominican Republican.

Almonte represents the American Dream by becoming successful in an American sport even though Almonte is from a poor country. The 2008 Beijing Olympic Games were globalized because of the presence of Yao Ming. Yao Ming is a sporting icon in China and also a star in America where he plays for the Houston Rockets. China also has a history with the Olympics where they did not win their first gold medal in 1984. When it came to 2008 Olympic Games being hosted at Beijing, China made an emphasis on the number 8 by starting the opening ceremony at 8: 08PM (Economist 2008, pp.

3-4). In all, more than 60 companies, both Chinese and foreign, are sponsoring the games. “ No multinational company bent on expanding into China or national company seeking to grow inside or outside China will miss out on the branding opportunity presented by the Olympics in Beijing,” according to Sir Martin Sorrell, chief executive of WPP, a giant advertising and marketing agency (Economist 2008, pp. 3-4). China wants to expand

them as a sporting power just like they are advancing in technology and foreign affairs.

By globalizing themselves in the 2008 Beijing Olympics China will gain more profit from sport. This is very similar to the Red Sox Nation illustrated in King-White 2008. Red Sox Nation has their own way of conducting themselves at the baseball games. Whether it is creating a separate organization just for Red Sox fans and/or yelling racial slurs to the opposing team's players every sports 'nation' has a way of showing their love for the team (King-White 2008, pp.).

The display of mascots that represent racialized stereotypes is morally wrong and sporting franchises should come to an agreement with these teams that display these mascots so they could change their name. Many people say that it is harmless for these mascots to be displayed. The die hard fans of the team will act out the racialized stereotype throughout the entire game as a part of a tradition. For example, Newman says " Indeed, sport is central among these cultural technologies of separation and alienation. While attending an Ole Miss sporting event, and particularly a contest involving the university's championship intercollegiate football team, spectators are immersed in a universality of the Old South symbols and signifying acts" (Newman 2007, pp. 8). This means that even though the University of Mississippi is an integrated school in the South the University becomes a " civil war encampment" during these sporting events (Newman 2007, pp. 8).

This blatantly displays why these racialized, stereotypical mascots are morally wrong. Turning the University back into the civil war encampment would cause any other student from a different university to feel uncomfortable, but in the University of Mississippi this is the hegemon which is also morally wrong. Such teams as the Redskins are socially insensitive to the fact that the term 'redskins' is equivalent to the 'n-word'.

If anything this would cause any of the sporting teams that do display this socially insensitive mascot to change their mascot. But of course the sporting franchise wants to make profit and they feel as if changing the name would cause them to lose money. In actuality, this will help them make money because of the die hard fans that will go out and buy everything with the name change on it. You would never see the Towson N-word or the Towson Chinks so why would you should have any team with the term redskins when it is considered a racial slur to the Native American community. This is also display the lack of respect for the Native American community since their voice is hardly heard and then when they are heard they are ignored.

Recently, the Washington Redskins won a legal battle over its trademark of the name "redskins". The judge says: The decision marked the second time that U.

S. District Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly has ruled in favor of the team, which has been fighting to protect millions of dollars in sales of Redskins caps, T-shirts and other merchandise. In 2003, Kollar-Kotelly ruled that a group of seven activists did not provide enough evidence that the team's name and images were so insulting that they had no legal right to trademark

protection. She also ruled that the activists waited too long to make their challenge, noting that the first trademark — “ the Redskins,” written in a stylized script — dated to 1967. Kollar-Kotelly was forced to revisit the delay issue after the U. S. Court of Appeals found in 2005 that one of the activists, Mateo Romero, might have legal standing because he was born in 1966. Yesterday the judge found that he, too, waited too long before joining the legal action.

He had been an adult for eight years before filing his initial complaint, she wrote” (Wilber 2008, pp. B. 2). Well, I want to be a sports agent and I know for a fact I would speak out against any social issue that could be surrounding my clients or my fans. Either though I might receive scrutiny for my comments I believe that being mute and choosing money over saying what is right and wrong would only make me seem like a capitalist monster. Another example of a high figure speaking up on an issue is Baltimore’s former Mayor Kurt L. Schmoke, an alumni of my high school.

Kurt L. Schmoke told Congress the legalization of illicit drugs would help America instead of hurting America. Schmoke received a plethora of scrutiny of this comment, but many people agreed with him. The legalization of drugs would reduce a plethora of crimes that occur daily because of drugs. Schmoke decided to not to say what people wanted to hear but spoke the truth.

Of course, Schmoke lost a plethora of campaign donators but in the end he was still one of the greatest mayors Baltimore have had (Associated Press

1988, pp. 2). Sport is a producer and product of my society. In my society, white men are held on a higher pedestal than women, children, and minorities. A white man will run our government until Barack Obama is sworn in as our next president.

In our American society, everyone is still not equal and it even shows in sports. Our American society still has a strong social class system that affects our availability to sport and still segregates the sport till this day. It is up to our generation to turn things around and show that we can all be equal and be able to play together in sport and also have something to fall back on. References Collins, C.

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