



UNIVERSITY OF NIŠ
The scientific journal FACTA UNIVERSITATIS
Series: **Physical Education** Vol.1, N° 4, 1997 pp. 61 - 63
Editor of series: Nenad Živanović, email: znenad@filfak.filfak.ni.ac.yu
Address: Univerzitetski trg 2, 18000 Niš, YU
Tel: +381 18 547-095, Fax: +381 18 547-950

REVIEW

CHANGESE IN MODERN SOCIETIES - CONSEQUENCES FOR PE AND SCHOOL SPORT

DR. BART CRUM (Netherlands)

keynote paper presented at the International Congress of the ASEP in Neuchatel,
Switzerland, 20th - 24th May, 1998

In F.I.E.P. Bulletin summer /autumn, 1998, Dr. Bart Crum has published his article under the title "Changes in modern societies - consequences for PE and school sport". The main issues in this paper are the cultural changes that can be observed in modern, affluent societies and the implications of these changes for compulsory movement lessons (PE) and optional school sport at the secondary school level. From the very beginning it seems important to emphasize one caveat. Focusing on general cultural changes in modern societies and in particular on changes in body - and movement culture and looking for consequences for schooling, we are faced with sweeping cross-cultural discontinuities.

The realization of quality in PE is increasingly endangered by changes that occur in the interests, attitudes and behaviours of many secondary school students. In order to describe and to interpret these changes, I firstly pay attention to '*postmodernity*', '*individualization*' and '*the rediscovery of the body*'.

Together, the shift towards postmaterialist values, the craving for self-realization, the trend to individualization and the rediscovery of the body have led to a process that can be labelled as '*the sportification of the society*' (cp. Cachay, 1990, Crum, 1992, Digel 1990; Grupe, 1998).

The emergence of the 'sport for all' idea invited or seduced the traditional sport system to extend its own borders in order to play along with new needs and expectations and to fulfill a range of new functions.

The sportification of the society has resulted in a striking process of internal differentiation of sport. This differentiation process is characterized by two opposite developments: on the one hand, the 'sportification' of sport and, on the other hand, the 'de-sportification' of sport.

In conclusion: under influence of the 'sportification of the society' and the 'de-sportification' of the traditional sport, the once relative homogeneous sport system has differentiated into a rather heterogeneous movement culture. Movement-cultural sub-systems have developed beside each other as different shops with different assortments and different internal rules for different groups of clients, who have different needs and

expectations. For the time being, the following heuristic classification of sportive sub-systems, each of them part of a different social convention, could be useful (Crum, 1992):

1) **Elite sport** - the dominant motives are: absolute achievement, status, money. This sport mode is often commercialized and requires (semi)professional participation.

2) **Competitive club sport** - here the dominant motive is a cocktail of the excitement of competition, pursuit of subjective achievement, relaxation and social contact.

3) **Recreation sport** - dominant motives are: relaxation, health and togetherness. Recreation sport is offered by sport clubs as well as by local authorities; often it is privately arranged.

4) **Fitness sport** - the dominant and often isolated motive is physical fitness. This mode is mostly offered by commercial agencies and also privately staged (e.g. jogging).

5) **Risk and adventure sport** - adventure and thrill are the dominant motives. Think of the mostly commercially organized, expensive activities such as Himalayan trekking, helicopter skiing, hang-gliding, scuba diving, rafting and parachuting.

6) **Lust sport** - hedonism, here exclusive pleasure is the focus. Think of the commercially organized (often in combination with tourism) forms of so called S-sport (sun, sea, sand, snow, sex, speed and satisfaction).

7) **Cosmetic sport** - the focus is on the model-appearance. Think of the commercially organized narcissism of body-building, -styling and -shaping, with a 'warming up' or a 'cooling down' on the sunbed.

In the part of his issue in titled as "Crisis in secondary school physical education" Mr. Crum describes the problems in PE teaching and gives his opinion to solve them.

In their daily work at school, PE teachers are increasingly confronted with youngsters who are children of the 'excitement society' and have been exposed to individualization and mediation. They have more freedom and also considerably more options for choice and consumption than earlier generations. Alas, often they do not know how to make choices and they have also problems with bonds and commitments. They view form and design as more important than function, and presentation as more valuable than achievement. Disengagement and fleetingness seem to be their hallmark.

Is it any wonder then that a growing part of these youngsters can hardly be motivated for school PE, that they think that the exercises (or better, the 'tomfoolery') in the gym, on the school field or the track are just boring and useless? It might be painful to admit, but if we dare to be honest and ready to remove our professional blinkers, then we can only conclude that it is no wonder at all! No wonder, but definitely a problem. A serious problem, because one of the consequences is that a growing number of youngsters can not find a way in the complexity of the movement culture or runs the risk of getting on the wrong tracks.

Mr. Crum thinks that sport pedagogy should face this problem. Sport pedagogy is firstly obliged to set pedagogical criteria for an evaluation of present trends in movement culture and then to develop didactic filters in order to draw consequences for the PE curriculum.

His first consideration focuses on pedagogical-ethical aspects of the problem. Some postmodern scholars - however, not only scholars - have developed an attitude in which relativism, irony and cynicism are important ingredients. The adagium is then: long life to normative relativism, 'everything goes'. Such an attitude gives the mental 'flexibility to cope with social pluralism and relativism, with a lack of orientation, with 'the end of

history" (Fukuyama) and with the misery that we daily get dished up by the media. It is his firm belief, however, that pedagogues cannot allow themselves such an attitude. If they do so, they commit an intellectual treason and become accessories to the lack of orientation of the growing generation.

For that reason he proposes that sport pedagogues should feel responsible for an introduction into movement culture under control of the following leading values:

- a) respect for the subjectivity of the individual (keyword: emancipation),
- b) respect for the fellow human (keyword: solidarity) and
- c) respect for the natural environment.

Consequently sport pedagogy should review and evaluate also the alternative sport modes in the light of these values. Then, for example, it could become evident that:

- the instrumentalization of the body-machine, which takes often place in the setting of fitness sport, violates the integrity of subjective embodiment,
- the narcissistic obsession with mesomorphy in the cosmetic sport reflects a "macho" ideology,
- the hedonism in the lust sport runs the risk of going for one's own fun and satisfaction at the cost of others,
- many forms of risk and adventure sport imply severe ecological damage,
- compared to other sport agencies, the sport club has a relative high potential for offering youngsters a clear and durable structure for healthy experiences and the possibility to develop a personal identity in the domain of embodiment and movement (cf. Crum, 1996).

His second consideration concerns the question, how (in which way) modern movement cultural forms should be represented in the PE curriculum for the upper grades of the secondary school. How should these modern forms be transformed didactically? Since every didactic transformation should be chosen in the light of the teaching objectives, it is worthwhile to return to the objective-question. Earlier in this paper he sets the following objective: "to qualify youngsters for an emancipated, satisfying and lasting participation in movement culture". Taking into consideration that movement culture is itself continuously in change, and moreover, that because of the process of aging, the meaning of sport for an individual is changing with time so that his/her sport participation will be differently staged throughout life, it becomes obvious that "qualification for an emancipated, satisfying and lasting participation" implies at least the following two aspects. Firstly, a basic competency to solve techno-motor and socio-motor problems (if you want you can call this 'skills' is required for such a participation, but secondly, also a thorough understanding of the social making of the movement culture.

Of all that could be done, how nice it would be if a substantial part could be realized. Then PE will certainly survive in the schools of the 21st century.

Nebojša Randelović