Paradoxes In My Life Essay, Research Paper

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1st Paradox

My athletic experiences have been very satisfying and positive. In the fist paradox, Sport Unites, Sport divides; Sport unites because it brings people of different class, race and gender together. I have met some great individuals while playing sports that are still my friends today. I have learned a great deal from these encounters. Not only about sports but also different cultures. I had an African American teammate that invited me to her house for a holiday meal, because I could not go home. The diversity ranged from setting, her urban, to my suburban, to food, the smell of greens and chitterlings delighted her and upset my stomach. The team I coach now has little diversity on the team. But, the diversity that it does has, I believe is beneficial to the team. Sport is very competitive, but there is a fine line between competitive and wins at all cost. Play the game and learn from it. I believe that sport can divide also. Sport divides player and coach obliviously but can also divided player with player. Though I have never experienced this, which I know of, I do understand that it is out there. I play and coach the game for the love, competitive nature and the experience of the diversity in culture it can bring together.

2nd Paradox

I think that even though we need to be sensitive to the feelings of others with concern to names, logos, mascots and flags we must also take into consideration the context of usage. If an established one is not meant in a racist derogatory manner, but a glorified prestige’s one the usage should be allowed. My parents raised me to be an extremely competitive person. In high school we were the “Lady foxes” and in college the” Lady Flashes”. These labels or names never bothered me because I was also raised to be a lady. My parents raised me to possess the ability to exhibit feminine qualities while still displaying the skill, determination, drive and competitive spirit of an athlete. I feel that the woman’s movement has far greater barriers to overcome than to concentrate on names and logos. If an established mascot or logo is meant to or attributed to oppression then by all means change it. But, the more educated we become the more we should understand the ways symbols can effect certain people or groups. While these individuals and groups need to question the intentions of logos unless you perceive yourself as less inferior then the logos are simply marketable tools to relate consumers with a product.

3rd paradox

I agree with Eitzen in his statements of taking sport too far and crossing the boundaries set forth. Sports for me, I have now found out, have been a blessing because I did not come across these types of behaviors or the perceived notion of sport as a foul. The mentality of winning at any cost changes the meaning of sport. Like Eitzen says, going outside the rules shouldn’t be considered a win at all.

4th paradox

Injuries are a part of playing. When one decides to play a sport, they must consider that injury may and most likely will follow. You take the good with the bad, heal and return. I feel that if you perceive/make sport to be destructive it is your own doing. Drugs, alcohol, diet; emotional and sexual abuse does not have to be part of the game. Why we are playing must be kept in mind. Eitzen states that guidance by administrators; educating parents, coaches and athletes about the poisons of athletics would be great solutions. Drug test to keep sports healthy. Because keeping the athletes healthy is the most important solution to prevention.

5th paradox

Social control has positive functions, which can lead to team bonding, common goals and stability, as Eitzen states. Social control can also lead to negative outcome. Through NCAA eligibility standards some athletes have been denied scholarships. Stipulations can lead to lying, cheating and stealing due to sanctions by boards. Athortatarian coaches treat players poorly due to the demands placed on them by society, school and the student body. These are only a few of the many negative outcomes that are excepted as truths. When I came to Kent I was told that I would receive a full scholarship, five years paid for a four-year degree. I started as true freshman and had to fight to get my fifth year paid.

6th paradox

I completely agree with Eitzen in stating that young individuals don’t learn democracy when the leaders are tyrants. Young people learn from those that will listen and trust in them not those that demand and degrade by authority. They want to be free and do not want to be lectured or punished for every decision not that of those in charge. To know what democracy entails they must first live in one. (Eitzen, p.63) From my own experience, high school was so much more fun than college. In high school the more I played the more I wanted to play. In college, the more I played the more I couldn’t wait for it to be over. I don’t want to sound ungrateful for the opportunity; it was just that it was more a job with limitations rather than enjoyment for the love of the game. Virtually every aspect of our lives was controlled. Sports are allotted/permitted to take up a particular amount of a student athlete’s time. But, the way around the rule is by scheduling non-mandatory activities with repercussions for non-attendance.

7th paradox

In considering contradictions to big time athletics I was lucky to attend a program that influenced good grades and academic success. I believe that we were treated as fairly as any other sport at Kent and if we weren’t then I was unaware. Eitzens’ solution to this situation begins with the changes in the administration of sport and the education of athletes. Only those students with the potential to compete as students should be admitted. Neither special treatment nor academic curriculum for athletics should be allowed or permitted. The making of student fees to be directed toward women’s sports and minor men’s programs to achieve greater equity. The limited spending on equipment and athletes receiving fair compensation for the revenue they generate. Athletes receive stipend and paid trips during holidays and for parent’s two paid trips to see their sons/daughters annually. Another alternative Eitzen feels will be implemented, eventually, is the money generated from TV. and bowl/tournament appearances going to fewer teams. These fewer teams would be commercialized for the elite athletes as a developmental program for big time sports teams. This, Eitzen feels, removes the hypocrisy of big time sports with the educational mission.