

Chapter 1– Essay Questions

1. Imagine you are a sociologist or physical educator and you want to offer a new course on the sociology of sport in your department. How would you present your case to your colleagues in the department? It is up to you to convince them that the course would be a worthwhile addition to the departmental curriculum.
2. Research done by sociologists may create controversies, especially in the eyes of people who have power and control in society. For example, sociological research on why women do not play sports as often as men play them may discover that the reasons for this difference is related to how social life is organized in a particular group or society. Explain how this could create a controversy in that group or society; who would be threatened by this discovery and why?
3. Some sociologists study sports in society because sports are tied closely to ideologies in societies. Explain what is meant by “ideologies” and then show how sports are related to ideas about gender, race, and social class.
4. Recent research in the sociology of sport focuses on the body in social and cultural terms rather than biological terms. This research is based on the notion that the body is socially constructed and given meaning within the context of culture. Explain what this means and list some of the issues that sociologists might study as they focus on the body as a social phenomenon.
5. A friend criticizes your choice to take a sociology of sport course. He says, “sports are purely physical activities and they don’t have anything to do with society or social life.” Explain to your friend that he is sadly mistaken and point out some of the more important connections between sports and various spheres of social life.