I. Social class and sport

A. What is social class / social stratification?
   - *A social system that indicates who ranks higher and lower in prestige and power in any given society.*

   - 1. What are the elements of social class?
     - money
     - education
     - occupation

   - 2. Other sources of social stratification
     - Sex
     - Age
     - Race
B. What are the social class differences in sport?
- 1. Participation sports: largely individual sports for the wealthy, team sports for the working class.
  - Why? What is the history of this?
- a. Individual sports are expensive. Country Club locations
- b. Organizations for the rich emphasize golf, tennis, swimming [and for the truly wealthy, polo, yachting]
- c. "Conspicuous consumption". I don't have to work. I can afford expensive, wasteful activities and can travel to do them (e.g. skiing)
- d. Blue collar folks have regular work schedules -> ability to plan team sports in free time
- e. Social norms in both strata reinforce this
  - mental experiment for those who grew up working class: what would your friends have said if you told them you were taking up golf or tennis?
- f. The VERY poor – especially the rural poor – have no organized sports. Pickup basketball; stickball in the street in cities. In other countries, street soccer.
Social class, social mobility, and sport

- g. Contact sports attract poorer kids. Why?
  - strength, toughness
  - reflect the values from that social stratum
- h. Basketball. Why is it the city sport?
  - cheap
  - accessible
  - takes up little space

- VIDEO: Carlin on golf

- 2. Spectator sports
  - a. To some extent parallel performance preferences
  - b. Poorer gravitate to violent sports, and those that involve machinery.
  - c. Reasons for this are speculative [see table 7.4 from Curry and Jiobu]
II. Social mobility and sport

A. Does participation in sport in high school and college -> social mobility? I.e., do you end up in a better occupation or with more money than you would have had because of playing sports?

1. Hard question to answer because of selection issue we have discussed earlier.
   - Problem is that 80% of male students play sports, biased towards the better off.

2. Coakley says
   - "studies suggest that as a group young people who have played sports on high school and college teams experienced no more or less occupational success than others from comparable backgrounds."
   - He concludes that it is most likely to work positively under certain other conditions
     - a. Opportunity for social contacts
     - b. Foster non-sport-related identities
     - c. Minimal injuries
     - d. Complete degrees
3. Study by Ewing (1995). High school sports increased the later wages of black high school athletes
   
   a. Data from the NLS 1979 → present, starting with 14-21 year olds. In 1994 they were 29-36.
   b. Used only men who worked full time for pay in either 1985 (age 20-27) or 1991 (age 26-33)
   c. Did not look at college sports participation at all
   d. Results: in both years the positive effect of athletic participation in high school on earnings was significant [p<.01]
      - They control for lots of other variables.
      - Also are significant effects of education and availability of collective bargaining.

> B. What is the likelihood of a "payoff" from sport, in terms of a further sports career?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approximate Number of Players in:</th>
<th>Football</th>
<th>Basketball</th>
<th>Baseball</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td>21,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pros</td>
<td>2,300</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rookies (annually)</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The “p” represents the proportion of athletes at one level that continue to participate at another. For example, in football, .05 (40,000/750,000 = .05) of the pool of high schoolers play in college. These figures are approximations and probably conservative.
Table 10–4  Odds of 15- to 39-year-old males in the U.S. attaining professional athlete status in major professional team sports by race/ethnicity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Caucasian</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = 467</td>
<td>N = 910</td>
<td>N = 14</td>
<td>N = 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All groups*</td>
<td>111,111:1</td>
<td>50,000:1</td>
<td>3,333,333:1</td>
<td>3,333,333:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within group</td>
<td>100,000:1</td>
<td>10,000:1</td>
<td>333,333:1</td>
<td>333,333:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASEBALL</td>
<td>N = 469</td>
<td>N = 112</td>
<td>N = 112</td>
<td>N = 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All groups</td>
<td>111,111:1</td>
<td>500,000:1</td>
<td>500,000:1</td>
<td>10,000,000:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within group</td>
<td>100,000:1</td>
<td>50,000:1</td>
<td>50,000:1</td>
<td>500,000:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASKETBALL</td>
<td>N = 85</td>
<td>N = 320</td>
<td>N = 0</td>
<td>N = 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All groups</td>
<td>500,000:1</td>
<td>166,666:1</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within group</td>
<td>500,000:1</td>
<td>20,000:1</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOCKEY</td>
<td>N = 630</td>
<td>N = 13</td>
<td>N = 7</td>
<td>N = 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All groups</td>
<td>200,000:1</td>
<td>3,333,333:1</td>
<td>1,000,000:1</td>
<td>10,000,000:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within group</td>
<td>100,000:1</td>
<td>500,000:1</td>
<td>100,000:1</td>
<td>500,000:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL FOUR SPORTS</td>
<td>N = 1660</td>
<td>N = 1355</td>
<td>N = 133</td>
<td>N = 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>All groups</td>
<td>33,333:1</td>
<td>33,333:1</td>
<td>333,333:1</td>
<td>1,666,666:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within group</td>
<td>25,000:1</td>
<td>5,000:1</td>
<td>50,000:1</td>
<td>166,666:1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes all 15- to 39-year-olds in U.S. population in pool.
†Includes only members of one's own racial or ethnic group in pool.
‡Adjusted to account for the fact that at least 50% of Caucasian NHL players are from Canada, Russia, and Northern Europe.

Source: Adapted from data presented by Leonard (1996: 296, table 5).
C. Conclusion: Really very little evidence of social mobility through sport. Clearly some individuals are helped, African-Americans the most. But some are clearly hurt (e.g., those recruited who drop out in two years with no skills who have lost two years of work experience).