The Role of Sport as a Mediator in International Relations

Prof. Dr. Robert C. Schneider Director, Sport Management Program The College at Brockport, State University of New York

International Eurasian Conference on Sport, Education, & Society Organized by: International Science Culture and Sport Association



1. MY 12^{TH} TURKEY VISIT

Happy & Flattered



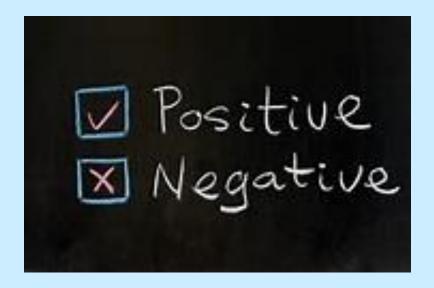
 Antalya, Izmir, Mugla, Erdine, Aydin, Denizli, Kayseri, Istanbul, Ankara, & and Many More



2. CENTRAL QUESTION

Can sport have a mediating effect on international relations?

Negative vs. Positive



3.GLOBAL PROBLEMS RESOLVED BY SPORT?

Sport Bringing People Together, International Sporting Events (Tomlinson & Young, 2011)

Poverty, Peace & Security, Disarmament, Human Rights, Democracy, Demography, Ecology, Energy, & Medical Care (Valeryevich, 2015)



4. EXTENSION OF SPORT'S POSITIVE IMPACT

Challenge: Deep Seated Generational Conflict



- Positive Impacts beyond the Sporting Event
 - e.g., Government & Common Person



5. REALITIES OF SPORT'S NEGATIVE SIDE

- Anti-Social Behaviors (Marasescu, 2013)
- Win-At-All-Cost Mentality
- Ruthlessly Compete
- Disrespectfulness and Uncivility (Zivkovic, Stamenkovic, & Makovic, 2013)







6. INCITING POOR RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN NATIONS

- Sport as Vehicle To Promote Negative Agenda
- e.g., Terroristic Activities Against One Another(Clark, 2004)
 - Negligible in Comparison to Other Risks (Shaver, 2015)
- Sport Is Merely a Vehicle (not the Cause)





7. IMPROVING INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS CANNOT BE DETERRED

Potential For Negatives through Sport is Reality

However:

- Good From Sport is Frequent
- Sport Focus: Spread Goodwill Across Nations





8. RESILIENCE OF SPORT AMIDST INTERNATIONAL DIFFERENCES

- Sport's Staying Power (Tope, 2008)
- Shared Commonality Between Countries





9. PERSEVERANCE OF SPORT ACROSS DEMOGRAPHICS

- Adults
- Children Resiliently Improvise; Streets & Playgrounds
- Natural Desire to Compete across Demographics
- Sport: Common Interest between Nations & People







10. FRIENDSHIPS, BONDS, & LOYALTIES THROUGH SHARED SPORTING EXPERIENCES

- Loyalty: Bond Shared by "Insiders" (Fletcher, 1993)
- Insider Experiences through Common International Sporting Experiences
- Bonds and Loyalties between Nations





11.OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH INTERNATIONAL SPORT

- Develop or Reinforce Friendships, Loyalties, and Bonds (Darnell, 2010; Darnell & Black, 2011)
- Bonds & Loyalties Include:
 - Family, Friends...Sporting Community
 - Those Who Share Common Experiences





12. LOYALTY CONTINUUM

- Competitors, Coaches, Administrators, Fans
- Type of Fraternity



13. OLYMPIC BOND (CASE IN POINT)

- Olympians Share a Bond without Ever Having Met
- International Athletes
- Members of International Sporting Community







14.SPORT AND GOODWILL BETWEEN NATIONS

- International Goodwill Not Guarantee
- John Lennon "Give Peace A Chance"
- Starting Point for Positive Conversation
- Mutually Positive Experiences







15. GOVERNMENT INFLUENCE OVER SPORT

- Minimizing Government's Role (Purify Sport)
- Sport as Promotional Tool for Government
- Governments Sole Directors Of International Sporting Contests
 - Government's Political Agenda Promoted





16. SHIFTING RESPONSIBILITY TO SPORT GOVERNING BODIES

- Allows for an <u>Apolitical</u> Impression of Nations
- "Temporary" Moment to Form Positive Relationships



17. RELINQUISH CONTROLS FOR QUALITY

- Government Incentive to Relinquish Control to Sporting Experts
 - Higher Quality





18. NATIONALISM EMBRACED AND REINFORCED THROUGH SPORT

A Note on Globalism



19. INTERACTIONS BETWEEN NATIONS ARE USUALLY FOR SELF-SERVING PURPOSES

- Sport Used to Establish National Identity (Field, 2014; Gorokhov, 2015; Lenger & Schumacher, 2015)
- National Agendas to Promote Nationalism
- National Participation in International Sporting Events & Good

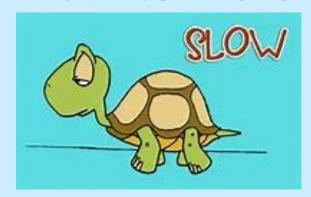






20. SPORT AS A PATH TO POSITIVE DIALOGUE BETWEEN NATIONS

- Mediator of International Relationships
 - Sport Often Subtle, yet Effective Role
- Large Scale Improvements between Nations, Unlikely
- A Beginning to Positive Dialogue
- Path to More Substantive Positive Outcomes





21. OPEN MIND & PROGRESS

- Progress toward Removing Learned Prejudices
 - In-person Interactions Characteristic Of Sporting Events (Allport, 1954)
- Open Mind Necessary





22. POSITIVE DIALOGUE

- International Sporting Events
- International Teaching & Study Exchanges
- International or Interregional Congresses
- May Not be the Sporting Event Itself
 - Process of the Event; Positive Interactions
- One-day Event
- Several Days





23. NOT ALLOWING IMPEDIMENTS TO DETER CHANGE

- Impediments to Protect Status Quo
- Interactions between Nations Required to:
 - Improving Poor Relations
 - Reinforcing Good Relations





24. SPORT MEDIATING PROPAGANDA AND STEREOTYPES

- Propagandistic Misinformation
 - Difficult To Overcome With Grass-Roots Interactions
- Opportunities for Genuine Exchanges
- Dramatic Changes of Long-Standing Perspectives? No







25. HOSTING & GOODWILL

- Cultural Opportunities to Create Goodwill
- Host & Guest Gain Cultural Understanding During Tourism Interactions (Canavan, 2016)
- Feature Attractions





26. PROCESS OF INTERACTING

- Interacting
- Strengthen or Weaken



27. HELP MEND STRAINED RELATIONSHIPS

- Sport or Sporting Event <u>cannot</u> Fully Repair
- Can Spread Goodwill; Help Mend
- Support Societal Problem Progress (Burnett, 2015)
- Putting Aside Governmental Differences
 - (if Only Temporarily)



28. LARGE SCALE INTERNATIONAL SPORTING EVENTS

- Convenient Opportunities for Government Official
- Social Gatherings & Tourism
- Goodwill Interactions
- Fans, Citizens, & Even Government Officials (Brownell, 2014)





29. SAFE & SECURE INTERNATIONAL SPORTING ENVIRONMENT

- Unassuming Kindness
- "On The Ground" Interactions
- Regular Everyday People
- Hospitality that Guarantees Favorable Impression



30. TURKEY & HOSTING

- Fascinating Culture
- Natural Landscape
- Breathtaking Sea
- Delicious Food & Tea
- Turkish People: Warm, Kind, & Generous







31. SUMMARY STATEMENT

The Role of Sport as a Mediator in International Relations

- Nations Take Advantage Of Any Opportunities Where Sport Can Be Used To Support Goodwill
- Sporting Events Can Help Mediate Positive Progress Between Nations

THANK YOU Prof. Dr. Robert C. Schneider Director, Sport Management Program



