

Let's Go to the Tape...er, Film: Examining Sport Policy through Film

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**Governance
Abstract 2009-051**

**May 28, 2009
4:50 PM**

**25 minute oral
(Richland A)**

Sport is viewed as a microcosm of society in that it shares the basic elements and expressions of issues of life, and as such, is able to mirror society, human experience, and transcend life (Eitzen, 2006). The imagery associated with sport provides the means for strong visual and other sensory images that can leave lasting impressions of those who experience it. Much like sport, film is able to mirror society in an overabundance of forms.

Film use as an academic device advocates that the unique features of film offer a commanding pedagogical mechanism (Champoux, 1999). Film implementation can enhance student learning through providing a means through which students understand concepts and reflect on presented information in the context of "real life." The flexibility and distinctiveness of film can be enacted to embody desired concepts in a commanding form, and is influential in shaping individuals as they "come to depend on familiar movie images to show us how to deal with important events of life" (Beck, 2002, p. 24). Educators are to be purposeful in film selection and implementation. Depending on course content and the desired learning objectives of instructors, film implementation can compliment educational instruction in a wide assortment of ways. Once relevant films have been identified, educators are to consider the best means of presentation. Champoux (1999; 2002) identified the learning functions of film as: 1) a case; 2) a metaphor; 3) satire; 4) time; 5) symbolism; 6) meaning; and 7) experience.

Though it should be noted that these learning functions need not be mutually exclusive of each other, the primary context for the film learning function of this study is utilizing film as a case study. This presentation and the associated line of research seek to identify the dimensions in which film implementation provides a means for enhancing sport management educational concepts, theories, and objectives. Utilizing the sub-discipline of sport governance, this study will identify and explore the value of film as an educational tool used to examine issues of policy pertaining to the governance of sport. In this work, several exemplary film cases will be presented and discussed. The presented film cases will serve as a template for further development of film use as a tie-in to sport governance education (with relevance to other sport management fields of study). Such demonstration is to provide an avenue for current and future managers of sport to be able to appreciate aspects such as governance considerations including policy development, rules, and regulations.

This work will detail the varying benefits associated with film implementation and highlighting the significance of taking painstaking efforts to ensure educational value. Also, the all-important concept of student reflection will be addressed. Students are to be given opportunities to reflect on applicable issues. Dewey (1933) acknowledged reflection as being an "active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends" (p. 9). Clayton (2004) categorized reflection a learning opportunity that is to be a "safe yet critical space" where learners are able to support and express their learning. Additionally, further points of relevance including aspects such as cost, logistics, copyright, and other considerations will be addressed.