

126. Sport

It is a set of competitive activities in which winners and losers are determined by physical performance within a set of institutionalized rules. While sport is an important aspect of recreation, many forms of recreations do not involve sport. Jay I. Coakly (1986) notes that a spontaneous race between two skiers who happen to meet is more adequately described as a "contest" than an example of sport. Although a contest between skiers involves physical activity and competition, it does not involve definite rules or standardized conditions.

Because sport reflects culture, it draws on achievement-oriented values and often intensifies them to an extreme degree. When achievement and winning come to be seen as the primary goals of sport, any means to obtain a win- including violence -may be encouraged. In an achievement-oriented society, coaches and fans expect athletes to put their physical well being on the line for the sake of achieving the valued goal of winning. More that this, players in many sports are expected to resort to violence if that promotes a win. Such orientations can begin at an early age.

The Questions

1. What is sport?
2. Do many forms of recreations involve sport?
3. What does Jay I. Coakly note?
4. How does one differentiate between the term "contest" and that of "sport"?
5. What does sport reflect?
6. How does sport reflect culture?
7. What do coaches and fans expect of athletes in an achievement-oriented society?
8. In an achievement-oriented society, what are expected of players?

127. Demography

It is the study of human population. It comes from Greek, meaning "description of people". Demography is a specialty within sociology that analyzes the size and composition of a population and the flow of people from place to place. Although partly concerned with statistics, demography also poses crucial questions about the effects of population growth and its control.

About 1750, world population began to "spike" upward. We now add 78 million people to the planet each year, which put the global total in 1999 at almost 6 billion.

The Questions

1. What is demography?
2. What does it mean literally?
3. As a specialty within sociology, what does demography analyze?
4. When did world population "spike" upward?
5. How many million people do we add to the planet yearly?
6. What is the total of world population in 1999?

128. Fertility

It is the incidence of childbearing in a society's population. During a woman's childbearing years, from the onset of menstruation (typically in the early teens) to menopause (usually in the late forties), she is capable of bearing more than twenty children. But fecundity, or maximum possible childbearing, is sharply reduced in practice by cultural norms, finances, and personal choice.

The Questions

1. What is fertility?
2. How many children is a woman capable of bearing during her childbearing years?
3. What is fecundity?
4. What are some of the factors affecting a woman's fecundity level in practice?
5. Do these factors, such as norms, finance, and personal choice have a negative effect or a positive one on the fecundity level of woman?

129. Crude Birth Rate

Demography measures fertility using the crude birth rate. CBR is the number of live births in a given year for every thousands people in a population. Demographers calculate a crude birth rate by dividing the number of live birth in a year by a society's total population and multiplying the result by 1000.

Comparing crude birth rates for various countries can be misleading if one nation has a larger share of women of childbearing age than another. A crude birth rate also tells us nothing about how fertility differs among a society's racial and ethnic categories. But CBR is easy to calculate and serve as a good indicator of a society's overall fertility.