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Sport and Education

Tribute to Martin Lee

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YOUTH AND SPORT IN THE USA AND GERMANY - A CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARATIVE STUDY

1. Cross-cultural research as a way out of isolation and parochialism

Globalization, defined by Robertson (1992, 5) as "the compression of the world into a single place", is a major feature of Western industrial societies. This trend is reflected in a worldwide communication network and an increasingly commercialized multi-national leisure culture. Other global changes result from individualization and social differentiation and also cross national boundaries. There are changes in certain aspects of adolescents' life situations, like a greater number of years spent in school and training and the increase in leisure time, the redefining of gender roles, the estrangement of adolescents from the social value systems handed down by adults, and changes in intergenerational relationships, with partial shifting of the balance of power in favour of the young, for example where modern technologies are used or in the spheres of music, fashion, body-related self-representation, and in sport.

Globalization tendencies are to be found in sporting activities of adolescents all over the world. Roller blading endangers pedestrians and vehicles in New York and Berlin alike. Adolescents from Memphis to Cologne are infected by every type of street sport fever. Californian outdoor activities with their fitness-oriented hedonism and East Asian martial arts are climbing the popularity of the young people the world over.

However, in marked contrast to the trend towards internationalization in youth and sport culture(s), scientific research on these social phenomena is largely restricted to the researchers' own countries. Not to put too fine a point on it, large sections of social studies in sport are still nationally oriented, with few exceptions (cf. for example Brandl-Bredenbeck & Rees, 1996; Brettschneider & Brandl-Bredenbeck, 1997; Brettschneider, Brandl-Bredenbeck & Rees, 1996; Naul, Neuhaus & Rychtecky, 1994; Rees & Brandl-Bredenbeck, 1995; Brettschneider & Brandl-Bredenbeck, 1997; Brandl-Bredenbeck, 1999; Brettschneider, Brandl-Bredenbeck & Rees 2001; Brettschneider, Brandl-Bredenbeck & Hofmann 2005). Not only does this restricted orientation conflict with the trend towards globalization in the field; even more problematic is the fact that some sections of sports science have not even reached the standard of international communication that is now customary. It is therefore a major aim of the present paper on adolescent sports culture in the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States

of America to map out the theoretical and methodological terrain of cross-cultural comparative studies and to point out promising new avenues for sports science. At the same time it is also an attempt to break out of the parochial isolation characteristic of social sport studies, and to stimulate international dialogue. To do this, examples and illustrations have been taken from findings that allow sport concepts and sport activities among adolescents in Berlin and New York to be compared. The findings are taken from a comprehensive study by Brettschneider/Brandl-Bredenbeck (1997) entitled "Sports culture and adolescents' self-concept - a cross-cultural comparative study about Germany and the USA".

Since the 1950s there have been a number of social and cultural phenomena and developments which originated in the USA, and most of which were subsequently taken up in German popular culture. Taking as examples the timings of the youth revolt, the start of the conservative backlash in the political system, the height of hedonistic value-orientation, or the popularization of indoor and outdoor sporting activities - from the aerobics craze to rollerblading - it would be easy to identify parallel features in the two countries' socio-cultural developments, occurring first in the one country and then later in the other. Thus it is not surprising that trend research based on modernization theories, which analyses and forecasts changes in popular culture, has discovered a fruitful cultural historical pipeline running from America to Germany over the last 30 years (Horx 1993, 19), whose productivity will doubtless be boosted by the increase in the speed of cultural exchange between the two countries, and between different cultures in general, on the communications superhighway.

A comparative analysis of youth and sport in the context of adolescent life-styles seems particularly pertinent since current developments in Germany appear to be a kind of delayed replication of American youth culture. A search for common features of the two youth sports cultures, for culture-specific differences, and for convergent or divergent trends within the context of adolescent "life worlds" in the USA and Germany may also provide an overview of future sports developments.

2. Cross-cultural research - theoretical problems and methodological implications

2.1. *Comparing as an Anthropological Category and a Research Strategy*

"In order to know who you are - compare yourself to others!" In his drama "Torquato Tasso", Johann Wolfgang Goethe points to the essential importance of comparisons for individuals. His implicit message is: Our lives are full of comparisons and we need them. Children compare themselves in order to know whether they are stronger, faster or better than other children of the same age. Adolescents tend to compare themselves to their peers with regard to success in school, physical appearance and media which are at their disposal. Comparisons in the adult world often focus on the professional career, the financial well-being and status of health. These examples reveal that on the one side comparing oneself with others is a core element of identity development in children and youth. On the other side the comparative aspect in adults' lives helps to identify and define one's own social position in a complex world. Taking

into account these qualities of the comparative view, comparing might be seen as an anthropological category.

Comparative research encounters problems on different levels. Often the access to the research question on a pragmatic level is the first problem which has to be solved. In this context it is of crucial importance to familiarise oneself with the state of the art and to get hold of the information necessary with regard to the research question. This task can be accomplished with the help of different instruments and information sources. A reliable list of information sources comprising international organisations, international journals, book series, books, monographs, encyclopaedias, international congresses, international workshop proceedings, international data banks, internet sources has been put together by Hardman (2000; 2003).

Comparative research also faces methodological and theoretical problems. In order to solve these problems researchers usually distinguish between two concepts. The diachrone approach looks at how the subject in hand has changed in an historical perspective. The synchronic perspective how two or more cultures deal with the topic simultaneously.

On the background of the idea that comparing can be seen as an anthropological category cross-cultural comparisons are nothing else than specific cases of comparisons. However, these cases require specific scientific treatment in order to overcome the naive perspective and to be able to give answers to the question of how to do comparative research in a decent way. This approach involves both methodological and theoretical aspects.

2.2. Methodology

In the course of the last decades Comparative Physical Education has moved from early ethnographically motivated description to methodologically sophisticated analysis. This has enabled the incorporation of the body of knowledge into theory-based explanations of the differences and similarities across cultures.

This development has been a multifaceted scientific process that has generated a diverse range of methodological tools. To avoid the so-called "Malinowskian dilemma" which means to compare incomparable (cf. Berry, 1980, 7) a set of criteria to assure comparability has been developed (cf. Brandl-Bredenbeck, 1999, 55-81). These criteria are reflected in the discussion about the different aspects of equivalences.

2.3. Comparing apples and oranges? - The need of equivalences

There is broad agreement that functional, conceptual, linguistic and sample equivalences are essential categories for cross-cultural comparative studies. Only if these criteria have been taken into account, valid comparisons can be made (cf. Brandl-Bredenbeck, 1999; Brettschneider & Brandl-Bredenbeck, 1997).

- Functional Equivalence of the categories chosen for a comparison is generally seen as a basic precondition for any meaningful comparison. Equivalence is fulfilled when the phenomena studied in the cultures included in the comparison are "reasonably familiar features" (Silvennoinen, 1986, 73). If functionally equivalent

spheres such as school and physical education are viewed as constructs that map reality, they have to be appropriately operationalised by means of multiple indicators.

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- Closely linked to the problem of functional equivalence is the problem of differing significance and of cultural variation in concepts, values and behaviour. Conceptual equivalence concerns the problem that members of different cultures may not necessarily attach the same significance to the same social phenomenon. Thus in some cultures, the idea of achievement is seen in a positive light as it does not disrupt the harmony of the group. However, if the performance of one group member sticks out from that of the rest, this is seen in a negative light and may in some circumstances be subject to social sanctions. This becomes very clear in Japanese interpretations of American baseball, which do not tolerate "stars", whilst in other cultures or ethnic groups, standing out from the crowd may even be the dominant aim of sporting activities, as it is frequently the case in occidental cultures (Galtung, 1991).
- A further equivalence criteria, aimed at meeting the precondition of a fair instrument, is linguistic equivalence. This form of equivalence is fulfilled when the wording of items in the questionnaires in multi-lingual studies has been checked by the re-translation method.
- Problems of equivalences can also arise with respect to the selection of samples. Only if there is correspondence at the macro level as far as for e.g. age, gender and socio-economic status of the population under scrutiny is concerned can sub-aspects on the micro level be usefully compared with one another.

2.4. Theory

The unanimous view in the relevant literature is that cross-cultural comparisons must be theory guided. General theories provide a framework for observing, comparing and recording phenomena, and for classifying findings. They supply the criteria that allow common features and differences to be detected and interpreted.

In cross-cultural comparative research covering at least two differentiated national cultures in one study, the problems of the theoretical basis are very profound. Since the object under study can basically be approached both from the perspective of the first culture, and from that of the second, researchers often continue to resort to their familiar national store of theoretical concepts, problems are analysed through culturally tinted spectacles, and researchers design their tools from the point of view of one of the cultures under study or attempt to decipher the strange culture in terms of their own, the central problem will remain unsolved. Thus, even where the intention to carry out cross-cultural comparative research has been proclaimed, scientific ethnocentrism is perpetuated, hampering any possible progress in knowledge.

There is not a canon or a recipe which describes how to solve the problem. But there are a some general considerations that might help to cope with the problems. These considerations refer to the topics of the "emic/etic-debate", the "tertium comparationis" and the "a-priori" vs. the "a posteriori" decision (cf.Brandl-Bredenbeck, 1999; Brettschneider & Brandl-Bredenbeck, 1997; Brettschneider et al., 1996).

2.5. *The emic/etic-debate*

The emic/etic-debate deals with the differences in the understanding of "cultures" and the implications for theoretical considerations in the comparative research process. Of central importance is the dichotomous understanding of cultures. On the one side cultural patterns are described as relative from culture to culture. On the other side cultural patterns are interpreted as being universal across the cultures.

Table 1: Criteria for Etic/Emic-research strategie (cf. Lonner, 1979, 19-20)

	ETIC	EMIC
Research Unit	all (or selected group of) cultures	one culture at a time
Structure of the system	world-wide system (created in advance)	structure of the (particular) system must be discovered
Perspective of the analysis	external view	internal view
Absolute/relative criteria	criteria are absolute and directly measurable	criteria are relative to the internal characteristics of the system and measured relative to each other
Evidence for differences/similarities	units are different/similar etically when instrumental measurements can show them to be so	units are different/similar emically when they elicit different/similar responses from people acting within the system

The emic-approach refers to cultural relativism. This research strategy tries to develop sets of criteria which are specific to one culture and focuses on differences between the cultures. Since this approach is based on the idea of cultural relativism there is a probability to over-emphasize similarities which are identified in the research process.

The etic-approach is based on the idea of cultural universalism. This approach aims at establishing criteria common to all cultures and to use them as the folio for comparisons. Research in the tradition of cultural universalism tries to identify similarities across cultures. This way the etic-approach tends to over-emphasize differences (cf. Table1).

2.6. *The "tertium comparationis"*

On the basis of the theoretical considerations a "tertium comparationis" has to be found. The "tertium comparationis" can be described as a tool that enables us to compare diverse aspects. For example, if I want to compare apples and oranges theoretical considerations concerning healthy nutrition, within these considerations the category fruit can serve as a "tertium comparationis". If a study does not have a concept based soundly on a specific theory, it is impossible to obtain more than purely chance results, descriptive observations, meaningless impressions and speculative interpretations. It is the underlying concept which changes a descriptive juxtaposition into a real comparison.

2.7. *The "a priori" vs. "a posteriori" - decision*

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Although the "a-priori" consideration of equivalences helps to avoid to compare apples and oranges in a naive way, part of the problem remains unsolved. The question whether e.g. physical education is functional equivalent in the different countries under scrutiny can not be answered in a convincing way unless it has been empirically verified. In other words: Though there is a strong demand for an "a-priori"-consideration of functional equivalence, the final decision on the question can only be made "a posteriori", which means on the basis of cross-cultural research (cf. Brandl-Bredenbeck, 1999).

3. Globalization, adolescence, and sport – theoretical frame and main focus

3.1. *Globalization, adolescence and sport – a theoretical frame work*

There can be no doubt that adolescence and sport are examples of global phenomena. As Csikszentmihalyi and Larson (1984, 41) have said, what is universal about adolescence seems to outweigh by far that which is unique, while a rapidly developing literature on the globalization of sport demonstrates the popularity of the issue among sociologists interested in sport.

The debate in sociology of sport has focused on how best to theorize globalization. What might be called "battle lines" were originally drawn between the supporters of modernization theory (e.g. Guttmann 1991) who tended to see the spread of sport as part of a general process of cultural diffusion, and the followers of a more economic-based approach in which globalization was seen as a uni-directional process through which "American style" capitalism was spread around the world as an example of a modern form of cultural imperialism (e.g. Kidd, 1991; McKay & Miller, 1991). These approaches have been criticized by Maguire (1994) as oversimplified because there are many global flows falling under the rubric of sport, and because what he called the "monocausal logic" behind the Americanization theories which he saw as too economically deterministic. Maguire offered what he called the "twin figurational concepts of diminishing contrasts and increasing varieties" (1994, 402) to explain the global spread of sport at the macro level.

In a recent review of globalization research Donnelly (1996, 247) describes what might be called a "softening" of these earlier positions, suggesting common ground around the concept of cultural hegemony as a way of understanding conflicting global flows. However, he also cites research by Cantelon & Murray (1993) who warn against an overly homogenized model of global culture, and by Rowe, Lawrence, Miller & McKay (1994) which is critical of the whole concept of globalization for underestimating differences in how groups experience sport.

From this preliminary research is emerging a more complicated picture of the global nature of sport, one which is consistent with more general theorizing about global issues. For example, Robertson (1995) has warned against conceptualizing globalization as either homogenization or heterogenization, and has argued that both these processes are going on simultaneously. We believe that the current macro-level

approach to globalization research in sport and the generally non-empirical nature of that research underestimates the complicated way in which sport perceptions and activities comprise "global flows" of sport within and across nation-states. For example, Bairner's (1996) study of the idiosyncrasies of "sportive nationalism" in the cases of Scotland, the Republic of Ireland and Sweden demonstrate the complicated nature of globalization research. Particularly interesting in Bairner's case studies was the finding that differences in the historical developments of the three societies make problematic global generalizations about sport.

3.2. Adolescent Sports Culture as the Main Focus

Our interest is to focus on a more micro-level approach to globalization. Our analysis empirically examines the degree to which there is a global sports culture, concentrating on the perspective of American and German youth.

In order to analyse what has been called global sports culture, we examine different aspects of youth and sport in Germany and the USA. First, we examine the relative importance adolescents put on sport in the context of leisure time activities. Secondly, we take a closer look at the adolescents' understanding of sport in the two cultural contexts. Analysing sport concepts from inside each cultural context is of central importance. Such an analysis not only enables to grasp the diversity of meanings attached to sport but at the same time serves as a basis for further cross-cultural analysis when youth and sport in Germany and the USA is under scrutiny. Thirdly, we use our findings concerning the sport concepts to assess the culturally influenced interpretation of soccer and basketball in Germany and the USA.

4. The design of the study

In both the Federal Republic of Germany (about 2200) and the USA (about 1800), data were collected by means of a questionnaire and through the institution of schools. In Berlin, Brandenburg, and Northrhine-Westphalia the survey was of school students in the 7th, 9th and 12th years of various types of school, and in New York and Memphis, it covered the 7th, 9th and 12th grades of High School.

4.1. The samples

The subjects were selected by means of a stratified or layered sampling procedure, i.e. a combination of systematic and random sampling. The schools were selected according to the criteria of socio-structural factors in the parts of town concerned and their location within their city.

According to requirements of cross-cultural methodology we compare the adolescents' understanding of sport and the sporting activities of two equivalent samples, that is of New York and Berlin adolescents. This procedure aims at minimizing obvious confounding effects. Since we know that intra-cultural differences due to ethnicity might be confounded within cross-cultural differences (Rees/Brandl-Bredenbeck 1995; Brettschneider/Brandl-Bredenbeck/Rees 1996) the following analysis is based on the

members of the white main stream culture in New York and on those adolescents in Berlin with German nationality. Black adolescents in the USA as well as Turkish adolescents living in Germany will be included in future analysis. Thus, for our purposes here it is legitimate to talk about a Berlin and a New York sample.

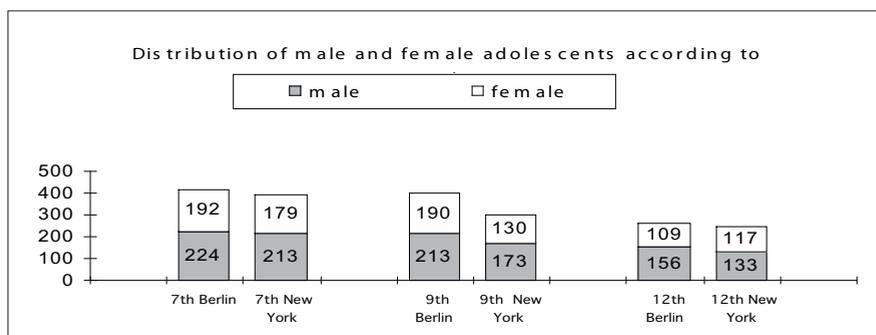


Figure 1: Distribution of male and female adolescents in Berlin and New York according to grades

As Figure (1) shows, the samples include comparable numbers of male and female adolescents across the age groups. In Berlin, the stratified school system was taken into account. Students from the three secondary school streams (Hauptschule, Realschule, Gymnasium), from comprehensive schools (Gesamtschule) and from vocational college (Berufsschule) are represented. In New York, differentiation according to school type is not relevant. All the students attended High School, either Junior High or Senior High depending on their ages.

5. Results

5.1. *The importance of sport as a leisure time activity*

In order to take a closer look at the importance of leisure time activities in general and at the importance of sport in the subjective evaluation of the adolescents in both countries, we developed a list of 16 leisure time activities and asked the adolescents in both countries to rate the importance of these activities.

The results are the following: As far as the subjective evaluation of the importance is concerned we find significant differences in the two cultures for twelve out of sixteen activities! This result can be interpreted in such a way that for the overwhelming majority of these activities the relative importance is seen in a different light in the specific cultural context. One of the few leisure time activities which seem to be of equal importance in both countries, is sport. In other words, sport as a leisure time activity is as important for adolescents in the New York area as it is for adolescents in Berlin. At first sight these results seem to support the assumption that sport is a universal phenomenon highly valued by adolescents around the world. This first

analysis is based on the concept of a global sports culture and deduces similarity from the "a-priori" assumption of comparability.

Table 2. Importance of leisure time activities Berlin/New York.

Please go through the following list and check how important each activity is to you!	Level of significance (* p<.01;** p<.001)
Listen to music	**
Watch TV/ video	**
Hang around with friends	**
Doing crazy things	*
Computer / videogames	**
Reading(e.g. books, magazines, comics)	**
Sport activities	.493
Playing an instrument	**
Extra work for school; follow up on homework	**
Going to parties, dances	**
Arts and crafts (e.g. photography, making things)	.042
Being by yourself (relaxing, day dreaming)	.036
Go shopping	*
Going to movies, concerts, theatre	.178
Volunteer work, social work	**
Other	*

A detailed analysis which uses the comparison itself for an "a-posteriori" assessment of equivalence shows intra-culturally inconsistent gender and consistent age effects (cf. table 3). In New York sport as a leisure time activity is more important for boys than it is for girls. With regard to the Berlin adolescents there is no significant gender effect. In both cultural contexts the importance of sport as a leisure time activity - independent of gender - decreases with age.

Table 3. Importance of sport as a leisure time activity. All values are mean values. Answers on a scale: *This leisure time activity is very unimportant (1) to very important (5).*

Doing Sports	New York					
	total n=552	male n=297	female n=255	7th grade n=222	9th grade n=180	12th grade n=152
	3.86	4.12 **	3.58	4.16 **	3.87	3.42
3.82	3.87	3.76	4.02 **	3.71	3.68	
Doing Sports	total n=939	male n=512	female n=427	7th grade n=349	9th grade n=345	12th grade n=246
	Berlin					

Level of significance: * p<.01; ** p<.001

This analysis reveals that sport as a leisure time activity shows similarities but also differences across the cultures. In order to further examine these differences and similarities we try to answer the following question: What do young people in the different corners of the world actually mean when they talk about sport?

5.2. The adolescents' sport concept: The problem of conceptual equivalence

Sport is indeed an expression of that socio-cultural system in which it occurs (Lüschen 1976). As a consequence of this tenet, adolescents' subjective sport concepts are approached by means of the association method (cf. Mrazek/Schäfer 1988). This procedure allows both subjective interpretations and the conceptual background that is deeply embedded in each individual's external socio-cultural factors to be recorded.

The following request was made to the respondents: "Think for a moment and then write down three things that come to your mind when you think of sport". The replies then underwent a bi-lateral work process, with their contents first being analysed and sorted according to logical categories in order to record, compare and analyse adolescent sport concepts in detail. Analysing sport concepts from inside each cultural context in this way not only enables the diversity of meanings attached to the sport concepts to be included in the interpretation, but also avoids ethnocentric perspectives when they are compared.

When all the associations, ideas, rational and emotional value judgements that adolescents express when asked what they think sport means are collected under the term sport concept, the result is a wide diversity of different meanings. As each concept is primarily linked to the experiences an individual has had in the course of his or her biography, there are both inter- and intra-individual differences. The assumption is that despite the diversity of meanings of sport, it ought to be possible to identify elements which form the core of the adolescent sport concept, as it were. Does this core have the same outlines among New York adolescents as among their Berlin counterparts, or are there context-linked variations?

Categorization of the associations on the basis of a contents analysis shows both common features and differences in the two youth cultures. The sport concept of young Berliners has the following major features:

- (1) Association with a relatively large number of sporting activities, with institutionalised sports disciplines dominating, but supplemented by more informal sporting activities. The numbers of team and individual sports disciplines are balanced; leisure activities (e.g. skateboarding, roller blading, free climbing) play a considerable role in the sport concept.
- (2) Dominance of positive associations, with fun so to speak as the omnipresent and at the same time rather vague super category. Negative judgements (e.g. stupid, silly, waste of time) are the exception rather than the rule.
- (3) Importance attached to physical effort (e.g. sweat, hard work) and the promotion of fitness.
- (4) Social reasons (e.g. friends, team mates) are important whereas career orientation (e.g. scholarship, money, pro athletes) is marginal to the understanding of sport.

New York adolescents present a slightly different picture with regard to their sport concept. When they think of sport, the associations are with:

- (1) A relatively small number of institutionalised team sports (e.g. basketball, American Football, baseball), which dominate all other sporting activities. Both individualised sporting disciplines (e.g. track and field, tennis) and informal leisure activities are named relatively rarely;
- (2) An almost unrestrictedly positive view of sport;
- (3) Career orientation, winning competitions, and victory. The opposite terms clustered around losing and defeat are very rare.

Independent of the cultural context, sport has a virtually untarnished positive image among the young, and this is decisive in shaping their sport concept. In the everyday consciousness of New York youth, the team sports baseball, basketball and football dominate the activities named. The significance of these among a broader American public and in the education system has been convincingly explained by Guttman (1979) in particular. Among the motives and gratifications connected with sport, the presence of ideas of competition and victory is striking among American adolescents. Berlin adolescents, on the other hand, emphasize a broader concept of sport. For them, physical activity can still be sport - and moreover, fun - if competing and wanting to win have a subordinate role, an idea that New York adolescents have difficulty with. This facet of sport concept is reflected in common sayings such as "If you can't win why play?", "Winning is not everything, it is the only thing" and "Defeat is worse than death, because you have to live with defeat", all to be found as mottos in many school gymnasiums and changing-rooms. There are also distinct differences in the associations connected with fitness and health. The idea of physical effort in sport, and its implicit potential to promote but also to impair good health, plays a considerably greater role among adolescents in Berlin than among those in New York.

One surprise is the greater frequency of school-related associations among Berlin adolescents as compared with young New Yorkers. This is surprising because sport has far stronger roots in the American school system and in school life than is the case in Germany. Pep rallies, in which both active participants and spectators psych themselves up for the school teams' matches, make school sport the dominant weekend topic. In view of the methodological peculiarities of cross-cultural comparative studies, this result suggests a problem of equivalence. In the everyday school life of young New Yorkers, sport has two different and widely divergent facets. On the one hand, there is competitive sport in the varsity system, which is presumably what adolescents think of when they are asked about their sport concept; and on the other hand there is physical education, which has only limited significance in the formation of a sport concept and so is hardly mentioned by the New York respondents (cf Rees 1997, in press, for the relationship between athletics and physical education in the context of American high schools). As the surveys were carried out in schools, it is reasonable to assume that the answers on sport-related associations given by German adolescents also reflect their experiences in school sport.

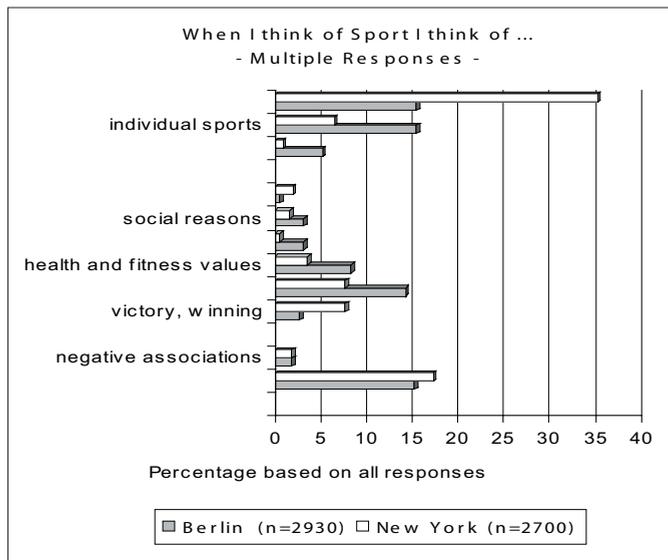


Figure 2: "When I Think of Sport, I Think of"; Analysis of associations; Cross-cultural comparison Berlin / New York; Selected categories

In addition and extension of the association analysis a slightly modified version of the measurement used by Brettschneider/Bräutigam (1990) to analyse adolescents' sports concepts has been used. The Berlin and New York adolescents were asked to respond to nine statements concerning their view of sport. In a first step a factor analysis (varimax rotation) of these responses was conducted. The results of the factor analysis confirm that there are both differences and similarities in the sport concepts of Berlin and New York adolescents.

In the Berlin sample a two factor solution explained 46.3% of the variation. The two factors correspond with two extremely diverse perceptions of sport. The first factor focuses on training, performance and competition - the traditional sport concept. The second factor focuses on the idea of including a lot of things and having fun - the new trend towards a wider sport concept.

Sport concept - Factor solution Berlin (n=1045)	
<i>Factor I:</i>	Sport which is oriented towards training, performance and competition (e.g. "Regular practice is an essential part of sport"; "In sport you need to be ready to practice even if you don't feel like it"; "Competition undoubtedly belongs to sport.")
<i>Factor II:</i>	Sport which includes everything; mainly fun, no competition (e.g. "The definition of sport can be very broad. The important thing is to move around and to do for your body."; "Being successful or unsuccessful in sport does not matter. The important thing is to have fun.")
Explained variance: 46,3%	

The factor solution for the New York adolescents presents a somewhat different structure. Three factors were identified which accounted for 48.4% of the variation. Whereas in the Berlin sample, training, performance and competition belonged to the same factor, sport which is oriented towards performance and competition is a separate factor in the sport concept of New York adolescents.

Sport concept - Factor solution New York (n=910)	
<i>Factor I:</i>	Sport which is oriented towards training and physical activity (e.g. "Regular practice is an essential part of sport"; "You cannot be in sports unless you are ready 'to push yourself' physically.")
<i>Factor II:</i>	Sport which is oriented toward competition/performance (e.g. "Generally speaking, improving performance belongs to the meaning of sport", "Competition undoubtedly belongs to sport.")
<i>Factor III:</i>	Sport which includes everything: mainly fun, no competition (e.g. "The definition of sport can be very broad. The important thing is to move around and to do for your body."; "Being successful or unsuccessful in sport does not matter. The important thing is to have fun.")
Explained variance: 48,4 %	

This emphasis on performance and competition seems to be deeply rooted in the tradition of the Muscular Christianity movement (cf. Eitzen/Sage 1993, 47). This tradition the American Dream of success in society is closely linked to the individuals' own performance. Performance in sport too, can help the individual to internalize socially accepted norms and values. By doing so these values can be transferred into other spheres of life and enhance the individual's position in society. "The essence of muscular Christianity was the belief that physical activity made a significant contribution to the development of morality and patriotism, and these values learned in sport at school would be transferred to other situations later in life" (Miracle/Rees 1994, 32).

So far the results of the association analysis and the divergent structures revealed by means of the factor analysis confirms the qualitative findings of both differences and similarities. The Berlin data reflects a concept of sport which can be characterized by the oscillation between a new hedonistic orientation focusing on fun, well-being and relaxation, and a traditional sports image of training, performance, and competition. The New York data show a stronger emphasis on the performance aspect, and also show competition as a separate component of sport.

Taking into account these differences in the sport concepts of Berlin and New York adolescents, the functional equivalence of the same sport activities in the respective countries can no longer be taken for granted. In order to get further information about the adolescents' sport concept in New York and Berlin selected items - each of them belongs either to the training-, performance/competition-, or fun -dimension - were analysed. The results of an analysis of covariance's (covariate: age) treating cultural context and gender as independent variables are shown in table (4).

Table 4: Analysis of covariance's of selected items; male and female adolescents from Berlin and New York; (co-varied for age).

ITEMS	mean-values					F-values		
	Total	Boys		Girls		Culture	gender	cu X ge
		Berlin	New York	Berlin	New York			
	(n=1991)	(n=582)	(n=509)	(n=482)	(n=418)			
1) Regular practice is an essential part of sport.	3.39	3.22	3.74	2.94	3.71	311.95**	21.89**	13.38**
2) Competition undoubtedly belongs to sport.	2.85	2.86	3.21	2.57	2.69	28.40**	82.66**	6.82*
3) Being successful or unsuccessful in sport does not matter. The important thing is to have fun.	3.48	3.51	3.27	3.66	3.50	46.76**	27.14*	1.63

Significance ** $p < .001$; * $p < .01$;

These results confirm traditional gender stereotypes (cf. Brettschneider/Bräutigam 1990, 100). Fun is more important for girls and young women than for boys and young men. This pattern of relationship is true across cultures even though Berlin adolescents (boys and girls) generally score higher on the "fun-dimension" (cf. figure 3).

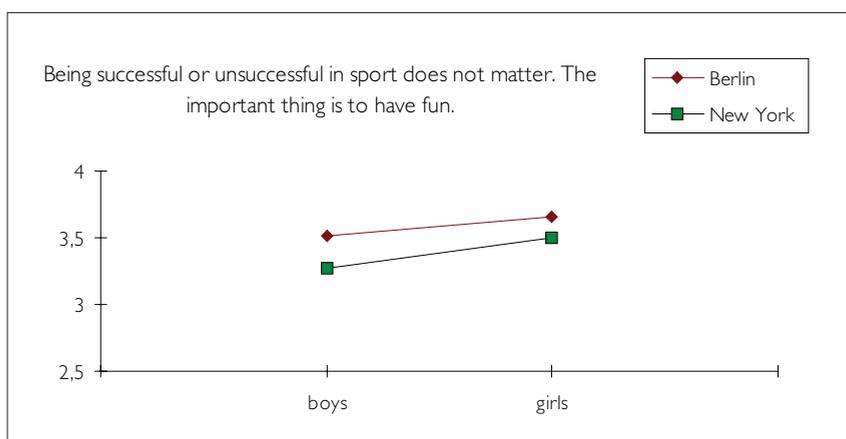


Figure 3: Mean-value difference on the "fun-dimension" for adolescent boys and girls in Berlin and New York.

With regard to the training- and performance / competition-dimensions the results are less unequivocal. The selected items in these dimensions show statistical interaction effects (cf. table 3); therefore one should be cautious when interpreting the main effects (Bortz 1999).

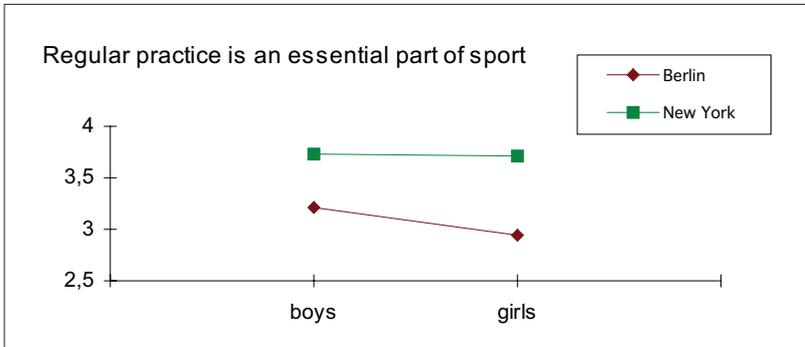


Figure 4: Mean-value difference on the "training-dimension" for adolescent boys and girls in Berlin and New York.

As far as the training-dimension is concerned earlier research in the German context has found traditional gender stereotypes. According to these findings boys are more oriented towards training in sports than girls (cf. Brettschneider/Bräutigam 1990, 100). In the present study gender differences on this variable occur only in the Berlin sample and not in the New York sample (cf. figure 4). A generalization of this gender specificity across cultures is not possible.

Somewhat different are the results concerning the performance/competition-dimension (cf. figure 5). Generally speaking, this aspect of the sport concept is more of a concern among male than among female adolescents. The importance of performance and competition is particularly high in the case of New York males.



Figure 5: Mean-value difference on the "performance/competition-dimension" for adolescent boys and girls in Berlin and New York.

The results of the association analysis as well as the finding on the basis of the factor analysis and the selected items can be summarized as follows:

Fun is of central importance in the sport concepts of Berlin and New York adolescents.

Regular training is more important in the sport concept of the New York adolescents. This is particularly true for male adolescents in New York.

Adolescents from both countries share the belief that sporting activities need to be strenuous. Performance and competition are more salient features in the New York adolescents sport concept than in the Berlin adolescents' sport concept. .

Berlin adolescents have a broader definition of what belongs to sport than their New York counterparts.

These results show: a globalized sport concept is more fiction than fact. Overall, there are both similarities and differences in the sport concepts of New York and Berlin adolescents. Depending on the specific socio-cultural context, the norms communicated by the school culture seem to have a greater influence on New York adolescents, while the increasing significance of subjective meanings may well lead to greater openness and diversity in the sport concept of Berlin adolescents. Despite these "small but important" differences, there are a large number of identical associations in the sport concept among both German and American adolescents, which mainly draw a positive picture of sport in both countries. Furthermore, some aspects of adolescents' sport concepts, specifically the emphasis on fun and competition, tend to be gender specific in both samples, providing evidence to support the idea of sport as a number of "global flows" (Maguire 1994) which transcend national boundaries.

5.3. Sport as a universal language - soccer, basketball and the problem of functional equivalence

These findings show that the problem of comparability in cross-cultural comparative studies requires particular attention. The question of whether equivalence should be checked before a study is made and regarded as a pre-condition for the study, or whether the ensuing comparison is itself a means of judging equivalence as it were a posteriori, must not be underestimated. This fundamental methodological decision has a not inconsiderable influence on the analysis and evaluation steps performed, and can systematically show findings and interpretations in a different light.

The possible consequences of particular equivalence decisions will be illustrated by the example of two sports that are popular in both German and American youth culture - European football or soccer, and basketball. When asked what sports they regularly took part in 1994, about equal proportions of adolescents in both New York and Berlin answered soccer and baseball. In New York, soccer was sixth in the list of activities with 5.9 % of the total sports named, in Berlin it was fifth at 6.5 % of sports regularly played. Basketball was the most frequently named sport in New York, with 12 % of the total, while in Berlin it was third most frequent at 9 %. In view of the trend towards internationalization and universalization, it could be argued that these findings are only logical, assuming a-priori the equivalence of these sports in the two countries. However, the differences in sport concept found by means of the association analysis are a reminder that interpretations of quantitative findings

need to be meticulous and detailed. Even where adolescents take part in sports that are identical at a phenomenological level, a glance at their respective socio-cultural backgrounds may lead to a more structured view. As the example of football shows, equivalence requires more than mere identical surface phenomena.

In Germany, football is not only the national sport, it is also, according to statistics issued by the Deutscher Sportbund, the German Sports Federation - number one among the sports played by adolescent males. The statistics produced by the Deutscher Sportbund (1994) show that 1.4 million children and juveniles (up to 18 years) are members. Of these, approx. 1.3 million are male adolescents, and 100,000 female. Though football is increasingly being played by adolescent females in Germany, the game can still be regarded as largely the preserve of men.

"Why is there no soccer in the US?" This question asked by Markovits (1990) seems not to reflect reality. According to Martens (1986, 28), 3.9 million American children and juveniles (up to 18 years) play soccer, 2.2 million of them male and 1.7 million female juveniles. The figures quoted by Martens are estimates of the degree of participation outside of school, making a direct comparison with the German DSB statistics extremely difficult, but the findings do nonetheless enable the contribution and status of football in the two youth sport cultures to be assessed. Despite its popularity among young people, soccer in the USA has a different significance from that given it in Germany. "The US wins by not losing" was the "NEWSWEEK" headline (1994) when the USA tied against Switzerland in the first match of the football world cup in the USA in 1994. To see a draw as a victory contradicts the way most US Americans view sport. Their view is, "A tie is like kissing your sister". This description of football makes it clear that soccer is something for children and girls. Soccer has been attributed with a non-American status and as being anti-masculinist (Sugden/Tomlinson 1996, 239). In contrast to American football or baseball, there is something missing, without which soccer cannot be seen as a real all-American sport. Values held in high regard in American culture, such as masculinity, decisiveness, competitiveness and winning are evidently either not present or not sufficiently communicated (cf. Miracle/Rees 1994, 17). The structure of the game is not compatible with the ideas of sport prevalent in the USA. There is a lack of action, not enough moments of decision or success, and too few events that count in the statistics.

Guttman (1979) uses the examples of baseball and American football to demonstrate that quantification, specialization and record-breaking are elements of modern sport that have fallen on particularly fertile soil in the USA. A high degree of specialization is not possible to the same extent in European football, and indeed is not particularly desirable. The high degree of cooperative and un-standardized playing action gives little scope for producing interesting statistics.

Thus in the USA, playing football is something for children, adolescent females and young women. Football is not (yet) "real" sport, and cannot become real sport, as the organizational infrastructure necessary for holding competitions is only in place for younger adolescents, but not for older youth and most especially not for adults.

The game of basketball is another example that shows how sporting activities that are similar on the surface are not therefore automatically equivalent constructs in the different cultural contexts. As the rapidly increasing membership figures in the Deutscher Basketball-Bund (German Basketball Federation) (1994: 81,000 and 2005: 202,000) (DSB 1994, DSB 2006), and the rise in competitors in the major street ball

competitions show, basketball is enjoying ever-rising popularity among young Germans. According to the results of the present study, adolescents in Berlin named basketball as a sport regularly played almost as frequently (9 %) as did adolescents in New York (12 %). What is making basketball so successful in Germany at the moment, and what are the differences between it and American basketball? The popularity of this game in Germany, particularly among children and juveniles, cannot be explained without reference to current trends in our society. Basketball is a symbol of a modern lifestyle, imbued with the spirit of the 1990s, that reaches far beyond the boundaries of the court and is emphasized by its own clothes and language. It is the same in feel as the young generation's basic attitude to life. There is constant action, it is geared to "sink or swim" situations. Everything is either attack or defence. Fast break, slam dunks, fade away jump shots and hook shots alternate continually with spectacular defence actions that only serve to heighten the intensity and drama of the game. Victory and defeat are side by side, dramatized in the dynamic process taking place on the court. Basketball and street ball, the sub-cultural variant preferred by the young, are two sports that can stand as symbols of a modern lifestyle in which body dramatization plays an important part.

Despite the fact that basketball is an important component in the Berliners' popular sport culture, there are considerable differences between how it is experienced by youth in New York and youth in Berlin. In the USA, institutionalized basketball does not represent the spirit of the times in the same way, but rather, it reflects basic features of modern sport (Guttmann 1979, 61 and 1994, 2-3): rationalization and quantification produce a plethora of statistical information on the course each game takes; scoring averages are almost as important as the state of play; all aspects of the players are measured uphill and down, and analysed and compared before, during and after the game. Moreover, there is a high degree of specialization that makes it possible to link success or failure directly to the performance of individual players. As Guttmann (1979) shows, it is these characteristics of modern sport that ultimately help to decide the success or failure of a particular discipline. But above all, in the USA basketball is associated with dynamics, strength and skill, sometimes even with aggressive, "typically masculine" behaviour patterns. Basketball, including its adolescent variant, represents cherished American values such as masculinity, decisiveness, courage, competitiveness and team spirit, which can easily be attributed to the philosophical tradition of "muscular Christianity" (cf. Miracle/Rees 1994). Identification with values held dear in American society applies to passive fans as well as to active players. Thus the success or failure of a college team (no matter whether basketball or American football) can have repercussions far beyond the bounds of a particular sports event, influencing the life of an entire small American town (cf. for example Bissinger's novel "Friday night's light" 1990). Basketball in particular seems to be a good example of the "cultural borrowing" that goes on as a result of globalization, in that the "street games" of Berlin may have much more in common with the informal, "pick-up" type games popular in American inner cities among black youth (cf. Frey 1994), than with basketball played as part of the inter-scholastic sports program in schools. These observations are conjectural in the face of no empirical data, but they do reinforce the need to study "local responses" to global flows in sport (Donnelly 1996; Wilson/Sparks 1996).

The divergent socio-cultural situations in which soccer and basketball are played, and the resultant differences in the way each game is viewed in Germany and the USA, make it plain that functional equivalence assumed on the basis of identical surface phenomena cannot be left unquestioned.

6. Conclusion

The examples of results from our cultural comparison must be regarded as provisional in this de-contextualized form. Nevertheless, they do allow preliminary conclusions with regard to empirical findings and theoretical issues.

The empirical data show that sport and popular culture among adolescents in Berlin and New York have common features, but also differences (cf. Csikszentmihalyi/Larson 1984, who find more common features than differences in the structures of adolescent "life-worlds" in their intra-American study). Sport has an unrestrictedly positive image in both cultural contexts. However, individual interpretation seems to have a greater emphasis in the sport concept of Berlin adolescents. Traditional meaning patterns such as competition and performance preferred by sport institutions are less important. The sport concept of young Berliners must therefore be characterized as tending towards openness and diversity. The answers given by young people in New York, on the other hand, are more strongly oriented towards an image of "all-American sports". Culturally imposed values and attitudes are more strongly expressed in their sport concept. To this extent, the sport concept of young people in New York appears on the whole to be narrower and less varied than that of their counterparts in Berlin.

As the analysis of specific sports has shown - soccer and basketball were the examples given here - identical surface phenomena, including similar statistics on adolescents' participation, are not sufficient for an assessment of cross-culture equivalence. Only a precise analysis of each of the cultures involved can provide enough of the necessary conceptual background for appropriately assessing issues of comparability and globalization. As the results show, it is hard to view basketball in New York and basketball in Berlin as functionally equivalent, and any equivalence of soccer in America with football in Germany can be questioned. The socio-cultural contexts of the two countries are too different. On the other hand, it might be argued that football in Germany has the same or at least a comparable function to basketball in the USA.

Our analysis shows how cross-cultural research on sport can contribute to the wider debate on globalization, recently theorized as comprising both "homogenization" and "heterogenization" tendencies (Featherstone/Lash 1995; Robertson 1995). For example, in the research on the globalization of sport, one theme in the homogenization issue has been the spread of "achievement" sport (cf. Galtung 1991; Kidd 1991; Mc Kay/Miller 1991) where victory and winning are emphasized. Our results show that "achievement" concepts are indeed part of how New York and Berlin adolescents think about sport, but this is not the whole story. There are differences, particularly in what characteristics can legitimately be included as part of the sport concepts, which separate Berlin and New York adolescents. Likewise different sports, in this case football (soccer) and basketball, are interpreted differently depending upon the culture in which they are practiced, although even here "local" environments (e.g. school versus street) may also

have an important effect on interpretation. There are also differences in how girls and boys perceive sport that transcend the "local" boundaries of Berlin and New York. This finding suggests that gender may be an important factor in what has been called the global flows of sport (Maguire 1994).

Future research on globalization and sport can extend our analysis to other samples within Germany and the United States and to other societies, to test the degree to which "local" responses to sport vary within and between cultures. The degree to which categorical variables such as gender, race (cf. for example Andrews et. al. 1996; Rees/Brandl-Bredenbeck 1995), and age have similar effect on sport concepts independent of culture or nation is also important. In these ways cross-cultural research can help to delineate what Robertson (1995, 27) has called the empirical problem of how "homogenization and heterogenization tendencies are mutually implicative".

7. References

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