

SOC CERTOWN USA

Questions for #docuhistory:

1. How do you approach immigration more generally in your classrooms in the period of 1900 to the present? What comparisons do you make to earlier eras in history?
2. What other case studies do you use when teaching about culture people bring with them as they immigrate? Soccertown USA focuses on the commonality of soccer being brought by immigrants to Kearny – what else could we look at?
3. The first quarter or so of the film focuses on growth and changes Kearny experiences as a result of changes to the economy brought about by globalization – what are your go to resources to use to look at the positives and negatives brought by increased globalization in the late 21st century?
4. Soccertown USA also looks at the role soccer plays in the creation of a national identity (or lack there of in the US) – what other popular culture phenomena could we look at for providing this sense of “national self” around the world?

Questions for teachers to take to the classroom:

1. Early in the film the narrator and players from Kearny talk about the creation of youth soccer in the United States. For many of the students in our classrooms playing youth soccer or some other organized sport was a part of their lives. Some questions to consider for research or case studies in our classrooms depending on the courses we teach:
 - a. How can we connect their experiences to those of kids/students in the 1970s and 1980s when they might not have had the same access?
 - b. What other influences/motivations can we see in youth sports today for those who are *not* the kids participating?
 - c. How do youth sports provide a way of socializing kids/students to American culture?
2. At one point in the film Tony Meola talks about how the sports memories he recalls the clearest were on the courts in Kearny and uses that to talk about those lessons that helped to make him into who he is today – essentially a touch point memory used to expand on other memories. To me this seems like a great way to help students if you are doing an oral history project – how can you talk to people about those events that shaped them. How else can we help/encourage students if/when we do oral history projects in our classrooms?
3. A common theme I noticed throughout the documentary was the cyclical wave of popularity of soccer in the US – big in the 1970s (Pele, NY Cosmos, national TV), the dying out of soccer in the 1980s (death of NASL, US Soccer unable to attract best players/athletes), and finally the reemergence of soccer in the 1990s (1990 WC

qualification, hosting 1994 WC, emergence of MLS). What else can we do with popular culture in our classrooms? Maybe mainly Sociology classrooms, but not necessarily.

- a. What other examples can students look at/research about how popular culture cycles over time – thinking fashion, food, etc.
- b. What are reasons in which a society pushes back on an element of popular culture? Who gets to “make those decisions” about what is popular?
- c. Doing some micro level research in their own schools – what do they see as trends, trend setters, changes over time if they have older/younger siblings.
- d. What role can/does media play in establishing and/or changing popular culture in the US?