The face of America is changing. The face of the world is changing. The face of sport is changing. And sport psychology practitioners must – in fact, have an ethical duty to – change with them. Our psychological training includes an increasing amount of multicultural focus and discussion. As sport psychologist practitioners, we must remember to bring with us this multicultural training into a sphere where consideration of culture can sometimes feel slow to evolve.

The four assumptions of multicultural psychology are:

- **All behavior occurs in cultural context.** A clinician must understand an athlete’s cultural context in order to truly understand their behavior.
- **Individuals have a multi-faceted cultural identity.** An athlete’s upbringing teaches them the variable weight of each facet.
- **A clinician must attend to an athlete’s phenomenology.** Each athlete’s perspective creates a subjective reality, changing how that person perceives and interprets the world and ensuring that no two people perceive and interpret it the same way.
- **The Social Constructionist Viewpoint.** A child internalizes the values and ideas of right, wrong, and worth taught by the dominant social forces at work during their early years. These lessons can be especially damaging when the values internalized go against how the child defines themselves and their cultural identity.

### Intersectionality within International Athlete Clinical Work

Understanding athlete experiences should incorporate understanding of complex interactions between power, cultural, social, economic, and educational differences occurring between sport in their country of origin and the country they compete in (Stambulova & Ryba, 2013)

Identifying intersections of athletes’ identities can help strengthen culturally competent clinical work. Facilitating insight into intersections amongst identities (i.e. gender, race/ethnicity) can provide important information regarding athletes’ cultural and athletic experiences. Practitioners should aim to form awareness of potential cultural differences within athletic opportunities.

### Considerations for Transitions from a Cultural & Cross-Cultural Perspective

- Retirement: voluntary or planned, emotional reactions, athletic identity, coping strategies, social & organizational support, educational/employment issues, perceived quality of the transition (Stambulova & Alfermann, 2009)
- Address anticipation/preparation for exiting sport, satisfaction with athletic performance, loss of camaraderie (Fuller, 2014)
- Possibly facilitate a transition network with other retired athletes, encourage pre-retirement planning for other careers (Fuller, 2014)

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**INTERNATIONAL PLAYERS IN THE SPORT SPOTLIGHT**

- David Beckham, Major League Soccer; United Kingdom
- Manu Ginobili, National Basketball Association; Argentina, Italy
- Sidney Crosby, National Hockey League; Canada
- Manny Pacquiao, Boxing; Phillipines
- Ana Kournikova, Tennis; Russia

**National Football League: International Pathway Program 2017**

- 4 international players join National Football League practice teams in 2017
Intersectionality: Increasing Clinician Self-Awareness with Cultural Praxis in Sport Psychology

All Behavior Occurs in a Cultural Context

- Where do I place the locus of control and locus of responsibility for this athlete?
- What environmental support is needed for this athlete?
- How am I showing respect for and giving autonomy to this athlete?

Individuals have a Multi-Faceted Cultural Identity

- What beliefs, assumptions, views, and attitudes do I have about this athlete?
- How am I incorporating a social justice framework and advocacy role into my work?
- How have I demonstrated competence with this athlete’s intersectionality and unique identities?
- Have I assessed this athlete’s spiritual or religious needs?

Understand Client’s Unique Reality

- Am I overpathologizing or underpathologizing this athlete’s problems?
- Do I have up-to-date information regarding the biopsychosocial issues that affect this athlete?
- Have I assessed from various perspectives outside of the athlete, like family, community, or societal influences?

Impact of Dominant Social Forces

- How do my identities and experiences influence my communication & helping style with this athlete?
- What prejudice, discrimination, inconveniences, stereotypes, and barriers does this athlete face (in or out of competition)?
- Do I have a basic knowledge of the historical, political, social, and psychological issues related to this athlete’s intersectionality?

Where can I learn more about Cultural Praxis in Sport Psychology?


This fact sheet is an initiative of the American Psychological Association Division 47’s Cornerstone Committee and has been prepared by Margaret Piper, M.A., Kelzie E Beebe, M.S.Ed., M.S., Counseling Psychology Doctoral Student, University of North Texas; and Julia Cawthra, M.A., Counseling Psychology Doctoral Student, Indiana University. Faculty advisors include Dr. Laura Hayden, Counseling and School Psychology Department, University of Massachusetts Boston and Dr. Kimberlee Bethany Bonura, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Walden University.