

INTRODUCTION

Success is More Important than Winning— An Introduction to Sports Ethics

My goal in writing this book is to generate thoughtful reflection about various ethical issues in the sports world. I hope that my efforts are effective in convincing you, the reader, that success is more important than winning. Once winning is put in perspective, many if not most ethical issues arising in the sports world seem to disappear. I believe this book can be used as an effective textbook introducing students to sports ethics. I also believe this book will be of interest to a much broader readership, especially those who live in the sports world. Several moral lines will be drawn on major ethical issues in sports which I hope will be of use to those of the sports world. I have used versions of this text for several years and to meet my learning objectives for the course I use two major assignments: Discussion Questions and Relevance Reports. I also give an ample set of basic terms for each chapter from the *Oxford English Dictionary* and briefly discuss these to begin each chapter. I pay special attention to the terms that are the oldest from the Old English (“OE”), Middle English (“ME”), and Late Middle English (“LME”). Knowing when terms originated provides a social context and helps us understand the meanings and purposes of words as they were born.

In ethics, when giving reasons to justify some action, we either reason top-down, applying some principle or rule to a situation, or bottom-up, from precedent cases that are most like the current situation. In this book I use a lot of a bottom-up method, one major kind of such thinking is called “casuistry or case-based thinking.” As such we will begin with actual case that gained a lot of attention in and out of the sports world. We will explore these cases and also include more of the context of the situation, usually in the form of the story going into the incident or event. These precedents lead to rules and principles. Additional cases either further confirm what was learned from the precedent cases or challenge the power of the precedent. Since I cannot report every relevant case in each chapter, this text works best when students/readers suggest other cases from the sports world that are dealing with the same issues we are dealing with through the precedent cases. This is where the Relevance Report assignments come in for each week, as well as use of the *Sports Illustrated* Vault, where additional relevant articles can be located by students/readers.

This introduction to sports ethics is unlike the handful of others that exist. First is the use of casuistry and major cases and stories in most of the chapters. Second, it enters the consideration of ethical issues after clearly defining and entering the sports world. Third, I present ethics relevant to several major “roles” involved in the sports world: players, coaches, parents, officials, media, and fans. Each of these different roles has different moral norms and virtues as well as ethical issues. Examining ethical issues of the sports world in this role-based way also broadens our understanding of sports, gaining a better appreciation for the different perspectives on the same events and issues.

In the following chapters we will do sports ethics through four different parts.

Part I. Sports, Ethics, Sports Ethics, Sports World (Chapters 1–3)

First, we will consider in detail the meaning of morality and ethics as well as get acquainted with four theories of morality I will use throughout this book in making moral judgments.

Part II. Coaches, Vince Lombardi, Children, Parents (Chapters 4–5)

Second are two chapters on children in organized sports, and coaches

Part III. Roles of Sports World: Fan, Umpire, Media (Chapters 6–8)

Third, I cover the other major roles of the sports world, namely, umpires, fans, and the media.

Part IV. Major Ethical Issues of the Sports World (Women, Race, PEDs, Violence, Gambling; Chapters 9–14)

Fourth, I consider several topics which are the source of major moral issues in the sports world: performance enhancing drugs, violence, women, and gambling.

Conclusion: Sports Ethics: Success Before Winning

Course Assignments: Discussion Questions, Relevance Reports, Vault Reports

Discussion Questions—Bloom’s Taxonomy

Serving on the Curriculum Committee at the University of Findlay had me consider proposals for new courses and new programs. Each new course submitted to the curriculum Committee is required to include a course syllabus. In the course syllabus, there must be included learning objectives for the course. Here is where we apply Bloom’s taxonomy of action verbs. It presents a list of verbs for six different intellectual skills in a hierarchy, from the most basic skills to the most complex. The more complex skills require the achievement of at least some of the tower level, basic intellectual skills. In the Curriculum Committee, we further require that lower-level course will have lower-level skills, and higher-level courses will have higher-level skills. One major problem we face on the committee is with courses that are proposed at a high-level and yet have the most basic of learning objectives. For our purposes in this book I will ask questions throughout along with the stories and material I present. The level of complexity and challenge of the question ranges from knowledge and comprehension, then application and analysis, and finally synthesis and evaluation.

Knowledge: remember previously learned information (arrange, define, describe, duplicate, identify, label, list, match, memorize, name, order, recall, reproduce, state)

Comprehension: demonstrate an understanding of the facts (classify, discuss, distinguish, explain, give examples, identify, predict, summarize)

Application: apply knowledge to actual situations (apply, change, choose, discover, illustrate, modify, predict, relate, show, use)

Analysis: break down objects or ideas into simpler parts and find evidence to support generalizations (analyze, appraise, categorize, compare, contrast, criticize, differentiate, distinguish, infer, outline, relate, select, test)

Synthesis: compile component ideas into a new whole or propose alternative solutions (assemble, collect, combine, compose, construct, create, design, develop, devise, formulate, generate, revise, set up)

Evaluation: make and defend judgments based on internal evidence or external criteria (argue, choose, conclude, defend, estimate, judge, justify, create, support, value)

Relevance Reports. These are meant to have students apply the main points of the chapter to a current event. This shows that the issues we are discussing in each chapter are on-going and continuing to be worked out in society. Also, this assignment is the tool I use to teach students how to use the four theories of morality. The assignment requires that students choose a current event relevant to the chapter we are discussing, then examine the situation and the event involved. Most importantly, they are asked to choose some specific, singular action taken in this situation that is ethically controversial. Many students who struggle with this assignment struggle with honing down to some specific action and then staying focused on that action in applying all four of the theories of morality. The strongest reports accurately apply all four theories to the single action offered for assessment, then draw a conclusion about the morality or immorality of the action. When these actions are clearly immoral, students can see that the four theories are in consensus against the action, but for different reasons. And with those actions that are more contentious and on which people are split, we can also see theories in disagreement, a theoretical mirror of the same disagreement in sport and society. One classic example we will see many times in the sports world is a case where the Kantian theory is opposed to an action because it treats some person as a mere means or uses that person in a disrespectful way, but at the same time the action creates a lot of happiness for a lot of people and not much unhappiness for many people so that the utilitarian theory will provide moral support of the same action. As character development is the central historical justification for the existence of sports at all, especially in the

modern sports world of the 19th century onward, the moral theory of virtue ethics is also used in the relevance reports. With this theory, students struggle to name specific virtues that are either demonstrated by the action or not demonstrated by the action (vices) so that there are either positive or negative traits of character involved in the action to morally justify or condemn the action. I have found that students struggle to name three separate, distinct traits of character, are quite broad in what they will name as “virtuous” traits of character, and sometimes struggle when condemning an action applying this theory. I say all of this, of course, so that you are aware of these challenges going in and can therefore experience and correct them yourselves.

This is the basic formal structure I ask students to use to complete each Relevance Report:

Part 1. Article (or YouTube video) citation (author name, article/video title, place of publication, date of publication)

Part 2. Brief Description of the article

Specific controversial **action** to be morally assessed in this report: _____

Part 3. Kantian Theory

Categorical imperative 1: Act only according to that maxim/rule you can at the same time make a universal law for all to follow.

i. Can action be required of everyone else in the same situation?

Categorical imperative 2: Act so that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of another, always as an end and never merely as a means.

ii. Is the actor, in taking the action, respecting himself or herself and all other persons as ends or disrespecting himself or herself and/or others as a mere means (as tools or instruments) to serve his/her own goals?

iii. Is actor fulfilling all of his or her four duties?

1. Direct duty to oneself: action should promote one's own physical welfare

2. Direct duty to others: action should not violate agreements made with others

3. Indirect duty to oneself: action should be taken to develop and not let waste one's abilities

4. Indirect duty to others: action should be made by the stronger players to help weaker players

All duties are met/duty violated (name: _____): circle one

Part 4. Utilitarian Theory: list on each side persons made happy, unhappy by the controversial action (name groups, societies, companies, and/or persons involved):

Happiness	I	Unhappiness
	I	
	I	
	I	

Is there more happiness or unhappiness produced by the action? Happiness/Unhappiness (circle one)

Part 5. Virtue Ethics Theory: the virtues/traits of character that are most involved in this action (Examples of virtues: courage, temperance, liberality, magnificence, pride, good temper, friendliness, truthfulness, ready wit, justice, self-control):

Virtue 1: _____

Virtue 2: _____

Virtue 3: _____

Is this action virtuous or not? Virtuous/Not Virtuous (circle one)

Part 6. Divine Command Theory

An exact, specific scripture that is relevant to the action taken:

God would approve of/condemn this action (circle one)

Conclusion: The action taken is moral/immoral (circle one)

Vault Relevance Report: A very special aspect of this book is the hundreds of *Sports Illustrated* articles scattered throughout. These provide many different angles and aspects of the issues not discussed in the text. There are many high-quality writers from *Sports Illustrated* over the years and this text shares some of this past work so as to keep these writers alive for new generations of readers. This is a primary benefit of the wonderful resource of *Sports Illustrated*, the Vault.

A final assignment can be to do a Relevance Report focused on an article from a wonderful free source of articles from 1954 to the present, the “Vault” of *Sports Illustrated*. Throughout the text are links to these *Sports Illustrated* articles, and the links do not exhaust the possible relevant articles available at the Vault. In addition to using the Relevance Report format for a Vault Assignment, it is also helpful to ask students to summarize the article in 10 words or less, to summarize the article in 150 words or less, and to in general be prepared to discuss various interesting points made in the article.

Oxford English Dictionary: The Birth of Words

For every chapter of the book I define especially relevant terms. I use the *Oxford English Dictionary*, or *OED*, an authoritative and thorough dictionary that is unique among dictionaries in that it points out when these terms first appeared. This is an incredibly important information, as we can then better understand the meanings of these words given the social context in which the terms were born. The date range of the *OED* are defined and abbreviated as follows.

OE	Old English—1149
LOE	Late Old English 1000–1149
ME	Middle English 1150–1349
LME	Late Middle English 1350–1469
L15	Late fifteenth century 1470–1499
E16	Early sixteenth century 1500–1529
M16	Mid-sixteenth century 1530–1569
L16	1570–1599
E17	1600–1629
M17	1630–1669
L17	1670–1699
E18	1700–1729
M18	1730–1769
L18	1770–1799
E19	1800–1829
M19	1830–1869
L19	1870–1899
E20	1900–1929
M20	1930–1969
L20	1970–1999
E21	2000–

ENTERING THE SPORTS WORLD



“World”

In this chapter, we will enter the “sports world.” I use the term “world” as referring to a myriad of professions and occupations connected to a focal activity. When I talk about the sports “world,” I mean by “world” general occupations and an area of concentration, focus, and interest. I am contrasting it from other “**worlds**” that exist in the larger society in which all of these worlds are located. In order to understand the sports world as a place of its own, consider other “worlds.” These worlds correspond to various specializations and “worlds” including health care, computers, education, business, environment, animals, engineering, and law. As a philosopher who specializes in teaching ethics at a school with several fruitful preprofessional programs, the challenge for me is to enter into these different worlds when teaching ethics that attends to the specific major issues and controversies they are likely to face when practicing in a field of that world, and also principles, rules, virtues, and precedent cases in their field.

The sports world, like all other worlds of larger society, has not always existed. The definition of a “**sport**” I use is an activity that includes three characteristics: competition, an institution, and gross physical activity.

In a literal sense of *world*, there are sports in countries all over the *world*.



SPORTS ILLUSTRATED VAULT

<https://vault.si.com/vault/1956/11/12/this-sporting-world>

November 12, 1956 “The Sporting World” SI Staff

Part I. Three Elements of a Sport: Competition, Institution, and Gross Physical Activity



A. Competition and Competitiveness: Element 1/3 of any “Sport”

“**Compete**” means to “strive” or “contend.” If one is not striving or contending, one is not competing. In addition, “compete” involves being “together” and “bear comparison.” To *bear* a comparison is therefore an essential element of a “sport.” This is to let a comparison happen and abide by whatever is discovered in the process. Cheating is essentially no longer bearing comparison. The opposite of “bearing with” is “fighting against” and not willing to accept comparison. **Competition** means to “take part in,” and this reiterates the fact of needing someone else for a “sport” (and thus no “sport” involves a person competing against himself/herself).

To understand competition, reflect first on the very definitions of the term. I see this first existing in the early 17th century, so the 1600s, just as the first explorers were settling in the New World that would become America. Also, if someone is competitive, then that means someone with a strong *urge* to compete. And compete means “strive for something together with another.” When we compete, we both want something we both cannot have. This is, in the sports world, the win. Both cannot win the same game. If there was literally no winner and no score being kept, the activity would be noncompetitive, that is, **recreational**. Winning, and therefore rules, are essential to a sport. Here, I interpret winning and rules as part of the more general “competition” or a sort of event. Also, when I compete against others, I am making myself a “rival”; I am “bearing comparison” with my teammates against opponents. As we will see, this most basic bearing of comparison is done instinctually by young children.

The tendency of most people who are in the sports world is to claim that life is all about competition. We will explore this more as what Koppett calls “sports-think.” This is an empirical claim that life is a constant and unwavering striving all the time to demonstrate superiority against opponents. This view, however, ignores the value and fruitfulness of cooperative efforts.

To make an argument for cooperation, I am happy to be able to share some work by Bil Gilbert, renowned writer for *Sports Illustrated* for many years. He penned one especially insightful article in 1988: “Competition. Is

It What Life's All About?¹ In this piece, he convincingly argues that life is actually not all about competition. Competition is not inherently good. Competition can be a bad thing, especially in life situations morally calling for cooperation.

Gilbert finds that those who reduce life down to competition quickly revert to a deeper theory of the survival of the fittest and laws of nature. In this worldview, we are animals engaged in an unrelenting competition with others. The result is few winners and many losers. Against the view “competition is life,” Gilbert provides three main counterarguments.

1. Most people try to find some “*niche*” in their lives, some area of specialization in which they but few others are trained and capable. Doing so allows one to avoid competing against others in a survival of the fittest-existence. The basic idea of finding a niche for oneself in society at large as a vocation and occupation is that I can *eliminate* a lot of the competition.
2. Many major human accomplishments throughout history have resulted from cooperation not competition: “As a matter of historical record, many of the most notable human accomplishments—cathedrals, constitutions, college athletic departments—are monuments to cooperative behavior.”
3. There is evidence that we have several natural drives, and some behaviorists believe we have two drives, one to be secure and another to be stimulated. If this is the case, then perhaps we are naturally *both* cooperative and competitive.

“Process of Social Evaluation” Naturally Practiced by Children



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Gilbert cites the great Rainer Martens, the father of modern sports psychology. Martens was a college football player, a semipro baseball player and quite a successful coach. However, he is known for his research at the University of Illinois concerning children and competitive play. Martens believes that competitive sports evolved out of what existed before the sports world, what he calls “the process of social evaluation.” He explains that there is a naturalness to the comparisons children make between themselves and other children who are practicing the same activity. By the age of five or six, children start paying attention to the abilities of others and they try to outdo others with whom they **play**. They soon learn to “keep score.” Martens explains that the evaluation of their own abilities, including comparing themselves with others, helps them figure out what they can and should be. This natural urge to compare themselves with others doing the same activity seems universal with children. And standards of comparison go well beyond sports and physical play to appearance, speech, possessions, and many other things. Martens emphasizes one main aspect of sport that distinguishes it from most of these other ways of comparing themselves to others: objective scorekeeping. This type of affirmation is much more *honest* than that of a doting biased parent who may praise every little thing whether the child deserves it or not. Sports can humble players who think they are better than they really are.

¹ May 16, 1988, *Sports Illustrated*, Competition. Is It What Life's All About? Bil Gilbert.



Learning Competitiveness

There is consensus among psychologists, coaches, and athletes that competitiveness can be acquired. Martens explains the key is to focus on the process and not the outcome.

People can certainly learn to be more competitive. It is really rather simple. The trick is to concentrate on mastering specific techniques—positioning the feet, gripping the ball, whatever—until the individual is comfortable with them. This obviously helps mechanically, but it is also the best way to reduce stress and the problems it can cause. If people can focus on mastering specific acts that involve things they can control,

they will be less inclined to be distracted by things over which they have no control. Being self-centered in this way helps to reduce anxiety about what opponents are doing, which is the source of most of what is threatening about competition.

Gilbert argues that the pleasurable and instructive aspects of sport should derive from the competition itself, not from the final score. This supports the core point of the sports ethic I argue for in this book, as the title makes clear: that success (attaining internal goals) should be valued more than winning (attaining external goals). Gilbert explains that tangible, external rewards and awards for victory are of little worth as they are merely symbolic, meant to stand for something accomplished. He argues, “the only real and lasting value of a game is what’s felt and learned during the contest.”

Success Is More Important Than Winning

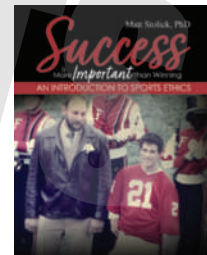
“It is not whether you win or lose but how you play the game.”

Gilbert explains that this adage sums up what most authorities think is the true value of athletic competition: not in winning or losing, but in how the game is played. Winning does not in itself mean the winner has been also moral or ethical. Nor does winning mean that the winner has played well (or “deserved to win”). Nicholas Dixon convincingly argues that sometimes the team or individual who wins is not the best, most deserving, or successful team or individual.² Furthermore, just because a team or individual won, the win may be largely the result of several things which, if true, makes success much more important than such “wins.” Dixon points out several of these factors that can and do taint wins in the sports world, including:

- refereeing errors,
- a referee fixing a game,
- a player fixes a game,
- the opponent cheats (in a myriad of ways),
- the opponent employs gamesmanship,
- bad luck,
- inferior performance by a superior athlete.

Dixon concludes,

A welcome consequence of our realization that a wide range of situations exist in which the better team or player does not win may be to **weaken the obsession with winning** that exists among some athletes,



² Nicholas Dixon On Winning and Athletic Superiority *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport* 26 (1999): 10–26.

especially in the U.S. Putting winning and losing in a saner perspective may reduce the motivation to resort to cheating, distasteful forms of gamesmanship, and trash talking and other forms of taunting. And, while the desire to win is a necessary ingredient of competitive sport, realizing that winning is not the be all and end all of athletic excellence may help to foster the cooperation that is part of healthy competition and prevent it from degenerating into alienation. (Dixon, 1999, p. 24)

Gilbert explains that in 1988, and more so today, the rewards for winning and the costs of losing are becoming more substantial. This is self-evident at the highest levels of sport, professional and Division I collegiate sports, which are both the big-money, big-scholarship, and big-celebrity level. But even for young children, succeeding at athletics is more and more often a quick, effective means of gaining status, perks, and privileges. As the importance of winning is increasingly emphasized, the competitive process—*how* one plays the **game**—becomes further de-emphasized. The worth of the inner rewards declines in comparison with the magnificence of the external rewards distributed.



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Sports Celebrities as Role Models to Children

A major worry shared by academics and athletes is that the conduct of sports celebrities might unfavorably influence young people. This is a major point about the sports world. It is hard to imagine an occupation existing in society that has more influence on children. What the athlete does the children will do, or at least think of as



SPORTS ILLUSTRATED VAULT

<https://vault.si.com/vault/2000/11/06/ask-the-coach-guidance-for-those-lost-in-sports>

November 6, 2000 "Ask the Coach Guidance for those Lost in Sports" Mark Mravic

<https://vault.si.com/vault/1993/06/14/one-role-model-to-another-whether-he-likes-it-or-not-charles-barkley-sets-an-example-that-many-will-follow>

June 14, 1993 "One Role Model to Another. Whether He Likes it or not, Charles Barkley sets an Example that Many will Follow" Karl Malone

<https://vault.si.com/vault/1987/06/15/athletes-or-role-models-demanding-higher-standards-from-players-is-unrealistic>

June 15, 1987 "Athletes or Role Models? Demanding Higher Standards from Players is Unrealistic" John Papnek

<https://vault.si.com/vault/1990/05/14/senseless-in-americas-cities-kids-are-killing-kids-over-sneakers-and-other-sports-apparel-favored-by-drug-dealers-whos-to-blame>

May 14, 1990 "Senseless" Rick Telander

<https://vault.si.com/vault/2010/05/10/the-hangover-roethlisberger>

May 10, 2010 "The Hangover: Roethlisberger" Jack McCallum

<https://vault.si.com/vault/2003/03/17/the-rise-and-fall-of-kirby-puckett-the-media-and-the-fans-in-minnesota-turned-the-twins-hall-of-famer-into-a-paragon-of-every-virtue-and-that-made-his-human-flaws-when-they-came-to-light-all-the-more-shocking>

March 17, 2003 “The Rise and Fall of Kirby Puckett” George Dohrmann

<https://vault.si.com/vault/2010/08/30/all-the-right-moves>

August 30, 2010 “All the Right Moves” L. Jon Wertheim

<https://vault.si.com/vault/1991/12/23/the-wrong-people-for-the-job-why-expect-athletes-to-be-role-models-when-they-could-scarcely-be-less-suited-to-the-task>

December 23, 1991 “The Wrong People for the Job. Why Expect Athletes to be Role Models, When They Could Scarcely be less Suited to the Task?” Rick Telander

<https://vault.si.com/vault/1998/05/04/paternity-ward-fathering-out-of-wedlock-kids-has-become-commonplace-among-athletes-many-of-whom-seem-oblivious-to-the-legal-financial-and-emotional-consequences>

May 4, 1998 “Paternity Ward” Lester Munson

<https://vault.si.com/vault/1990/01/29/booted-out-down-under-when-john-mcenroe-behaved-like-john-mcenroe-the-australian-open-threw-him-out-of-the-tournament>

January 29, 1990 “Booted Out Down Under. When John McEnroe Behaved Like John McEnroe, The Australian Open Threw Him Out of the Tournament” Craig Neff

<https://vault.si.com/vault/1983/07/25/in-a-rush-to-make-a-big-gain>

July 25, 1983 “In a Rush to Make a Big Gain. Criminal Activities of Billy Cannon Showed him to be a Counterfeit Hero” SI Staff

acceptable to do. Thus, when kids see intentional fouls, bragging about cheating and not getting caught, coaches intimidating officials, throwing chairs, lying about immoral recruiting practices, taking performance-enhancing drugs, and practicing brutality, the conclusion they can reach is that just about any means are justified by the end of winning. Glyn Roberts, a University of Illinois professor of sports psychology, expresses concerns about the defective role model presented by athletic heroes. Roberts sees the prevailing moral message is that anything is acceptable if you don't get caught.

Let us now move on from Gilbert and conclude our consideration of competitiveness as one of the three defining elements of any “sport.” The term itself, we have seen, by definition implies a *cooperative* effort. That is, teams and players rely on one another to even have contests at all. And competitiveness is required of any sport, so that if one is not competing, say losing on purpose or not even trying, then the sport is no longer being played. Competitiveness involves vying for victory on the field of play.



SPORTS ILLUSTRATED VAULT

Boxing history of being a “dirty business”—cannot trust results, no real “competition”

<https://vault.si.com/vault/1959/08/24/needed-honesty-and-competition>

August 24, 1959 “Needed: Honesty and Competition” SI Staff

<https://vault.si.com/vault/1974/07/08/in-defense-of-the-competitive-urge>

July 8, 1974 “In Defense of the Competitive Urge. The Vice-President Reflects Fondly as a Michigan Football Star and Yale Coach” Gerald R. Ford

B. The Institution and Institutions: Element 2/3 of any “Sport”



The second element of any “sport” is that it involves “institution.” Notice that “institute” is an older term than “institution.” The meaning of “**institute**” is “to establish, arrange, and teach.” This term is about setting up the basic rules, to “arrange” things in a certain way, and to teach. Teaching means that there is an introduction into whatever has first been “instituted” and is a part of what happens with an institution. A lot of the words used to define “institution” are merely about setting things up, but not as much about how things can or should develop through the years and seasons.

Every sport was originally instituted but also is in continuous motion, especially with rule changes. In baseball the spitball was once allowed, instant replay has been recently introduced into the sport, and another recent change disallows a runner to plow over a catcher at the plate. The point is that although origins are a necessary part of an institution, without which it could not exist, no sports institution is ever static and concrete but evolves continuously. Strategies and tactics and ways of playing the game also change. However, within the institution of each individual sport there are some basic fundamental skills that are of the very essence of the sport, so that the sport could not exist without those skills. In baseball, examples are hitting, throwing, and fielding.

Every sport can be broken down into different eras, and these largely reflect different ways of playing as well as different rules introduced into the sports. In a sense, although playing the same sport, those of different eras were also playing different sports, even though the sport goes by the same name. The institution can also be understood by considering the lives of players, especially ones who changed the way the sport was played. It is truly a shame that we tend to forget the greats of the past, and I believe many in the sports world feel the same way. “Institution” is broad and includes the cultures and accepted ways of acting for a certain group of people. It includes the origins of the sport (where, when, why, who, how), history of games played at various levels, major players and others who especially innovated the sport in significant ways, the rules and how they change over the years, innovations in equipment, strategy, technique, and in how the sport is viewed by the wider society at large. In each sport there are certain players who epitomize those sports, who play the sport the way we think it should be played.

One more point about different eras of a sport. There are a plethora of top ten lists of greatest athletes and teams of all time for each sport. People ask what would have happened if one athlete from one era would have competed against another athlete from another era, who would have won. The bottom line rule I think is ultimately accepted as true is this: there is no right way to compare and rank the greatest players from different eras. Mere numbers and statistics are extremely deceptive, as numbers for one era cannot be translated into the numbers for another era.



SPORTS ILLUSTRATED VAULT

<https://vault.si.com/vault/1955/07/25/man-against-ball>

Early baseball July 25, 1955 “Man Against Ball” SI Staff

Baseball is the sport often referred to as the “national pastime” of the United States. The very word “**pastime**” was used when baseball began. We will see in this book that the sport of football overtakes baseball as being the most popular sport in the United States, more properly referred to as the “national pastime.” But baseball is “instituted” before American football. American football had to evolve in major ways before it was accepted by society, and only at colleges and not as professionals (unlike baseball). Baseball came first. Miller explains “The Civil War had transformed attitudes toward sports, most notably baseball . . . the war effectively nationalized it” (p. 42). But as it will especially serve our purposes later in the book when we discuss violence and brutality, college sports and the purpose of the NCAA, and other topics, I will focus on the institution of college football (professional football started much later than college, in 1921, while students at Rutgers invited Princeton in 1869 to the first intercollegiate football game (pp. 88–89).



SPORTS ILLUSTRATED VAULT

<https://vault.si.com/vault/2016/11/21/football-america>

November 21, 2016 “Football in America” SI Staff

The Institution of Football



SPORTS ILLUSTRATED VAULT

<https://vault.si.com/vault/2017/04/17/what-if-one-presidents-progeny-hadnt-altered-football-forever>

April 17, 2017 “What If? . . . One President’s Progeny Hadn’t Altered Football Forever?” SI Staff

John Miller presents the story of how Theodore Roosevelt saved college football. This was done by Roosevelt while he was president of the United States, encouraging the several colleges to come together to make rules changes to football, primarily to eliminate brutality from the game (John J. Miller *The Big Scrum How Teddy Roosevelt Saved Football*. NY: Harper-Perennial 2011). This was accomplished in 1906 with the formation of what would become the NCAA and several major rules changes. This was the closest that football had come to being prohibited. Football as a sport was defended and criticized in the decades prior to 1906, and it is worth our while to reflect upon these and learn from history, as these same arguments for and against football can still be used today.



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Through Teddy Roosevelt we can learn about how football first began, specifically *college* football. He started at Harvard in 1876, the second year of Harvard football, although he never played himself. However, he was a very strong fan and supporter of the sport, as will become clear as we consider some facts about the personal background of Roosevelt. Before the Civil War, American schools had not emphasized athletics. This reflected a Calvinist tradition that stressed labor over play, and “for them, spare time was not an opportunity for self-improvement through athletics or other means” but “an opening for temptation and wickedness” (p. 36). In short, “much of American culture frowned on sports and games” (p. 36). However, two major social forces at the time, the YMCA and Muscular Christianity, would combine to counter this negative view of sport. The YMCA “opened its first gym in New York in 1869- a development that the New York Times described as a ‘concession to Muscular Christianity’” (p. 43). Miller explains that “As a movement, Muscular Christianity sought to combine Christian spirit with physical vigor. Bodies existed for a divine purpose. They were not to be abused or neglected. In fact, they should be developed” (p. 37). And the YMCA was “founded in London in 1844 and spreading to Boston in 1851, the YMCA at first sought merely to promote prayer and biblical study” (p. 42). By the Civil War, around 200 existed chapters in the US.

President Charles Eliot: The Moral Argument against the Sport of Football

The major foe and critic of football was also at Harvard. This was the President, Charles W. Eliot, who held this position for forty years, from 1869 to 1909. He grew up before the popularity of sports which happened after the Civil War. Miller explains that Eliot’s years as President coincide with the growth of the sport of football. He resisted and ultimately would try to ban this game. Miller describes him as “football’s prohibitionist” (p. 96).

In 1884 the Harvard Athletic Committee observed brutality breaking out in the game in various places. In a game between Princeton and Wesleyan, “the committee watched one player throw another out of bounds, push him down as he tried to get up, and seize the football from him, all the while the referee looked on without objection” (p. 107). They observed brutal fighting with fists in all of the games they went to observe. Unfair play was a prominent feature of the games, and such conduct was rarely punished. Intentional off-side plays and unlawful interference was common. The committee expressed concern, finding that “the game is demoralizing



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to the spectators mainly through its brutality; unfair play they usually fail to recognize” (p. 108). The committee recommended a ban on football. Harvard would not play football for the 1885 season.

Harvard Cancels 1885 Football Season

Canceling the 1885 season was very unpopular at Harvard. It looked petty and irrelevant, and in the next year, 1886, Harvard would resume playing football. A major force behind reversing course was alumni influence. Up to the present time in the 21st century alumni of various major colleges are a powerful force at their home universities and states. Miller explains these football-supporting alumni were a powerful influence from the very beginning of college football: “Toward the end of the 19th century and into the 20th, they became especially important to athletics because their financial support underwrote everything from team travel to the construction of new football stadiums” (p. 108).

And in the 1880s football became a very popular spectator sport. Games drew hundreds then thousands then tens of thousands of spectators, growth happening in only a few years. Correlated to the increase in spectators was the development of major rivalries between schools (p. 121). Schools everywhere were starting their own football teams.

A sport needs to be originally instituted—in other words, be set up. Miller argues Walter Camp, more than anyone else, “deserves the title of football’s founding father” (p. 67). Camp was born in 1859. In the Fall 1876 Camp entered Yale University. He was a standout multisport athlete in high school. At Yale Camp played baseball, crew, track and tennis. He was an ordinary student. He played six years of football at Yale, four as an undergraduate and two more while he was attending Yale Medical School. He became a coach at Yale although when he began as a freshman there was no coach. At this time “there were no formal coaches . . . the team captain was essentially a player-coach” (p. 71). While at Yale Camp-teams had a record of 25-1-4. Camp stayed on as a coach at Yale from 1876 to 1909. As Miller explains, “Yale football teams dominated the sport. They won 319 games, lost 14, and tied 16” (p. 76).

In 1876 the Intercollegiate Football Association was created to formalize rules, as up to this point team captains met before each game to make agreements on how to play. Rules included a standardized field (140 yards by 70 yards) (p. 77). There were also to be neutral referees, a scoring system, and teams of 15 players to a side.

In the 1880s several key features of the institution of football emerged. At the beginning of this decade the sport was still more like rugby than what we know as football today. During these years players started wearing uniforms but no helmets and no pads. Between plays there was a rugby-style scrum, players locking arms and waiting for the official to toss the ball between the teams. There was no “center” or “snap” or “quarterback.” Blocking was illegal, as was tackling below the waist. Forward passes were not allowed. Players would frequently throw each other to the ground, throw elbows, pile on each other, and all this watched by a single referee! (79)

In 1880, Camp proposed cutting the number of players from 15 to 11, which was accepted. He also introduced a change to football that would distinguish it from rugby, namely, the “possession rule.”

Camp Invents the “Quarter Back”

A scrimmage takes place when the holder of the ball puts it on the ground before him and puts it in play while on-side their by kicking the ball or snapping it back with his foot. The man who first receives the ball from the snap-back shall be called the quarter back and shall not rush forward with the ball under penalty of foul. (p. 79)

With this change, the ball would not go up for grabs, but teams would have *possession* of the ball. And now plays would begin with *a snap* to a new position of *quarterback*. Now the offensive team could call *plays*. This made much more useful *coaching* and practices (p. 80).

Still, there was no concept of downs. The result was a team would just hold onto the ball and take safeties (being tackled in one's own end zone). Safeties were worth no points and for which they were not penalized. Instead, the ball would just be placed at the 25 yard line after a safety.

In 1882, Camp proposed the concept of *downs*, and teams would have three downs to move the ball five yards or lose ten yards to keep possession. If not they surrendered the ball to the other team (p. 81). Now *measurement* became an important part of football. In order to measure, the fields began to be painted with lines at five yard intervals, making the field look like a “gridiron” (p. 82).

Scoring Change: Fewer Points for Kicked Goals, Points for a Touchdown

Scoring is also a crucial part of any sports competition. There is clearly a major difference in strategy and ways of playing the sport with the change in scoring rules. In 1883, the rules committee changed the scoring system. Now a touchdown was worth two points instead of zero points, a goal following touchdown was worth four points, a goal from the field five points, and a safety one point. At the end of 1883, touchdowns were increased to four points and the kick afterward to two points and a safety was doubled to two points (p. 83). In this single year, the sport of football decreased the defining skill of the sport of “foot” ball- kicking field goals after touchdowns.

The V-Trick/Flying Wedge and Predictable, Serious Injuries

In the first half of the 1890s, football was becoming brutal, and more critics were voicing their opposition to football. Players were not allowed to block with either arms at this time but would still interfere. Also, referees were very lax in their calling of fouls. The brutality of the game would increase substantially with Princeton's introduction of the “V-trick,” a wedge play that became a dominant play in football. In the flying wedge, two lines of men would create two lines well behind the line of scrimmage and would build up speed to the focus of one man on the defense (this build up of the speed of players also gave this play the name of “mass play”). Then when they arrived at full speed at the center the ball was snapped back and the ball carrier followed behind the wreckage and strewn defensive bodies, especially the singled-out man, who would obviously suffer severe physical injuries as a consequence of the V-trick. Injuries included broken heads, fractured skulls, broken necks, wrenched legs, dislocated shoulders, and broken noses (p. 129). Soon, every team was using the flying wedge, or “mass momentum plays” (p. 129).

Football Under More Social Criticism: Brutality Central to the Attack

At the end of 1893 season, a major controversy about football had broken out in society. Teddy wrote a defense of football in Harper's Weekly, against “the noisy crusade” of the prohibitionists (p. 132). He argued that “The sports especially dear to a vigorous and manly nation are always those in which there is a certain slight element of risk. It is mere unmanly folly to try to do away with the sport because the risk exists” (pp. 132–133). He also expressed his opposition to brutality in football: “The brutality must be done away with and the danger minimized. The rules for football ought probably to be altered so as to do away with the present mass play ... while the umpires must be made to prevent slugging or any kind of foul play” (p. 133). The rules committee was also against the mass play, and to eliminate the mass play, made a rule that allowed no more than three men being in motion before the start of a play (p. 133).

In the next year, on November 24, 1894, there would be yet another visible example of brutality in football in the game between Harvard and Yale. Harvard was 2-14 against Yale at this point, and 25,000 spectators were there for the game. This game would be described as “the bloodiest and most appalling display of out-and-out violence yet witnessed in a big game” (p. 135). With the score 6-4 in favor of Yale, Yale punted and Harvard's Edgar Wrightington caught the ball and fell on the ground. But a Yale player jumped on him, driving his knee into

Wrightington's neck and shoulder, breaking his collarbone. The player who delivered the dirty hit, Hinkey, "felt no remorse. He was just following his own advice. The night before the game, he had urged his teammates to ignore Harvard players who called for a fair catch. 'Tackle them anyway and take the penalty.'" (136) And incredibly, after this brutal foul the referee did not eject him from the game (p. 137).

Here we see a very early example of intentionally injuring an opponent, beyond violence to brutality. After a half of many brutal fouls Harvard decided to play brutally in the second half, with a couple of ejections finally for slugging and breaking noses. In the second half there was brutality and no scoring. After this disgraceful brutal game, the two teams would not play against each other again for three years (p. 138).

Harvard's President Eliot now made a forceful argument against football. He thought football distracted students from academics and that substantial gate receipts from games were making money rather than education the motivation behind football. He also argued that the "unwholesome desire for victory" was a type of savagery, leading to many serious physical dangers, and these resulting from the desire to intentionally hurt one another (p. 139). And E. L. Godkin of *The Nation* joined Eliot in his argument against football, comparing football to the Roman arena (p. 144).

Teddy Letter on Football Reform: Keep Violence, Eliminate Brutality

In a letter from Teddy in early 1895, he gives ample reflection in his defense of the sport of football, stressing the positive value of physical contact. In this letter he says:

the rough play, if confined within manly and honorable limits, is an advantage. It is a good thing to have the personal contact about which the *New York Evening Post* snarls so much, and no fellow is worth his salt if he minds an occasional bruise or cut. (p. 150)

... I feel very strongly in favor of altering the rules, so far as practicable, to do away with needless roughness in playing, and, above all, in favor of severe umpiring, and the expulsion from the field of any player who is needlessly rough (pp. 150–151)

I do not give a snap for a good man who can't fight and hold his own in the world. A citizen has got to be decent of course. That is the first requisite; but the second, and just as important, is that he shall be efficient, and he can't be efficient unless he is manly. (p. 151)

The Latin I learned in college has helped me a little in later life in various ways, but boxing has helped me more. (p. 151)

The criticism of football broadened at this point beyond *brutality* to pointing out the cancer of the winning-is-everything attitude. In college football, in a desperation for victory, teams would play ineligible players and "look the other way" as alumni supporters paid these "ringers" to play for their colleges. Critic Gotkin argued that the winning-is-everything attitude was a product of a cultural sickness rooted in *Gilded-Age Capitalism* (p. 161).

Teddy Speaks On the Value of a Strenuous Life

With football being threatened with prohibition, on April 10, 1899, at the Hamilton Club in Chicago, Teddy gave one of his most famous speeches. In supporting football, (and contact sports) he proclaimed something he is still remembered for: "I wish to preach, not the doctrine of ignoble ease, but the doctrine of the strenuous life." Also, "We do not admire the man of timid peace. We admire the man who embodies victorious effort . . . who has those virile qualities necessary to win in the stern strife of actual life." And instead of self-satisfaction, which he said has "nothing to do with it," it is the motivation of duty to country that was behind his fervor. In a sense this was a secularization of Muscular Christianity.

Intentionally Injuring Opponents as Strategy—Brutality Takes Over

As further evidence that brutality, not violence, was the major threat to the prohibition of football at the turn of the 20th century was the game between Dartmouth and Princeton on October 24, 1903. Matthew W. Bullock, star player for Dartmouth, early in the game collapsed in pain with a badly broken collarbone. This injury also would end his career. The thing about this injury is that it was intentionally inflicted as a deliberate strategy to cripple him. And although Bullock was black, it was not racism that was behind the intentional injury. A Princeton player readily admitted the strategy and that a coach was behind it: “we’re coached to pick out the most dangerous man on the opposing side and put him out in the first five minutes of the game” (p. 176). Miller explains that “Teams were committed to maiming opponents” and that this player revealed a practice of a form of brutality in football. Teddy read about this and was more convinced that football needed to be reformed (p. 176).

In 1900 Teddy would be Vice President to William McKinley, then in September 1900 McKinley died, and Teddy became President. He was elected President in 1904. Early in his second term, on June 28, 1905, he gave a speech to Harvard alumni. He said,

When the injuries are inflicted by others, either wantonly or of set design, we are confronted by the question not of damage to one man’s body, but of damage to the other man’s character. Brutality in playing a game should awaken the heartiest and most plainly shown contempt for the player guilty of it . . . I hope to see both graduate and undergraduate opinion come to scorn such a man as one guilty of base and dishonorable action, who has no place in the regard of gallant and upright men. (p. 177)

The Sport of Football Is Saved and The Advent of the NCAA

All of the momentum and political wrangling about the fate of the sport of football came to a head in 1905. President Eliot wrote a report he called “The Evils of Football.” He pointed to the serious injuries, the brutality, coaching from the sidelines, and intentionally injuring opponents (p. 181). As the battle between football advocates and prohibitionists reached a fever pitch, there was a very important meeting that took place between Teddy and Endicott Peabody, an old college friend of Teddy’s who worked with Camp on his committee that produced *Football Facts and Figures* and founded Groton School for Boys, which was rooted in principles of Muscular Christianity. He sent a three page letter to Teddy urging him to help reform football, given that as US President with so much power, as well as deep love for the sport of football, he was uniquely positioned to make a difference. In response to this Teddy contacted Walter Camp for a meeting along with other college representatives as well. The October 9, 1905 meeting also included the new head coach of the Harvard football team, 26 year old William Reid. Here note that from the very beginning of college football head coaches were given enormous salaries. Reid’s “seven-thousand-dollar salary was considerably higher than any professor’s and almost as much as Eliot’s” (p. 187). Roosevelt opened the conversation; “Football is on trial” (p. 187). Roosevelt held a two-hour meeting with the football representatives. The result was the drafting of a statement of promise to clean up the game.

On January 12, 1906 a new organization would be created and named the Intercollegiate Athletic Association of the United States. Within a few years it would be renamed the National Collegiate Athletic Association, or NCAA (p. 204).



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In the 1906 season the game was safer in less injuries and in fan perception. Even a reluctant President Eliot had to admit the game was cleaner. At this point the movement to abolish football lost momentum. American football had weathered its first major crisis, especially by addressing and eliminating major forms of brutality from the sport. The rules changes worked, the popularity of football continued to grow.



SPORTS ILLUSTRATED VAULT

<https://vault.si.com/vault/1962/12/17/the-harvards-and-the-yales>

December 17, 1962 “The Harvards and the Yales. The Preppies, the Wonks and Clubbies have their own Curious Ways of Celebrating the Weekend when they Play the Game with those Nasty—And, Naturally, Inferior—Boys from New Haven” Robert H. Boyle

<https://vault.si.com/vault/1964/12/07/great-asterisk-football-game>

December 7, 1964 “Great Asterisk Football Game. The Boston College Team Played a Wild Match with Holy Cross in 1896—And the Score is Still in Dispute” Parton Keese

<https://vault.si.com/vault/2001/06/11/going-out-with-a-shout-as-bill-cleary-retires-as-harvard-athletic-director-he-rips-the-ills-of-college-sports>

June 11, 2001 “Going out with a Shout as Bill Cleary Retires as Harvard Athletic Director, He Rips the Ills of College Sports” E.M. Swift

<https://vault.si.com/vault/1971/12/06/an-anthology-of-early-gridiron-literature-catches-the-spirit-of-the-games-pioneers>

December 6, 1971 “An Anthology of Early Gridiron Literature Catches the Spirit of the Game’s Pioneers” M. R. Werner

<https://vault.si.com/vault/1995/08/05/no-contest-a-few-dozen-good-reasons-why-college-football-is-better-than-the-pro-kind>

August 5, 1995 “No Contest. A Few Dozen Good Reasons Why College Football is Better Than the Pro Kind” Rick Reilly



SPORTS ILLUSTRATED VAULT

Bass Fishing aspires to form Institution

<https://vault.si.com/vault/1998/08/24/reeling-in-dough-thanks-to-rival-tours-and-big-bucks-sponsorships-bass-fishing-pros-are-becoming-millionaires-in-a-sport-that-could-turn-into-the-next-nascar>

August 24, 1998 “Reeling in Dough Thanks to Rival Tours and Big-Bucks Sponsorships, Bass-Fishing Pros are Becoming Millionaires in a Sport that Could Turn into the Next NASCAR” Jack McCallum



C. Gross Physical Activity: Element 3/3 of any “Sport”

This third element of any sport is a difficult criterion to pin down exactly. Being physical instead of merely mental or intellectual is of the essence of sports. Physicality is the major distinction between sports and the broader category of “games.” Within all these games involving physical activity, a further distinction can be made between those involving only fine motor skills and those requiring the use of gross motor skills. A “sport”

by definition involves gross motor skills. Gross motor skills involve use of the large bodily muscles to make physical movements. Of course, we need to ask how gross they must be in order to qualify, and perhaps there are some sports that are in the grey area between the two types of motor skills.

Technically, NASCAR is *not* a sport. This can be a bit confusing as NASCAR (and other forms of racing machines) are regularly features in sports media, not in **entertainment** or under some other heading. Racing machines of all kinds deal in fine motor skills but not gross motor skills. There is no running, jumping, physical grappling, but the exertions are all happening while sitting down and steering. Propelling and making move a boat in crew, however, also has one sit down, but the vigorous *rowing* of crew demands great cardiovascular fitness and gross muscle movements. Crew members provide the power for the vessel, there is no gas tank. This also goes for the distinction between the nonsport of motorcycle racing and the clear example of the sport of bicycling. The bicyclist provides the power to move the bike and there is vigorous and substantial gross motor skills involved. Although this distinction between gross and fine motor skills does have some grey area, it should serve us well enough especially in distinguishing sports from mere games. Other sports that have the requisite gross physical activity include bowling, football, soccer, softball, baseball, golf, lacrosse, basketball, long jump, high jump, wrestling, and boxing.



SPORTS ILLUSTRATED VAULT

ON THE GAME OF MOTOR RACING

<https://vault.si.com/vault/1975/05/12/a-virus-of-velocity>

May 12, 1975 "A Virus of Velocity" SI Staff

<https://vault.si.com/vault/2005/06/06/-is-this-an-olympic-sport>

June 6, 2005 "Is This an Olympic Sport? The IOC is Voting on Whether to Eliminate Some Elements and Add Others—A Contentious First Step Toward Freshening Up the Games" E.M. Swift

Part II. The Sports World as Entertainment—Basic Structure of Any (Professional) Sport

Leonard Koppett *Sports Illusion. Sports Reality. A Reporter's View of Sports, Journalism, and Society*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994.



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Leonard Koppett writes a book as a retired long-time sports newspaper reporter. He grew up in New York City, went to Columbia University three years prior to WWII, then into the army for a year, then back to Columbia to finish school, then *New York Herald Tribune* in 1948, then *New York Post* in 1954, then *The New York Times* from

1963 to 1978. He also regularly wrote columns published in *The Sporting News* from 1968 into the 1980s. Koppett provides us another way to define the sports world. From the outset note that his focus is on “mass spectator” sports, not all sports. Koppett focuses on “‘mass spectator sports,’ ones that succeed in keeping the illusion of importance alive in large numbers of people over long periods of time” (p. 14).

The title of his book, *Sports Illusion, Sports Reality*, refers to a major illusion believed by those who enter the sports world. That single major illusion is this: that the result of a game matters. He elaborates that this illusion is “an illusion so strong and so long ingrained that beyond a certain point the attachment is no longer entirely voluntary. And the sports business consists of finding ways to create and maintain that illusion” (p. 13). The opposite of the illusion is the reality lived by those who participate in sports. For those who participate, “the importance of the event is no illusion: it’s real” (p. 14). This is the reality of the physical actions and effects as well as the effect of winning or losing.

The central persons of the sports world are the players. They, not any others hovering around the sports world, are the ones who put themselves on the line physically and open themselves up to judgment by those not playing. For them, the sport is also real life. Participants in sports are, just by virtue of participating, demonstrating many moral virtues. Teddy Roosevelt captures the honor in the striving, and in competing, and distinguishes those who compete from those who do not:

The Man in the Arena—Participants Are Superior to Critical Spectators

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat. (From Theodore Roosevelt’s speech “Citizenship In A Republic”)

A. Sport is a Business

Spectator sports are essentially a type of entertainment business. “The entertainment value of sports lies not in the physical actions observed but in the feelings aroused in those who interpret the meaning of those actions” (p. 15). As a type of entertainment, spectator sports differ from other forms of entertainment in seven major ways: comprehensibility, continuity, readability, coherence, hazard, low cost, and vicarious experience (violence, triumph, second-guessing, and patriotism).

Koppett explains how the sports world provides the spectator with the opportunity to vicariously experience violence, triumph, second-guessing, and patriotism.

The vicarious experience of *violence* in sports Koppett explains from a biological and social perspective. He reasons that we human creatures on a physical earth have a long history of physical violence. This includes “damage and hostility but also in the sense of great physical exertion encompassing intensity and passion. The urge remains: the opportunity to give it socially acceptable expression” (p. 24). The key here is an unconscious instinctual “urge” to violence, something we humans have as a species. Seeing humans this way, contact sports, for example, provide the opportunity to feel and relieve this urge “despite substantial risk of injury.” Echoing Teddy and the other defenders of football in its first crisis, it is this element that represents the attractiveness of sports (p. 24). For *spectators*, this vicarious experience happens through identification and vocal expression.

The vicarious experience of *triumph* is “the satisfaction derived from ‘beating’ someone.” And “[t]his goes beyond mere ‘winning,’ to the idea of defeating an opponent (p. 25). *Second guessing*, frustration relief, omnipresent in our lives . . .” And, “the ego boost one gains by being able to say ‘he [famous, rich, talented] was wrong and I [just plain me] was right’ is tremendous” (p. 26). *Patriotism*, “the impulse to be patriotic—feelings of pride, loyalty, unity, protectiveness, willingness to sacrifice with respect to your ‘in-group,’ and readiness to fight any ‘out-group’ that appears hostile—runs deep in all societies” (p. 27).



SPORTS ILLUSTRATED VAULT

<https://vault.si.com/vault/1990/05/21/the-most-powerful-man-in-sports-mark-mccormack-founder-and-ceo-of-international-management-group-rules-his-empire-as-both-agent-and-impresario>

May 21, 1990 "The Most Powerful Man in Sports. Mark McCormack, Founder and CEO of International Management Group, Rules his Empire as Both Agent and Impresario" E.M. Swift

<https://vault.si.com/vault/2013/03/18/morality-players>

March 18, 2013 "Morality Players" Steve Rushin

B. Sport Requires a *League* Structure

The sports world is made up of individual sports. The structure of any particular sport has as a basic unit of organization the "league" (p. 32). A league structure has two key characteristics: first, it provides a schedule and declares a champion; second, it provides a strong central government (p. 32). A league provides a governing power and any player who violates league rules excluded from the entire league and every team, not just one team. Also, there is a territorial monopoly for each member of the league, annual championships under similar conditions, a continuity of records, and "a simple central identity that transcends the movement of any one player or group of players" (p. 37).

Using the sport of baseball as his example of how "professional" sports were born, Koppett points out that in 1858, 22 ball clubs formed National Association of Base Ball Players (p. 33). Baseball is the original national pastime of America as it is the oldest mass spectator sport. Harry Wright in 1867 become the first coach, of the Cincinnati Red Stockings. He hired for pay four players for salary. This move bluntly defied the gentleman's amateur code of playing for free. At this point people suddenly "acknowledged that amateurism was being widely ignored, and accepted professionalism as 'legal,' though frowned upon" (p. 35). Then in 1869, the Cincinnati Red Stockings became the first fully *professional* baseball team, paying 10 players contracts. Two years later in 1871 ten clubs join National Association of *Professional* Base Ball Players. Notice the key change in the name of the league, explicitly "Professional."

C. Three Levels of a League: owners, managers, and players

In a sports league there are three levels of personnel: ownership (goal is profit), the management (goal to produce winning team and positive influence on profits), and the player (goal to be part of winning team and excel individually) (p. 39). The promoter arranges the staging of an event, the sponsor puts up money, underwriting expenses and prizes. The greatest power in the sports world, within any particular sport, is with the team owners. Koppett explains: "All basic policy decisions, always, are made at the level of club owner or the equivalent" (p. 41). With rare exceptions, club owners are already prosperous before they become club owners, and that means they have other substantial business interests (p. 49) Owners benefit from many tax benefits, capital gains, coverage of business expenses. They are automatically local celebrities and important community figures in "booster sense" (p. 49) They also benefit from the exclusivity, daily news potential, personal prestige, enormous ego rewards, and all the vicarious thrills (p. 50) Koppett reiterates several times that in the sports world, the owners of teams have the ultimate power.

Koppett next explains that there must be money made, and this means drawing a crowd. Understanding this helps us grasp the big picture meaning of the "sports world." This is a world offering one kind of entertainment for a crowd of people. Koppett explains "The true ancestors of the World Series and the high school football game are the carnival, the circus, and the religious festival" (p. 42). The basic idea of mass spectator sports is to put on a show of some kind and make people willing to pay to see it.



D. A Sport Needs a Commissioner

Further explaining the basic structure of any sport (mass spectator in particular) Koppett points out the need for a commissioner. The first commissioner of baseball came right after the 1919 Black Sox scandal, although was in the works for years as the three man commission idea was not working for a variety of reasons. Kennesaw Mountain Landis, who was named the first commissioner in 1921, was referred to as the “czar.” “The ‘czar’ concept proved so vivid, and was so endlessly publicized, that it was soon institutionalized” (p. 79). The idea of a “czar” primarily conveys the idea that the league commissioner is the ruler of the sport. However, in reality, the commissioner is subject to the owners. Koppett explains that the commissioner is “an employee of the club owners who hire him” (p. 79). Even though the commissioner is the front man to the public, he doesn’t have a penny invested in the business (p. 79). In short, the commissioner “carries out and legitimizes policies the club owners set” (p. 80).

E. The Power of the Sports World in Society: Natural Alliances

With Koppett and his focus on professional sports we have considered the most basic aspects of the “sports world” as a business. Again, this world exists among other worlds of other groups of interests and professions. But these various worlds in society do not necessarily compete against the others. Instead, the sports world is powerful because it is supported by so many other social worlds, each with power of its own.

Koppett calls these “natural alliances” of the sports world. Koppett cites nine natural alliances of the sports world: newspapers, broadcasting, politicians, local businesses, real estate, the school system, local government, potential employees, and the general populace (p. 56).

F. Sports-Think: The Sports World is Not Real Life

Koppett argues that the sports world is not the same as the larger society. In what he calls “sports-think,” however, those in the sports world attempt to apply their sports world thinking to situations outside of the sports world. We will talk about the various values and traits of character potentially instilled in those who participate in sports, ones that they apply successfully in their lives outside of the sports world. However, sports-think fails to appreciate the major differences between sports and real life. Most basically, in the sports world there are clear rules, in life there are no clear rules, referees are readily available in a sport, but not in real life, results are very clear with scores and definite points but in real life there is no final score and the game is never finished, and strategy is limited and well-defined in sports but very indefinite with many possible choices in real life (p. 188). This leads Koppett to recognize: “how profound the differences between games and life are” (p. 189) Koppett explains that sports-think does its serious damage when it colors our decision-making processes with what he calls the “the win-lose idea” (p. 189). Here he points out that the root cause of this damage is wrongly equating winning with success: “We begin to equate winning with ‘success,’ and losing with ‘failure,’ although quite different concepts are involved” (p. 189). Here Koppett adds more substance to back up the claim of my book, “Success is More Important than Winning.” The winning is everything attitude is one that warps our way of thinking in real life. “In real life, though, countless successes (and failures) occur in contexts that have nothing to do with beating anyone” (p. 189). And more broadly in the world at large is where Koppett sees the worst of the negative consequences of the winning-is-everything attitude. He points out that “. . . the win-lose syndrome hurts in politics and international affairs, including war” (p. 190).

Part III. The Historical and Social Context for the Birth of the Sports World



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In Part I I defined a “sport” as having an institution, competition, and gross physical skills. In Part II I defined a “sport” as a profession with various characteristics, especially as a form of entertainment. Now, in this Part III, I want to define “sport” from a historical perspective. A “sport” historically is meant to provide **diversion** from work. That means it is not the usual or regular focus in life, something we do perhaps every weekend on our hours off from work. A diversion is not something we do most of the time. This is why professionals in sport lead an odd sort of human existence, becoming experts in a diversion from human life. Others in the sports world also make a diversion their major focus in life, especially fans for whom sports are the core of their identities.

Most generally, in human history there have been two major “sports worlds.” The first is represented by the Greek Olympic games, the second by the modern sports world from 19th century onward. There were also “sports” in the ancient world before the Olympics.

The sports world began with the Ancient Olympics from roughly 776 BC to 393 AD. The first sports world we know is the one that began in the 1800s. It helps us understand sports better to reflect upon the original moral justifications offered for the value of sports. The sports world we know began only after we socially had the **leisure** time to create sports. As we will see this is roughly during the Industrial Revolution. But sports were not always acceptable in America. They had to show that they were not merely a Puritan waste of time, but rather as a legitimate way to spend time, one that affirms God and strengthens a believer.

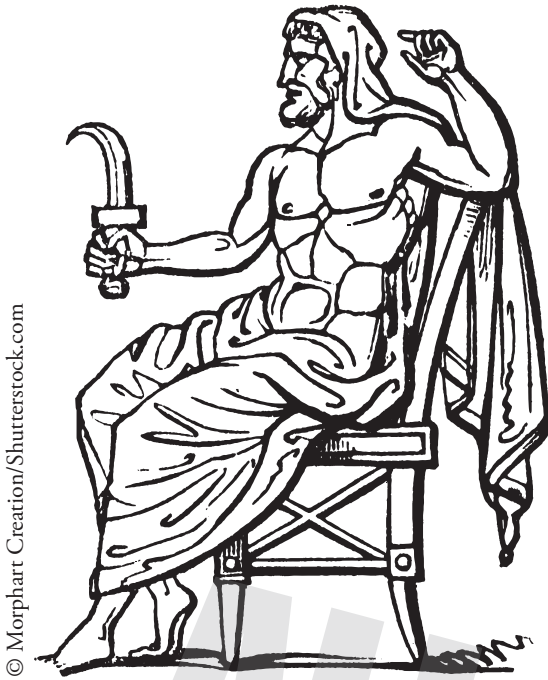
You can see by the title of this article by Gary Cross (“Play in America From Pilgrims and Patriots to Kid Jocks and Joystick Jockeys Or How Play Mirrors Social Change”) that play “mirrors social change.” We will see in several chapters of this book that *sports* also mirror social changes. Cross explains that “Conventionally, the history of the modern western world has been divided into three phases: preindustrial (ca. 1500–1800), industrializing (roughly the nineteenth century), and mass consumption or what is sometimes called the postindustrial (twentieth century)” (Cross, 2008, p. 9). We will use this same basic breakdown and talk about the preindustrial, industrial, and postindustrial phases to set the context for the birth of the sports world.

A. Preindustrial Era 1500–1800—The Eve of the Birth of Sports

In these challenging days for the Pilgrims and first settlers who came to the new land of what would become America, there were no tractors or labor-saving machines. They had to use and make



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a virtue of hard manual labor with simple tools. They worked sunup to sundown, and the agricultural season roughly dictated their lives, working long hours during the seasons when it was time to plant and harvest, and then some leisure time during seasonal breaks from work after harvests (Cross, 2008, p. 9). The Puritans dictated the original mores of the land including seeing play (and sport—primarily horse racing) as an ungodly waste of time.

The earliest colonists abandoned the old traditions of communal play they brought with them from their countries of origin because of Puritan opposition. In this preindustrial period, play was allowed to happen when the agricultural season gave a brief break, especially at Christmastime. This time of play had a Saturnalian character. **Saturnalian** is a term used in reference to the ancient Roman custom of a week of drinking in early December, a “binge” with heavy and immoderate use of intoxicants.

As this was a brief respite from the usual long, hard manual labor they put in to survive, when they did have a chance to relax and not work, they overdid it and went to excess in their celebrations. These Saturnalian occurrences were fueled by alcohol in the form of spirits as well as beer. Beer was a primary drink of even Puritans

from the first years in the New World, especially with no clean drinking water and a view of beer as nourishment more than an intoxicating beverage.

Before the birth of the second sports world in America, there were occasional times of play. Play for the colonists included hunting and play breaks a few minutes a day (Cross, 2008, p. 12). Also, the rich and powerful of colonial America, in part in response to the Saturnalia displays, began to introduce new, more ‘refined,’ *genteel*, and individualistic forms of play (Cross, 2008, p. 12). This is a crucial point to understand in order to grasp the original meaning of “amateur” later on in the college sports chapter. Note that here in the pre-industrial era the term “amateur” does not even exist.



SPORTS ILLUSTRATED VAULT

<https://vault.si.com/vault/1971/01/11/games-children-play>

January 11, 1971 “Games Children Play. More than 70 Youthful Pastimes of the 16th Century Can Be Found in This Rollicking Masterpiece by Pieter Bruegel. An Art Historian and Sometime Sportsman Now Offers us a Detailed Look at Several of the Games and Tells us how they Provide Rare Insights into the Manners of Another Era and Hold Up a Mirror to our Own” Alexander Eliot

B. Industrial Era 1800—Sports Are Born

After the 1790s in the United States, industrialization drastically changed work, making it much more productive, localized, intense, and efficient. The new technologies included the steam engine for transportation and cotton gin in agriculture. This change moved labor forces to factories and away from their homes and families (Cross, 2008, p. 14). Initially, this was a regular pattern of six days of work from sunup to sundown and then rest on Sunday the Sabbath. This regular pattern of work was *not like* the preindustrial way of life, of seasonal labor and rest (or binging). The new industrial pace was steadier and unwavering, happening with no break all seasons of the year.

The industrial revolution separated work from home. Jobs were centralized in impersonal usually urban offices and workshops. Mechanization changed work with textiles, then mining, then metalworking, then after 1830 all these industries had a way to move goods around the country with the building of the first railroads. Early in the industrial revolution, play was virtually eliminated, especially with 12 to 14 hour work days. And this was still prior to the child-labor laws that would not emerge until the late 1800s into the 1900s, so still at this time children, as soon as they were old enough, also worked alongside of adults.

Because of such a rigorous and demanding work schedule, when workers did get time off they drank excessively. Again, as with the preindustrial era, when there was a time to rest and not work, workers overdid it with alcohol. To cater to alcohol consumers during this time there was a proliferation of bars and saloons. There was also a growing concern with public drunkenness and the negative moral effects of the saloons. Here we can see the roots and early rumblings of what will culminate in Prohibition in 1920.

As a counter to the bars and saloons and the Saturnalian orgies, authorities started to create alternatives to the saloons, including city parks and libraries. Early in the Industrial Revolution it became clear that working people to death was unsustainable. In the 1840s a monumental social change happened. Workers went from an average work week of 3000–3600 hours a year to 1600–2000 hours a year. This drastic reduction of working hours was certainly more humane and led to the birth of the idea of retirement as well as the rise of an appreciation for the importance of allowing for and fostering childhood play. And the stage was now set for the birth of sports.

The YMCA and Muscular Christianity Provide Moral Justification for Sports



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The sports world is born in the 1840s. In addition to the drastic reduction of work hours there were also two other major forces behind the creation of the sports world. These forces were the Young Men's Christian Association ("YMCA") and the social movement known as "Muscular Christianity." These also provide the primary and original moral justification for sports themselves. The YMCA was created in 1851 as a healthier alternative to the theater and saloons for masses of lonely industrial workers. With infrastructure in place, post-Civil War the YMCA would explode in growth across the country and be caught up in major social and political movements (Cross, 2008, p. 16).

The initial mission of the YMCA was domestic and rescue-oriented, focused on giving city dwellers spending long hours away from home an alternative to saloons. The mission was to provide a "home away from home"

for Protestant young men newly arrived in the city³ (Putney, 2003, p. 65). YMCAs start to spread into other American cities. In 1853, there were 20, 1856 there were 56, and in 1860 there were 205 (Putney, 2003, p. 65).

And then as the focus of the organization evolved from mere rescue, it moved to creating something, building something, namely, “character.” The organization moved from its old focus of keeping young men from sin and adopted, consistent with several other progressive Christian organizations at the time, one of character building. Character *building*, as the name implies, require not the *preservation* of morals already taught, but rather it was to *strengthen* boys so as to ward off degeneracy. Putney explains that “character builders” thought it was most important to teach a boy about proper masculinity, otherwise “he might never develop into a leader capable of asserting ‘American’ values.” (Putney, 2003, p. 67)



SPORTS ILLUSTRATED VAULT

<https://vault.si.com/vault/2008/01/21/losing-their-religion>

January 21, 2008 “Losing Their Religion” Selena Roberts

The heyday of Muscular Christianity was between 1880 and 1920. American Protestants were strongly involved, and this same movement began a bit earlier in England, in the 1850s in Anglican and then Unitarian churches. Champions of this movement included Josiah Strong, G. Stanley Hall, Dwight L. Moody, and President Theodore Roosevelt. Roosevelt “transformed himself via boxing and barbells from a sickly house-bound teenager into the rough-riding, safari-going, big-stick-wielding Bull Moose of legend” (Putney, 2003, p. 5). Amos Alonzo Stagg was also quite influential, arguing that religion and sports were compatible (Putney, 2003, p. 2). A general definition of “Muscular Christianity” says that a real Christian is committed to health and manliness. With the industrial revolution jobs became less manual and more mechanical, and as a result people became softer and in worse physical shape. Large corporations with their plethora of sedentary office jobs were accompanied by a new sort of plague not seen before in the world, called “overcivilization” (Putney, 2003, p. 4). The spread of Muscular Christianity in the closing decades of 19th century, Putney explains, was a response to the symptoms of overcivilization, and represented the decline in the evangelical Christian antipathy toward sports, and adoption of athletic programs by most of the widely popular YMCAs (Putney, 2003, p. 3).

Putney explains it was widely held that by the end of the 19th century, the Victorian gentleman was ill-equipped to handle the challenges posed by modernity. There was a new model for manhood that stressed action and aggression. The very word “masculine” was first used in the 1890s (Putney, 2003, p. 5). There was a harkening back to a muscular, *preindustrial* body, a tool for doing good. Putney also explains that as regards race, not all muscular Christians were white and there were black muscular Christians as well, but “the masculinist rhetoric of [M]uscular Christianity flourished more in white churches than in black ones” (Putney, 2003, p. 8). Catholics were early sports advocates, with some key early schools and colleges introducing competitive sports such as St. Johns College (Fordham) and St. Francis Xavier and there was even the concept of “Muscular *Catholicism*” developed at this time (Putney, 2003, p. 9).

As for the Scriptural support for the ideal of a muscular Christian, the “commitment to health and manliness” is primarily based on Mark 11:15, where manly exertion is part of a righteous action (Mark 11:15). Also, there is 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 where physical health is interpreted as a good and Godly thing (Putney, 2003, p. 11). There was also another benefit that was seen even this early on in the sports world, and that is that athletics was a way to “ameliorate English

class differences” (Putney, 2003, p. 13). This is ironic in that the term “amateur” was created in part to keep separate working people from elite non-working classes. Also, advocates for sports pointed out that many were in their new sedentary work lacking in experiences of pain and endurance to bring out and foster masculine qualities, which could be addressed through sports participation.



³ Clifford Putney *Muscular Christianity. Manhood and Sports in Protestant America, 1880–1920* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2003.

Muscular Christianity in America is the movement that sets the context in which the sports world was born. After there was a social acceptance of the consistency and coexistence between sports and religion, the sports world would flourish in America. This was a radical departure from views held less than a century before, where play, sports and physical exercise were not accepted as things good in themselves or as the means to attaining any good.

Social Gospel Movement Supports Sport



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During the late 19th century there was a massive expansion and growth of cities with an influx of immigrants. Born at this time in Christian circles were Social Gospel movements, with notable initial proponents at Oberlin College in Ohio. These movements had Christians primarily showing their faith through working to improve conditions in society. They shared with the Muscular Christians of the time a concern for the problem of “the religious sentimentality of a vacillating, flabby, self-indulgent generation” (Putney, 2003, p. 40).

Now notice, crucial for the acceptance of sports by the powerful religious and specifically Christian factions in America, that the Social Gospel advocates as well as many others were together stressing the importance of physical health (Putney, 2003, p. 43). Putney explains that Social Gospelers helped erode the boundaries between sacred and secular and by equating health and manliness with divinity.

The Sudden Professionalization of Sports



SPORTS ILLUSTRATED VAULT

<https://vault.si.com/vault/1963/11/18/we-are-grown-men-playing-a-childs-game>

November 18, 1963 “We are Grown Men Playing a Child’s Game” Gilbert Rogin

And another new phenomenon of late nineteenth century was *professional* sport. What would later be called America’s national pastime, baseball, fielded its first pro team in baseball with the Cincinnati Red Stockings in 1869. The first World Series would take place in 1903. Professional football would not begin until 1921, and college football was played in the early to mid-1800s, with the first official game in 1869, and was second to baseball as the main sport of the country (Putney, 2003, p. 46).

The strongest defenders among Christians of the sports world were the so-called body as temple theologians (based on Scriptures like 1 Corinthians 6:19-20). They read Scripture as praising the body as a vehicle for good. Putney describes their position as one arguing for “the compatibility of health and scripture, the need to glorify



one's body, and the tendencies of health toward goodness and weakness toward evil" (Putney, 2003, p. 56). This is emphasized in 1 Corinthians Chapter 3 and Chapter 6.

Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? 17 If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple. (1 Corinthians 3:16-17)

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? 20 For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

Further Scriptures on the body as something to be valued are from 2 Corinthians Chapters 4 and 5.

But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. (2 Corinthians 4:7)

We know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. (2 Corinthians 5:1)

That the "flesh," not "body," is the focus of warnings and condemnation in the New Testament is reflected in the following three Scriptures.

It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. (John 6:63)

I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. 16 Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. 17 But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells with me. 18 For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. (Romans 7:15-18)

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the spirit. 6 To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to god; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, 8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. (Romans 8:5-8)

There was also a very practical reason for clergy to accept sports, and that was basically that the masses to whom they preached were quite authentically drawn to sport. The clergy had a tough time with their masses in condemning sports, especially when played on Sundays. The clergy came to accept sports as a form of "sympathetic indulgence" to their flocks. There was more compassion than a Scriptural defense by the Christian leaders. Their congregants toiled six days and had one day off. It was a humane gesture to allow workers on their one day off the choice to participate in or watch a ball game. This softening and compromise was the first step to sports taking over Sunday. The door had been opened.



SPORTS ILLUSTRATED VAULT

<https://vault.si.com/vault/1968/05/27/they-cheer-when-the-parson-is-pitching>

May 27, 1968 "They Cheer When the Parson is Pitching Rev. Bob Richards, Twice an Olympic Pole-Vault Winner" Myron Cope

Sports Allowed on Sundays

This was the time when Sunday was relinquished to sports and it basically got out of hand from there, in a way that those at the end of the 19th century could not have imagined in their wildest dreams. They certainly did not foresee a billion dollar sports world where large numbers of people all over the country gather to worship their teams, in person or via media. At this time, “The possibility that recreation might one day crowd out religious worship altogether struck most liberal clergy as too far-fetched” (Putney, 2003, p. 58).

Physical Strength Not Same as Christian Life and Understanding

The major weakness of body as temple theology is that the one who was well built and physically trained could wrongly be assumed to be a (good) Christian, that is, a Christian just by virtue of their physical prowess. This is a major problem that plagues the sports world to this day. Nowadays and for many decades, star athletes are seen as good, moral people just because of their success playing a sport. The argument that a star athlete is therefore a Christian or a moral person is surely fallacious. This point will be abundantly clear to us when we explore several notable hero athletes in the chapters to come.

Bertrand Russell, one of the greatest philosophers of the 20th century, described an inconsistency of muscular Christianity “pedagogy” in the life of a university, a quite insightful point that we will see today in revenue-generating Division I football and basketball at major universities. Russell bemoans the values of sports and athletes as including “anti-intellectualism, insistence on conformity, and equation of might with right” (Putney, 2003, p. 17).

Continuing into the 20th century there was still a strong movement in favor of developing manliness in men and avoiding passivity. In 1906 a representative book on this thinking, a critique of femininity in the churches, was Carl Case’s *The Masculine in Religion* (Putney, 2003, p. 75). And further pushing churches to be more practical and to accommodate the real-life interests of the people in their pews, especially men, they were challenged by the businessman’s absence from church. The businessman was reluctant to “waste time” with lifeless committee work on petty things (Putney, 2003, p. 75). One place that did more to meet these needs of such a man was the lodge.

After 1920, what survived WWI of the Muscular Christianity movement was quite watered down and physical activity and exertion became something to do to simply better oneself in a quite secular sense. Physical education and training was incorporated into general culture and no longer done as a precondition for the Godly works that would follow. A lot of the physical exercise and staying in shape, in other words, became less about serving others and doing good and being a better Christian and instead became a source of personal pleasure and personal benefits from the exercises.

C. Post-Industrial Era 20th century

As we enter the 20th century and the post-industrial world, the sports world began in earnest with institutions built in baseball, football, basketball, soccer, golf, tennis, and many other sports. Especially relevant to the sports world of all the technologies born in the early 20th century were the radio as well as the movie with sound. The general theme seems to be making the audience passive. Once films had sound, passivity was greatly increased, and there would also be a new and very effective way to create “fame” for star actors and actresses, as they were seen by everyone everywhere films were shown. This same basic creation of fame will begin happening in the sports world as well: “. . . with the coming of sound after 1926, the screen talked while the audience grew silent. Moviegoers became private viewers and listeners, individuals in a crowd. The simple fact that millions saw the same film featured in the same week had a profound impact on culture, accelerating the rise and fall of fads and celebrities” (Cross, 2008, p. 25).

The radio was only a hobbyist tool until 1920s, when it became an entertainment appliance in the homes of millions of people. For the sports world, there would now be audiences listening to the call of games they had not witnessed themselves, and teams would develop a following of regular radio listeners. Here we can see the main reason advertisers would get involved in radio, reaching so many people at once with no other way to reach so many, especially with no need for the ability to read as with newspapers but instead allowing for passive listening. One could argue that advertisers started to take over professional sports at this point, in the 1920s. Advertisers would come to this large audience to buy time and grow the radio stations. Radio

also became part of a new culture of what today we would call ‘multitasking,’ as homemakers, children, and husbands *combined* listening to the radio with housework and other domestic chores. (Cross, 2008, p. 26) Radio developed methods of attracting larger audiences with targeted programming, understanding their listeners as preferring different programming at different times given their ages and gender.

When television in the 1950s took over radio’s family format, it built upon many of the strategies started by radio and went farther, providing even more for each age and gender segment to watch over the course of a day’s programming. Even more than radio in the 1930s, television expressed the personal power to experience the world without having to join a crowd. The epitome of this for sports television was the so-called greatest game ever played in 1958 between the NY Giants and the Baltimore Colts. Televisions took over homes in the 1950s in a quite radical way, and by the end of the decade most families would have a television set. Cross explains that while in 1950, only 9 percent of American homes had television, four years later, the figure had reached 55 percent. By 1967, 95 percent had at least one set. That year, Americans watched an average of five hours of television per day (Cross, 2008, p. 26).

Television viewing changed dramatically since the 1950s, especially with the emergence of multiple-TV households and at the end of the 20th century a proliferation of cable channels. Radios and televisions ultimately separated families once families had more than one television or radio in the house. Once that was the case, family members no longer had to share space or spend time together (Cross, 2008, p. 26). And developments of new media technologies in the 20th and into the 21st century were led by the personal computer, Cross citing as crucial the development of the personal computer with the introduction of the Mac and Windows in 1983 and the introduction of the Internet browser in 1994 (Cross, 2008, p. 27).



SPORTS ILLUSTRATED VAULT

<https://vault.si.com/vault/1962/01/08/the-bizarre-history-of-american-sport>
January 8, 1962 “The Bizarre History of American Sport” Robert H. Boyle

Conclusion

In this initial chapter we made our entrance into the “sports world.” We roughly defined “world” as a special area of interest involving related occupations. Then we defined the “sports world” in three ways. First by definition made up of three elements: competition, institution, and gross physical activity. We elaborated upon each of these three elements, including the example of the institution of American football and how it overcame its first initial major crisis with brutality culminating in 1906 with the invention of the NCAA. We also saw how Teddy Roosevelt distinguishes between the critic spectator and the participant or “Man in the Arena.” The second major way of defining the sports world is by focusing on sport as a mass spectator form of entertainment. In this sense, sport is first and foremost the entertainment business. Necessary for a sport as a business is a League structure including owners, managers, players, and a commissioner. Also, the sports world is especially powerful because of the natural alliances that exist in society that feed off of and collaborate with those in the sports world. Finally, sports are not real life and treating it as such is called “sports-think.” The third way of understanding the “sports world” is historically. We saw that the sports world is born in the 1800s during the industrial revolution. Key to this happening included more leisure time, the YMCA, and the movement of Muscular Christianity. Sports were professionalized, notably with the national pastime of baseball leading the way. The key moral justification for sports was one based on positive moral character development, including a distinction between the body and the flesh in interpreting the Bible.

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