

Abstract for the Annual Meeting of the British Association for the Philosophy of Sport 2006

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Doping under medical control: conceptually possible but impossible in the world of professional sports?

Professor Soren Holm

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Abstract

One of the arguments in the debate about whether or not the current blanket ban on doping in sports should be lifted is that if the ban is lifted it will be possible to have doping under medical control. If doping becomes legitimate there is no longer a need for sportspersons to hide that they are using doping and no longer a need for doctors to hide that they are prescribing doping. This would, according to the argument, entail a number of positive consequences: 1) that the sportsperson can access impartial medical advice about the effectiveness and side-effects of different doping methods and can therefore make a more informed decision, 2) that side-effects of doping are picked up more quickly and dealt with more effectively, and 3) that it will be possible to collect reliable information about the effects and side-effects of different doping techniques because sportspersons and sports doctors will be able to share their experiences.

In this paper I will critically analyse this argument and show that it is very unlikely that these positive effects will occur as a general phenomenon across all, or even most sports and doping techniques. I will mainly focus the analysis on the situation facing the professional sportsperson, but some of the arguments and conclusions will also apply to non-professional sportspersons that are part of, for instance, national teams.

Sport and Transition.

Lev Kreft

Abstract

The differences and tensions between concepts of “sport” and “physical culture”, both born to cover a universal field of more or less the same phenomena, are many. They sometimes erupt in serious conceptual, ideological and cultural prestigious battles. As all the battles of that kind, those involved tend to put on some additional clothes, as those of “Anglo-Saxon sport” vs. “Continental physical culture”, “Bourgeois sport” vs. “Proletarian physical culture”, or, old surpassed “physical culture” vs. new progressive “sport”. These and other costumography cannot hide that “sport” and “physical culture”, in spite of these differences and fights, cannot exist without each other, and that their opposition is part of conceptual binaries and contradictions of modernity.

The transition from socialist atavist physical culture to market spectacle and civil society sport represents a special historical case of these battles and contradictions. Socialist ideology of physical culture and sport, however differs from state to state in its final exhausted stage of the 1980s, but included at least three common sources and features taken from previous history of modernity reshaped in accordance with all-embracing, originally totalitarian ideology:

- **enlightenment** with its idea of unending progress towards perfection;
- **competitive nationalism** with its will to win, exceed and dominate;
- **ultimate human freedom** with universally developed human being, including perfect balance of body and soul, as the desirable end and purpose.

In other words, socialist ideology of sport still belonged to grand narratives of modernity. In Slovenia, after Yugoslav self-management socialist ideology of physical culture, transition introduced insecurity and ambiguity about the whole discourse of sport and sport sciences. It was clear that “physical culture” was not sustainable as a universal approach any more. Starting from sport as a universal concept, new concepts and ideologies emerged, some of them more or less simply substituting “physical culture” with “sport”, and others eliminating physical culture discourse all together, or at least subjecting it to the rule of global sport ideology. We can take writings of Silvo Kristan and Roman Vodeb as examples of these insecurities and ambiguities, and of theoretical ambitions to put things in their right place again. As philosophy of sport in Slovenia, and perhaps in some other “new countries” of socialist origin, is in its initial phase, to study transition from one general ideology of sport to another might be a revealing and inspiring challenge, especially because in sport sciences it is sometimes expected that philosophy of sport can and should provide better concepts, and thus help to establish a new ideology of sport and of sport sciences.

Defining the Human: On reaching an ethical judgement about genetic technology in sport.

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Abstract

There has been significant interest and dialogue on the possible application of genetic technology in sport, specifically elite sport and individual athletes, as exemplified by media commentary and speculation. The arrival of such technology and the ethical questions that arise from its application often provokes discussion on the concept of human itself. Once such a definition has been formulated it is often believed the answers to the ethical questions will become clear. Generally such discussion focuses upon the issue of whether being human is dependent on the composition of pre-determined organic matter that has arisen from natural selection, or whether there is an essence of the human which is non-material or non-physical and therefore the physical form which this takes can be concluded to be irrelevant.

This paper aims to explore the problems associated with defining what it is to be human as it is this concept upon which many of the ethical debates surrounding the application of genetic technology to humans rest. Typically conventional methods which attempt to formulate necessary and sufficient conditions will be contrasted with alternative approaches to this problem. This includes Haraway's resistance to polar opposites that encompass terms such as 'human' and 'machine', Heidegger's concept of *Being* and understanding of *Dasein*, and Ryle's formulation of a category-mistake. This is complemented with Wittgenstein's notion of 'attitude' and concludes with the thought that the concept of human is not one that necessarily needs to be formally defined. Moreover, any attempt to do so may hinder our ability to (re)solve the philosophical problems that often arise from traditional discussion on what it is to be human, including the associated concerns that surface alongside the development of genetic technology and its application within sport.

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A philosophy of exposition to intolerance.

Brian Charles

Abstract

The victims of violence in the practice of sport could contribute to its' demise by promoting a philosophy of victims for change. Their anonymous data supply, its collection and representation on the Internet, and through other mediums, could increase public awareness of participant violence in sport and the need to reduce it. Case file violence in specific sports, in individual countries, and their localities could provide powerful data for change in place and by sport and society, at any spatial scale. The "exposé" of sport violence and those who instigate it to the level of the club may not only touch the conscience of the perpetrator and those associated with sport in any capacity, but also, many people in the wider community beyond the arena and social construct that is sport. A philosophy of "exposition to intolerance" to combat violence in sport was suggested at the 2004 British Philosophy of Sport Association Annual Conference in *Brian Charles Violence in Rugby Union and a review of institutional responsibilities for protection and redress of Rugby Union players*, and in particular, an exposure of sport violence by "the design of an interactive website - www.sportnotviolence.org - that may encourage many sports, and those that govern them to look introspectively at their very ethos, future practices, development, global standard disciplinary control, commercial and moral integrity, and their image in the wider community."

With evidence, I would like to document the emergence of a philosophy of "exposition to intolerance" by two National Rugby Unions, using the Internet as their medium. I would like to reiterate and expand upon previous ideas, that as yet, have not been developed by those that govern sport to strike out violent practice in sport with the proper use of available and projected information, and not only in rugby union. The Crown Prosecution Service London Crime in Sport Conference of the 3rd of June 2005 attracted the interest of the media, but those who govern ethics and equity in sport did not attend. Britain could lead the legal and social reform of violence in sport, with or without victim involvement.

Gross disparities do exist in sport specific insurance cover and compensation worldwide. The arguments and the practicalities of alternative, commercially competitive, tiered, equitable, international sport specific insurance policies, designed by world governing sport bodies as a part of globalisation and process, the drives for equity in sport within its universalism, and often, irrespective of other polarities in place, will be discussed.

Governments could use sport as a discourse and vehicle to influence the construction of ethical and moral values in society through education at an early age. Those who govern sport could see commercial value in the investment and promotion of fair play policies that can shape the development of their sports and their popularity. The generational inheritance of valued morals in sport could reduce violence amongst us in society. This is a philosophy of a future for sport and a role it could play in our lives that goes beyond violence and its intolerance, but also to the core of ourselves, testing our understanding of equality and morality, and our desires for the type of society we wish to live in. This idea is projected within the paper.

Should Sports Stars hold a Special Responsibility to Behave in a Moral Manner?

Kevin Dixon and Jim Golby, University of Teesside

Abstract

Sport as a popular social practice holds a dominant position within society, and sports stars themselves are held in high admiration (Arnold 1992; Wellman, 2003; Guilinotti 2000; Cashmore and Parker 2003; Woolridge 2002; Butcher 1998; Harris 1994). As a consequence of this, the behaviour of sports stars has become a strongly contested area of social debate (Turner 1989; Parkinson 2001; Greechan 2001; Wood and Hughes 2001; Lines 2001). The focus of such arguments will inevitably reflect social attitudes towards the subject of morality. Within the literature a variety of authors (Brown *et al* 2003; Turner 1989; Parkinson 2001; Wellman 2003) have made reference to a particularly dominant social position; a position which suggests that those worthy of public admiration (i.e. the sports star) should be judged on their actions in life as well as at work. For example, if the sports star abstains from or performs a morally significant action then it is often presumed that they are deserving of a particular type of response (be that praise / resentment / blame). This paper will examine, from different ethical perspectives, a) if elite sportsmen and women do have duties and responsibilities above and beyond other people, and b) examine the source, if any, of that additional responsibility.

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Show me how you move and I will tell you who you are

Irena Martínková, PhD.

Abstract

We, as human beings, are always bodily beings and therefore situatedness and movement are inseparable from us (e.g. Heidegger's Dasein – being-there, and Patočka's moving corporeity). Unfortunately, we do not give our movement and its quality much attention. When we do, it is usually when we are learning new movements or when we are in pain. We also notice certain things, for example, strange movements if they are very visible; and also much information comes to us subconsciously, for example, when we have a strange feeling about someone without really knowing why. However, though we move all the time, our movement is generally a non-thematic means of reaching our various aims. But our movement is much more than a means for certain ends. Every move we make is a manifestation of the whole of ourselves. Through our movement we give out much information about ourselves, often without realizing it. This manifestation is not only at the level of body-language, which has become a popular topic and which is often used for the improvement of self-image, gaining profit and so forth, but this manifestation regards the whole of ourselves, how we are as well as relations outside of us. In this way, we can also say that our movement is ourselves.

Manifestations of movement can be seen in many ways: we can “read” a lot from the movement of others, while at the same time others can learn many things about us (if they understand our manifestations), however, we can also learn much about ourselves through the inspection and feeling of our own movement. Like this, our communication and care of ourselves can become more profound than it generally is. Though for a human being this understanding of movement can be a precious source of information, he / she can do without it. However, it is something that should lie at the core of the teaching of physical education and coaching, so that a PE teacher and a coach can understand and support the whole moving human being, not only apply partial movements to his / her students.

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Eugenic practices – genetic treatments: A different way to elevate the Olympic Winner? A new ethical dilemma arises”.

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Abstract

The main purpose of this paper is to investigate and detect the positive and negative options that come out as a result of the technological progress' invasion in the world of Sports. Transhumanism is a new philosophical theory which allows and encourages the use of technology (genetic treatment and eugenics) in order to live in a better way. On the other hand there is Olympism, which represents the values and ethos of harmony and balance in body and mind and spirit. Is it possible for these two philosophies to be combined? What are the ethical problems that result of using these methods?

This paper examines the thesis that IOC has adopted for the phenomenon of gene doping and what are the measure that will be taken to protect Olympism. IOC's thesis is really important as far as we consider that IOC is the one who configures and – finally – imposes the framework in which athletic endeavor takes place. Also we have to investigate if there are any legal provisions or safety valves in order to avoid negative phenomena like cyborg – athletes. Through this study we are trying to focus on the ethical and practical dilemmas that arise considering the principles of the two philosophies – Olympism and Transhumanism- and the interaction between them. Have human rights been affected by the use of technology in the field of Sports?

As ethical and philosophical issues arise, the Scientific Community has to determine the boundaries of human performance and IOC has to suggest the legal framework through which Sports will remain integral.

Maybe the evolution of Eugenics is the normal route to reach human perfection; however, this evolution has to be smooth and gradual, without any economic and social motivations. Human will – especially the athletes' – has to remain free as they express the Olympic Ideal.

Did Danish Cyclist Knud Enemark Jensen's Die from Doping During the 1960 Rome Olympics?

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Abstract

The linguistic turn in philosophy has brought the problem of truth to the fore of historiography. This has led a number of writers to suggest that there is no truth in history. This paper aims to challenge this view through a study of the Danish cyclist Knud Enemark Jensen at the Olympic Games in Rome 1960.

On the opening day of the 1960 Olympics, the 23-year-old Danish racing cyclist Knud Enemark Jensen became sick and fell off his bicycle during the team time-trials. An ambulance was called, but he was beyond rescue. That much we know. We also know that it was a terribly hot day with temperatures above 40 degrees Celsius. What is not known for certain is why he died. Through the literature on the history of doping it is often mentioned that Jensen died from amphetamines and this fatality prompted a more serious response from politicians and sporting bodies. While evidence suggests that the incident did prove something of a catalyst for firming up anti-doping policy, I will show, that the oft-repeated claim that Jensen's death was caused by doping is in fact unfounded. Although it is a serious allegation that Jensen was using amphetamines none of those claiming it make the effort to provide evidence to support their 'knowledge'. The reason for this may be that rumours have acquired status of public knowledge. So it is circulated in scientific literature as a fact. In other words, there seems to be a socially constructed 'truth' about Jensen's death. If we accept the idea that truth is a social construction holding the view that there is no Truth with a capital T, it would not matter what was claimed about the cause of his death. However, on the basis of a reading of the accessible sources I will try to substantiate that that there is a truth with a capital T. Maybe we are unlikely to fully discover it. But I will argue that we can approach it through interpretation of evidence, and suggest that the purpose of (historical) science must be a search for truth.

Fair play or victories? The dilemmas of government sponsored sport institutions

Ask Vest Christiansen

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Abstract

The revelations of systematic doping in international cycling in the late 1990s proved as a catalyst for the foundation of the World Anti Doping Agency. From that moment doping was something both politicians and sports organisations officially had to take a clear stand on. Establishing a hard line anti-doping profile became a central feature of image management. Consequently; athletes who tested positive were severely punished and ostracised by their organisations.

Government sponsored elite-sport organisations found it especially necessary to instigate a clear anti-doping profile in order to retain the favour with the state and their sponsors. This, however, have put these organisations in a dilemma. On the one hand, they need to pursue a tough policy on doping while on the other, their *raison d'etre* is to create internationally competitive athletes and results. Government sponsorship of elite athletes therefore require a delicate balancing act: it must promote national competitiveness while supporting, or appearing to support, the campaign against performance enhancing drugs. As this paper will illustrate this leads to conflicts between the ideals which the organisations pay tribute and wish to represent in public on the one hand, and the way they act internally in real-life circumstances on the other. In other words, the organisations are situated in a dilemma between the will to purity and the will to victory.

With a distinction between the two analytical terms *the essence of sport* and *the spirit of sport* as point of departure, the paper gives three examples as to how this dilemma has emerged in Danish elite cycling. The first deals with cooperation with the Italian coach and physician Dr. Luigi Cecchini, the second with paying other cyclists for help, and the third with offering caffeine tablets to young prospective riders.

The sources for the analysis consist partly of newspaper articles, books and official documents and partly of long interviews with more than thirty Danish elite racing cyclists. Although the material this paper draws on originates from a Danish context, the dilemma in question can be found in most other countries where elite sport is an important part of the national identity.

Making a Comeback

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Abstract

Why is the drama of a comeback in sports so captivating? Why do we rise to our feet in jubilation, sometimes close to tears, when the momentum of a sporting event shifts and our hopes are rekindled? Why do even those who do not witness these comebacks first-hand find the retelling of the overcoming of odds by individual athletes (human and nonhuman) and teams so compelling? In this paper I explore the issue of the comeback in sport and examine the various levels of its appeal.

Sport has been likened to an arena in which our own psycho-dramas are played out in symbolic form. In keeping with this I will explore how and why the identities and aspirations of individuals, communities, and even broader audiences are reflected in the comeback in sport. Whether it be the recent heroics of a Liverpool soccer team, the return of the injured race horse Seabiscuit during the Depression, the reversal of the boxer Joe Louis's earlier loss to Max Schmelling in a time of racial discrimination and a Nazi threat, or the return of adventurers given up for lost, the comeback resonates in us.

At some point in our lives we all seek to return from a setback. Whether the circumstance be ill health, economic woes, grief, moral failure, or some other deficit, we find ourselves in the down position. We hope for momentum shifts in our own lives. We seek reversal and/or redemption. I suggest that this common experience helps account for our admiration of others who have beaten the odds in sport. Sport is a venue where we draw inspiration and hope. Furthermore, in sport we see how both effort and unforeseen contingencies play significant roles in the reversal of fortune. Both our works and unexpected grace in the form of contributions by others play roles in the drama of sport and in the drama of our own lives.

In addition to the particular challenges that are distributed among us unevenly, we share in common the looming horizon of death. In the contest for survival death ultimately wins. Furthermore, according to Martin Heidegger, human existence as being-toward death is accompanied by an ineluctable, horizontal *awareness* of finitude. In the contest of the universal experience of death, we are captivated by the stories of those who come back from the brink of death. So too in sport we encounter the unexpected resurgence of those on the brink of defeat and elimination. Might these comebacks in sport resonate at a deep level with a desire to stave off our own mortality? In sport, we admire the comeback, but we especially remember those reversals that end in triumph. At a deep, and perhaps inchoate level, might the appeal of the dramatic comeback in sport be linked to a hope for the ultimate reversal of fortune?

Play, Performance, and the Docile Athlete

Leslie A. Howe

Abstract

Athletes often speak of themselves and their bodies in markedly Cartesian terms, and critics such as Susan Bordo have commented on some of the more extreme manifestations of this, especially as a quest for control over irrational corporeality. Similarly, Michel Foucault outlined a highly influential perspective on the disciplining of the human body and a compelling story about the effort to wrest a truth of individuals through the exercise of bodily practices. I want to argue that much of this analysis, while persuasive and productive, is misapplied to the sport situation *if* it is done so without taking account of some crucial distinctions.

The athlete submits to various regimes of physical and mental training that become progressively more elaborate and demanding as he or she continues to develop expertise in a given sport, and these regimes are directed to both self-discipline and the production of a narrowly defined set of bodily movements. In this process the athlete also absorbs a code of behaviours and comportment appropriate to the micro-society of his or her sport. One learns to become one's self as a practitioner of a set of sport-disciplines: the athlete-self is thus constructed by external "micro-powers" internalised by the subject who so "discovers" his or her "true self": the docile athlete, to adapt Foucault's phrase.

The problem with this picture is not that it is false, but that it is incomplete. It may with some reservations be said to characterise sport-*training*, and in many instances *performance*, particularly in the more rigidly movement-codified sports (e.g., gymnastics). But what it overlooks is the central sport experience of *play*. I offer a preliminary account of how play, as the lived project of an intentional embodiment directed toward subjective and intersubjective expression, provides the counterpoint to the critique of sport as totalising technical discipline. While play may presuppose a significant background of training and discipline, it is also a noncompellable spontaneity. As such, it resists complete submergence under the discipline that conditions its expression, and in some instances may be seen as enabling an explicit subversion of programmatic performance.

Aesthetics and art in sport

Stephen Mumford

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Abstract

Since David Best's work in the 1970's (cf. 'The Aesthetic in Sport' and 'Sport is not Art') a standard has been that sport is not, and can never be, art. I intend to re-examine this debate.

In the first place it is agreed that aesthetic value can be found in sport, both in terms of physical movement but also higher-order beauty in strategy and tactics. I agree with Best, however, that aesthetic value is not a sufficient condition for art. Best has a definition of art that he argues does not apply to sport. I say that this definition is either overly restrictive or can indeed apply to sport. A key battleground that remains is the number of disanalogies that Best claims there to be between sport and art.

Sport is likened by some observers to unscripted theatre. Best responds that defeat or injury only happens to the character on the stage, not to the actors, whereas in sport people do suffer real defeats and real injuries. I argue that there is a sense in which sport can involve adopting a role. Team-mates in national sides, for example, can become adversaries in club sides. These adversaries may be perfectly good friends off the sporting field but have to adopt a role for the sport, even to the point where they are prepared to risk injuring their friends in order for the game to be won. After the game the adversarial role can be dropped and the friendship unaltered. Analogously, a drama may require the actors to be adversaries, even to the point where a physical injury occurs: A may have to give B a real slap across the face for it to look convincing. The actors, like the sportspeople, accept that the injury is not administered to the adversary *qua* person but to the adversary *qua* opponent. In both cases, however, extreme acts of violence may be interpreted as acts against the person rather than acts against the role and therefore produce appropriate indignation.

In sport, the aesthetic values are also said to be incidental while they are essential in standard cases of art. This is contentious because it ignores the evident fact that many sports are spectator sports and dependent for their rules and evolution on the responses of the spectators. A sport may undergo rule changes specifically to make it a more pleasing spectacle rather than, for example, to make it more physically demanding. Some of the reasons why a sport is regarded as entertaining can be understood as aesthetic reasons, and with a broad enough conception, all such reasons can. As there is a link between such aesthetic values and the existence and nature of the sport, sometimes sport can correctly be described as art.

No Line to Draw? Performance-enhancement and Moral Particularism

Leon Culbertson.

Abstract

The notion of drawing a line is a prominent feature of literature on the moral evaluation of performance-enhancement practices. This paper draws on the later work of G. P. Baker, exploring his interpretation of Wittgenstein's use of the terms 'picture' and 'conception' to argue that the notion of drawing a line is a picture or conception with which we often operate when engaged in moral evaluation. This is a central feature of *both* 'everyday' moral evaluation *and* much literature in ethics and ethics of sport (not only deontology). The paper argues that the notion of drawing a line creates a false and misleading picture, which leads us to want to say 'everything on this side of the line is okay, and everything on the other side is objectionable.' By drawing a line, or simply by thinking that that is what we need to do, we require a generalisation. It is this generalisation that is the mistake – it leads us irrecoverably astray. We need to abandon the picture of drawing a line in our moral evaluation of action and belief.

If the notion of drawing a line has no place in moral evaluation of action or belief, then this raises an interesting question for the relationship between ethics and practices where a line must be drawn. For example in medicine it is continually necessary to draw and re-drawn the line in relation to moral matters. The same is true of research ethics, law and policies on performance-enhancement in sport. It is therefore not possible to argue that along with a rejection of the notion of drawing a line as a basis for moral evaluation of action and belief, we must reject the practice of drawing a line as a *guide* to moral action in *some* situations. It is quite clear that from a practical point of view it is still necessary to draw a line in such situations. However, this brings into question the idea that concrete moral reasoning is *purely* the domain of philosophy (cf. Williams' *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*). The moral evaluation of an action or belief is one thing, but the formulation of policy in relation to moral matters is another thing altogether. The notion that policy on moral matters *can be* formulated on the basis of the best way to morally evaluate actions and beliefs is mistaken. The two are separate spheres, one practical (policy) and the other philosophical/ethical (the moral evaluation of action and belief). This calls into question the idea that policy *should* be formulated on ethical grounds in such a way that those grounds would stand philosophical scrutiny. In reality, policy is *necessarily* formulated on *practical* grounds, which entail a 'best fit' approach. This matches policy to general moral principles in the best way generality allows. Perhaps the answer is to take the policy (and therefore its underlying principles) as a weak guide, but require consideration of the specifics of the case at hand. A key point of the paper, however, is to argue that while such an approach may be necessary in relation to policy, we should not make the mistake of concluding that such an approach should be applied to the moral evaluation of action and belief. The paper applies this position to clarify what I take to be confusions in the literature on performance-enhancement policies in sport.

The Hero in Victory and Loss

Ivo Jirásek

Abstract

Every game and every competition (including sport) contains the strain from the possibilities of winning and losing as their constitutive component. The first part of this paper is occupied with the so called “agon-motive”, that is the principle of social being as distinguished by interpersonal rivalry and by the process of the acceptance of challenges. It calls attention to the distinctions between military agon and sport agon and their possible transformations. The second part of the text is occupied with the distinction between reaching for the victory by “rivalry” (antagonism, the encounter with another personality, the looking for the answer to the question as to who of those competing is better) and “perfectionism” (the questioning over the fact of who is the best and after the competition for which a record of its value has been made). The value of victory is not bad in and of itself, if it carries the ethos of equal chances. It is, however, necessary to distinguish the phenomenon of victory from the phenomenon of “victory at all costs”. Such adoration of victory, such overriding of victory over any other values (health, respectable competition and so on) is a sign of the leaving of the ideal of a harmonious personality. The archetype of a hero is changing and from Homer’s gritty hero connecting physical force in harmony with intellect and a big heart it has come to the contemporary image of a unidimensional hero concentrating on the instrumental use of human corporeality with the goal of achieving victory. Hence it is important to evoke the values of losing, to highlight a meaning which is lost on those who look upon it from a superficial point of view. The ability needed for the obtainment of heroic victory could be understood by use of the following terms: the ambivalence of the Greek *arête* (capability as a moral value) and the Latin term *virtus* (efficiency as power and strength). That is why the end part of the paper is an analysis of the antique ideal *arête*, manifesting itself in *kalokagathia* pedagogy and practical realization in the form of *paideia*.

In the Zone: How the Confident Athlete Exemplifies Aristotelian Virtue

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Abstract

When a competitive athlete considers his or her performance as a subjective experience, the single most important factor in determining the success or failure of that performance is often confidence. Confidence is elusive, and yet somehow and to some degree the result of preparation and willpower; confidence is very often the index of the most exhilarating and frustrating moments of an athlete's career; confidence can come and go in a flash, in the same individual and often in the same performance; confidence is necessary not only for peak performance, but also for sustained participation in the competitive engagement. Although more of a mental phenomenon than physical, it works through the bodily expression: like sports itself, it represents a bridge between the body and the mind.

The phenomenology of confidence in the athlete serves as an excellent model for the Aristotelian notion of moral virtue (*arête*) and happiness (*eudaimonia*). My paper hopes to elucidate these points; if successful, the discussion will show the many parallels between athletic excellence and virtue theory in a manner that is mutually revealing. My discussion will be organized around the following points:

1. The Golden Mean: Aristotelian virtue is a median disposition of a natural emotion, such as fear or anger—it is not a uniform response to every possible situation, but rather an adaptable disposition. In similar fashion, confidence is some kind of balance between or integration of two elements: relaxation and intensity. Either by itself destroys peak performance, but it is not easy to find this balance, especially in the face of an antagonist who is trying to destroy confidence.
2. Teleology: Aristotle's analysis of practical agency, begun in the very first line of the Nicomachean Ethics, reveals a teleological structure of all human agency. A *telos* is not merely a purpose or a goal, however, it is a metaphysical principle of action. In fact, according to Aristotelian metaphysics, it is the first cause of action in the intentional order. Confident athletes are often said to be able to visualize success (they can "see" themselves hitting the ball right, before executing their action, for example)—this turns out to be not merely pop psychology, but rather a profound commentary on the nature of time and causality.
3. Freedom: Aristotle teaches us that there are two types of human freedom: that which is wishable and that which is choosable. One must never confuse these spheres, or one shall forfeit one's freedom. Aristotle tells us, for example, that happiness cannot be chosen, although one can make choices that lead to happiness. In a similar manner one cannot simply decide to be confident; it is a misunderstanding of the nature and experience of real confidence to try to do so (and might very well hinder the competitor's need for relaxation). Confidence is something of an attunement between one's mind and emotions, on the one hand, and one's developed performative skills (muscular memory) on the other – again very much like the development of good habits

Skill in Sport- Are we Hung -Up?

Paul Davis.

Abstract

In a recent paper¹, I challenged the notion that the goal of games is skilful interchange. And I concluded an earlier paper with the prescription that “the competitive interests of the effortless and silken should not dictate that we change rules to disfavour the sweaty and determined.”² Here, I attempt to expand upon the preceding. I propose, specifically, that a raft of legitimate anxieties about the structural integrity of sport, alongside a familiar theory of games, has helped incite two overlapping but separate responses: (i) an unduly dominant normative role in sport for skill, and (ii) an overly narrow conception of skill. I recommend that we both extend typical conceptions of skill and abandon the temptation towards sport’s normative reduction to skill.

The preceding, familiar theory of games, in which Morgan rests some ideological hope³, is Suits’s theory that games are the voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles.⁴ The preceding, legitimate anxieties are several, overlapping, and probably increasing in number. They include:

- Fear of an overweening, quantitative paradigm of sport excellence
- Fear of insufficiently or inappropriately anchored attitudes towards rule-breaking and to the content of rules, ratified in theories such as Conventionalism⁵, the Regimentation Thesis⁶, and even Formalism
- Fear of putatively inappropriate performance-enhancing devices, such as drugs and genetic modification
- Fear of sport’s co-optation into the instrumentalist paradigm of capitalism, against which games are essentially equipped (as Morgan urges)⁷ to offer an oppositional moment
- Fear of sport’s commercial co-optation, especially its alleged capitulation to what Hargreaves has called the “sponsorship-advertising-media axis”⁸
- Fear of sport’s co-optation into the isms, such as racism and sexism
- Fear of the exaggeration of a narrow range of virtues, such as courage in the face of pressure⁹

¹ Davis, P. “Game Strengths,” *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport*, XXXIII(1) (2006)

² Davis, P. “Boxill’s Stylish Ambiguity,” *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport*, XXVI (1999), p. 94

³ Morgan, W.J. *Leftist Theories of Sport: A Critique and Reconstruction* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1994)

⁴ Suits, B. “The Elements of Sport”, in Morgan, W.J. and Meier, K.V., *Philosophic Inquiry in Sport* (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 1995), pp. 11-15 (esp. pp. 11-13)

⁵ For articulation and brief discussion of conventionalism and formalism, see Simon, R. “Broad Internalism in Sport”, *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport*, XXVII (2000), pp. 1-9

⁶ See D’Agostino, F. “The Ethos of Games”, in Morgan, W.J. and Meier, K.V., *Philosophic Inquiry in Sport* (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 1988), pp. 63-72, esp. pp. 65-6

⁷ *Ibid.*, various

⁸ Hargreaves, J. *Sport, Power, and Culture* (Oxford: Polity, 1986). On sport and television in particular, see Morgan (*ibid.*), pp. 229-50.

- Fear of sport's aesthetic desecration
- Fear that the preceding undermine the internal goods of sport

The total literature of able writers on the above anxieties is massive, itself sufficient testimony to their legitimacy. But it is tempting to glissade from their recognition to normative conceptions of sport that are impoverished in ways different from the conceptions (or nonconceptions) that underpin the outcomes we are rightly worried about. The undue normative pre-eminence of skill constitutes such an impoverishment, an impoverishment reinforced if accompanied by an unduly narrow conception of skill. I recommend that we try to find skill in sport more liberally than we typically do, and that we divest skill of the normative primacy that is regularly claimed for it in sport.

⁹ See Dixon, N. "On Winning and Athletic Superiority", *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport*, XXVI (1999), pp. 10-26, esp. pp. 21-2.

Sport and Biotechnology: The increasing space between ideals and fears

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Abstract

Developments within biotechnology and genomics have raised a variety of (sport) philosophical and (sport-) ethical discussions. In particular, the prospect of genetically enhancing athletic performance ('gene doping') has been widely discussed (cf. Miah, 2004; Tamburrini & Tännsjö, 2005). The promises that are generated by the sciences of biotechnology and (nutri)genomics raise exciting philosophical questions and speculations about the future of humanity in general, as well as about sport related issues regarding the fair game and the complex interactions between the 'natural' and the 'artificial' in elite sport (van Hilvoorde, Vos & De Wert, 2006). Meanwhile, some of the discussions have past the stage of mere speculation. Recently, the German coach Thomas Springstein has been charged because emails were discovered in which he asked for the gene therapeutic (and still experimental) medicine Repoxygen (the so-called 'EPO-gene').

Notwithstanding the application of genetic enhancement in elite sport, one can observe, however, a certain gap between (sport-)philosophical discussions, utopian and dystopian scenarios on the one hand, and the promises that are generated by genetic science itself on the other hand. In this paper I will first discuss a project on sport and biotechnology in which scientists, athletes and sport organizations collaborated and in which four potential applications of biotechnology (prevention, selection, therapy and enhancement) were further discussed (van Hilvoorde & Pasveer, 2005). In the discussion on each potential application we observed a specific lack of interaction between ethical discussion and empirical (sport, medical and genetic) practices. For example, discussing the possible introduction of 'gene doping' just in terms of abstract ('transhumanist') ideals ('overcoming the limitations of human nature') or fears ('the new eugenics') obscures some of the crucial ethical and empirical questions concerned (cf. McNamee, 2005). 'Jumping ahead' of the empirical practices and cases, so I will argue, ignores and underestimates the amount of work and organization that still needs to be done in order to really 'genetisize' the world of elite sport.

This also holds true for the discussion on the selective use of gene technology. I will further question the possible bridging between the actual practices of scouting and selection, the possible use of gene technology to select athletic talents and what it means to have a right to an 'open future'. By means of concrete cases of prenatal selection I will further claim that the sport philosophical discussion on gene technology in sport needs to have a closer empirical look at the actual possibilities and impossibilities of genetic science.

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The inadequacy of 'Gender' as an emancipatory concept

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Abstract

The sex/gender bifurcation has served a number of functions; the most immediate was to provide means to challenge the hierarchical relationships that subordinate women to men (Hird 2000). However the work of recent feminists such as Butler, Grosz and Gatens, casts uncertainty on the validity of the sex/gender distinction. Feminists have embraced the sex/gender distinction as a way of providing women with liberation through gender role choice. The concept of 'gender' was originally embraced by feminists as a critical tool to challenge female oppression. Gender is predominantly used to refer to social behaviours and characteristics associated with biological sex. Yet as Howard and Hollander (1997: 10) note, "there is substantially less agreement on exactly what this statement means". Alongside questions concerning the meaning of the concept 'gender', which it can be argued is based on a number of spurious dichotomies, Prokhovnik (1999: 108) crucially notes that the promise of a multiplicity of gender – roles made by the sex/gender distinction is illusory and remains fallacious. Despite the ever growing body of work aimed at problematising the sex/gender dichotomy and the critical analysis of gender as an emancipatory term, a large body of feminist research in sport is nevertheless determined by a gender-blind model of equality. Indeed, I will argue that investment in the term 'gender' has led to the neutralisation of sexual difference and the desire for sex blind equality. I will examine the suggestion that this desired neutrality is not neutrality at all but what Gatens (1996: 17) refers to as "a 'masculinization' or 'normalization' (in a society where men are seen as the norm, the standard) of women – a making of 'woman' into 'man'".

This paper will outline and critically assess some of the conceptual problems and limitations of investing in 'gender' as an emancipatory concept. I will argue that feminist theory has falsely relied upon the sex/gender distinction as an analytical tool used to examine the relationship between gender and subjectivity. It is my intention to problematise the dichotomous nature of the sex/gender distinction which fails to capture the diversity of subjectivity or recognise the interrelations between body, mind and emotion (Prokhovnik 1999). Furthermore, I will argue that mainstream sports feminists continue to work within the sex/gender dichotomy and resultantly feminisms only solutions for female athletes have been "to become honorary men or to retreat into the motherhood of 'natural' sexual difference" (Prokhovnik 1999: 158).

TALENT DEVELOPMENT IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION: A CRITIQUE

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(from 1 April, School of Education, Roehampton University, UK)

Abstract

The UK government has invested an enormous amount of funding in the support and education of 'Gifted and Talented' pupils in all curriculum subjects in schools (DFEE, 1999). It has also earmarked considerable resources, as part of its *Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links* initiative (DfES / DCMS, 2003), specifically directed towards Talent Development in Physical Education. Together, these schemes mean that to the development of talented pupils in physical education has a uniquely privileged position in British schools. This paper discusses two themes that have remained somewhat implicit throughout the development of this initiative. First, an interesting feature of the debate on this subject is the almost total lack of consideration, or even mention, of learning in physical education, as an area of the school curriculum. Both practitioner and academic discussion and policy documentation is premised on the presumption that the outcome of the curricular talent development in physical education process is elite, adult representative sport. In other words, this aspect of school physical education is understood purely in terms of the performance of a select few, usually after they complete their formal schooling. Second, the vision of talent development presented is one in which the system seeks to detect, and of then protect those destined for elite performance. Talent, within this discourse, is understood as a fixed entity, which is largely stable and generalised. This paper argues that neither of these presumptions is defensible. It hypothesises reasons why these two themes are so widely held, and proposes empirical and philosophical grounds for abandoning them, in favour of a model of practice that is both equitable and rational.

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A character education in Physical Education and sports based on teacher talk and reflection

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Abstract

Though the NC guidelines in England and Wales require that all teachers take seriously the moral development of their pupils (NCPE, 1999:8), there is little offered in the way of guidance as to how they ought to go about this task. This is not to say that many PE teachers are not already engaged in this process. As the findings of my small scale study of *exceptional* PE teachers shows, some most definitely are. However, the important work these “sorts” of teachers are already doing in this area tends to be diminished or misrepresented in national guidelines (Carr, 2000), and is neglected altogether in Continuing Professional Development in PE (CPD-PE) provision (Armour and Yelling, 2004). In an attempt to bring this crucial oversight to the fore, I combine the findings of my study with Edmund Pincoffs’ (1986) virtue-ethical approach to moral education. I demonstrate the extent to which *exceptional* PE teachers are already engaged in making moral judgments based on what they understand to be social constraints and the “sorts” of persons they meet in their everyday lives. I then explore how dispositional analysis might help PE teachers talk about and reflect upon the place of the virtues and vices in PE and sports. For example, the teachers in my study were able to identify the dispositions that they considered to be desirable in the good pupil-sportsperson, and maintained that four of these dispositions – respectfulness, making an effort, enthusiasm and an appreciation of teamwork – were commonly cited by them when conveying to pupils the sorts of persons they preferred to see playing sports. This suggests that *exceptional* teachers, at least, are very capable of implementing moral educational processes that develop good character in the context of PE and sports. It isn’t to say, however, that we can automatically assume that pupils *can* identify with these *sorts* of sportspersons and *want* to emulate their “desirable” qualities (Pincoffs, 1986). With this tension in mind, I discuss the strengths and shortcomings of dispositional analysis, and conclude that in the hands of the “right sorts” (Pincoffs, 1986) of teachers, such an approach is helpful to PE teachers when it comes to nurturing and developing the good pupil-sportsperson, and can provide them with a dynamic way of thinking about and ultimately designing a character education in PE and sports. I also examine the extent to which such an approach may be useful when it comes to actually teaching people how to be these “right sorts” of teachers in the context of Initial Teacher Training and CPD-PE.

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Writing Affect: Challenging Traditional Representations of Bodies in Movement

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Abstract

The way the body is represented in most scholarly writing about sport is alarmingly static, and this needs to change if we are to create a body of sports literature that makes readers actually feel what it is to do a sport, as opposed to understand from a purely theoretical perspective what a sport is. To this end, I challenge the very idea of representation, suggesting that its attempt to 'capture' moving bodies within meaning has robbed these bodies of their visceral and sentient dimensions – that is, of the movement and momentum that make them an exciting site of philosophical investigation.

My own interest lies in how affect operates during public skating sessions at an ice rink in Montreal, and my aim is to evoke this sense of affect in my writing about this site. To this end, I mobilise Roland Barthes's favoured literary trope, the figure, to build a skaterly encyclopedia of affective culture. Comprised of excerpts culled from my ethnographic field notes and quotes drawn from relevant theoretical and literary sources, the purpose of these fragmented texts is to provoke a bodily response. For instance, if the reader feels, on reading the figure "spin," a sensation of dizziness, or experiences a moment of fluttery intoxicating abandon, then the text could be said to be doing its work. For indeed, these texts are designed to work: in recreating a sensation of movement through affect, they are meant to do something to you as opposed to tell you about something. In performing a couple of these texts, I hope to spark a discussion on the particular challenges facing those who strive to insert the living, moving body into typological etchings on a page. I also hope to make a case for creating more poetic representations of bodies in motion.

A Dispute on the Existence of Free Time

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Abstract

When it is assumed that free time exists, as it takes place, for example, in researches on sport for all, it turns out that the formulation of a universally binding definition of free time is, as a matter of fact, a task impossible to be accomplished, similarly as in the case of many other notions characteristic for the humanities. According to, among others, Karl Popper, every attempt to define *e.g.* religion, culture, personality or health includes a mark of *fallibilism*, which is noticed sooner or later – the harbinger of the future fall; that is, a mistake, an imperfection, a controversial statement. Thus, those attempts leave some epistemological deficiency, as well as an impression that those interpretations could be changed, modified, improved.

Whenever I analyze some definition of free time, I find that it is neither full, nor universal; that it can be referred only to the context of the book or the paper where it appears; that it is not up to its task and undergoes falsification when other theoretical assumptions, other viewpoints are assumed as the basis for considerations. Thus, in the case of free time – as well as of other notions such as personality, health, culture, religion, education, etc. – we have to do with plurality of standpoints, interpretations, considerations, definitions, which are applied accordingly to the adopted research option.

According to the interpretation I propose, we have to do with occupied time and unoccupied time – that is, with free time (free, since it is not occupied). However, free time – that is, time which is not occupied at all – does not exist. Regarding the man as a being conscious of his existence, it can be assumed that free time never currently – that is, in the time being, at present – exists. Free time is time of abstract, conceptual qualities. It can be only envisaged by the subject and can regard the future (although not only).

Naturally, such a perspective in considerations on free time, similarly as other more or less controversial conceptions, may arouse various reservations. Nevertheless, the impossibility of unambiguous specification of this notion does not mean that problems of free time should not be dealt with.

Hermerutics of face and supreme sports performance

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The phenomenon of Medusa's Head evidenced by so many athletes at the end of supreme sports performances, is the phenomenology of the face. The face as sign of effort and pain, the explication of face as „ens intentionale.“ Intentionality has its base in the resemblance in the face. It is displayed in extreme experience and even the possibility of death. This idea, the extreme experience as the limit of being is capture in ancient Greek as Kenosis (in Greek “emptying from shape“): hermeneutical figure of sacrifice in mythological thinking.

Supreme performances in sport can also be interrogated via the problem of resemblance (ens intentionale) in relation to the shape (ens formale). This raises the similarity of supreme sports performance with idea of sacrifice. Sport may offer athletes the possibility finding of the ultimate end point of their life force which opens up the possibility of self knowledge and the role of sport in the understanding of oneself in particular.

I open up a space for discussing the possibility of this relationship between supreme performance and self-knowledge through some ancient Greek concepts.

I discuss “Arche” (the base of movement in the body), „Telos“ (the purpose of the life movement), „dynamis“ (the possibilities in the concrete position) and „energeia“ (the change of possibility in the reality) as the fundamental components of movement vocabulary. I finally present the idea of Ergon (achievement) to show how supreme sports performance is a witness of the essence of the athlete.

Sport and Complexity Theory

Hugh Trenchard

Abstract

Complexity theory entails principles of broad application and analyzes how components interact within a system, whether those systems are physical, biological, or sociological or otherwise [eg.1]. I discuss general principles of complexity theory and show how they may be applied to sports, with examples shown for both mass-start endurance sports and team sports. One basic concept of complexity theory is that collective patterns emerge by the interactions between system components [1]. In sports these components are race or game competitors.

The application of these universal principles to sport suggests that humans possess an inherent natural capacity to appreciate universal principles inherent in all complex systems through their simulation or re-creation in sport, and the meta-level structures that emerge collectively from sporting activities. Every game or race, by having specific beginning and end points, may be viewed as a controlled version of naturally occurring complex systems. It is thus arguable that one primary purpose of sport is to simulate complexity in nature. Viewed this way, the primary purpose of sport is not competition; rather it is more fundamental: it is to simulate complexity in nature, and to be involved in sport or to observe it is to participate in a microcosm of universal collective phenomena. As a result, here competition is not viewed as the primary purpose of sport, but is merely a component that drives the meta-level emergent phenomena.

As examples, I show how complexity theory has relevance to mass-start endurance sports such as cycling, running [2,3,4] open water swimming, and cross-country skiing. Similarly, complexity theory also has application to team sports [5,6]. I expand on existing discussion, drawing conclusions about team sports as self-organized dynamical systems. In both sets of examples, I discuss how they represent examples of universal collective complex phenomena and explore why their simulation of natural phenomena is a primary underlying purpose of sport.

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Excellence, elitism, and the unbearable greyness of prudent sportspersons

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Abstract

Brown argues that prudence requires an individual to be '*equally* concerned about *all* the parts of his future' (Miller-Brown 1990: 78) thus keeping our options open. Following Daniels (1988) 'prudential lifespan account' he argues that the rational person will employ prudence in making decisions with regards to their life in time-neutral ways; avoiding the over-weighting of any given time slice. In the sports domain the 'prudential athletic lifestyle (PAL)' (Miller Brown 1990: 78) demands that a rational agent will engage in sport with a concern for their well-being over an entire life that ensuring that the goods inherent in sport can be pursued and secured over the course of a life time.

This paper will critically examine the concept of the PAL. It is argued that the proposal that rational agents must be thus prudent excludes their possibility of their attaining excellence in adolescence or the earlier years of adulthood in order not to limit the potential to secure these goods later in life. The achievement of one's potential, particularly in elite sport may indeed require the abandonment of prudence in the proposed sense. Indeed, it may at times for sportspersons to be rational to put 'all their eggs in one basket.'

Slote's (1983) proposal that goods and virtues are 'time-relative' (1983: 31) is of relevance here. This is opposed to the basis of the prudential athletic lifestyle, its insistence upon the time neutrality (Miller Brown 1990) of well-being. The tension between these contrasting perspectives will be explored in the context of a number of sports.

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