

Communications

To the Editor of the *Journal of Sport History*:

I believe it was Lily Langtry, mistress of the famous, who laid down the dictum: "Never answer your critics" —sound advice probably (particularly when they outnumber you!). However, as the only subject of an "aside" and a personal footnote (No. 24) by Don Morrow in his "Canadian Sport History: A Critical Essay" (Vol. 10, No. 1, Spring 1983), I feel compelled to respond.

In taking me to task, Dr. Morrow finds it "curious that he has published only one article between the two Journals," i.e., *Journal of Sport History* and *Canadian Journal of Sport History*. Actually, I have had two articles published, in addition to 8 book reviews—not a noteworthy contribution particularly, but if my shortcomings are to be discussed one might as well be accurate, Dr. Morrow kindly uses the adverb "extensively" to describe my Paper presentations and publications elsewhere, however, and allows that "Certainly any researcher has the right to choose his avenues for publication..." It is simply a matter of priorities with one's time. I freely admit that I have *preferred* the challenge of attempting to publish beyond CJSH (even to Journals *outside* of North America—I do not understand Dr. Morrow's assertion that "Canadian historians dealing with sport do not publish internationally," in my case or in others; or his contradiction that "3 researchers living in Canada have published in *Stadion*"). Further, I confess that it seems less "insular" to me, and again more of a challenge, to prepare and present Papers at the American Historical Association Annual Conference (as I've done twice) or at other international gatherings on Canadian sport history topics, than to contribute another article to CJSH. I also prefer to devote time to trying to produce a book occasionally (even one published in 1978 which had nothing whatsoever to do with sport history, i.e., Soccer, but which I also happen to teach at the University which employs me) and to write chapters for various books, which of course tends to reduce further one's output of articles submitted to any Journals.

I do regret not having published more in JSH, but of course I am simply in the company of many others in this deficiency, and the reason is far from "curious." I have been busy on the Editorial Board, and as Book Review Editor from 1973-77. Twice, in fact, I have attempted to work up a suitable contribution, but each time decided that it would not meet the high standards of the colleagues to whom it would be sent for review. But as a charter member of NASSH I have supported JSH in the ways indicated, and been fortunate enough to have had Papers accepted at several NASSH Conferences. Some of these presentations have been published outside JSH or CJSH simply because

I was *invited* by the Editors involved to submit them. (One feels obligated to respond to such generous overtures graciously with gratitude, wherever possible). I have never received a personal invitation to submit to JSH, and there is of course no reason why I should; I did receive an invitation to submit my 1977 NASSH Paper to CJSJH, but after I had already agreed to submit it to *Quest*.

I am baffled by Dr. Morrow's statement that "only 6 articles out of a total of 200 (conservative estimate of the total)" pertain to Canadian Sport History in the *CAHPER Journal* between 1972 and 1982. For example, leaving aside all the other issues, the two Special Issues alone for which I served as Guest Editor (yet another preferred chore of sorts)—i.e., Vol. 42 No. 4 for the 1976 Montreal Olympic Games; and Vol. 44 No. 4 for the 1978 Edmonton Commonwealth Games—contain at least 9 articles which pertain to Canadian sport history.

I simply cannot understand Dr. Morrow's description of me in "my capacity as advisor to doctoral students in Canadian sport history, *an office shared by no other academician in the country*" (my italics). Dr. Gerry Glassford, our present Dean, has acted in this capacity at the University of Alberta for a longer period than I have, continues to do so, and signed Dr. Morrow's dissertation as supervisor when he himself graduated from this institution in 1975, Dr. Peter Lindsay has also acted as advisor or supervisor to several doctoral students in Canadian sport history here in recent years, and continues to do so. Both of these colleagues, of course, are highly-regarded "academicians" in Canada.

Nor do I comprehend the link which Dr. Morrow makes between this advisor role wrongly attributed solely to me and his perceptions of my lack of productivity regarding JSH and CJSJH. The role of advisor and/or supervisor (chairman or committee member) to graduate students, M.A. and Ph.D., is particularly demanding of considerable time in terms of trying to guide them adequately, while reading and commenting upon their numerous (and frequently large) theses and dissertations every year. It tends to leave even less time for one's own publication efforts.

From a somewhat biased view as one of the persons involved carrying on "the Howell tradition" at the University of Alberta for the last decade (1973-83), I dispute the charge of a lack of analysis in the sport history studies completed at this institution through the description that they fall into the genre of "one damn fact after another" history. But one doesn't want to stray too far into the area of interpretation or opinion here; all one can reasonably ask and expect is that colleagues elsewhere will read them and judge for themselves. However, it is *not* factually correct to state that "the first three dissertations completed at the University of Alberta by Lindsay, Cox and Jones were all compiled sport by sport" alone. Lindsay's 1969 dissertation also has chapters on "Sport in Confederation year" (IX), "Sport in Schools and Colleges" (X), "The Influence of the Military Garrisons" (XI), and "Women in Sport" (XII); Cox's dissertation on the 1867-1900 period has a chapter "The Influ-

ence of Schools and Universities” (VIII), and on “Amateurism and Professionalism” (IX); while Jones’ study on the 1900-1920 period has no less than seven similar chapters (VII to XIII), including ones on the “YMCA, YWCA and the Church,” and “Ethnic Influences.” Furthermore, when one realizes that some of the most productive and respected practicing sport historians in Canada did their dissertations at the University of Alberta during this period (Kevin Jones, Jean Leiper, Barbara Schrodt, and Donald Morrow himself, to name only four); and that the list of External Examiners for those studies reads like a distinguished Who’s Who for the field (e.g. Earle Zeigler, Alice Cheskya, Syd Wise, Alan Metcalfe, and Bill Baker, *inter alia*), one can only suspect that they must offer something more besides “quantity of research.”

As a matter of record, the prestigious *Journal Stadion* is *not* “the Journal of the International Association for the History of Physical Education and Sport (H.I.S.P.A.)” as Dr. Morrow states. (As President of HISPA, I only wish it were!).

Finally, while surprised by Dr. Morrow’s over-generous comments on my limited literary offerings, I would happily forego them for some more accuracy as indicated; or for some of that generosity to be extended instead to the program of which he is one of the most outstanding graduates. Perhaps that will be forthcoming in the future. I hope so. For I am sure that the “How-wheel” (to use Dr. Morrow’s individual metaphor) will keep turning, and before leaving I would like to say that I am proud to have been associated with the people who kept it moving over the years. The great pity for Canadian Sport History, in my opinion, is that there is not yet another Doctoral “wheel” now turning somewhere in Canada. From my perspective and experience over the past decade, that would be the greatest leadership contribution to Dr. Morrow’s plea for “concentrated and focused development” for the “next decade.” The dangers and disadvantages of being “the only game in town” for too long in a growing area are obvious, not only to those who attempt to run it, but also to those who want to play.

(Sorry, Lily).

University of Alberta

Gerald Redmond

To the Editor of the *Journal of Sport History*:

It was refreshing to read Dr. Redmond’s letter in response to “Canadian Sport History: A Critical Essay” (*JSH*, Vol. 10, No. 1). Professional interchange in the form of critical observation is rare in the field of sport history. Personally, I view criticism as progressive and important in the sense that “without contraries there can be no progression.” It seems that Dr. Redmond’s letter is more a defensive response and a product of some kind of persecution complex (for example, “Never answer your critics particu-

larly when they outnumber you!" I certainly don't view myself as one who outnumbers Dr. Redmond) than it is warranted criticism of my major comments about the state of the art of Canadian sport history. Furthermore, I hardly view one bracketed aside and a corresponding footnote as "taking me [Redmond] to task." If any person or element was taken to task in the essay it was the work of Dr. Alan Metcalfe.

To respond directly, the essay dealt with Canadian sport history under the assumption and boundaries delineated quite clearly in the article. Thus, book review, non-sport or "other" categories of articles were excluded deliberately as were international publications pertaining to sport history that was not Canadian in content. One can only commend Dr. Redmond for his extensive work in these areas (the first sentence in footnote #24 does exactly that); still my curiosity remains about the topic under consideration viz. *Canadian* sport history in the two most prominent journals in North America. "insular" as that might seem. Dr. Redmond's comments re the *JSH* and his lack of publication therein simply corroborate the thesis of my essay, although I was unaware of the demand for *Canadian* sport history articles in journals other than *JSH* and the *Canadian Journal*.

Regarding *C.A.H.P.E.R.* Journal and the "baffled" Dr. Redmond, my analysis remains as stated in the essay given the explicit assumptions. As to his lack of understanding and inability to comprehend my comments regarding advisorship of graduate theses, Drs. Lindsay and Glassford have only been peripherally involved in Canadian sport history over the past ten years; it was my assumption that Dr. Redmond was the primary Faculty member at The University of Alberta who was actively involved in teaching and research in Canadian sport history. I was not aware that Dr. Glassford accepted graduate students in the area of Canadian sport history although it was my privilege to work under Dr. Glassford when my original advisor left the University four months after my arrival in Edmonton (prior to Dr. Redmond's tenure at The University of Alberta). It was also my assumption that Dr. Lindsay, certainly a "highly-regarded academician," is reluctant to accept graduate students due to his heavy administrative involvement. I think those are fair assumptions and ones that are fairly well known, hardly warranting any lack of comprehension but perhaps a desire to give credit where credit is due—so noted.

As an alleged "charge" that descriptive theses lack analysis, I have researched my essay for such a "charge." In fact, on page 69, I acknowledged descriptive-based theses as a form of method and the importance of descriptive history was underlined again on page 75 with respect to the overuse of method without description. The theses by Lindsay, Cox and Jones combined contain 1,043 pages devoted to sport by sport description and 219 pages devoted to topical description, but still in the genre *in my view* of "one damn fact after another" history. Similarly, the "quantity of research" comment was complimentary and quite in keeping with the topic. Quantity does not defy quality: the former is easily measured, the latter is subjectively assessed (by some other standard when a "Who's Who" of external examiners, I

would hope) and is dependent to a considerable extent upon the topic, the graduate student, the question(s) under consideration etc.

Finally, I stand by my comments on The University of Alberta. In no way does the essay belittle the institution, its graduates or its contribution to Canadian sport history. Instead the essay offers a critical general look at the area, not merely Redmond sport history or Alberta sport history. I heartily concur with Dr. Redmond's comments about the necessity for another doctoral program in sport history; it is an objective of several universities in Canada, but one which continues to be blocked by economic and political barriers. It is very easy to congratulate ourselves for the developments in Canadian sport history over the past decade. The refreshment of Dr. Redmond's letter is quickly dissipated for me by his over-emphasis upon and misinterpretation stemming from the first person singular pronoun: the letter, to me, smacks of a personal feeling of persecution that mars any real perception of *professional* criticism. As we all do with the process of doing history, the essay I wrote approached the topic from my own point of view, but with a definite methodology that was clearly stated. It is unfortunate that one bracketed aside elicited such an emotional response. Still I would gladly invite any kind of interchange that will develop our field.

University of Western Ontario

Don Morrow

Editorial Note: Letters to the editor are published verbatim