

IV. Sports in Perspective

IV-1 Duncan, Margaret Carlisle. "A Hermeneutic of Spectator Sport: The 1976 and 1984 Olympic Games," *Quest*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (1986), 50-77.

This paper employs a theoretical framework articulated in an earlier *Quest* article to understand a particular sporting spectacle; at the same time, it suggests a specific method that might be used to support such a framework. The 1976 and 1984 Olympics—the two most recent games in which the United States participated—are examined in terms of six categories of symbolism: dramatization of recurring life issues, transcendence of human limitations, rebellion against industrialized society, spectatorship as an aesthetic experience, religious overtones, and political dimensions. Hermeneutics is shown to be a most desirable method for this kind of interpretive framework and is discussed in terms of its appropriateness, timeliness, and usefulness as an instrument of social critique.

—Margaret Carlisle Duncan

IV-2 Figler, Stephen K. "Veblen Revisited: Excerpts from and Comment on Thorstein Veblen's *The Higher Learning in America*," *Quest*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (1983), 21-28.

In 1918 Thorstein Veblen, one of American society's most noted and caustic critics, aimed his analytic eye at the institution of American Higher Education. The thread of economics ran through most of Veblen's work, including *The Higher Learning in America*. He described the businesslike posture taken in American colleges and scrutinized, in particular, the place of college athletics within the "business" of higher education. This paper considers how Veblen's commentary applies to contemporary college athletics.

—Stephen K. Figler

IV-3 Park, Roberta J. "Hermeneutics, Semiotics, and the 19th-Century Quest for a Corporeal Self." *Quest*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (1986), 33-49.

In an attempt to better understand the societies they investigate, a growing number of intellectual historians have begun to turn their attention to examining cultural meanings as well as the structures of society. Drawing upon developments in intellectual history, as well as on social science theories that are concerned with *hermeneutics* (interpretation of texts) and *semiotics* (the study of signs and symbols), this paper discusses possible future directions for research in the history of sport and physical education. Two of many possible areas of investigation are suggested: (a) the rise of such 19th-century sporting spectacles as the Oxford-Cambridge crew race, the Harvard-Yale football game (the prototype for all similar American contests), and the modern Olym-

pit Games, and (b) the impact of developments in 19th-century biology (the life sciences) on ideas about health, physical education, and athletic sport.

—Roberta J. Park

- IV-4 Shepard, R. J. "Sport Commemoratives: The Contribution of Philately to Sports History," *Journal of the Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation*, 49, No. 5 (May-June 1983), 2-6.

Commemorative postage stamps featuring sport and physical activities are used to explore national attitudes toward human movement. An analysis is made of the relative production of sports vs. non-sports issues of various nations in the following areas: volume of sales of letter rate and other denominations, current market value of issues, rate of change of values, and relative output to competitive and recreational sport issues. This study shows that national interest in sports tends to decline after hosting Olympic Games, that regional games have greater appeal than Olympic competition, and that collectors are attracted less by sport issues than by other types of commemorative stamps. 2 references.

—Alyce T. Cheska

- IV-5 Struna, Nancy L. "E. P. Thompson's Notion of Context' and the Writing of Physical Education and Sport History," *Quest*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (1986), 22-32.

To suggest some means of writing "better" history, this paper builds upon E. P. Thompson's notion of history as the "discipline of context." Rather than just a rendering of past actuality, according to Thompson, history is a body of knowledge which derives from the interrelating, the integrating, the weaving together of strands of evidence that point to change or continuity in human life in the past. The historian does this networking, this interweaving, in every phase of his or her work—as one derives researchable questions, locates and works with the evidence, and shapes conceptualizations and explanatory schemes. The discussion presents examples of both the process and the product of "contexting" in all of these phases.

—Nancy L. Struna

- IV-6 Watson, Scott B. "The Legitimation of Sport: Pindar and Weiss," *Quest*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (1983), 37-45.

Allen Guttmann has discussed the quest for records as a distinguishing characteristic of modern sport. The writer contends in this paper that while on the surface a distinction between modern sport and earlier forms of sport can be made on the basis of that characteristic, this may conceal or obscure a significant continuity or parallel between Greek athletics and modern athletics. The parallel proposed is the similarity, both functional and substantive, of records in modern athletics and the victory odes of Pindar in Greek athletics with regard to the possible legitimation of sport in the context of a symbolic world view. This parallel is developed through a discussion of Paul Weiss' treatment of records and an interpretation of Pindar's victory odes.

—Scott B. Watson, Edited by R. A. Swanson

- IV-7 Welch, John H. "Cinematographical Studies, 1930-1939: An Overlooked Decade," *Quest*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (1985), 84-91.

Biomechanical researchers who analyze data collected cinematographically usually acknowledge the work of late 19th-century cinematographers. Eadweard Muybridge

(United States and England), Etienne J. Marey (France), Christian W. Braune, and Otto Fisher (Germany). The acknowledgement is then typically followed by a review of the current literature. But most of these studies delete the significant “middle generation” of cinematographers—1930-1939—a particularly fruitful decade during which motion pictures were used to help identify biomechanical principles. This discussion focuses on the cinematographical studies of W. O. Fenn, H. Elftman, R. B. Glassow, E. Jokl, and T. K. Cureton, who have given biomechanics a rich legacy and helped define the discipline as it exists today.

—John H. Welch, Edited by R. A. Swanson