

A Decade of the Body: Researching and Writing About The History of Health, Fitness, Exercise and Sport, 1983-1993*

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“No topic more occupied the Victorian mind than Health—not religion or politics, or Improvement, or Darwinism.” These words introduced Bruce Haley’s pioneering study, *The Healthy Body and Victorian Culture* (1978).¹ As Haley ably demonstrated, “health” (both personal and that of “the nation”) permeated nineteenth-century literature. It punctuated sermons and edicts. When used in connection with athletes, notably the “gentleman-amateur,” health implied a robust constitution and moral rectitude. The future of the nation rested in the hands of such men; the future of “the race” in their loins²—or so it was proclaimed.

Rhetoric and reality did not always match, however; and social class impelled alternative readings. The Amateur Athletic Club’s *mechanic’s clause* effectively excluded working males from “amateur” contests after 1866. Moreover, it was widely believed that the physiology of the lower classes (the nervous system was especially indicted) qualitatively differed from that of “gentlemen.” Middle- and upper-class females, whose health was thought to be habitually precarious, posed yet another problem. Working-class females, who might spend long hours at intensely demanding tasks, were rarely considered in debates about women’s health.³

While Edwin Chadwick was campaigning for clean water, improved sewers, and better housing, Charles Kingsley (no less ardent about sanitary reform and an advocate of health-giving physical education) was extolling

* The author thanks those individuals who responded to her request for information concerning relevant books, monographs, and articles.

1. Bruce Haley, *The Healthy Body and Victorian Culture* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 1978).

2. Among myriad examples, the following are illustrative. Richard A. Proctor, *Strength: How to Get Strong and Keep Strong, With Chapters on Rowing and Swimming, Fat, Age, and Waist* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1889) and J. William White, “A Physician’s View of Exercise and Athletics,” *Lippencott’s Magazine*, 39 (1887): 1008-1033.

3. See for example, Edward M. Beardsley, *A History of Neglect: Health Care for Blacks and Mill Workers in the Twentieth-Century South* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1987); Alice Kessler-Harris, *Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).

virtuous—and fragile—womanhood and redeemed—and vigorous—manhood in novels like *Yeast* (1851) and *Westward Ho* (1855). It rested with Kingsley's friend Thomas Hughes to enshrine games-playing in that quintessential "muscular Christian" schoolboy story, *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857).⁴

Ranging from Victorian physiology and the pronouncements of medical men, to mind-body relationships and the period's preoccupation with "the will," to biological determinism and a passion for vigorous exercise, Haley perceptively sketched—under the rubric "health"—broad nineteenth-century landscapes. In the last 15 years, several of these have been examined in considerable detail. Additionally, new vistas have been opened with regard to health, exercise, and women—that half of the population absent from Haley's study.

Compared to what had preceded, the amount of attention given to the history of health since 1983 has been considerable. Whereas a decade ago Roy Porter could state, "we have histories of disease but not health, biographies of doctors but not of the sick,"⁵ such an assertion would be difficult to sustain in 1993. Porter and others associated with the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine have done much to bring academic respectability to this area of inquiry. So have those who study sport and exercise, as we shall see.

The intellectual and political currents that fostered the "new histories" of the 1970s (e.g. working classes, women, gender, mentalities) helped to stimulate interest in the history of health. These, in turn, have been linked to developments in the history of medicine and the history of the body. This review will comment briefly on these last two topics and attempt to show how they may have relevance for the historiography of health and fitness, notably in relation to exercise, sports, and physical training. First, a few general observations are necessary.

Health and Fitness As Organizing Concepts

"Health" and "fitness" are by no means unambiguous terms. The inclusiveness of Haley's Victorian *health* is illustrative. The World Health Organization defines health as "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." Anthropologists repeatedly stress the necessity of considering sociocultural as well as bioecological factors that have influenced "the incidence of health and disease now and throughout history." As the editors of the *Dictionary of the History of Science* note, concepts of health "must be translated into historically and

4. While the contributions of Thomas Hughes have received considerable attention, Kingsley's contributions have not. See, for example: Charles Kingsley, *Health and Education* (London: W. Isbister and Co., 1874); Allan J. Hartley, *The Novels of Charles Kingsley: A Christian Social Interpretation* (Folkstone: The Hour-Glass Press, 1977).

5. Roy Porter, "Introduction," in Roy Porter (ed.), *Patients and Practitioners: Lay Perceptions of Medicine in Pre-Industrial Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 1.

culturally specific terms.” With typical incisiveness, Patricia Vertinsky has shown how views of the body and encyclopedia definitions of health changed between 1887 and 1985.⁶

There is, moreover, the matter of, competing ideologies. Drawing upon Rene Dubos’ 1959 *Mirage of Health: Utopias, Progress and Biological Change*, Michael Goldstein compares the *Hygeia* model (“health achieved through discovering and living in harmony with the laws of nature and the environment”) to the *Asclepius* model (“health achieved through human intervention to limit illness and disability”). Whereas the former perspective guides health promotion movements, the latter dominates mainstream medicine.⁷

Introducing her study of “personal health and social change in nineteenth-century Boston,” Martha Verbrugge observed that those women who sought well-being and personal fulfillment through becoming *able-bodied* soon discovered that health “had no ‘uniform meaning, and their quest had no single conclusion.” As Verbrugge perceptively points out, “health” is a powerful concept “precisely because it is so comprehensive.”⁸ This very comprehensiveness creates certain difficulties, however (e.g. what should be included in or excluded from an investigation; through what metaphors and/or analogies have notions of health been constructed and conveyed?).

When studying such questions in relation to *exercise* and *fitness*, the situation has been vexed because until recently there has been a sense that anything that has attracted so many faddists and quacks could hardly be of sufficient worth to merit scholarly attention. Such sentiments, even if unintended, seep through a 1983 *Isis* review of *Crusaders for Fitness: The History of American Health Reformers*.⁹ Developments over the last 10 years oblige us to reconsider the value of “health” as a focus for reconceptualizing significant parts of the past.

The term “fitness” poses similar problems. Victorians tended to think of fitness in terms of biological adaptiveness. From this flowed a host of assumptions about sexual, racial, and other “differences.” Athletes were often

6. Patricia Vertinsky, “Science, Social Science, and the ‘Hunger for Wonders’ in Physical Education: Moving Toward a Future Healthy Society,” in Roberta J. Park and Helen M. Eckert (eds.), *New Possibilities, New Paradigms?* American Academy of Physical Education Papers No. 24 (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics Publishers, Inc., 1991), 70-88; Gordon Edlin and Eric Golanty (eds.), *Health and Wellness: A Holistic Approach* (Boston: Jones and Bartlett Publishers, Inc., 1985), 5-6; George M. Foster and Barbara G. Anderson. *Medical Anthropology* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978). I; W. F. Bynum, E. J. Browne, and Roy Porter (eds.), *Dictionary of the History of Science* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 177.

7. Michael S. Goldstein, *The Health Movement: Promoting Fitness in America* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1992), 29.

8. Martha H. Verbrugge, *Able-Bodied Womanhood: Personal Health and Social Change in Nineteenth-Century Boston* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 10; 192.

9. *Isis*. 74:4 (1983): 620-621. In 1985, *Isis* published Larry Owens, “Pure and Sound Government: Laboratories, Playing Fields, and Gymnasias in the Nineteenth Century Search for Order,” vol. 76, pp. 182-194. It is encouraging that the leading “International review devoted to the history of science and its cultural influences” would include an article on this subject. Those who are regular readers of the physical education and sport history literature will know much of the story, but may find interesting the discussion of physiologist H. Newell Martin at Johns Hopkins and the juxtaposition of the Harvard gymnasium and the Hopkins laboratory (with its own new order for “playing the game” of science, p. 194).

depicted as biologically superior males. In the late 1800s, when anthropometry was in vogue, symmetry of the body was thought to reflect physiological—even spiritual—fitness. During times of national emergency, fitness has been expressed largely in terms of musculoskeletal strength and cardiovascular efficiency, as discussed in *Measurement of Physical Fitness: A Historical Perspective* (1992).¹⁰

Today, fitness is often equated with muscle size, body contour, and/or the ability to sustain a 30-minute exercise bout. Benjamin Rader has pointed to the prominence accorded such bodies in current presentations of the “self.” A sinewy and well-muscled body has become a sign of empowerment for females as well as for males. However, the billion-dollar “fitness industry” (with its motorized treadmills, dietary supplements, and stylish workout paraphernalia) often fosters practices that are inimical to health. Teen-agers ingest steroids, as Terry Todd has shown, risking heart and liver damage in a quest for some idealized mesomorphic form. Girls and women become anorexic while pursuing the “perfect” ectomorphic body: while both sexes are attracted by the allure of cosmetic body sculpting.¹¹ Can such things be appropriate subject-matter for the scholarly historian? With increasing frequency, the answer seems to be “yes”!

Joan Brumberg’s *Fasting Girls: The Emergence of Anorexia Nervosa as a Modern Disease* (1988) has been hailed as a pathbreaking exploration, illuminating—among other things—how “our cultural tolerance for body fat has diminished” since the early 1900s. Is sickness, and even death, worth the attainment of some culturally sanctioned form? Harvey Levenstein examined “the transformation of the American diet” (a significant aspect of health and fitness) between 1880 and 1930; while Hillel Schwartz’s *Never Satisfied* (1986) surveyed a century and a half of America’s preoccupation with dieting, shaping, and re-shaping the body. The National Endowment for the Humanities recently supported the production of a film entitled “Fit: Episodes in the History of the Body” which traces the “cultural roots of America’s fitness fascination” and its connections with such topics as eugenics, Madison Avenue marketing, public health, prevention of heart disease,

10. Roberta J. Park, *Measurement of Physical Fitness: A Historical Perspective*. ODPHP Monograph Series. United States Department of Health and Human Services (Washington, DC: ODPHP National Health Information Center, 1991).

11. Benjamin G. Rader, “The Quest for Self-Sufficiency and the New Strenuosity: Reflections on the Strenuous Life of the 1970s and the 1980s,” *Journal of Sport History*, 18:2 (Summer 1991): 255-26; Terry Todd, “Anabolic Steroids: The Gremlins of Sport,” *Journal of Sport History*, 14:1 (Spring 1987): 87-107 and “A History of the Use of Anabolic Steroids in Sport” in Jack W. Berryman and Roberta J. Park (eds.), *Sport and Exercise Science: Essays in the History of Sport Medicine* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 319-350. Each volume of *Athletic Business* is filled with advertisements that show lean, well-muscled young men and women and articles such as “The Fitness Center,” *Athletic Business*, 16:4 (April 1992). The February 1993 special issue, devoted to “Products and services for the athletics, recreation and fitness professional,” was 266 pages.

and President Kennedy's endorsement of school-based exercise programs.¹²

Michael Goldstein's succinct and informative *The Health Movement: Promoting Fitness in America* (1992) asserts that the quest for health may be seen as a "social movement" not unlike the civil rights or feminist movement; and skillfully links today's issues with nineteenth-century antecedents. Early intersections among sanitation (later called "public health"), personal health, and exercise are discussed in Jack Berryman's article on the beginnings of John Stuart Skinner's *American Farmer*. Two decades ago, John Betts demonstrated linkages among the public park movement, recreation, and sanitation before the Civil War. Nineteenth-century "sanitary reformers" were a diverse group that ranged from eclectic physicians to strength seekers like George Windship (whose advocacy of heavy lifting influenced early Y.M.C.A. leader Robert Jeffries Roberts) to those who agonized that a host of weaknesses would be brought on by "self-abuse."¹³

John Duffy's wide-ranging *The Sanitarians: A History of American Public Health* (1990) comments in passing on the American Association for the Study and Prevention of Infant Mortality (1909) and agencies that helped foster the health education movement of 1915 to 1930. However, many turn-of-the-century Americans were convinced that an important function of the public schools was instruction in hygiene, "the laws of life" (applied physiology), and physical education. Thomas A. Storey, M.D., who became New York's state director of physical training in 1916 (the first such office in the United States), insisted: "There can be no complete scheme of school hygiene without physical education, and . . . no complete scheme of physical education without school hygiene." The emergence of physical training in schools, Y.M.C.A.s, and other institutions in the 1880s, James Cassedy maintains, was one of the "conspicuous symbols" of American society's fluctuating "dedication to exercise and better health."¹⁴

12. Joan J. Brumberg, *Fasting Girls: The Emergence of Anorexia Nervosa as a Modern Disease* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 254. These predilections are by no means new. Tendencies to anorexic behaviors in the High Middle Ages have been discussed by Carolyn Walker Bynum, "Women Mystics and Eucharistic Devotion in the Thirteenth Century," *Women's Studies*, 2 (1984): 179-214 and Rudolph Bell, *Holy Anorexia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985). Harvey Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table: The Transformation of the American Diet* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); Hillel Schwartz, *Never Satisfied: A Cultural History of Diets, Fantasies and Fat* (New York: The Free Press, 1986). (Excerpts from flyer announcing availability of the 16 mm film.)

13. Goldstein, *The Health Movement*, ix; *passim*; Jack W. Berryman, "Sport, Health, and the Rural-Urban Conflict: Baltimore and John Stuart Skinner's *American Farmer* 1819-1829." *Conspectus of History*, 1:8 (1982): 43-61; John R. Betts, "Public Recreation, Public Parks, and Public Health Before the Civil War." in Bruce L. Bennett (ed.), *Proceedings of the Big Ten Symposium on The History of Physical Education and Sport* (Chicago, The Athletic Institute, 1972), 33-52; Joan Paul, "The Health Reformers: George Barker Windship and Boston's Strength Seekers," *Journal of Sport History*, 10:3 (Winter 1983): 41-57; John L. Greenway, "'Nervous Disease' and Eclectic Medicine," in Arthur Wrobel (ed.), *Pseudo-Science and Society in Nineteenth Century America* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1987), 46-73 and other articles therein. See, also, the papers in Norman Gevitz (ed.), *Other Healers: Unorthodox Medicine in America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988).

14. John Duffy, *The Sanitarians: A History of American Public Health* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990). See, also, George Rosen, *A History of Public Health*, expanded edition (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993). Storey is quoted from Richard K. Means, *A History of Health Education in the United States* (Philadelphia: Lea and Febiger, 1962), 80. James H. Cassedy, *Medicine in America: A Short History* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 100-104.

The early biologically oriented physical training model was soon challenged by the attractiveness of the play movement and a dedication to teaching social values through games and sports. Although the rhetoric of "health" continued well into the second half of the twentieth century, psychology, social science, and most especially pedagogy were clearly on the ascendent by the 1920s. As a consequence, health education increasingly became a separate subject, or was relegated to a minor adjunct of the physical education lesson.¹⁵ (The breach was publicly, even if unintentionally, proclaimed in the 1970s when the American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation voted to abandon its more integrating "association" structure in favor of that of an "alliance.")

During the 1980s, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (through the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion) discussed the epidemiologic and public health aspects of physical activity and stressed relationships "between exercise or physical activity and other health behaviors." The inaugural issue of *Medicine, Exercise, Nutrition, and Health* (January-February 1992) declared: "The jury is in. There can no longer be any doubt that daily . . . practices have a profound impact on long-term health." The January/February 1992 issue of *Public Health Reports: Journal of the U.S. Public Health Service* opened with a statement that would have astonished those turn-of-the-century Americans who believed that the principle already had been confirmed: "Society is slowly coming to the realization that the health status of children and their educational development are inextricably linked".¹⁶

The linking of health with intellectual (and moral) as well as physical development has a long history. Health and disease are terms used to convey opposite conditions. However, whereas disease typically denotes "a definite morbid process having a characteristic train of symptoms," health connotes nothing so definite. As *The Wellness Encyclopedia* (1990) observes: "Most of us believe that if we are not sick, we are healthy. Even doctors think of health as the absence of disease." Our propensity to give the higher status to disease is demonstrated in how we construct sentences and myriad other ways. The title of a comprehensive 1985 anthology employs the sequence *sickness and health*. The editors' introduction points to the inclusiveness of both these concepts: "to understand sickness and health in America we must study not

15. See Vertinsky, "Science, Social Science, and the 'Hunger for Wonders.'" especially pp. 71-76; and Roberta J. Park, "Physiologists, Physicians, and Physical Educators: Nineteenth Century Biology and Exercise, Hygienic and Educative," *Journal of Sport History*, 14:1 (Spring 1987), especially pp. 57-60.

16. James M. Rippe and Ann Ward, "Medicine, Exercise, Nutrition, and Health: A Vision for the '90s." *Medicine, Exercise, Nutrition, and Health*, 1:1 (January-February 1992): 1-4; *Public Health Reports: Journal of the U.S. Public Health Service*, 100:2 (March-April 1985), entire issue; and Antonia C. Novello, Christopher De Graw and Dushamka V. Kleinman, "Healthy Children Ready to Learn: An Essential Collaboration Between Health and Education." *Public Health Reports: Journal of the U.S. Public Health Service*, 107: 1 (January-February 1992): 3-15.

only medicine, but public health and life-style as well.”¹⁷

All of the above—and more—has influenced medicine. In so doing, concepts of health have been altered. Works Paul Starr’s *The Social Transformation of American Medicine* (1982) and Kenneth Ludmerer’s *Learning to Heal: The Development of American Medical Education* (1985) detail how “laboratory instruction and clinical clerkships,” improved technologies, a four-year curriculum, and a rejuvenated A.M.A. decisively reoriented and elevated the status of medicine between 1885 and 1925.¹⁸ In the process, medicine’s *modus operandi* moved increasingly from preventative measures to curing—the *restoration* of health.

New Approaches to the History of Medicine, the Body, Health and Fitness—Intellectual Currents and Biomedical Realities

During the 1960s and 1970s, a number of events affected researching and writing about the history of medicine, the body, health, and fitness. In a series of provocative books, the French historian and social critic Michel Foucault repeatedly insisted that culturally determined conceptions of the body have been of the utmost consequence in guiding scientific and medical discourse as well as defining power relationships.¹⁹ Poststructuralists, critical theorists, and scholars in many fields rapidly turned their attention to such matters. These, in turn, spawned critiques and reviews such as Michael Shortland’s 1986 *History of Science* essay, “Bodies of History.”²⁰

The novels of British authoress George Eliot, Sally Shuttleworth maintained, are replete with metaphors wherein Victorian social theory and nineteenth century physiology reinforce each other. Sociologist John O’Neill discussed “physical” and “communicative” bodies from the perspectives of cosmological, social, political, medical, and consumer concerns. In a chapter entitled “Health, Disease, and Medical Care,” published in *The Ferment of*

17. University of California, *The Wellness Encyclopedia: The Comprehensive Family Resource for Safeguarding Health and Preventing Illness* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1991), 1: Judith W. Leavitt and Ronald L. Numbers (eds.), *Sickness and Health in America: Readings in the History of Medicine and Public Health*, second edition (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985). The “Guide to Further Reading” in the latter volume lists major books, monographs, and articles published in the 1960s, 1970s, and early 1980s.

18. Paul Starr, *The Social Transformation of American Medicine: The Rise of a Sovereign Profession and the Making of a Vast Industry* (New York: Basic Books, 1982); Kenneth M. Ludmerer, *Learning to Heal: The Development of American Medical Education* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1985).

19. Especially, Michel Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception* (New York: Vintage Books, 1975), originally published in 1963 as *Naissance de la Clinique*. The commentaries on Foucault’s work are numerous. See, for example, Karlis Racevskis, *Michel Foucault and the Subversion of Intellect* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983) and Hurbert L. Dryfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, second edition with an Afterword and an Interview with Michel Foucault (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).

20. Michael Shortland, “Bodies of History: Some Problems and Perspectives,” *History of Science*, 24 (1986): 303-325 assesses the strengths and weaknesses of two prominent works of the early 1980s: Edward Shorter, *A History of Women’s Bodies* (London: Allen Lane, 1981), and Bryan S. Turner, *The Body and Society* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984).

Knowledge: Studies in the Historiography of Eighteenth-Century Science (1980). W. F. Bynum observed: "Models of physiological function may embody attitudes to children and the aged, to men and women, class and race, refinement and civilization, and to existing and desired social systems."²¹

Thomas Cole recently examined changing views of aging in America, giving attention to such matters as nineteenth-century "popular health reform and the legitimation of longevity" and the "ideal of 'civilized' old age." While twentieth-century biomedical science has increased the average life-span, it has tended to make life a "scientific problem" rather than a personal journey. Patricia Vertinsky's numerous studies clearly illustrate how social concerns and models of physiological function have been woven together and applied to health, exercise and the debility of middle-class females and the aging of both sexes.²² What of models of physiological function applied to sports, where the body is dynamically and prominently displayed? Exercise regimens for elite athletes, sedentary males, or criminals (to note only three under- or unexamined populations) are likely to have been guided at least as much by cultural concerns as by metabolic or other physiological concerns.

Anson Rabinbach's *The Human Motor: Energy, Fatigue, and the Origins of Modernity* (1990) seeks to elucidate the interplay of concerns arising out of industrializing societies and discoveries in physiology, biology, medicine, and psychology. A new metaphor emerged in the late 1800s, Rabinbach contends—the working body conceived of as a "human motor." As an "engineer of life" (as one of his students called him), physician and physiologist Etienne Jules Marey (1830-1904) was but one of a growing number of investigators (e.g. Angelo Mosso, Eadweard Muybridge, Nathan Zuntz) whose work laid the foundations for twentieth-century exercise science.²³

The "motor" metaphor was a useful device for studying the body's physiological and neurological processes. At the same time, it evoked fears of

21. Sally Shuttleworth, *George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Science: The Make-Believe of a Beginning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), especially chapter 1; See, also, Gillian Beer, *Darwin's Plots: Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Eliot and Ninetenth-Century Fiction* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983). John O'Neill, *Five Bodies: The Human Shape of Modern Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985); W. F. Bynum, "Health, Disease and Medical Care," in G. S. Rousseau and Roy Porter (eds.), *The Ferment of Knowledge: Studies in the Historiography of Eighteenth-Century Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 224.

22. Thomas R. Cole, *The Journey of Life: A Cultural History of Aging in America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). Among her many contributions, see Patricia Vertinsky, "Of No Use Without Health: Late Nineteenth Century Medical Prescriptions for Female Exercise Through the Life Span," *Women's Health*, 14:1 (1988): 89-115; "Sport and Exercise for Old Women: Images of the Elderly in the Medical and Popular Literature at the Turn of the Century," *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 9:1 (1992): 83-104; "Body Shapes: The Role of the Medical Establishment in Informing Female Exercise and Physical Education in Nineteenth-Century North America," in J. A. Mangan and Roberta J. Park (eds.), *From "Fair Sex" to Feminism: Sport and the Socialization of Women in the Industrial and Post-Industrial Eras* (London: Frank Cass, 1987), 256-281. (In the same volume, Paul Atkinson, "The Feminist Physique: Physical Education and the Medicalization of Women's Education" nicely compliments the Vertinsky chapter, pp. 38-57.) Also, Vertinsky, "Old Age, Gender and Physical Activity: The Biomedicalization of Aging," *Journal of Sport History*, 18:1 (Spring 1991): 64-80; and *The Eternally Wounded Woman: Women, Exercise and Doctors in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990).

23. Anson Rabinbach, *The Human Motor: Energy, Fatigue, and the Origins of Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

exhaustion and reactions to the possibility that work would become dehumanized. In France, a coalition of “public hygienists, moral crusaders, and physiologists” sought to reform physical education to combat the loss of “physical energy.”²⁴ How were such concerns expressed in Britain, America, or other countries? Answers to questions that derive from such considerations will be useful in shedding light on the much vexed issue of health and fitness in relation to exercise, sports, athletics, and physical training.

Since the 1960s, debates over women’s rights and empowerment, sexuality and AIDS, anorexia and bulimia, and other political and biomedical issues have intensified interest in the body and in health. Although it would be 1986 before the U.S. Public Health Service joined in sponsorship of a National Conference on Women’s Health, the seeds for such a meeting had been sown much earlier. The publication in 1973 of the Boston Women’s Health Collective’s *Our Bodies, Ourselves* is one example. A 1981 symposium at Berlin’s Freie University entitled “Man and Health in the History of the Modern Age” is also illustrative, drawing together scholars from such seemingly disparate fields as medicine, art, folklore, ethnology, anthropology, social history, behavioral science, the history of “mentalities,” and historical sociology.²⁵

In 1991, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* summarized two decades of intellectual activity under the heading, “The Human Body and Changing Cultural Conceptions of It Draw Attention of Humanities and Social Science Scholars.” That same year, the *Journal of Modern History* published review articles entitled “A Corpus for the Body” and “Identifying Themes in the Social History of Medicine.” *New Perspectives on Historical Writing* (1991), likewise, assessed progress.²⁶ Roy Porter’s chapter, interestingly, is concerned with the history of the body, not the history of medicine—the field to which he has made such valuable contributions.

It could be argued, of course, that it is not possible to study the history of medicine, disease, illness, health, or fitness without accounting for the body. Nonetheless, the absence of a chapter on the history of medicine is a bit surprising given the stunning developments that have occurred since 1970. Introducing a 1992 collection ranging from Greco-Roman healers to health care in twentieth century Britain, Andrew Wear spoke for many when he stated: “The social history of medicine has come of age. It is now possible to see in some detail the way in which medicine has developed within society.”²⁷

24. *Ibid.*, 224-225.

25. Boston Women’s Health Book Collective. *Our Bodies, Ourselves: A Book By and For Women* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973). The 1981 symposium is discussed in Arthur E. Imhof, “Man and Body in the History of the Modern Age: Reflections on an International Symposium in Berlin, 1-3 December 1981.” *Medical History*, 27 (1983): 394-406.

26. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 12, 1991, pp. A4-A8; Ioan P. Culianu, “A Corpus for the Body.” *The Journal of Modern History*, 63:1 (1991): 61-80; Randall McGowen, “Identifying Themes in the Social History of Medicine,” *ibid.*, 91-98; Peter Burke (ed.), *New Perspectives on Historical Writing* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991).

27. Andrew Wear (ed.), *Medicine in Society: Historical Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 1.

Transitions from the older emphasis on great doctors and great discoveries to newer interests were reflected in a volume celebrating the fiftieth anniversary (1979) of the Johns Hopkins Institute for the History of Medicine and the Welsh Medical Library. Erwin Ackerknecht, M.D., author of such classics as *A Short History of Medicine* (revised edition, 1982) spoke for the earlier tradition wherein physicians with an interest in history had written on subjects like plague and cholera or the growth of a particular institution. While he acknowledged that insights of the new social history of medicine could be useful, Ackerknecht warned that its proponents would be well-advised to balance an "admiration of M. Foucault" with adequate scientific knowledge.²⁸

Charles Rosenberg (Professor of History at the University of Pennsylvania and a major contributor to the newer approaches) provided the counterpoint in "The History of Disease: Now and in the Future." With its interest in such things as "history from below," the *new* history asked different questions and used an array of techniques in an effort to illuminate practices and populations that the older medical history had ignored (e.g. "diet, agricultural practice, family and household"). B. W. Higman and Kenneth Kiple are among those who have drawn upon archaeology, epidemiology, and nutrition, along with archival evidence, in an effort to reconstruct the health, living conditions, and working capacities of slave populations. Barbara Hanawalt has looked at coroner's roles (a thirteen-year-old was killed by an arrow while playing) and similar sources to shed light on the daily life, diet, and work patterns of Medieval peasant families. Nancy Struna has used estate inventories as an entry point to "'gender and sporting practice in early America."²⁹

It would be prudent to keep in mind the observations of both Ackerknecht and Rosenberg. Technical and scientific knowledge no less than insights from cultural studies, feminist and gender studies, literary criticism, and the like will be needed to enhance our understandings. My recent efforts to reconstruct daily physical activity patterns (functional "fitness") of populations as diverse as medieval knights, monks, and peasants, athletes in the Classical and modern worlds, female coal miners, and Caribbean slaves required the assistance of physical and cultural anthropology, epidemiology, nutritional science, exercise physiology, archaeology, and other disciplines.³⁰

28. Edward H. Ackerknecht, *A Short History of Medicine*, revised edition (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982); Edward H. Ackerknecht, "Causes and Pseudocases in the History of Diseases," in Lloyd G. Stevenson (ed.), *A Celebration of Medical History* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), 19-31. (See also editor Stevenson's Introduction to the volume.)

29. Charles Rosenberg, "Commentary: The History of Disease," in *A Celebration of Medical History*, 32-36. B. W. Higman, *Slave Populations of the British Caribbean, 1807-1834* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984); Kenneth F. Kiple, *The Caribbean Slave: A Biological History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); Barbara A. Hanawalt, "Seeking the Flesh and Blood of Manorial Families," *Journal of Medieval History*, 14 (March 1988): 33-46 and *The Ties That Bound: Peasant Families in Medieval England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); Nancy L. Struna, "Gender and Sporting Practice in Early America, 1750-1810," *Journal of Sport History*, 18:1 (Spring 1991): 10-30.

30. Roberta J. Park, "Human Energy Expenditure from *Australopithecus afarensis* to the 4-Minute Mile: Exemplars and Case Studies," in John O. Holloszy (ed.), *Exercise and Sport Sciences Reviews*, Vol. 20 (Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins, 1992), 185-220.

Examples of Works That Might Inform Histories of Health and Fitness in Relation to Exercise, Sport and Physical Training

In Sickness and in Health: The British Experience, 1650-1850 (1988) reconstructs past perceptions and practices by focusing on the interdependence of social structure, the body, and concepts of health. The Englishman's devotion to roast beef was more than "patriotic gloating, gluttony or fantasizing." The more affluent population's preference for meat and wine, rather than the gruel and water of the poor, was not merely a matter of financial advantage. Framed within prevailing conceptions of the body, reasoning by analogy suggested that red meat and wine built those substances they resembled—muscle and blood.³¹ Industrialization, the rise of a commercial class, and the emergence of a public school sporting ethos were all important in differentiating Georgian from Victorian sporting practices; but altered readings of "natural facts" concerning the body were by no means inconsequential.

Ludmilla Jordanova's *Sexual Visions: Images of Gender in Science and Medicine Between the Eighteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (1989) illustrates how profoundly our assumptions regarding purportedly "natural facts" have been conditioned by prevailing cultural beliefs and values. Having examined wax models, paintings, fiction, poetry, anatomical charts, and other iconographic sources depicting the female body, Jordanova provides provocative assessments of ways in which language and knowledge have become "gendered."³²

Patricia Vertinsky's "Form, Function and Physical Activity: The Medicalization of Women's Bodies" (1991) exemplifies how language continues to "pinpoint unerringly women's particular disadvantage in the world of sport." Using the human skeleton system as her focus, Londa Schiebinger has described how doctors in France and Germany in the mid-1700s reconceptualized the body's osseous structures. Since *man* was the measure of all things, the female skeleton in d'Arconville's 1759 *Traite d'osteologie* was "studied for its deviation from the male skeleton."³³

As a result, first anatomical and then physiological science began to search for "sex differences in every bone, muscle, nerve, and vein of the human body." The German anatomist Samuel Thomas von Soemmerring fashioned the diagrams for his 1785 work *Uber die Wirkungen der Schnurbruste* ("Effects of the Corset") after a young woman who had recently borne a child and statues of the Venus di Medici and Venus of Dresden. These diagrams appeared 'in health and exercise manuals like

31. Roy Porter and Dorothy Porter, *In Sickness and in Health: The British Experience, 1650-1850* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1988), especially chapters 1-4.

32. Ludmilla Jordanova, *Sexual Visions: Images of Gender in Science and Medicine Between the Eighteenth and the Twentieth Centuries* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989).

33. Londa Schiebinger, "Skeletons in the Closet: The First Illustrations of the Female Skeleton in Nineteenth-Century Anatomy," *Representations*, 14 (Spring 1986): 42-82. See, also, Patricia Vertinsky, "Form, Function and Physical Activity: The Medicalization of Women's Bodies," paper presented to the North American Association for the Sociology of Sport, 1991, p. 19.

Catharine Beecher's *Physiology and Calisthenics for Schools and Families* (1856) and Russell Trall's *The Illustrated Family Gymnasium. . . .* (1857/1873) for nearly a century.³⁴

The consequences of such thinking have been perceptively discussed in *Sexual Science: The Victorian Construction of Womanhood* (1989), Cynthia Eagle Russett's thoughtful assessment of how anxieties over women's bodies and minds permeated nineteenth-century discourse. Looking at the scientific literature—and analyzing metaphors like the “conservation of energy” and the “phyletic ladder” as applied to women—Russett has demonstrated the repeated conflation of biological models and social concerns.³⁵

There have been, as yet, no such densely argued historical studies of how male bodies have been constructed. In “The Embodiment of Masculinity: Cultural, Psychological, and Behavioral Dimensions” (1986), Marc Mishkind and others point out that although scholars have been concerned with the physical appearance of women, studies of masculinity have ignored the body.³⁶ This is especially intriguing since within the arena of athletics the body and culturally constructed beliefs about masculinity have been, and are, forcefully and endlessly entwined. Many important historical questions concerning the bodies, health, and fitness of males have yet to be asked, much less answered.

In *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (1990), Thomas Laqueur asserts that the “one-sex” model (males hierarchically superior to females) that had informed medical thinking from Classical times was replaced by a “two-sex” model in the 1700s. This new model soon infused both biological and social thought. Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier* (1528) had cautioned women against “sturdie and boisterous” exercises lest they turn—quite literally—into men. Conversely, men were warned not to do things that could impair “hardiness and perfection of male stability.” Similar admonitions appear repeatedly in Victorian literature. The work of those who have examined Medieval and Renaissance constructions of the body suggests that it would be hazardous to uncritically assume a simple linear progression between the two epochs.³⁷ How, then, might we account for what appear to be similar views?

Large gaps in the historical record make it difficult to come to grips with such a question. Dennis Brailsford's and Nancy Struna's studies of games and recreations as cultural phenomena are among the relatively few that deal with the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Struna has identified

34. Schiebinger, “Skeletons in the Closet,” 58-59; Catharine E. Beecher, *Physiology and Calisthenics for Schools and Families* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1856); Russell T. Trall, *The Illustrated Family Gymnasium. . . .* (New York: Fowler and Wells, 1857).

35. Cynthia Eagle Russett, *Sexual Science: The Victorian Construction of Womanhood* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989).

36. Marc Mishkind, J. Rodin, L. R. Silberstein, and R. H. Streigel-Moore, “The Embodiment of Masculinity: Cultural, Psychological, and Behavioral Dimensions,” *American Behavioral Scientist*, 29 (1986): 545-562.

37. Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), especially 122-129; Marie-Christine Pouchelle, trans. Rosemary Morris, *The Body and Surgery in the Middle Ages* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1990).

in pre-Revolutionary America antecedents of the health and “domesticity” that writers like Catharine Beecher would espouse in the mid-1800s. Lamar Murphy’s *Enter the Physician: The Transformation of Domestic Medicine, 1760-1860* (1991) comments on “health care for the Republican family” and early efforts to establish school-based health and physical education. Linda Borish points to conflicting perceptions of the health and fitness of rural females in antebellum New England. Whereas voluntary exercise and simple recreations were considered health-giving, labor was seen as debilitating. Those who blithely wrote about the health of farming populations often found conditions quite different when, and if, they ever investigated.³⁸

The renowned English physician Thomas Sydenham (1624-1689) and his contemporaries gave relatively little attention to exercise. Sydenham follower Francis Fuller’s *Medicina Gymnastica* (1704) advocated moderate exercise for curative as well as preventive reasons. Prevailing Galenic concepts held that the “animal spirits” (which gave the body life) could be easily “wasted.” Such beliefs persisted in medical thinking until well into the late 1800s.³⁹

For earlier centuries, John Marshall Carter’s studies of sports and pastimes in feudal societies suggest intriguing questions regarding fitness, if “fitness” is interpreted as the capacity to perform “physiological work.” Strength and stamina were requisite for a man whose life and status depended on success in battle and tournament. Maurice Keen’s *Chivalry* (1984) records that 80 knights may have “suffocated in their armour in the dust and heat” at a tournament at Neuss in 1241.⁴⁰ William Marshal, “The Flower of Chivalry” (ca. 1167-1182), was reputed to have gained 500 victories in 15 years as a tourneyer. Wearing a reconstructed 25 pound *hauberk* (chain mail tunic) and carrying armaments of an eleventh-century knight, Ian Peirce recently found it possible to spend five hours (three in the saddle) with little discomfort.⁴¹

38. Nancy L. Struna, “‘Good Wives’ and ‘Gardeners,’ Spinners and ‘Fearless Riders’: Middle- and Upper-Rank Women in the Early American Sporting Culture,” in Mangan and Park (eds.), *From “Fair Sex” to Feminism*, 235-255; Lamar Riley Murphy, *Enter the Physician: The Transformation of Domestic Medicine, 1760-1860* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1991); Linda J. Borish, “Farm Females, Fitness and the Ideology of Physical Health in Antebellum New England,” *Agricultural History*, 64:3 (Summer 1990): 17-30. See, also, Linda J. Borish, the Robust Woman and the Muscular Christian: Catharine Beecher, Thomas Higginson, and Their Vision of American Society, Health, and Physical Activities,” *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 4:2 (September 1987): 139-154.

39. The best treatment of the sixteenth to the early eighteenth centuries remains Dennis Brailsford, *Sport and Society, Elizabeth to Anne* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969). Chapter 5 deals with health/medical perceptions.

40. John Marshall Carter, *Medieval Games: Sports and Recreations in Feudal Society* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1992) and *Sports and Pastimes of the Middle Ages* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, Inc., 1988); Maurice Keen, *Chivalry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 87. See also, Gregory Malszecki, “The Physics and Aesthetics of Jousting,” *Proceedings of the 5th Canadian Symposium on the History of Sport and Physical Education Toronto*, 1982, pp. 87-94.

41. Georges Duby, *William Marshal, The Flower of Chivalry*, trans. Richard Howard (New York Pantheon Books, 1985); Ian Peirce, “Arms, Armour and Warfare in the Eleventh Century,” in R. A. Brown (ed.), *Anglo-Norman Studies X: Proceedings of the Battle Conference, 1987* (Woodbridge: Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 1988). 237-257. See, also, John Marshall Carter, “Wine, Women and Song: Publicizing Sports Records and Reputations in the High Middle Ages,” *Canadian Journal for History of Sport*, 23:2 (December 1992): 17-25.

The role of exercise and athletics in relation to aging in the Ancient world was recently reported by Nigel Crowther. Wilfried Fiedler's "Sexuelle Enthaltbarkeit griechischer Athleten und ihre medizinische Begründung" ("Sexual Abstinence of Greek Athletes and Its Foundations") examines Classical beliefs about enhanced athletic performance through proper nutrition and sexual restraint. Mirko Grmek's *Diseases in the Ancient Greek World* (1983), which is now translated into English, draws upon paleodemography, iconography, immunology, epidemiology, and clinical medicine.⁴² Might similar techniques be used in attempts to reconstruct the health—or training regimens—of athletes in the Ancient world?

David Young's calculations of Olympic stade winners from 588-408 B.C. indicate that some men were successful for a period of eight years—a feat that would have required something like "full-time devotion to training." Given the number of recent sourcebooks and other writings on athletics in the Ancient world, those with a sound knowledge of the period might be able to construct testable models of such things as the energy expended by wrestlers or pancratiasts in the first century A.D. In an attempt to disentangle myth from actuality concerning purported long-distance runs undertaken by the Sumerian monarch Shulgi, Deane Lamont asked (among other things) the fundamental question: "would the feat have been physiologically possible" given the distances alleged, terrain traversed, climate, diet, etc.⁴³ Although such attempts are fraught with difficulties, the judicious use of models borrowed from exercise physiology and allied fields may be of use in helping to reconstruct certain parameters of fitness in past epochs.

Jack Berryman's review article "Exercise and the Medical Tradition From Hippocrates Through Antebellum America" (1992) provides a much-needed overview of more than two thousand years of the "non-naturals" (diet, rest, cleanliness, evacuations, exercise, the passions) in Western approaches to health. As Berryman points out, the support that exercise has received recently from the medical community is neither new nor unique.⁴⁴

Health, Medicine and Mortality in the Sixteenth Century (1979), the first of the Cambridge Monographs on the History of Medicine series, had included a chapter on Tudor health manuals such as Thomas Elyot's *Castel of*

42. Nigel B. Crowther, "Old Age. Exercise and Athletics in the Ancient World." *Stadion International Zeitschrift für Geschichte des Sports*, 16:2 (1990): 171-183; Wilfried Fiedler, "Sexuelle Enthaltbarkeit griechischer Athleten und ihre medizinische Begründung," *Stadion* 11:2 (1985): 137-175; Mirko D. Grmek, *Diseases in the Ancient Greek World*, trans. Mireille Muellner and Leonard Muellner (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).

43. David C. Young, *The Olympic Myth of Greek Amateur Athletics* (Chicago: Ares Publishers, Inc., 1984), 135-138; 145. See, for example: Michael B. Poliakoff, *Combat Sports in the Ancient World: Competition, Violence and Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987); Waldo E Sweet, *Sport and Recreation in Ancient Greece: A Source Book with Translations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987); Stephen G. Miller (ed.), *Nemea: A Guide to the Site and Museum* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990); Deane Lamont, "Footraces in Antiquity," Paper presented at the 21st Convention of the North American Society for Sport History, 1993.

44. Jack W. Berryman, "Exercise and the Medical Tradition from Hippocrates through Antebellum America: A Review Essay," in Berryman and Park, *Sport and Exercise Science*, 1-56.

Helth (1536-39). Eighteenth-century rules of health were the subject of Ginnie Smith's chapter for *Patients and Practitioners: Lay Perceptions of Medicine in Pre-Industrial Society* (1985), a subsequent volume in the series. A.F.M. Willich's *Lectures on Diet and Regimen*, first published in 1799, went to many editions. So did agriculturalist Sir John Sinclair's *Code of Health and Longevity*. . . , first published in 1807. Its substantial sections on exercise and preparing athletes for competition are imbued with Galenic concepts of how the body functions. Many older precepts persisted in twentieth-century training regimens even as energetics began to forge new ways to think about the body.⁴⁵

In *Power At Play: Sports and the Problem of Masculinity*, Michael Messner has observed that in order to conform to the expectations of the male peer group's "alienated, violent embodiment of masculinity," individual athletes will endure great pain and indulge in practices that are inimical to health. The most dramatic examples of voluntary self-destruction may have been the hundreds of players on both sides of the Atlantic who sustained permanent injury or lost their lives in soccer, rugby, or "gridiron" football before World War I. The same medical journals that reported the statistics repeatedly insisted that the physical and moral benefits that "football" bestowed upon participants far outweighed the dangers.⁴⁶ Messner and those he cites offer compelling explanations for why athletes are willing to endure extensive pain; but why, we might ask, has it also been necessary to impute "health" to such unhealthy practices!

Contributions of Historical Studies of Exercise, Sport and Physical Training

Some of the most useful work concerning health and fitness—as well as historical constructions, of male bodies—has been that which has taken as its focus exercise, physical training, sport, and athletics. *Making Sense of Self: Medical Advice Literature in Late Nineteenth Century America* (1981) examined anxieties, debates, and aspirations that were embedded in postbellum books, guides, and pamphlets. This interest in "medical self-help," the authors contend, "was matched by the hunger for general information on anatomy, physiology, child care, physical education, and hygiene."⁴⁷

45. Paul Slack, "Mirrors of Health and Treasures of Poor Men: The Uses of the Vernacular Medical Literature of Tudor England," in Charles Webster (ed.), *Health, Medicine and Mortality in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Ginnie Smith, "Prescribing the Rules of Health: Self-Help and Advice in the Late Eighteenth Century," in Porter, *Patients and Practitioners*, 249-282; See, also, Roy Porte, "Laymen, Doctors and Medical Knowledge in the Eighteenth Century: The Evidence of the *Gentleman's Magazine*," *ibid.*, 283-314; Roberta J. Park, "Athletes and Their Training in Britain and America, 1800-1914," in Berryman and Park, *Sport and Exercise Science*, 57-108.

46. Michael A. Messner, *Power at Play: Sports and the Problem of Masculinity* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), especially chapter 4; Roberta J. Park, "Mended or Ended? Reporting Football Injuries in the British and American Medical Press, 1870-1920" (forthcoming).

47. Anita Clair Fellman and Michael Fellman, *Making Sense of Self: Medical Advice Literature in Late Nineteenth-Century America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), 8.

The publication in 1982 of James Whorton's *Crusaders for Fitness: The History of American Health Reformers* alerted us to new possibilities. Ranging from millenarian views of personal and social reform (aptly labeled "Christian physiology"), to diet and vegetarianism, to concerns about "neurasthenia" and debates over uric acid, to bicycling and fears of induced impotence, Whorton traced major currents of American preoccupations with health as these evolved between 1830 and 1920. That same year, his seminal paper on the assumed pathology known as "athlete's heart" illustrated how concepts of health and fitness, medical perceptions and practices, and socially constructed views of the body are powerfully joined.⁴⁸

Donald Mrozek's *Sport and American Mentality, 1880-1910* (1983) concentrated on genteel America's quest for personal regeneration—and social renewal—through vigorous action. Drawing together major themes from religion, evolutionary biology, and nation-building aspirations, Mrozek excavated layers of messages that have compacted around athletic metaphors and icons. Strongman Eugene Sandow, the Columbia crew, the 7th Cavalry track team, and an outdoors-loving President were extolled as "thoroughly fit" males.⁴⁹ Below the surface, however, anxieties lurked. Janet Oppenheim discusses many of these in *Shattered Nerves: Doctors, Patients and Depression in Victorian England* (1991), while making passing reference to exercise. I gave brief attention to athletics as a perceived palliative for the "brain-toil" that threatened to enfeeble males in the late 1800s, and as preventive to the "shock" that men might suffer in battle.⁵⁰

As Mrozek observed, between 1880 and the First World War the emerging sciences seemed to offer hope that human perfectability actually might be attained. Among those who sought a "rational, scientific" study of the effects of exercise on body and mind were individuals prominent in establishing the Association for the Advancement of Physical Education in 1885. During its formative years, the goals of this organization were oriented around the health and "fitness" of the musculoskeletal, circulatory, digestive, nervous, and excretory systems and directed at organic and psychosocial development.⁵¹

48. James C. Whorton, *Crusaders for Fitness: The History of American Health Reformers* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982) and "'Athlete's Heart': The Medical Debate Over Athleticism, 1870-1920," *Journal of Sport History*, 9:1 (Spring 1982): 30-52. See also, James C. Whorton, "Muscular Vegetarianism: The Debate Over Diet and Athletic Performance in the Progressive Era," *Journal of Sport History*, 8:2 (Summer 1981): 58-75.

49. Donald Mrozek, *Sport and American Mentality, 1880-1910* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1983). See, also, Henning Eichberg, "The Enclosure of the Body: On the Historical Relativity of Health, Nature, and the Environment of Sport," *Journal of Contemporary History*; 21 (1986): 99-122.

50. Janet Oppenheim, *Shattered Nerves: Doctors, Patients, and Depression in Victorian England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Roberta J. Park, "Physiology and Anatomy are Destiny!? Brains, Bodies and Exercise in Nineteenth Century American Thought," *Journal of Sport History*, 18:1 (Spring 1991): 31-63 and "Soldiers May Fall, But Athletics Never! Nineteenth Century Conceptions of Male 'Nervous Diseases' in Europe and America," paper presented at the 20th Convention of the North American Society for Sport History, 1992.

51. Park, "Physiologists, Physicians, and Physical Educators" and "Health, Exercise, and the Biomedical Impulse, 1870-1914" (1989 C.H. McCloy Research Lecture), *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 61:2 (1989): 126-140.

Efforts to achieve a scientifically grounded physical education have been frustrated, in part, by the popularity of self-proclaimed physical culture “experts” who have had much in common with the nostrum hucksters described by James Harvey Young in *American Health Quackery* (1992). Professor (!) D. L. Dowd, for example, claimed that his Health Exerciser had been endorsed by 20,000 physicians, lawyers, clergymen, and editors. Few, if any, self-styled physical fitness authorities have matched the career of Bernarr Macfadden (1868-1955), as Jan Todd and Robert Ernst have shown. Macfadden amassed a considerable fortune through his *Physical Culture* magazine and other ventures, fulminating against smoking, alcohol and drugs while promoting pure water, health foods, exercise, a healthy sex life, and “the human form divine.”⁵²

At the same time, an embryonic sports medicine and sports science was developing in Europe. In “Auf dem Wege zur Sportwissenschaft: Mediziner und Leibesübungen im 19. Jahrhundert” (1988), Hans Langenfeld provided an overview of attempts to bring new discoveries of physiology, physiological chemistry, medicine, and mechanics to bear on hygiene, orthopaedics, physical training, and *Heilgymnastik* (remedial gymnastics). The elusive borders “between science and quackery” in American physical culture were examined by Donald Mrozek in the spring 1987 Special Issue of the *Journal of Sport History*. In his Introduction to this volume, Guest Editor Jack Berryman noted that 1986 was the first time that a session explicitly devoted to “Sport, Exercise, and American Medicine” had been part of a NASSH conference. *Sport and Exercise Science: Essays in the History of Sports Medicine* (1992), the first book-length volume to examine these topics historically, was crafted around the 1987 *JSH* Special Issue.⁵³

In Britain, the Clinical Society had taken up the issue of medical problems associated with athletics as early as 1873. It was in Germany, however (where a strong clinical and research orientation in the biomedical sciences had emerged in the mid-1800s) that sports medicine first emerged as an identifiable field. John Hoberman examined the period from 1890 through the 1930s in “The Early Development of Sports Medicine in Germany” (1992); and expanded upon these matters in *Mortal Engines: The Science of*

52. James Harvey Young, *American Health Quackery* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992). See, also, David Armstrong and Elizabeth M. Armstrong, *The Great American Medicine Show: Being an Illustrated History of Hucksters, Healers, Health Evangelists and Heroes from Plymouth Rock to the Present* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1991); Roy Porter, *Health for Sale: Quackery in England, 1660-1850* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989) maintains that the study of these purveyors of medications and nostrums can shed light on the types of practices that were available. Jan Todd, “Bernarr Macfadden: Reformer of Feminine Form.” *Journal of Sport History*, 14:1 (Spring 1987): 61-75; Robert Ernst, *Weakness Is a Crime: The Life of Bernarr Macfadden* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1991). The career of strength seeker Bob Hoffman, founder of *Strength and Health* magazine, is examined in John D. Fair, “Bob Hoffman, the York Barbell Company, and the Golden Age of American Weightlifting, 1935-1960.” *Journal of Sport History*, 14:2 (Summer 1987): 164-188.

53. Hans Langenfeld, “Auf dem Wege zur Sportwissenschaft: Mediziner und Leibesübungen in 19. Jahrhundert,” *Stadion* 14:1 (1988). 125-148; Donald J. Mrozek, The Scientific Quest for Physical Education and the Persistent Appeal of Quackery,” *Journal of Sport History*, 14:1 (Spring 1987): 76-86; Jack W. Berryman, *ibid.*, “Introduction,” 5-6.

Performance and the Dehumanization of Sport (1992). Drawing upon developments in such fields as psychology, pharmacology, and physiology—and examining both scientific and pseudo-scientific applications—Hoberman has offered intriguing insights into the West's fascination with record-breaking performances. At the turn of the century, French physician Philippe Tissie (a prominent figure at hygiene and physical education congresses and an admirer of Brown-Sequard's *liqueur testiculaire*) was one of a growing number of individuals who conducted tests on endurance athletes.⁵⁴

Eugene Weber examined the “new interest in fresh air, gymnastics, and ‘physical regeneration’” in fin de siècle France. Bicycling, excursions to the Alps, the growth of gymnastic and sporting associations, and the emergence in 1882 of school drill teams (*bataillons scolaires*) reflect a search for health and a response to what Robert Nye has called a “medical concept of national decline” in late nineteenth-century France. Similar themes are explored by various contributors to *Les athletes de la Republique: Gymnastique, sport et ideologie republicaine, 1870-1914* (1987) and in Jaques De France's study of sport, physical activity, and bodily excellence between 1770 and 1914. Roland Renson and Jan Tolleneer trace developments in Belgium; and Horst Ueberhorst's recent book on physical training and sport in the German east and the Sudetenland brings forth—among other things—insights concerning roles of the famous pathologist Rudolph Virchow and nerve physiologist Emil Du Bois-Reymond in the medical (and nationalistic) debate over the 1860 introduction of Swedish gymnastics at Berlin's Royal Central Gymnasium.⁵⁵

Across the Channel, efforts were made to institute gymnastics and physical training for the health benefits these were thought to confer. However, the class-conscious English gave pride of place to the games-playing ethos of Oxford and Cambridge, Eton, Harrow, and other great public schools. The pages of James Mangan's elegant studies of athleticism and imperialism resonate with images of the thoroughly fit male. *Manliness and Morality: Middle-Class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940* (1987), the first work to take up this subject from a Trans-Atlantic

54. John Hoberman, “The Early Development of Sports Medicine in Germany,” in Berryman and Park, *Sport and Exercise Science, 233-282* and *Mortal Engines: The Science of Performance and the Dehumanization of Sport* (New York: The Free Press, 1992).

55. Eugene Webber, *France, Fin de Siecle* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1986), chapters 9, 10, 11; Robert A. Nye, *Crime, Madness, and Politics in Modern France: The Medical Concept of National Decline* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), chapter 9; Pierre Arnaud, *Les Athletes de la Republique: Gymnastique, sport et ideologie republicaine, 1870-1914* (Toulouse: Bibliotheque historique Privat, 1987); Jacques de France, *L'Excellence corporelle: La formation des activites physiques et sportives modernes, 1770-1914* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires Rennes, 1987); Roland Renson, “‘Les corps academique’: La genese de l'education physique universitaire en Belgique,” *Stadion*, 17:1 (1991): 87-99; Jan Tolleneer, “‘Formation pour la vie et formation pour l'armee’: La Federation Nationale des Societes Catholiques de Gymnastique et d'Armes de Belgique (1982-1914),” *ibid.*, 101-120; Horst Ueberhorst, *Vergangen, nicht Vergessen: Sportkultur im deutschen Osten und im Sudetenland—Von den Anfängen bis 1945* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1992), 57-63; *passim*. *L'Italia in Paestra: Storia, documenti e immagini della ginnastica dal 1833 al 1973* (Rome: La Meridiana Editori, 1992) contains interesting information about health as well as gymnastic exercises; and is well illustrated.

perspective, includes papers that might encourage comparative analyses of British and American concepts of fitness.⁵⁶

Whereas most work to date has relied on prescriptive literature, Harvey Green's *Fit for America: Health, Fitness, Sport and American Society* (1986) is informed by material culture. (The book evolved as part of an outstanding exhibition at Rochester's Margaret Woodbury Strong Museum.) Although we cannot be certain how much use Americans made of sitz baths, Indian clubs, portable water filters, electric hair brushes, and the hundreds of other artifacts that were on display, these are capable of speaking in ways that the printed page cannot. A symposium held in connection with the exhibition resulted in *Fitness in American Culture: Images of Health, Sport, and the Body, 1830-1940* (1989), with chapters on: a change from national health to personal fulfillment in the twentieth century; advertising and the body; tonics and iron therapy; popular concepts of diet, strength, and energy; and educational views of exercise and athletics ca. 1830-1906.⁵⁷

Too Long Forgotten—Women's Health and Exercise and That of Under-Researched Groups

Patricia Vertinsky, who can write with considerably more authority on such matters than can I, has surveyed the recent enquiry into "women's history and sport history" for this Special Issue of the *Journal of Sport History*. The following sections, therefore, will be confined to those studies that have dealt explicitly with women's health and fitness in relation to exercise and sport; or to brief comments about topics that might be useful lines for future inquiry.

Since the 1970s, women and women's health issues have received sustained attention in historical investigations. Efforts to give voice to those who had for so long "suffered and been still" resulted in rapidly expanding scholarship of which Ann Douglas Woods' "'The Fashionable Diseases': Women's Complaints and Their Treatment in Nineteenth-Century America" (1973) was an early example. Nearly half the papers in *Clio's Consciousness Raised: New Perspectives on the History of Women* (1974)⁵⁸ dealt expressly

56. James A. Mangan and James Walvin (eds.), *Manliness and Morality: Middle-Class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987). See, also, James A. Mangan, *The Games Ethic and Imperialism* (Harmondsworth: Viking Penguin, Inc., 1986) for fascinating insights into the lengths to which a Cecil Tyndale-Biscoe and other "Evangelical athletes of Empire" would go to fashion "fit" bodies and morals. W. David Smith's *Stretching Their Bodies: The History of Physical Education* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1974) is useful for those who want to know about the history of physical training more than about games-playing for British boys.

57. Harvey Green. *Fit for America: Health, Fitness, Sport and American Society* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986); Kathryn Grover (ed.), *Fitness in American Culture: Images of Health, Sport, and the Body, 1830-1940* (New York: The Margaret Woodbury Strong Museum, 1989).

58. The phrase comes from Martha Vicinus (ed.), *Suffer and Be Still: Women in the Victorian Age* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972); Ann Douglas Wood, "'The Fashionable Diseases': Women's Complaints and Their Treatment in Nineteenth-Century America," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 4 (Summer 1973): 25-52; Mary Hartman and Lois W. Banner (eds.), *Clio's Consciousness Raised: New Perspectives on the History of Women* (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1974).

with health and illness. An informative 1990 anthology devoted to historical studies of women, health, and medicine in America brought together an array of formerly scattered "pertinent research addressing various aspects of women's health history." This volume illustrates the range of work now available (e.g. gynecological and reproductive issues, self help, mental health, female physicians, pharmacists, public policy, nurses, physical educators) and provides extensive bibliographical information.⁵⁹ To paraphrase Andrew Wear, it now seems quite reasonable to say: "the social history of women's health and illness has come of age."

As Martha Verbrugge has recently, and accurately, noted: "the history of health and physical education for women is a curious field." While significant information has been collected and important questions have been raised, investigations have been scattered and their quality has been uneven. Nonetheless, she contends, the field is "full of promise."⁶⁰ (Perhaps those within it, who thus far have written the most, have been reluctant to raise the necessary questions.) Verbrugge's *Able-Bodied Womanhood: Personal Health and Social Change in Nineteenth-Century Boston* (1988) offered valuable and much-needed corrective insights, as have other recent studies.

In the 1800s, some women sought health and other benefits through "the water cure." Susan Cayleff's *Wash and Be Healed* (1987) and Jane Donegan's study of hydropathy comment briefly on exercise among other therapeutic modalities. Portions of the pre-Civil War health reform efforts were transferred to the American Social Science Association (founded in 1865), and after 1885 to the American Association for the Advancement of Physical Education. Although there is not yet an American counterpart to Shelia Fletcher's *Women First: The Female Tradition in English Physical Education, 1880-1980* (1984). Betty Spears' *Leading the Way: Amy Morris Homans and the Beginnings of Professional Education for Women* (1986) brings forth useful information about the Boston Normal School of Gymnastics and Wellesley College.⁶¹

Women's physical training in Britain owed its inception to the dedicated work of Martina Bergman, whom the London School Board appointed in 1881. She had prepared at Stockholm's Royal Central Gymnastics Institute, recognized by English-speakers on both sides of the Atlantic as offering the best training available. (Graduates had studied anatomy, physiology and hygiene as well as the techniques of teaching exercises.) Whatever other

59. Rima D. Apple (ed.), *Women, Health and Medicine in America: A Historical Handbook* (New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992), xviii. (First published in 1990.)

60. Martha H. Verbrugge, "Knowledge and Power Health and Physical Education for Women in America," in Apple, *Women, Health and Medicine*, 361-382.

61. Susan E. Cayleff, *Wash and Be Healed: The Water-Cure Movement and Women's Health* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987); Jane B. Donegan, *Hydropathic Highway: Women and Water-Cure in Antebellum America* (New York Greenwood Press, 1986); Shelia Fletcher, *Women First: The Female Tradition in English Physical Education, 1880-1980* (London: The Athlone Press, 1984); Betty Spears, *Leading the Way: Amy Morris Homans and the Beginnings of Professional Education for Women* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986).

objectives early female physical educators may have had (and there were several), their *raison d'être* was *health*: And they never forgot it! The words that Madame Bergman-Osterberg used to describe the goals of her program could have come from any number of her American counterparts. “*Individual and race perfection*” was to be achieved by insuring that young women gained:

the maximum of *health*, through increased organic development and activity; by the maximum of *beauty*, by harmonious development of the human form; and by increased *moral consciousness* through a more perfect . . . balance between physical, intellectual and moral qualities.⁶²

When women’s institutions came to accept—indeed embrace—games-playing, the stated objectives of their programs continued to emphasize *health* and personal development in accordance with prevailing ideals of womanhood. Directresses sincerely believed that these goals were their professional responsibility. They also were fully aware that they were among the few women on male-dominated faculties—or in positions of power at single-sex institutions. The “redundant” woman described in Martha Vicinus’ *Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women, 1850-1920* (1985) cast a long and ominous shadow. Moreover, their work took them perilously close to the privileged male realm of athletics. Not surprisingly, early leaders went to great lengths to protect what they had created, even if this meant fostering an insularity that has been severely criticized since the 1960s. As Jennifer Hargreaves points out, they defined “the newly learned female ‘aggressiveness’ and ‘competitiveness’” in games-playing as something quite different from that associated with men’s sports.⁶³ The two ideologies, like the two programs, were kept hermetically sealed one from the other.

Framed within the rhetoric of physical health and moral rectitude, programs were organized and supervised by professionally trained women who were careful to keep their public lives beyond reproach. (They were not the only newly “professional” women to sense this need. Jihang Park has argued that Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, the first British woman to qualify as a physician, eschewed the hygienic dress reform movement of the 1880s, believing that “ladylike behavior and dress were essential” to advancing the cause of women in medicine.) Even though rigorously controlled, school-based sports programs did provide opportunities for many girls and young women to engage in more vigorous activity than had been customary. They also offered at least modest leadership opportunities when few were available to females;

62. The quote appears in Shelia Fletcher, “The Making and Breaking of a Female Tradition: Women’s Physical Education in England, 1880-1980, in Mangan and Park, *From ‘Fair Sex’ to Feminism*, 149.

63. Martha Vicinus, *Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women, 1850-1920* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985); Jennifer A. Hargreaves, “Playing Like Gentlemen While Behaving Like Ladies’: Contradictory Features of the Formative Years of Women’s Sport,” *British Journal Sports History*, 2:1 (May 1985): 40-52.

and gave to participants a good time, judging from the faces of the 1902 St. Leonards School Cricket Team in Kathleen McCrone's study of games-playing between 1870 and 1914.⁶⁴

Most historical accounts have focused on events at schools such as St. Leonards and Wellesley College. However, McCrone offers glimpses of the working-class Ladies Hockey League, ostracized by the elite-minded All England Women's Hockey Association. Recently some attention has been given to women who must have been at least fairly "fit" (e.g., women runners in the late 1700s, turn-of-the-century strongwomen, and female pedestrians who completed "six-day" walking-running matches in the 1870s and 1880s).⁶⁵

Girls' basketball in Iowa as described by Janice Beran—or in Texas and Kentucky as described by Roxanne Albertson and Peggy Stanaland—appears to have provided somewhat different experiences than did programs conducted according to the dictates of the National Women's Basketball Committee (1899-1917) and its successors. The latter divided the court into nine, then three, then two parts (austensibly to prevent overexertion); and included commentaries by women physicians on "undue strain" from over-exertion during the menstrual period in the *guides* that were published. The outlines of the medical debate over women's basketball between 1892 and World War II have been reported by Nancy Dosch. Field hockey players, on the other hand, seem to have been considered more "fit" since they were permitted to traverse the bulk of the 100-yard field.⁶⁶ How are such seeming paradoxes to be explained if not largely on grounds of jurisdictional control?

Patricia Vertinsky's *The Eternally Wounded Woman: Women, Doctors, and Exercise in the Late Nineteenth Century* (1990) illustrates another kind of

64. Jihang Park, "Sport, Dress Reform and the Emancipation of Women in Victorian England: A Reappraisal." *International Journal of the History Sport*, 6:1 (May 1989): 10-30; Kathleen E. McCrone, *Playing the Game: Sport and the Physical Emancipation of English Women, 1870-1914* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1988).

65. *Ibid.*, 134-139; See, also, Kathleen E. McCrone, "Class, Gender, and English Womens' Sport, c. 1890-1914," *Journal of History*, 18:1 (Spring 1991): 159-182; Peter F. Radford, "Women's Foot-Races in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," paper presented at the 2nd Congress of the International Society for the History of Physical Education and Sport, Berlin, 1993; Jan Todd, "The Strong Lady in America: Professional Athletes in the *Police Gazette*," paper presented at the 17th Convention of the North American Society for Sport History, 1989; Roberta J. Park, "Strong and Thick-Set Heroines: The Other Side of Women's Sports, 1750-1900," paper presented at the 21st Convention of the North American Society for Sport History, 1993.

66. Janice A. Beran, "Playing to the Right Drummer, Girls' Basketball in Iowa, 1893-1927," *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, Centennial Issue (1985): 78-85 and "Iowa, the Longtime 'Hot Bed' of Girls' Basketball," in Joan S. Hult and Marianna Treckell (eds.), *A Century of Women's Basketball: From Frailty to Final Four* (Reston, VA: American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 1990) 181-204; Roxanne M. Albertson, "Basketball Texas Style, 1910-1933," *ibid.*, 155-166; Peggy Stanaland, "The Early Years of Basketball in Kentucky," *ibid.*, 167-180; Nancy C. Dosch, "'The Sacrifice of Maidens' or Healthy Sportswomen?: The Medical Debate Over Women's Basketball," *ibid.*, 125-136. For a different look at the issue of teaching menstrual hygiene, see Joan J. Brumberg, "Something Happens to Girls: Menarche and the Emergence of the Modern Hygienic Imperative," *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 4:1 (July 1993): 99-127. On the insularity of programs, see Roberta J. Park and Joan S. Hult, "Women As Leaders in Physical Education and School-Based Sports, 1865 to the 1930s," *Journal of Physical Education Recreation and Dance*, 64:3 (March 1993): 35-40. Lynn D. Gordon, *Gender and Higher Education in the Progressive Era* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990) discusses regional and generation differences, and both chosen and forced insularity in women's higher education through the 1920s.

jurisdictional control—that which male members of the medical profession have exerted over women's bodies. Even as dominant Anglo-American medical discourses consigned middle- and upper-class women to perpetual ill-health, physicians like Mary Putnam Jacobi and Clelia Mosher (and in Britain, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson) insisted that those who were otherwise healthy did not break down from either study or exercise. In spite of data-based investigations that supported their claims, beliefs about the “innate” weaknesses of females have persisted. Such arguments, Helen Lenskyj points out, have been—and are—rarely subjected to the scrutiny of logic, thereby reinforcing the hegemonic control that males in authority exert over females. At the same time that efforts were being made to convince laboring women that heavy *work* was safe, middle-class women were bombarded with messages that “heavy *play* was dangerous.”⁶⁷

Gertrud Pfister has located similar arguments in German medical discourses from 1860 to World War II. Arnd Kruger's revelations concerning *naturism* illustrate the range of ideologies and activities (e.g. “beauty movement,” water cures, natural healing, physical culture, therapeutic nudity, “racial hygiene”) that were embraced within German health reform from 1900 through the 1930s. Austensibly aimed at liberation, these ended in political movements that “reduced women all the more to their reproductive biological function.” Paul Weindling's *Health, Race, and German Politics Between National Unification and Nazism, 1870-1945* (1989) examines those groups that gave to German eugenics its particular form. Although there are recent books on American eugenics, none refers to the interest that some physical educators expressed in “race betterment,” or examines how “the ‘science’ of improving human stock” might relate to Anglo-American attitudes regarding athletics.⁶⁸

Hereditarian thinking and cultural fears also infused nineteenth century beliefs about African-Americans. Assertions of biological inferiority were used to legitimate the institution of slavery and condone the insanitary conditions in which many Blacks were obliged to live after 1865. David Wiggins' investigation of insidious contentions that Blacks have “great speed but little

67. Vertinsky, *Eternally Wounded Woman*, especially 113-159 and “Feminist Charlotte Perkins Gilman's Pursuit of Health and Physical Fitness as a Strategy for Emancipation,” *Journal of Sports History*, 16:1 (Spring 1989): 5-26; Helen Lenskyj, *Out-of-Bounds: Women, Sport and Sexuality* (Toronto: Women's Press, 1986), 29. Women cyclists and skaters who defied such norms notwithstanding, the participation of Canadian females was largely circumscribed by the same ideologies that were found in the United States and Britain. See, also, Helen Lenskyj, “Femininity First: Sport and Physical Education for Ontario Girls, 1890-1930,” *Canadian Journal of History of Sport*, 13:2 (December 1982): 4-18 and “Common Sense and Physiology: North American Medical Views on Women and Sport, 1890-1930,” *Canadian Journal for History of Sport*, 21:1 (May 1990): 49-64.

68. Gertrud Pfister, “The Medical Discourse on Female Physical Culture in Germany in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries,” *Journal of Sport History*, 17:2 (Summer 1990): 183-198; Arnd Kruger, “There Goes this Art of Manliness: Naturism and Racial Hygiene in Germany,” *Journal of Sport History*, 18:1 (Spring 1991): 135-159; Paul Weindling, *Health, Race, and German Politics Between National Unification and Nazism, 1870-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989). See, for example, Daniel J. Kelves, *In the Name of Eugenics: Genesis and the Uses of Human Heredity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985). Dudley Allen Sargent, Director of the Harvard gymnasium, spoke on the importance of physical education at the First National Conference on Racial Betterment in 1914.

stamina” reveals how facile “scientific” findings of anthropology, physiology, and psychology have been called upon to support value-laden social beliefs. Gwendolyn Captain’s examination of health education and physical training at historically Black colleges between 1880 and 1910 has identified Booker T. Washington’s attendance at the 1887 Harvard Summer School of Physical Training and the initiation of these subjects at Tuskegee Institute. Similar connections were made between the Boston Normal School of Gymnastics and Hampton Institute.⁶⁹ These significant, but virtually unexplored, matters—like the health and fitness of many ethnic groups, working-class females and males, and children and youth—still await our attention.

Where Do Histories of ‘Health’ and ‘Fitness’—Especially in Relation to Sport, Physical Training, and Exercise—Stand Within General History?

The 1980s saw the production of many books, monographs, and articles that assessed history as a discipline and sought to rethink the historian’s craft. One issue has centered around a question that may be phrased: “can *special* histories be of sufficient merit to be embraced within the canons of *historical scholarship*?”⁷⁰ Histories of health and fitness—especially in relation to exercise, physical activity, games, and sports—are always likely to fall within, or close to, what has been called “special” history. However, this does not necessarily consign them to insignificance. Quite the contrary! A decade and a half ago, Maurice Mandelbaum declared: “while the tasks of the general historian and of those dealing with special histories are different, they are none the less complimentary, lending each other mutual support.”⁷¹ Since health and fitness profoundly influence all aspects of life, using these as entry points to the past may prove to be extremely valuable.

69. David K. Wiggins. “Great Speed But Little Stamina: The Historical Debate Over Black Athletic Superiority.” *Journal of Sport History*, 16:2 (Summer 1989): 158-185; Gwendolyn Captain, “Racial Advancement Through Exercise: Physical Education for Women Who Attended Traditionally Black Colleges, 1880-1910,” paper presented at the 108th Annual Convention of the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, Washington, DC, 1993.

70. The number of such works is considerable. See, for example, Dominick LaCapra, *History and Criticism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985).

71. Maurice Mandelbaum, *The Anatomy of Historical Knowledge* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), 15.