

From Pitch to Putt: Sport and Class in Anglo-American Sport

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Class has always been one of the paramount issues in sport historiography. During the period 1983-1992, historians have continued to debate the role of class in sport history, particularly its relationship to modernization, industrialization, and urbanization. Scholars have focused on such concerns as agency and hegemony, cultural diffusion, socialization, crowd composition and behavior, and social mobility. This essay examines how scholars have dealt with class as an independent and dependent variable in the United States, Great Britain, and Canada, whose sport historiography is in each case firmly based on their national scholarly traditions. Thus grand theory, particularly Marxism, and its sophisticated variants, remains a major feature of British literature, moderately so in Canada, and is largely avoided, if not rejected, in the United States. Class remains the central issue in British sport historiography, while Canadians are nearly equally concerned with other factors like colonialism, ethnicity and nationalism, and Americans consider class not much more prominent than race and ethnicity as a major feature of industrial capitalism and urbanization.

I. CLASS AND THEORY

Grand theories based solely on class were largely discarded by the 1980s. Marxist analysis has been jettisoned, or at least greatly modified by sport historians, and neo-Marxist theoreticians who achieved considerable notoriety in the 1970s are generally unread. Nonetheless, Richard Greneau and Richard Hargreaves have each authored a major theoretical examination of sport history based on class analysis. Greneau's brief essay "Class and the Canadian Case" (1983), a widely praised Marxist model of Canadian sport history is intellectually indebted to the scholarship of Raymond Williams and Antonio Gramsci, and especially Anthony Giddens's analysis of the social and culturally structured possibilities of play. Greneau was primarily interested in the ways class relations influenced the development of sporting institutions, and were in turn influenced by the processes that controlled the

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transformation of those institutions. Based largely on secondary sources, Greneau sketched out four critical phases in Canadian sport beginning with a preliminary stage of structuring in which games were increasingly limited by urban statutes, educational programs, and voluntary sports organizations, followed by periods of bourgeois consolidation, commercialization, and state intervention.¹

Greneau ably demonstrated how conflicts over resources played a crucial role in determining athletic opportunities, and provided a means to signify status and justify “deference and class distance.” The dominant English classes relied on school sports to teach their sons leadership, fair play, and discipline, while their communities established regulated sporting opportunities to promote order and morality. Elite sports clubs emerged in the mid-nineteenth century that emphasized sociability over sport, discouraged open competition, and provided a model for future middle-class clubs. A generation later the urban business elite set up national amateur sporting organizations to exclude the lower sorts. This sporting culture was challenged by workers’ sport, especially commercialized contests, that constituted cultural resistance. Greneau recognized that the labor elite accepted the concept of the ideal Victorian amateur/gentleman, but claimed that labor organizations, unions, factories, and workers’ organizations that structured sport on a marginal scale were catalysts in crystallizing class consciousness.²

Greneau’s model is best grounded for pre-Confederacy Canada, but thereafter is less illuminating. His sketchy analysis of twentieth-century professional and international sport is weakly based in empirical data. Overall his emphasis on class results in shortchanging such factors as athleticism, nationalism, urbanization, and ethnicity.

John Hargreaves’s neo-Marxist *Sport, Power and Culture: A Social and Historical Analysis of Popular Sports in Britain* (1986) employed Gramsci’s theory of cultural hegemony to analyze the changing historic relationships between sport, power, and class in Britain. Unlike Greneau, he recognized that class is not a monocausal determinant of sport, and considers gender, age, and race all more significant. His thesis was that sports unified “dominant groups and supporting classes while disorganizing and fragmenting subordinate ones,” and then reconstituted the working class “within a unified social formation under bourgeois hegemony.”³

1. Richard Greneau, “Outline of the Canadian Case,” in *Class, Sports and Social Development* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1983), 91-135, esp. 92, 93, 129.

2. *Ibid.*, 95-98, 101, 108, 109, 111-15. It would seem that factory teams organized by management would not be a source of cultural resistance, or else management would have discontinued sponsorship.

3. John Hargreaves, *Sport, Power and Culture: A Social and Historical Analysis of Popular Sports in Britain* (New York: St Martin’s Press 1986), 6-7, 57-113, 209 (quotes). Hargreaves’s study has received little attention from historians, and has been superseded by Richard Holt’s more nuanced *Sport and the British: A Modern History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989). Sociologist Joe Maguire applauded Hargreaves for moving from a simple base/superstructure model toward developing a more relational conception of power and a historical sensitivity to the study of sport’s embedment in socio-cultural struggles. He likes the idea of culture as negotiated affair in which the role of human consciousness and action are vital parts. See Joe Maguire, review of *Sport, Power and Culture* in *Research Quarterly* 60 (September 1989): 301-2.

Hargreaves saw sport linked in complicated ways to the power relations of capitalism. He argued that by the mid-nineteenth century, bourgeois sporting organizations established political hegemony over popular and working-class culture, integrating the lower-middle and upper-lower classes into its cultural norms. The dominant classes simultaneously estranged and repressed lower-class British folk by separating them from socially consecrated sport which severely weakened their pursuit of liberation. The state contributed to this hegemony by financing sport and exploiting fears about working-class violence to impose stricter control over the lower class. Yet while Hargreaves made some interesting points, he had insufficient empirical data. Several assertions go unproven, such as his claim that the ascendancy of gentlemanly amateurism induced bourgeois hegemony in mid-Victorian Britain.⁴

II. SPORT AND THE ELITE

Historians identify the upper class in Great Britain as the aristocracy and landed gentry, a status largely gained by ascription and great wealth, traditionally based on land. Elsewhere in the Anglo-Saxon world, the upper class comprised about 1-3 percent of a country's inhabitants, drawn from the richest 5 percent of the population. Their status depended on how their affluence was achieved, as well as family background, education, religion, ethnicity, residency, and access to power. These upper classes were less immutable or solidified than the British elite. Elite sport was among the first subjects of sport historians because of upper class leadership and prominent participation in amateur sports, as well as the relatively rich written records they and their sports organizations have left. Over the past decade historians have continued examining the formation and social functions of restricted voluntary athletic organizations, and have become interested in such topics as elite mentalities, power, the impact of urbanization, and the role of gender.⁵

4. Hargreaves recognized that local elites were often preserved by their Patronage of traditional sports, but is uncertain how or why. He presumes that the gentry supported strict poaching rules primarily to civilize the rural masses rather than, as is more likely, to prevent any infringement on traditional elite privileges. Hargreaves, *Sport, Power and Culture*, 205. On rural hunting privileges, see P. B. Munche, *Gentlemen and Poachers: The English Game Laws 1671-1831* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 129. For a critique of Hargreave's analysis, see Holt, *Sport and the British*, 363-64, who found it theoretically elegant, but a closed system of thought inadequately documented.

5. British historians differ from American scholars because they frequently identify upper class with the aristocracy. They often label very rich industrialists and capitalists as upper middle class, while American historians would categorize the same individual as a member of the elite. Harold Perkin identifies English and Welshmen with an annual income in 1867 in excess of £1,000 as upper class (0.48 percent). One-fourth of the population was middle class (25.1 percent), and three-fourths (74.4 percent) were manual workers. See Harold Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society: England Since 1880* (London: Routledge, 1989), 29. See also David Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990). On American definitions of the elite, see Frederic C. Jaher, *The Urban Establishment Upper Strata in Boston, New York, Charleston, Chicago, and Los Angeles* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982).

On early studies of elite sports see E. Digby Baltzell, *Philadelphia Gentlemen: The Making of a National Upper Class* (New York, 1958); Dale Somers, *The Rise of Sports in New Orleans, 1850-1900* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1972); Stephen Hardy, *How Boston Played: Sport, Recreation and Community, 1865-1915* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1982); Dennis Brailsford, *English Sport from Elizabeth to Anne* (Toronto: Routledge and K. Paul, 1969).

ELITE SPORTS CLUBS

The recent literature on elite sports primarily examines the development of restrictive athletic organizations. Such associations were less essential in Great Britain with its landed aristocracy and well-established gentry class. American, Australian, and Canadian elites were much more likely to have earned their wealth through commerce, industry or the professions than by inheritance, have families of more recent lineage, and live in greater proximity to lesser sorts. They copied British aristocratic social behavior to certify their status and establish an integrated community. Riess argues that voluntary ethnic associations' latent functions were probably more important than their manifest ones because playing sport was secondary to promoting sociability. These elite organizations controlled downtown or suburban private space where they competed in a non-threatening atmosphere that helped strengthen class bonds and cultivate a sense of community and insularity.⁶

Horse Racing and the Jockey Clubs

Elite efforts to emulate the British aristocracy were most evident in the "Sport of Kings." Nancy Struna extended Timothy Breen's analysis of early southern horse racing to more fully explore the relationship between the Chesapeake gentry's sports in the period 1660s-1720s and their emergence as a distinct social rank. Her main points are: 1) sport provided a vehicle for planters to emulate English role models, copying their pleasures and importing British goods and styles; 2) the great planters developed a sporting ideology that stressed proper behavior and fair competition and opposed brutality, which enabled sport to teach values like honesty, order, moderation in gambling, and productivity, important for men responsible for establishing and protecting order in a fragile society; and 3) the elite employed sport as a venue to patronize the lesser sorts and secure their deference.⁷ The role of New York's elite in the revival of the eastern American turf in the 1820s was examined by Melvin Adelman in his outstanding study, *A Sporting Time: New York City and the Rise of Modern Athletics, 1820-70* (1986). He found that Knickerbocker participation identified or confirmed their status and brought them into contact with other urban elites. Eastern racing collapsed a few years after the 1837 Depression, reemerging after the Civil War under the leadership of New York's American Jockey Club (AJC), whose Jerome

6. See, e.g., Alan Metcalfe, *Canada Learns to Play: The Emergence of Organized Sport, 1807-1914* (Toronto: McClellan and Stewart, 1987), 45-46; Steven A. Riess, *City Games: The Evolution of American Urban Society and the Rise of Sports* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 24-26, 54-60; Benjamin G. Rader, *American Sports: From the Age of Folk Games to the Age of Televised Sports*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1990), 80-95.

7. Timothy H. Breen, "Horses and Gentlemen: The Cultural Significance of Gambling Among the Gentry in Virginia," *William and Mary Quarterly* 34 (April, 1977): 329-47; Nancy Struna, "The Formalizing of Sport and the Formation of an Elite: The Chesapeake Gentry, 1650-1720s," *Journal of Sport History* 13 (Winter 1986): 213-14, 221, 223, 225, 229-31.

Park (1866) became a model for future elite American racetracks.⁸

Adelman found the AJC was less prestigious than the New York Yacht Club or the city's major metropolitan men's clubs. He concluded in a pioneering study of early AJC members' social backgrounds that nearly anyone who could afford the price, including Boss Tweed, got in. Nonetheless, the great preponderance (83.3 percent) had incomes among the city's top one percent and lived in its richest wards. He considered the original AJC as more of an integrating organization of horse fanciers and bettors than a voluntary association differentiating among social elites, except for the 50-member Board of Governors who ran the track and were at the apex of New York Society.⁹

The elite's role in New York racing is further examined by Riess in *City Games: The Evolution of American Urban Society and the Rise of Sports* (1989). They owned the costly breeding farms, the top thoroughbreds, and organized prestigious jockey clubs to operate elite racetracks. These tracks were not profit maximizers, but encouraged top level competition to test the breed, furnished a venue for betting, and provided a location for socializing. Upper-class businessmen, especially traction magnates like William Whitney and August Belmont II, formed coalitions with local political bosses to advance and protect their horse racing interests against gambling reformers and the democratic new proprietary tracks. Racing's elite organized The Jockey Club (TJC) in 1895 to control thoroughbred racing by licensing all participants, and it became the most prestigious organization in American racing. However, elite horsemen were not omnipotent and, around the turn of the century, horse racing was temporarily halted virtually everywhere. When the sport revived after World War I, the elite remained prominent as horse owners and track operators, and it continued to provide a means to seek celebrityhood and elite status.¹⁰

Alan Metcalfe's *Canada Learns to Play* (1987), the most notable historical study of Canadian sport, pointed out that early Canadian races were associated with garrisons and turf clubs in the larger towns, and was severely hurt after the military installations were closed. Thoroughbred racing in Canada became a national sport in the 1870s and 1880s when commercialized tracks opened, threatening the upper-class owners of the major tracks,

8. Melvin L. Adelman, *A Sporting Time: New York City and the Rise of Modern Athletics, 1820-70* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 47-49. Jerome Park had exclusive admissions policies. Ticket prices were high which was different from most English tracks that admitted infield spectators for free. The AJC relied on admission fees, concessions, and pool privileges to support itself without mass audiences. Adelman, *Sporting Time*, 80-81 87-88.

9. Melvin Adelman "Quantification and Sport: The American Jockey Club, 1866-1867. A Collective Biography," in *Sport in America: New Historical Perspectives*, ed. Donald Spivey (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985), 51-65.

10. Riess, *City Games*, 181, 189, 197. A less prestigious connection of the elite to the turf was the Gould family's control of the racing wire through their prominent position in Western Union. Robber baron Jay Gould's daughter Helen got Western Union out of the lucrative wire service business in 1904 on moral grounds. It soon became an exceptionally valuable enterprise for the underworld figures who took it over. See Riess, *City Games*, 186.

who responded by forming elite jockey clubs. In 1895, elite horsemen formed the Canadian Jockey Club to protect their sport against an expanded racing calendar, proprietary tracks, and booming off-track betting. Their clout in Parliament secured legalized on-track betting, the banning of off-track betting, and the creation of a racing cartel.¹¹

Wray Vamplew in his outstanding *Play Up and Play the Game* (1988) pointed out that English racing in the early 1900s was not a profit-maximizing enterprise since the Jockey Club set a 10-percent limit on dividends. Thoroughbred ownership was extremely limited, and during the 1890s one-eighth of British owners were titled, which made the sport very attractive to new rich industrialists and businessmen who sought social status. One can imagine their dismay when former Tammany boss Richard Croker's horse won the Epsom Derby in 1907. Elite owners often treated racing as an expensive hobby that consistently lost money. In 1905, for instance, an average horse cost £366 to train, but earned only £149.¹²

In Australia, Brian Stoddart argued in *Saturday Night Fever* (1986). wealth and status were likewise tied to the turf. Despite the conventional wisdom that sport produced classlessness in Australia, the reality has been that class (economic power) and status (social power) were always important. Horse racing was first introduced in Tasmania and New South Wales by respectable folk on the British aristocratic model, and repeated in South and West Australia where "social life was dominated by families with pretensions to the property-owning habits of the British landed-gentry." Membership in the jockey clubs was difficult to achieve, requiring money, private school education, respectable occupation, and family heritage.¹³

Adelman and other historians studying American trotting, considered a more democratic sport than thoroughbred racing, have found that in the 1860s nouveau riche men like Commodore Vanderbilt tried, to make it more exclusive, and hence more prestigious, by buying up the best trotters and rationalizing the breeding industry. Elite roadmen also formed trotting organizations like New York's Gentlemen's Driving Club to facilitate competition among their peers and mobilize forces to get municipalities to build courses for them. In 1892, the club formed an alliance with Tammanyites to build a race course in Central Park. They were blocked by a broad-based

11. Metcalfe, *Canada Learns to Play*, 148-53.

12. Wray Vamplew, "*Play Up and Play the Game*": *Professional Sport in Britain, 1875-1914* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 101, 105. Then there were those unique individuals like the Duke of Portland, who in 1889 gave his £73,858 winnings to charity. On Crocker, see Riess, *City Games*, 54.

13. Brian Stoddart, *Saturday Afternoon Fever: Sport in the Australian Culture* (London: Angus & Robertson, 1986), 33-34, 38. During the Great Depression, the Western Australian Turf Club raised ticket prices despite falling attendance to exclude people who could not afford to bet. *Ibid.*, 38. Polo was used to teach leadership to military officers. *Ibid.*, 35.

public opposition, but one year later \$3 million was appropriated for a Harlem Speedway.¹⁴

Aquatic Sports

Historians agree that yacht clubs were at the apex of elite sports clubs. Adelman identified the New York Yacht Club as the city's most prestigious and discriminating and among the city's highest status men's clubs, especially after the victory of the *America* in 1851.¹⁵ Yacht clubs in mid-nineteenth century Canada replaced sledding and hunting clubs as the most expensive and prestigious sports. A status hierarchy, determined by location and members' prestige, emerged among yacht clubs, led by the Toronto Royal Canadian YC (1852). Clubs originally emphasized social activities; but that began to change in 1880 with the new Toronto YC which stressed racing.¹⁶

Rowing in England at this time had enormous social cachet. Neil Wigglesworth's *A Social History of Rowing* (1992) focuses on elite rowing. He points out that formal elite regattas on the Thames became popular in the late eighteenth century, often featuring watermen's races, though by 1800 elite crews frequently raced using watermen to steer. Regattas included gentlemen-only and watermen-only events for prizes or wagers, although elite boat clubs soon emphasized pleasure over competition. Professionals were distinguished by class, and the elite attended the first professional sculling championships (1831). However, professionals were looked down upon because they allegedly cheated, and outclassed amateurs by extra training and superior strength.¹⁷

Wigglesworth points out that school boat clubs were established at

14. Adelman, *Sporting Time*, 68-69; Riess, *City Games*, 131-32; Roy Rosenzweig and Elizabeth Blackmer, *The Park and the People: A History of Central Park* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), 366-68. Historian John Gilkeson found a similar situation eight years later when the Providence Driving Association (presumably a more middle-class organization) proposed a speedway at Roger William Park. It was decried as "class legislation": If "the city cannot afford to layout fields for the boys to play base ball or for their elder to play golf," why "build a speedway for a few favored residents to trot their fast horses?" In this case a compromise was reached and the city added both a speedway and athletic fields. John Gilkeson, *Middle-Class Providence, 1820-1940* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 150, 234.

15. Adelman, *Sporting Time*, 197-204. Australians have mounted challenges for the America's Cup since the 1960s, including media magnate Sir Frank Parker, and won in 1983 under property developer and business tycoon Alan Bond's *Australia II*. Bond reputedly had trouble getting into Perth's leading yacht clubs. Stoddart, *Saturday Afternoon Fever*, 40, 53. Contrary to the conventional wisdom, Gilkeson found that Providence's sailing clubs were less exclusive than chasing the hounds or even tennis. While yachting was mainly a sport for the rich, providence's Narragansett BC of rising young men supported an outstanding eight-man crew that won the national championship in 1881. Members paid just a modest \$5 entrance fee and \$20 annual dues. The club sponsored operas, elegant balls, fairs, and races. An 1880 regatta sponsored in conjunction with a patent medicine company drew 80,000. Its place as aquatic club taken over by the Narragansett Bay yacht clubs. While the 159-member Corinthian YC was mainly for the wealthy, in 1894 it had many skilled men and propertyless white-collar members. Similarly, the 300 men in the Rhode Island Yacht Club had a varied composition. Its members in 1900 ranged from wealthy manufacturers who belonged to elite clubs to property-less clerks and commercial travelers. Gilkeson, *Middle-Class Providence*, 148-49.

16. Metcalfe, *Canada Learns to Play*, 35-36. See also Robert Wayne Simpson, "The Elite and Sport Club Membership in Toronto, 1827-1881" (Ph.D. diss., University of Alberta, 1987).

17. Neil Wigglesworth, *The Social History of English Rowing* (London: Frank Cass, 1992), 65, 185, 186, 43, 118.

Westminster (1813) and Eton (1816) when public schools were their most exclusive. Their alumni formed boat clubs, especially at Oxford and Cambridge, and in 1828 the former raced London amateurs for a purse. The colleges used professional trainers until mid-century, when the emphasis moved from winning to style and polish.¹⁸

The Henley races, which gained royal status in 1851, were the preeminent matches. The amateur question became most visible there, with a rigid definition Wigglesworth considers snobbish and hypocritical. Eric Halladay's *Rowing in England* (1990) argued that Henley's problems with lower status foreign crews prepared to win at any cost came to a head in 1906 when Henley refused to reinvite Philadelphia's Vesper BC after it admitted accepting payments and public funding.¹⁹

Cricket

Adelman found that antebellum Americans did not adopt the paternalistic British cricket heritage. Upper-class American cricketers seldom played with the lower classes, unlike the British elite, whose rigid social structure gave the elite the self-confidence to play with deferential social inferiors. Cricket became a measure of self-identification in the 1840s when New York's St. George Cricket Club (SGCC) switched from an ethnic to a class organization.²⁰

George Kirsch and Tom Jable have documented that elite Philadelphia cricket clubs kept the sport alive after the Civil War. Jable studied 1,025 cricketers active in the period 1850-80 and found that during the 1860s club membership had shifted from professionals to prominent businessmen. By 1870, 62.4 percent of cricketers had high white-collar occupations. Facilities were moved to suburbia where members could imitate the English gentry. One-fourth (28 percent) belonged to the Union League, the city's most prestigious men's club, and others used membership as a stepping stone to higher status clubs. Jable argued the elite used cricket to nurture such useful values as discipline, self-control, self-confidence, and cooperation that aided their sons' social and vocational future.²¹

Metcalfe found that cricket was more widely played in Canada than the U.S., where it was utilized by elite private schools to train young Canadians to become English gentlemen. "It symbolized the yearnings and aspirations of the Canadian social elite not to be Canadian, but to be like the English

18. *Ibid.*, 121-22, 188.

19. *Ibid.*, 191, 193, The last manual exclusion clause was dropped from racing regulations only in 1956 following international failures that called for new blood. *Ibid.*, 136; Eric Halladay, *Rowing in England: A Social History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), 116.

20. Adelman, *Sporting Time*, 86, 87, 100; George B. Kirsch, *The Creation of American Team Sports: Baseball & Cricket, 1838-72* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 37, 118.

21. Kirsch, *Creation of American Team Sports*, 124-27, 151-54; Tom Jable, "Social Class and the Sport of Cricket in Philadelphia," *Journal of Sport History* 18 (Summer 1991): 210-11, 218-21; *idem*, "Latter-Day Cultural Imperialists: The British Influence on the Establishment of Cricket in Philadelphia, 1841-1872," in *British Culture and Sport at Home at Abroad*, ed. J.A. Mangan (London: Frank Cass, 1988), esp. 185.

landed aristocracy.” Stoddart and sociologist Jon Stratton argue that Australian cricket was more democratic than in England where it retained an aristocratic aura. The Australian amateur-professional split was cash-based, and thus they were shocked when W.G. Grace demanded money to play.²²

The Country Club and English Country Life

Richard Holt in his landmark work *Sport and the British* (1989) pointed out that British elite patronage of eighteenth century popular recreation declined because of enclosure and other important changes in the agricultural economy that weakened gentry-tenant bonds in favor of a more courtly, private, and refined life-style. However, large-scale land clearance encouraged fox hunting which brought landlords and major tenants together in a public display of the rural power structure. Foxhunting became increasingly exclusive during the nineteenth century and attracted upwardly mobile businessmen like Shell magnate Marcus Samuel to the country life.²³

In Canada, where pre-Confederation organized sports were dominated by Montreal's affluent British colonial officials, military officers, and businessmen, Metcalfe asserted that the first prestigious social sporting clubs were curling (1807), and hunt and tandem clubs, the latter vestiges of the old social system Organizations like the Montreal Hunt Club (1828) were located in areas dominated by affluent men who sought to copy the British aristocracy. Thereafter a network of expensive clubs emerged that catered to a privately educated Anglican elite. The higher status nineteenth-century sports were lifetime activities, often amenable to women, like sleighing or golf.²⁴

American historians have uncovered considerable evidence that the late-nineteenth-century elite imitated British country life. The rich enjoyed field sports through organizations like the Boone and Crockett Club. Francis Couvares in the *Remaking of Pittsburgh* (1984) reported that the city's elite, including Andrew Carnegie, Andrew Mellon, and Henry C. Frick, were passionate about angling and hunting. The elite organized five hunting and fishing associations between 1881 and 1887.²⁵

Most elite Americans preferred elegant and remote country clubs where they could enjoy an English country life with servants and exclusive outdoor sports. Gilkeson argued that the country club was the most exclusive sports

22. Metcalfe, *Canada Learns to Play*, 84; Stoddart, *Saturday Night Fever*, 36; Jon Stratton, "Australia—This Sporting Life" in *Power Play: Essays in the Sociology of Australian Sport*, ed. Geoffrey Lawrence and David Rowe (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1986), 20.

23. Holt, *Sport and the British*, 44-47, 108. See also Cannadine, *Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*, 360-370, who emphasizes the replacement of the old guard in fox and fowl hunting by new-moned merchants and manufacturers.

24. Metcalfe, *Canada Learns to Play*, 20, 22, 29, 33-34.

25. Riess, *City Games*, 54; Francis G. Couvares, *The Remaking of Pittsburgh: Class and Culture in an Industrial City, 1877-1919* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1984), 36. See also Collen J. Sheehy, "American Angling: The Rise of Urbanism and the Romance of the Rod and Reel," in *Hard at Play: Leisure in American, 1840-1940*, ed. Kathryn Grover (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992), 78-79, 83-84. On British big-game hunting in North America and the Empire, see Cannadine, *Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*, 375-76.

organization because it offered the greatest range of activities and required the most space. These societies encouraged sport for the sake of sociability, unlike English clubs, whose camaraderie was a by-product of athletic interest. Riess described the country club as a rustic oasis where members escaped teeming cities and the anxieties of work, socialized with the right people for marital or business purposes, and played expensive sports.²⁶

The most popular country club sports were tennis and golf. Private golf clubs were originally established by aristocratic shareholders in wealthy communities to gain access to a landed life-style. Holt indicates that at English golf courses, unlike the more democratic Scottish grounds, the clubhouse was more important than the course. Metcalfe points out that Canadians copied the English and also moved toward more socially-oriented play at the turn of the century, reflected by the construction of big clubhouses. Throughout the Empire, the most prestigious courses were those designated "Royal," like Australia's Royal Sydney GC, largely established by attorneys, prominent politicians, and old-moned businessmen.²⁷

Holt argued that British tennis bridged the upper and middle classes. "Like cricket and rugby, tennis fitted neatly into the more open elite created by the expansion of the Victorian professions and commerce." However, historian Helen Walker identifies several clubs, including the All-England Tennis Club (Wimbledon, est. 1877) as very exclusive. In Canada, lawn tennis began in 1874 as an elite game, albeit less expensive than golf, and for years was mainly played at private clubs where women made it the most social and fashion-conscious sport. Similarly in Australia, when tennis was introduced in the 1870s, "colonial and intercolonial contests were marked more by a concern for social relations than for playing intensity or ability." In the U.S., the first courts were often built specifically for country club wives and daughters. Even when Canadian cities began building courts in the mid-1910s, virtually all were reserved for private clubs.²⁸

Club wives and daughters constituted a leisure class who were among the most prominent sportswomen. They played croquet, tennis, or golf, often in coed settings, and always in a sedate style. Their social status protected them from ridicule or having their femininity questioned and made it easier to

26. Gilkeson, *Middle-Class Providence*, 147. Country clubs in smaller cities like Providence, Rhode Island, were at the top of all sports clubs, followed by tennis and yacht clubs, with cycling clubs at the bottom. Providence's Country Club was established in 1888 because some members of the Hope Club, the city's most prestigious, wanted a country place for riding and shooting. Tennis courts and golf were soon added. By 1902, the city's social register listed 10 such family-oriented clubs. *Ibid.*, 147, 148. On the major urban country clubs, see Rader, *American Sports*, 94; Riess, *City Games*, 58-61.

27. Holt, *Sport and the British*, 130-33; Metcalfe, *Canada Learns to Play*, 37-38; Stoddart, *Saturday Afternoon Fever*, 51.

28. Holt, *Sport and the British*, 125-27; Helm Walker "Lawn Tennis," in *Sport in Britain: A Social History*, ed. Tony Mason (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 254, 262; Allen Guttmann, *Women's Sport: A History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 117-23; Metcalfe, *Canada Learns to Play*, 41; Stoddart, *Saturday Afternoon Fever*, 17-18; Riess, *City Games*, 59. See also Catriona M. Parratt, "Athletic 'Womanhood': Exploring Sources for Female Sport in Victorian and Edwardian England," *Journal of Sport History* 16 (Summer 1989): 142-55, which gives considerable attention to the agency of elite English women at the turn of the century, and Guttmann, *Women's Sport*, 129-34, for a survey of elite European women's sport.

break social conventions. As Cindy Himes points out, elite women “used sport to establish more casual and friendly relations between the sexes, to discredit myths about feminine weakness, to adopt more practical forms of dress, and to reject physical idleness and disability as a lifestyle.”²⁹

Athletic clubs were at the bottom of the high-status sports organizations; Gilkeson found that the Providence Athletic Association was at the bottom “as far as club atmosphere and chumminess goes.” The New York Athletic Club, the model American athletic club, was actually organized in 1866 by three upper-middle-class sportsmen who were primarily interested in sporting competition. Rader has demonstrated that the NYAC was taken over in the 1880s by a more socially renowned leadership who made it more of a selective urban men’s club than a sports organization by actively recruiting older, richer, and not necessarily athletic, New Yorkers.³⁰

ELITE MENTALITIES

Amateurism and Elites

Class was central to definitions of amateurism. Metcalfe argued that Englishmen originally had no need to define the term because it was part of their closed social system. Gentlemen had long played cricket with Players, and it was not dishonorable for them to make money from sports. Holt argues that in 1866 when the new Amateur Athletic Club of Oxbridge alumni excluded all manual workers, it “reflected the wider conflict between hierarchy and equality of opportunity in mid-Victorian England.” Amateurism was mainly a club issue until the establishment of the Amateur Rowing Association in 1882 by Henley stewards, the culmination of Oxbridge alumni’s control of Thames rowing. The ARA operated under the rules of the Henley races that barred anyone who had competed with professionals for a prize, taught athletics as a livelihood, worked as boatmen, or were manual workers. This definition did not gain universal acceptance, and when the National Amateur Rowing Association was formed in 1890, it was open to everyone except for professional oarsmen.³¹

Holt found the key shift in the amateur question was the move from class to financial dimensions. The British amateur/professional division based on a cash nexus came at the end of the century with the formation of the Football League (1885) and the split between Rugby Football Union and

29. Rader, *American Sports*, 94-95; Donald Mrozek, *Sport and American Mentality, 1880-1910* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1983), ch. 5; Guttmann, *Women in Sport*, 123-29; Cindy L. Himes, “The Female Athlete in American Society, 1860-1940” (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1984), ch. 1.

30. Rader, *American Sports*, 56-57; Gilkeson, *Middle Class Providence*, 142. In 1890, the Athletic Club was one of the few high-status clubs open to more than a handful of upwardly mobile non-Protestants because it needed their membership fees to pay for its expensive facilities. Perhaps the relatively low status of the Athletic Club explains why it was the only prominent men’s club in Providence that opened its facilities to women. *Ibid.*, 144.

31. Metcalfe, *Canada Learns to Play*, 120; Holt, *Sport and the British*, 108; Halladay, *Rowing in England*, 81 (quote), 88-89.

Northern Union (1894) over broken-time payments so working-class blokes could have the leisure time to compete with wealthy young men.³²

Metcalf argued that the amateur crisis in Canada occurred in the 1860s and 1870s when the middle class challenged the exclusivity of early Canadian sportsmen. It then became necessary to institutionalize the elite value system English middle-class immigrants had brought over to a country that lacked a landed aristocracy and had a different social structure. Canadians then defined amateurism on a class basis which reflected middle-class discomfort with making work out of play. The Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen (1880) barred those “who assisted in the pursuit of athletic exercises as a means of livelihood . . . and does not abandon or neglect his usual business or occupation for the purpose of training more than two weeks during the season.”³³

Rader pointed to a different course in the United States. Clubs developed restrictions fearing that professionals, especially social inferiors, would take over their games. The 1876 NYAC rules became the standard, barring those who had competed for money, or vied with professionals for a prize, or taught athletics to earn a living. Athletic clubs adopted these rules largely to protect themselves as a status community. However, Rader indicated that this action did not rest on a body of established customs or the sponsorship of an inherited aristocracy for whom style was more important than victory. New men of wealth in America were accustomed to winning at all costs in business, and their clubs skirted the rules to bring in top athletes.³⁴

Sport and Elite Values

The most thorough study of sport and elite values is Don Mrozek's *Sport and American Mentality, 1880-1910* (1983). Mrozek found that sport's attainment of respectability with the middle and upper classes was important in shaping the speed in which sport developed and the directions it took. However, class was less important when it came to major cultural changes affecting perceptions of sport and contexts in which its suitability and respectability could be measured than such factors as the emergence of a national consciousness and a unitary culture, the changing role of women, and a growing preference for energetic dynamism.³⁵

Mrozek recognized that the elite were worried about the future of their country and used sport to facilitate social, sexual, and cultural regeneration.

32. Holt, *Sport and the British*, 103, 105, 107.

33. Metcalf, *Canada Learns to Play*, 103-4 (quote), 121. The ruling bodies were uncomfortable excluding respectable workingmen, and allowed them in if they accepted middle-class attitudes toward sport, and behaved like gentlemen. *Ibid.*, 123. By 1884, amateurs were those who had never competed for money prize or wager, with or against professionals for prizes, or taught or coached as a livelihood. *Ibid.*, 122.

34. Rader, *American Sports*, 89-91. Rader's work is most definitely not class driven (his index has no entry for “class,” “elite,” or “middle class”), although he is very concerned with the role of class. He sought to explain how and why informal games evolved into modern sports examining changes in organizations, rules, finances and ethos along with changing social, cultural, and economic circumstances. *Ibid.*, ix.

35. Mrozek, *Sport and American Mentality*, xiii.

Upper-class opinion makers articulated how sport provided beliefs, rituals and mechanisms for personal and social renewal. Elite politicians like Teddy Roosevelt and military officers like General Leonard Wood connected the spirit of victory and social efficiency, and supported the manly sports of football and boxing to develop strength, character and leadership traits, and to inculcate the habit of success through competition. Elites vigorously supported intercollegiate sport at prestigious men's colleges and physical education at sister institutions to promote manliness at the former, femininity at the latter, and good health and character at both.³⁶

Historians have recognized how the Anglo-Saxon elites sponsored sport as their duty to promote morality, physical and mental health, and social harmony, to improve the quality of life for the masses, and to establish cultural hegemony. American urban elites and middle-class reformers at the turn of the century saw sport as an educational institution, and consequently strongly supported adult-supervised recreation at small parks, settlement houses, and Public School Athletic Leagues to uplift urban youth, develop their character, and Americanize them.³⁷

Boarding schools and elite day schools were a major locus of the strenuous life. The Canadian upper class advocated middle- and upper-class Victorian values like hard work, structured inequality, and acceptance of authority that were taught at elite secondary schools. Sociologist Christopher Armstrong credited Groton's Endicott Peabody with making athletics compulsory as he copied the athleticism of English public schools and elite eastern colleges to build up his students physically, morally, and spiritually. They would learn to play by rules, control their aggression, work as a disciplined unit, and do their best. Once-pampered boys would be ready for New Haven playing fields or San Juan Hill.³⁸

Labor historian Francis Couvares claimed that while men like Theodore Roosevelt associated the strenuous life with martial values and chauvinism, the cult of strenuosity "sprang from a revolt against bourgeois gentility and Protestant repression" and "leaned heavily on distinctly plebeian attitudes towards deportment and physical exertion."³⁹ The evidence of elite emulation, at least consciously, of plebeian attitudes and behavior is not compelling.

36. *Ibid.*, 17. On elite eastern college football, see Ronald A. Smith, *Sports and Freedom: The Rise of Big-Time College Athletics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988). On women's programs at Wellesley, see Martha H. Verbrugge, *Able-Bodied Womanhood: Personal Health and Social Change in Nineteenth Century Boston* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

37. Riess, *City Games*, 133-35, 162. N. L. Tranter found that nearly 90 percent of club presidents, patrons and patronesses of sport in nineteenth-century Central Scotland were nobility and property owners who were fulfilling a traditional social obligation and promoting the ideology of the elite schools game cult. N. L. Tranter, "The Patronage of Organized Sport in Central Scotland, 1820-1900," *Journal of Sport History* 16 (Winter 1989): 227-47.

38. Metcalfe, *Canada Learns to Play*, 17, 29, 56; Christopher F. Armstrong, "The Lessons of Sports: Class Socialization in British and American Boarding Schools," *Sociology of Sport Journal* 1 (1984): 314-31; Holt, *Sport and the British*, 74-86.

39. Couvares, *Remaking of Pittsburgh*, 102. See also Elliott J. Gorn, *The Manly Art: Bare-Knuckle Prize Fighting in America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), 102; Rader, *American Sports*, 94.

Perhaps slumming elite members of the male bachelor subculture emulated the lower sorts. As Rader cogently pointed out, “The typical Victorian apparently experienced the sporting world with ambivalent feelings, a secretly harbored awe and fascination mixed with publicly expressed horror and disgust.” Probably the best example was boxing. The “fancy” sponsored prize fights in the late Georgian and Regency eras, and Elliott Gorn and Richard Holt have demonstrated late nineteenth-century elite fascination with the Manly Art. Certain upper-class Americans like Teddy Roosevelt became amateur boxers, while in Edwardian England the National Sporting Club (1891) was established as a private club of rich urban merchants, theatrical folk, well-off bookmakers, and sporting aristocrats to support prize fighting.⁴⁰

Mrozek effectively reaffirmed the elite obsession with sport for purposes of consumption, fashion, and display, and identified the rich as “pioneers of sports as a leisure activity which required no justification.” Sport became an end in itself. He derided the upper class for its orientation toward exclusivity, self-gratification, and privacy in comparison to the middle classes who believed more in the importance of duty and public interest. Mrozek criticized undisciplined and dilettantish elite sport and paternalistic use of sporting wives as objects of conspicuous display.⁴¹

Elites and the Making of Urban Parks

The power of American elites to influence recreation was keenly felt in the development of municipal parks. As Roy Rosenzweig and Elizabeth Blackmer’s outstanding volume *The Park and the People: A History of Central Park* (1992) demonstrated, elite New Yorkers were instrumental in all stages of Central Park’s development and uses, even long after it had become a mass institution, through philanthropy and government leadership. They attributed the original idea of a great democratic public park to a circle of elite New Yorkers, and specifically merchant Robert Mintum, who believed it would boost the city’s cosmopolitan reputation, refine the rich, lift up the poor, advance commercial interests, raise property values, secure new tax

40. Rader, *American Sports*, 33, 34 (quote). Dennis Brailsford, *Bareknuckles: A Social History of Prize-Fighting* (Cambridge, Eng.: Lutterworth Press, 1988), chs. 3, 7-8; Gorn, *Manly Art*, 27, 32, 57-59, 130-31, 194-95, 198-99, 248-49; Guttmann, *Sports Spectators*, 73-76; Gilkerson, *Middle-Class Providence*, 168. Members of the National Sporting Club attended fights in dinner jackets following a formal dinner. Holt, *Sport and the British*, 64-66.

Historian Stan Shipley describes the amateur boxers of the British Amateur Athletic Club who fought for Queensberry Cup titles starting in 1867-1885 as middle-class members of exclusive amateur boxing clubs. The organization was supplanted by the Amateur Boxing Association, founded in 1880, that opened competition to the working classes by the 1890s. Stan Shipley, “Boxing,” in Mason, *Sport in Britain*, 81, 90.

41. Mrozek, *Sport and American Mentality*, 103, 126-27, 108.

revenues, improve public health and morality, provide an alternative to dissipating recreations, and curry political favor with the electorate.⁴²

Adelman and Rosenzweig/Blackmer found that when Central Park opened in 1859 it mainly served the wealthy and middle classes who flocked to its skating rinks, drives, and concerts. During its first decade, most parkgoers, especially women, arrived by carriages or horses, which were then owned only by wealthy folk. The "elite park" was largely inaccessible to the working class that lived far away. Even in the 1870s when Central Park became relatively open to all, elite park board members still emphasized receptive recreation. Paradoxically, Rosenzweig and Blackmer pointed out, the park's greatest democratization came under the direction of that most autocratic of supervisors, Robert Moses, who rebuilt and improved the park through the democratic social impulses and funding of the New Deal.⁴³

Sport, Cultural Diffusion and Indigenous Elites

A number of historians have analyzed the receptivity of elite British sport and athleticism throughout the Empire. The English games, which reflected their presumed social and cultural superiority, were taught to indigenous elites to help integrate them into the imperial system. J. A. Mangan's *The Games Ethic and Imperialism* (1986) examined how upper-middle-class missionaries and administrators brought the British life-style and values to distant parts of the world, including Canada, the Sudan, Nigeria, and India, to create Christian gentlemen and develop a loyal indigenous leadership who sought to become "Englishmen." Richard Cashman has recently criticized Mangan for emphasizing the imperialist point of view (a reflection of his research principally in English-based secondary sources), and giving insufficient attention to those being cultivated.⁴⁴

A number of essays in J.A. Mangan's anthology *Pleasure, Profit, Proselytism* (1988) employed third-world sources to examine British integration of local elites through sport. André Odendaal, for instance, discussed how Cape native elites became highly acculturated and enthusiastically took

42. Rosenzweig and Blackmer, *Central Park*, 18, 24. Other scholars like Riess and Couvares have shown how elites were influential after the Civil War in the development of suburban parks, neighborhood parks and playgrounds at the turn of the century.

Couvares found that Pittsburgh parks were originally improved to enhance elite leisure with driving and bridal paths. Schenley Park set aside space for a privately run golf course. Couvares, *Remaking of Pittsburgh*, 107. On parks and the playground movement, see Riess, *City Games*, 41-46, 127-50, Gilkeson, *Middle-Class Providence*, 235-38; Roy Rosenzweig, *Eight Hours for What We Will: Workers and Leisure in an Industrial City, 1870-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), ch. 5; Stephen Hardy and Alan G. Ingham, "Games, Structures and Agency: Historians on the American Play Movement," *Journal of Sport History* 17 (Winter 1983): 285-302.

43. Adelman, *Sporting Time*, 256-58; Rosenzweig and Blackmer, *Parks for the People*, 9, 10, 211-20; Riess, *City Games*, 142-43; Judith A. Davidson, "The Federal Government and the Democratization of Public Recreational Sport: New York City, 1933-43" (Ph.D. diss., University of Massachusetts, 1983).

44. J. A. Mangan, *Imperialism and the Games Ethic* (London: Viking, 1986); Richard Cashman, "Cricket and Colonialism: Colonial Hegemony and Indigenous Subversion," in *Pleasure, Profit, Proselytism: British Culture and Sport at Home and Abroad 1700-1914*, ed. J. A. Mangan (London: F. Cass, 1988), 258-72.

to cricket. By the 1880s they were organizing their own cricket clubs to become more assimilated, behave like gentlemen, and merit full citizenship. Similarly, pre-1914 West Indian cricketers were drawn from the local elites and other respectable elements. They emulated imperial styles and behavior, especially against British cricketers, to prove how “British” they were. Cricket provided a bond with the mother country and a means for the local elite to disseminate British identity in their islands.⁴⁵

III. MIDDLE-CLASS SPORT

Eric Hobsbawm has argued that the “rise of sport” in the late nineteenth century occurred in tandem with the flourishing of the middle class as activities previously restricted to the rich became more widely available. Hobsbawm argued the middle class had little sense of identity, unlike the aristocracy or class-conscious workingmen. The bourgeoisie used sport, which they and the aristocracy largely governed, and which promoted exclusivity through amateurism and high costs, as a social and economic bond that promoted nationalism, helped mark off class lines, and provided a new role for women. Hobsbawm felt that sporting practices and invented traditions filtered downward, partly through organizations that sought to exercise social control over workers. The labor aristocracy adopted the bourgeois sporting tradition, not out of manipulation, but because they enjoyed the games and the values of self-improvement they represented.⁴⁶

The beginning dates for the rise of middle-class sport has been pushed back into an earlier era by Melvin Adelman. He argues that antebellum New York’s “initial thrust of organized sport came largely from the upper and upper-middle classes.” About 40 percent of New York’s population at mid-century was middle class, which provided the organizational leadership for harness racing and baseball as well as nonspectatorial sports. Trotting men in

45. Andre Odendaal, “South Africa’s Black Victorians: Sport and Society in South Africa in the Nineteenth Century,” in Mangan, *Pleasure, Profit, Proselytism*, 193-214; Brian Stoddart, “Cricket and Colonialism in the Caribbean,” in *ibid.*, 231-57. See also Keith A.P. Sandiford and Brian Stoddart, “The Elite Schools and Cricket in Barbados: A Study in Colonial Continuity,” *International Journal of the History of Sport* 4 (December 1987): 333-50.

46. Eric Hobsbawm, “Mass Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914” in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 301-7. Hobsbawm errs in claiming that class-specific plebeian sports were rarely consciously developed. His sole example is soccer when the workers took over an upper-class game and developed their own plebeian soccer culture, although Hobsbawm also points out that autochthonous lower-class sub-cultures developed that owed nothing to higher social class cultures, *Ibid.*, 306.

For an in-depth discussion of English middle-class sports, see John Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes, 1880-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), which appeared after this essay was completed. Lowerson focuses on how sport was an instrument of middle-class development and self-definition. He considers five principal themes: social differentiation and the use of sport as a criteria for demarcation; entrepreneurship; ideas about disposable assets (time, space, and money); voluntarism; and broadened opportunities for people of different ages, physical capacities, and incomes. *Ibid.*, 2. Like other British historians, his upper-middle-class includes people of considerable wealth and standing who in North America would be considered part of the upper class. An implicit point he makes is that non-elite people could and did play “elite” sports. Stockbrokers, for instance, were active in “the most exclusive and expensive of elite sports such as game-shooting and yachting.” *Ibid.*, 9. Presumably this did not gain them elite status. But neither did it make those sports déclassé and no longer elite.

the 1840s were mainly from the more prosperous middle classes, although less well-to-do middling sorts, like food industry workers, had cheap and utilitarian roadsters, while most members of the SGCC were originally from the comfortable middle class.⁴⁷

The early nineteenth-century middle class were middle-income folk who included the bourgeoisie of petty shopkeepers, professionals, agents, and clerks, yeoman farmers, and well-paid independent artisans who exercised control at the workplace and lived by Victorian norms. These craftsmen were loyalists who identified with capitalism and envisioned success through internalizing Victorian virtues or radical workingmen who believed that middle-class morality would prepare them to fight capitalism through brotherhood and cooperation. Adelman found that artisans were involved in various sports that expressed the tension caused in their communities by the onset of the modern productive system. Their interest in sports like baseball reflected middle-class aspirations, but their participation in sport could also represent workingmen's desire to maintain traditional values and their esteem of physical prowess.⁴⁸

Manliness and the Ideology of Sport

Adelman and Riess emphasized the significance of the antebellum positive sports creed in encouraging and justifying middle-class American sport. Hard-working middle-class folk opposed the alternative culture of the sporting fraternity who got their manly self-image through their vile amusements, while the pre-industrial middle class got their sense of manliness by being good breadwinners, faithful husbands, and reliable fathers. They became involved in team sports because of their ameliorative potential (public health, morality, and character), and the camaraderie, fun, and competition sport offered.⁴⁹ Riess pointed out that post-bellum middle-class men turned to sports to demonstrate manliness and gain recognition and a sense of self-

47. Adelman, *Sporting Time*, 8, 59, 61. Slightly more than one-fifth of the prestigious St. George Cricket Club were artisans. *Ibid.*, 103.

48. Adelman, *Sporting Time*, 8, 18; Riess, *City Games*, 30-31. On "middle class" artisans, see Paul G. Faler, "Cultural Aspects of the Industrial Revolution: Lynn, Massachusetts, Shoemakers and Industrial Morality, 1826-1860." *Labor History* 15 (1974): 367-94; Bruce Laurie, *Working People of Philadelphia, 1800-1850* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1980).

This definition of the antebellum middle class has been taken to task by Stuart Blumin who argues that the colonial all-encompassing urban middling sorts of small storekeepers, professionals, clerks, and artisans became in the antebellum era a distinctly nonmanual white-collar class. Blumin gives "primacy to changes in work, to the economic and social relations of the workplace, and to the social identities that arose from and were most generally framed in terms of, economic activity." Nonmanual workers shared experiences regarding income, wealth, economic opportunity, and the economic and social relations of the workplace that were not any longer shared with artisans. Their social identities were based on economic activity that reflected declining public respect for manual work. In addition, a distinctive class and class formation were also reflected by personal and social experiences (consumption, residential location, relations, voluntary associations, and family organization and strategy). Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1989), esp. 11, 136-37, 187.

49. Adelman, *Sporting Time*, 269-86; Riess, *City Games*, 27-31; *idem*, "Sport and the Redefinition of American Middle-Class Masculinity," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 8 (May 1991): 5-27. On the British manly creed, see Holt, *Sport and the British*, 86-98.

accomplishment that their increasingly bureaucratic jobs did not provide. They were worried about becoming overcivilized, feminized, and molly-coddled sissies, and turned to sport to be invigorated, revitalized, and made into real men. Upper-middle- and middle-class men became involved in physical fitness activities. Gorn indicated that they even began to spar in athletic clubs, reflecting their admiration for pugilists who were as much models of self-discipline and self-control as unbridled aggression. The middle classes were particularly concerned, as David Macleod pointed out in *Building Character in the American Boy* (1983), with improving their sons' character and morals and curbing their sexual precocity through such organizations as the YMCA.⁵⁰

Richard Holt demonstrated in *Sport and the British* that the middle class in Great Britain also saw sport as a means to develop loyal and brave muscular Christians who could exercise social control over their sexual impulses, including homosexuality. Ironically, "by cloistering boys together during puberty, public schools . . . encouraged not manliness but vice." In Great Britain, Holt indicated, the middle class also saw sport as a means to develop loyal and brave muscular Christians who could exercise social control over their sexual impulses; including homosexuality.⁵¹

The middle classes were a major subject in Holt's *Sport and the British* which analyzed how changing class structures and urban experiences molded sport. He demonstrated how the Victorian middle class played a pioneering role by criticizing traditional recreations and interfering with poor people's moral lives, banning football from public highways for interfering with commerce and prohibiting cruel sports (with the tacit consent of the landed elite, who had opted for more exclusive and civilized pleasures). Subsequently, middle-class ideals boosted rational recreation and clean sport (the civilizing process particularly influenced the labor aristocracy and old social elites). Holt emphasized the roles of amateurism, sociability, status, and suburbanization in the rise of middle-class sports that was highly organized into sports clubs that provided a separate sphere for middle-class British men.⁵²

The Growth of Sporting Clubs

Stuart Blumin pointed out in his landmark study *The Emergence of the Middle Class* (1989) that sports clubs in the 1840s were largely divided along a manual-nonmanual division, which as other historians have recognized, differentiated members by social backgrounds. They were more visible than literary societies or glee clubs, and in line with "middle-class values and

50. Adelman, *Sporting Time*, 173-74, 281-84; Riess, *City Games*, 61; Gorn, *Manly Art*, 194-206. On children and sport, see Rader, *American Sports*, ch. 13; David I. Macleod, *Building Character in the American Boy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983); Allen Guttmann, *Whole New Ball Game: An Interpretation of American Sports* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 82-91.

51. Holt, *Sport and the British*, 89-91 (quote, 91).

52. Holt, *Sport and the British*, 347-48.

experiences," had written bylaws and constitutions that promoted order and dignity, and functioned in a controlled atmosphere, typically in less congested outdoor areas. Their sports, like curling in Canada, promoted sociability and exemplified such values as diligence, faith and obedience.⁵³

The democratic game of baseball, played by virtually all middle-class youth, was the most important middle-income sport in North America. Adelman demonstrated that the Knickerbockers, the first recognized team, were "gentlemen" of moral virtue, but not of the social elite. They were mainly white-collar workers, below the status of the St. George Cricket Club, yet, "in spirit and tone they were more akin to upper class sportsmen . . . than later ball players with their win-at-all costs philosophy." Adelman found that in the early 1850s three-fourths of metropolitan New York players were evenly divided between upper-middle and middle class; the rest were artisans. However, later in the decade as the game became more popular, high white-collar players declined to one-fifth, and the rest were middle to lower-middle income. One-third of all players were artisans, well-paid workers in the food, shipping, construction, and printing trades that had been minimally impacted by industrialization, who had a rich sporting tradition. Virtually none were unskilled even though one-third of the city's labor force were unskilled. Baseball was inexpensive, was often sponsored by master craftsmen, fit into their work schedules, enhanced their prestige and gained them respectability. The baseball fraternity, who belonged to regular teams, were expected to pay dues, attend practices, and behave like gentlemen. Adelman showed that baseball's democratic character extended beyond the diamond, since during the 1860s three-fifths of club officers and National Association of Base Ball Players delegates were low white-collar workers and one-fifth were artisans.⁵⁴ Adelman further discovered that over 90 percent of the best ("most active") players in the late 1860s were low-white collar or skilled, and they provided a pool for early professional baseball. Three-fifths (61.8 percent) of New Yorkers in the National Association of Professional Base Ball Players were artisans, and the rest were low white-collar workers.⁵⁵

Kirsch's exactly detailed *The Creation of American Team Sports* (1989) found that Philadelphia ballplayers in the period 1855-1870 came from higher social backgrounds than New Yorkers. Philadelphia's cricketers were more white-collar (79.3 percent) than its baseball players (71.8 percent),

53. Blumin, *Emergence of the Middle Class*, 213-16. On curling, see Metcalfe, *Canada Learns to Play*, 39-41. On middle class clubs, see Riess, *City Games*, 32-36; Adelman, *Sporting Time*, 61-62, 138-40, 154-56, 176-77, 251; Brian S. Butler, "'Gain Ground and Glory': Metropolitan Athletic Clubs and the Promotion of American Football." *International Journal of the History of Sport* 9 (December 1992): 378-96, Metcalfe, *Canada Learns to Play*, 64-65, 82-83, 98-100.

54. Adelman, *Sporting Time*, 121-42, 123 (quote), 138, 141, 176-77. The Brooklyn Eckfords, the city's second organized team, was comprised of top-paid shipwrights and mechanics, labor aristocrats who held many middle-class values and named their team for the city's richest shipbuilder. *Ibid.*, 125.

55. *Ibid.*, 177, 179, 181-82.

much more likely to have high white-collar jobs (48.5 percent to 30.6 percent), and about seven times as wealthy. The city's black ballplayers were more prosperous than most African-Americans, but mainly blue-collar (54.5 percent), and had about four-fifths (78.3 percent) as much property as white ballplayers.⁵⁶

Kirsch, Adelman, and Goldstein found that adult nines were mainly based on occupation, residence, education, religion, and institutional affiliation. Kirsch also discovered that several baseball team memberships were evenly mixed by class, which was rare among cricket elevens. On the other hand, baseball teams scheduled games against clubs from similar backgrounds, while cricket clubs frequently had inter-class matches, such as elite elevens against machine operatives. Kirsch argued that baseball generated more social friction than cricket because so many groups and classes had teams.⁵⁷

Australian cricket was very middle class, brought over in the nineteenth century by English upper-middle-class sons who comprised the new gentry, and used it to teach their values and conventions. Sociologist Jon Stratton claimed that Australians were concerned how the Anglo-Saxon racial type could do in an alien and enervating environment, and saw sport as a vehicle to develop a new natural bourgeois man whose mind harmonized with his body. Stratton saw Australian middle-class sportsmen as more diversified than in England. They enjoyed aristocratic English sports like hunting, shooting, and cricket, supervised by men who adopted the public school traits of manliness, sportsmanship, and especially amateurism.⁵⁸

Amateurism and Middle-Class Power

Holt classified the amateur code as one of two major elements of middle-class sport. The code was embodied in public school games that bridged traditional aristocratic norms and bourgeois values of competitiveness and hard work, representing fair play (ethics) and status (gentlemen). These values of educators, professionals and civil servants, were much stronger in Southern England than in the North where industrialists tolerated professionalism and played a leading role in the Football League and Rugby League clubs.⁵⁹

Holt identified recreational suburban sport as the second major element of middle-class athletics. Holt felt that suburbanites who benefitted from consumerism, higher incomes, and the more private and hedonistic life-styles

56. Kirsch, *Creation of American Team Sports*, 124-27, 134. One curious anomaly was that while Philadelphia blacks ballplayers owned 70 percent of the real estate of white players, their personal estates were marginally greater than their white peers. *Ibid.*, 127.

57. Kirsch, *Creation of America Team Sports*, 146, 152-156, 158, 164-65, 168; Warren Goldstein, *Playing for Keeps: A History of Early Baseball* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989), 24-27; Adelman, *Sporting Time*, 124-26, 141. On the baseball fraternity, see Goldstein, *Playing for Keeps*, 17-31.

58. Stratton, "Australia-This Sporting Life," 89, 98, 99.

59. *Ibid.*, 349-50.

of the late Victorian and Edwardian eras had a limited view of amateurism, and applied it only to track and field, rugby, and cricket. He believed that middle-class folk became more identified by conspicuous consumption in less exertive sports than by values or beliefs. He claimed that money alone determined acceptance among middle-class WASPS.⁶⁰

The British middle class wielded considerable power in sports organizations. Vamplew pointed out that it was not happenstance that Birmingham clerical workers were early leaders in forming sports clubs because they were familiar with bookkeeping and administration, and were among the first employees to get Saturday half holidays. Vamplew indicated that once active sports broadened its base, the middle class organized sports associations and established eligibility rules to protect their interests. He hypothesized that "the ensuing struggle by professionals for recognition as legitimate sportsmen can perhaps be seen as part of the wider class confrontation taking place in society at this time." N. L. Tranter found in his exhaustive study of nineteenth-century organized sport in Central Scotland that public service and professional occupations dominated leadership roles in all team sports. Participants were overwhelmingly middle class "and their allies in respectability, the skilled working class." Tranter pointed out that the Scottish clubs were designed for members' enjoyment and improvement, and not to attract the lower orders to promote social order.⁶¹

Halladay examined how the English upper-middle class employed amateur rowing for social distancing and social engineering. Rowing taught middle-class oarsmen a classical view of society that affirmed a class system based on heredity, rank, and nobility of blood. Halladay suggests that it was the extensive impregnation of British sport with upper-middle-class ethical values from 1850s to 1940 that gave rowing its essential social identity.⁶²

Canadian amateurism, the impact of industrialization, the rise of new sporting institutions, and the peculiar Canadian elements in sport, were examined by Metcalfe in *Canada Learns to Play*. Metcalfe argued that Canadian sport reflected how middle and upper classes deferred to the United Kingdom while working class deferred to American culture. He argued that the ideology

60. *Ibid.*, 349-51.

61. Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game*, 210; N.L. Tranter, "The Social and Occupational Structure of Organized Sport in Central Scotland During the Nineteenth Century," *International and of the History of Sport 4* (December 1987): 307-8, 310, 312. Elsewhere Tranter suggests that middle-class sponsorship largely entailed the donation of prizes. They were supporting the character-building traits of sport, serving as community boosters, and possibly making some money. See Tranter, "Patronage of Organized Sport in Central Scotland," 238-45.

62. Halladay compares and contrasts the social exclusiveness of the elite with the tradition of artisan rowing and examines the conflicts between these groups when growing leisure time made rowing more popular. He finds this long struggle constituted a revolt of the provinces as well as an effort to remove social barriers, ending in the abandonment of professionalism and the universal acceptance of the modern amateur tradition. Halladay, *Rowing in England*, 118-19.

By the 1870s, local racing was affected by the Oxbridge nexus because it was the first time many middle-class families sent sons to public school and university, and they did not fit well in upon returning. Consequently, they established exclusive clubs and develop racing separately from less socially acceptable clubs. *Ibid.*, 124.

of amateurism, primarily identified with the anglophone urban middle class, brought unity and coherence to Canadian sport, and was not seriously challenged until after World War I. Metcalfe asserted that amateur sport became a means for establishing and maintaining middle-class hegemony. imposed through its control over the media, government, schools. and the Amateur Athletic Union of Canada which supervised sports clubs that institutionalized inequality.⁶³

Metcalfe showed how Canada's national sports organizations were established by upper-middle-class men whose bourgeois values provided a common bond among Canadian sportsmen, and helped soften regional aspirations for autonomy. Metcalfe discerned "a clear distinction between clubs created to organize and co-ordinate the competition of members and those whose objective was control." He found tennis, cricket, golf and canoeing the preserve of a small select middle and upper class, while most team sports (soccer, lacrosse and hockey) drew from a wider base. Hockey leagues were established by middle-class groups like amateur athletic associations, colleges, banks, and mercantile firms, who identified it as an ideal means to teach manly qualities. The coming of professionals changed things around because monetary rewards and victory at any cost became more important. Dedicated amateurs found this philosophy alarming, stressing cooperation over competition, and means over ends. The amateur-professional division symbolized the rise of mass sport, making amateurism seem dated, and inappropriate.⁶⁴

Guttman identified a close connection among class, sport. and fair play. an ideal of bourgeois Victorian/Edwardian liberalism. It was exemplified by the elite game of cricket as played by W. G. Grace and his ilk. By contrast, Guttman pointed out that baseball, which he identified as a working-class game, had a heritage of chicanery. However, the evidence does not bear out this theory. For instance, Guttman's principal exponent of the "win at all costs" school, Ty Cobb, was not a working-class youth, but the son of a high school principal. Furthermore, upper-middle-class football was nearly always characterized by cheating on and off the field. Even cricket itself became less "fair," evidenced by the rise of the bodyline game in the 1930s. Acceptable form could vary among practitioners of the same sport. As Richard Lewis

63. Metcalfe, *Canada Learns to Play*, 220. See also Alan Metcalfe, "Power: A Case Study of the Ontario Hockey Association, 1890-1936." *Journal of Sport History* 19 (Spring 1992): 5-25.

64. Metcalfe, *Canada Learns to Play*, 61-69, 100, 102. For an example of upper-middle-class dictatorial control over a provincial sports organization, see Metcalfe. "Power: A Case Study of the Ontario Hockey Association, 1890-1936," 5-25. On middle-class Canadian sport in small towns, see Nancy B. Bouchier, "For the Love of the Game and the Honour of the Town: Organized Sport, Local Culture and Middle Class Hegemony in Two Ontario Towns, 1838-1895" (Ph.D. diss University of Western Ontario, 1990). Her work has been made accessible in "Aristocrats" and Their 'Noble Sport': Woodstock Officers and Cricket During the Rebellion Era." *Canadian Journal of History of Sport* 20 (May 1989): 16-31: "'Strictly Honorable Races': Woodstock's Driving Park Association and Small Town Civic Holidays." *ibid.*, 24 (May 1993): 29-51. Bouchier points out that the use of the term aristocrat for the officers by local folk was probably an affectation, and that they were more likely to be middle class. Bouchier, "The 24th of May is the Queen's Birthday." *International Journal of the History of Sport* 10 (August 1993): 184n.26

demonstrated for croquet, acceptable English play in hitting the opponent's ball was poor form in America. Nor did Guttman take into account John Dizikes's analysis of manipulative nineteenth century middle class men trying to bend rules whenever they could in order to win, or Karen Halttunen's argument that in the 1850s the urban middle classes abandoned earlier reservations about insincerity, and recognized that social rituals, theatricality, duplicity, artifice, and hypocritical pretensions were part of the presentation of self in public gatherings and private circles.⁶⁵

Professional Sport

Historians have given considerable attention to the role of the middle class as sports entrepreneurs. Wray Vamplew in *Play Up and Play the Game* traced the influence of economic variables on commercialized British spectator sports, described as one of the economic success stories of the late Victorian era. He examined the social origins of sports capitalists, professional athletes, and spectators, and such social problems as gambling, player misconduct, and spectator violence.

Vamplew explored shareholding in professional soccer at the turn of the century when rewards were mainly psychic or social, since few clubs promised dividends. The majority of English shareholders (56.3 percent) were white-collar, and club directors were overwhelmingly white-collar (84.4 percent) in 1901, mostly proprietors and employers (56.2 percent). They were twice as likely to be elite or professionals (22.8 percent) compared to Scotland (11.2 percent) where 70.4 percent of directors were white-collar. Similarly Holt found that over 90 percent of club directors in the period 1888-1915 were middle class, mainly manufacturers, managers, financial and commercial businessmen, of the food and drink and the building trades.⁶⁶

Metcalfé argued that early Canadian commercialized sports like ice hockey were mainly financed by middle-class entrepreneurs who aimed at middle-class audiences. Riess pointed out in *City Games* the prominence of upwardly mobile politicians in early American professional sports. Similarly, Jones showed that Manchester's inter-war spectator sports were controlled by middle-class folk, including the dog tracks, the local racetrack, and Manchester United. Biographical studies have helped illuminate middle-class sporting ventures. Peter Levine's *A.G. Spalding and the Promise of American Sport* (1985) examined how Spalding rose from his career as a professional

65. Guttman, *Whole New Ball Game*, 55-58; Robert Lewis, "American Croquet in the 1860s: Playing the Game and Winning," *Journal of Sport History* 18 (Winter 1991): 382-84; John Dizikes, *Sportsmen and Gamesmen* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981); Karen Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle-Class Culture in America, 1830-1870* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982).

66. Vamplew, *Play Up and Play the Game*, 157-58, 161; Holt, *Sport and the British*, 175. Only 42 of 740 shareholders in the period 1888-1915 were artisans and four were unskilled. Only 32 were gentlemen. *Ibid.*, 283-84. A recent study of the early leaders of the Northern Rugby Football Union, the sport's first professional league, found that they were mostly self-made lower-middle-class types who did not bring with them the polish of public-school and university men, but experience in commerce. Paul Greenhalgh, "'The Work and Play Principle': The Professional Regulations of the Northern Rugby Football Union, 1898-1905," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 9 (December 1992): 357-59.

ballplayer to become owner of the Chicago White Stockings and the preeminent nineteenth-century sporting goods manufacturer. He established a well integrated, highly rationalized company that advertised extensively and gained recognition as the “official” supplier of equipment for national sports organizations and publisher of their rules and guidebooks. Robert Ernst’s biography of Bernarr McFadden, *Weakness is a Crime* (1991), analyzed how an impoverished sickly youth who grew up to become a bodybuilder and proponent of physical culture became a wealthy publishing entrepreneur.⁶⁷

Women’s Sports and Coed Recreational Sports

A few recent books have concentrated on middle-class sportswomen. Martha Verbrugge’s *Able Bodied Womanhood* (1988) focused on the rise of well-being among elite and middle-class nineteenth-century female Bostonians, examining various athletic training programs, particularly athletics at Wellesley and the establishment of the Boston Normal School of Gymnastics, to demonstrate women’s growing awareness and understanding of health issues. Kathleen McCrone in *Playing the Game* (1988) argued that between 1870 and 1914 it was upper middle-class privately educated Englishwomen who dominated female sport. Their interest was generated by education, and made possible by leisure time, money, and their ability to surmount such impediments as “the patriarchal nature of social relations and restrictive perceptions of femininity.” Major innovations occurred at expensive new schools like Rodean, whose game mistresses stressed team sports like field hockey at a time when lower-class schoolgirls were limited to gymnastic exercises. The instructors’ goal was to create fit and feminine bourgeois mothers. Their athletic experience countered negative stereotypes, and promoted female autonomy and self-respect through an activity that was a symbol of male exclusivity.⁶⁸

Historians have well illustrated the importance of middle-class coeducational social sports, as well as the growing participation of young women in

67. Metcalfe, *Canada Learns to Play*, 65, 73, 168-72, 180; Riess, *City Games*, ch. 6; Jones, “Interwar Sport in Manchester,” in *Sport and Working Class in Modern Britain*, ed. Richard Holt (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), 71-72; Peter Levine, *A. G. Spalding and the Rise of Baseball: The Promise of American Sport* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); Robert Ernst, *Weakness is a Crime: The Life of Bernarr McFadden* (Syracuse University Press, 1991).

68. Verbrugge, *Able-Bodied Womanhood*; Kathleen E. McCrone, *Playing the Game: Sport and the Physical Emancipation of English Women, 1870-1914* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1988), esp 21-153; idem, “Class, Gender and English Women’s Sport, c. 1890-1914” *Journal of Sport History* 18 Spring 1991: 159 (quote); Holt, *Sport and the British*, 117-22. See also Nancy L. Struna, “‘Good Wives’ and ‘Gardeners’: Spinners and ‘Fearless Riders’: Middle- and Upper-Rank Women in the Early American Sporting Culture,” in *From “Fair Sex” to Feminism: Sport and the Socialization of Women in the Industrial and Post-Industrial Eras*, ed. J. A. Mangan and Roberta J. Park (London: Frank Cass, 1987), 235-55; Frances B. Cogan, *All-American Girl: The Idea of Real Womanhood in Mid-Nineteenth Century America* (Athens, GA University of Georgia Press, 1989); Françoise Labridy-Poncelot, “Imaginaires Feminins et Pratiques Sportives: L’imaginaire de la Femme Bourgeoise et Son Usage des Pratiques Sportives: L’exemple de la Revue *La Femme Française* (1902-1904),” in *Les Athlètes de la République: Gymnastique, Sport et Ideologie Républicaine, 1870/1914*, ed. Pierre Arnaud (Toulouse: Bibliothèque Historique Privat, 1987), 317-28; Himes, “The Female Athlete in American Society, 1860-1940”; Susan Cahn, *Coming on Strong: Gender and Sex in Women Sport, 1900-1960* (New York: Free Press, 1994).

liberating, yet respectable sport and physical fitness activities. Adelman and Rosenzweig/Blackmer pointed out the importance of ice skating in Central Park for the elite and the upper middle class. Robert Lewis has discussed the croquet fad in North America where it was a recreational game played by men and women or family groups. Croquet sets were expensive and games were typically played in a suburban yard or villa that became the ideal of middle-class gentility. Croquet was simple, informal, loosely structured, non-competitive, and did not require physical strength or stamina, which "endeared it to moralists seeking to protect the middle-class family."⁶⁹

In the late nineteenth century, upper-middle- and middle-class people turned to life-time sports, including golf and tennis, played for status, sociability, and business. and angling, which was mainly for recreation. John Lowerson estimated that in the 1890s when there were about 60,000 players in the United Kingdom, they required an income of at least £100 to afford the game. Lowerson pointed out that middle- and upper-class British anglers dominated the best waters for game fishing because of costs, and were disdainful of working-class fishermen who they felt were corrupted by profit-seeking competition in lieu of recreation.⁷⁰

The first public links in English resort towns were priced for better-off folk, while expensive golf courses became important attributes of wealthy communities in the 1920s, established by shareholders providing collective access to a landed lifestyle. The American middle class tried to emulate elite golfers, exemplified by the rise of their own golf clubs in the 1920s, as well as the popularity of public courses. Tennis in Great Britain filtered down from the elite by the 1920s all the way to the lower middle class, and by the late 1930s, there were nearly 3,000 affiliated clubs, offering sociability as well as competition. Riess pointed out that American middle-class men and women took advantage of tennis courts at accessible suburban parks by the 1880s. A big boom occurred in the 1920s when the number of public courts rose by 81 percent, further enhanced by Depression-era public works projects.⁷¹

69. Adelman, *Sporting Time*, 257-58; Rosenzweig and Blackmer, *Parks for the People*, 229-32; Lewis, "American Croquet in the 1860s," 373-75, 386, 373 (quote). Gilkeson argues that in Providence, cycling clubs were the least prestigious upper-middle-class organized sport. In the mid-1890s, Providence had at least 11 cycling clubs comprised of over 6,000 bikers, primarily clerks, salesmen, and kindred workers. They were often divided up by ethnic groups, race, and gender. Gilkeson, *Middle Class Providence*, 149. For other recent studies of the bicycle, see Holt, *Sport and the British*, 122-24; Richard Holt, "The Bicycle, the Bourgeoisie and the Discovery of Rural France. 1880-1914," *British Journal of Sports History* 2 (September 1985): 127-39; McCrone, *Playing the Game*, 177-85; Patricia Marks, *Bicycles, Bangs and Bloomers: The New Woman and the Popular Press* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1990).

70. John Lowerson, "Angling," in Mason, *Sport in Britain*, 15, 16, 27.

71. Lowerson, "Golf," in Mason, *Sport in Britain*, 189-90, 193; Lowerson, "Sport and the Victorian Sunday: The Beginnings of Middle-Class Apostasy" *British Journal of Sports History* 1 (September 1984): 189, 190, 193, 212, 218; McCrone, *Playing the Game*, 156-77; Holt, *Sport and the British*, 124-28; Riess, *City Games*, 62, 132, 141-43.

IV. SPORT AND THE LOWER CLASSES

By the 1970s, working-class history moved away from a complete focus on trade unions through the pioneering scholarship of E. P. Thompson. E. J. Hobsbawm, Herbert Gutman, David Montgomery, and their students. The emphasis moved toward the emergence of a working-class culture and workers' struggle for control over the workplace as key factors in the making of working-class consciousness.⁷²

This redirection of focus encouraged scholars to examine sport, described by Hobsbawm as "a mass proletarian cult," as a central element in the formation of a masculine working-class culture. As Elliott Gorn pointed out. "If historians are to understand working-class people, they must look closely at their folklore and recreations, their pastimes and sports, for it has been in leisure more than in politics or in labor that many men and women have found the deepest sense of meaning and wholeness."⁷³

Students of working-class sport over the past decade were concerned with the impact of industrialization (time-work discipline and standard of living), urbanization (the crowding of cities and loss of historic recreational sites), and the civilizing process (the dominant classes restricting the bachelor subculture). They have been interested in such topics as workers' adjustment to modernization, the status of traditional pastimes, the emergence of new sports, working-class agency, and the social functions of their sporting culture.

WORKERS' SPORT AND AGENCY

A key question for scholars is the extent to which the working class has controlled its own sporting culture. Holt, Adelman, and Riess have recently asserted that the positive Anglo-American sports ideology developed in the mid-nineteenth century encouraged clean working-class athletics to develop a healthy, moral, and orderly workforce, and to head off labor radicalism.⁷⁴

72. See, e.g., E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage, 1963); idem, "Time Work Discipline and Industrial Capitalism," *Past and Present* 38 (December 1967): 56-97; idem, "Patrician Society, Plebeian Culture," *Journal of Social History* 7 (1974): 382-403; Eric Hobsbawm, *Labouring Men: Studies in the History of Labour* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967); Herbert C. Gutman, *Work, Culture and Society in Industrializing America: Essays in America Working-Class and Social History* (New York: Pantheon, 1976); David Montgomery, *Workers Control in America Studies in the History of Work, Technology and Labor Struggles* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1979)

For studies of working-class culture by the younger generation of labor historians, see Alan Dawley, *Class and Community: The Industrial Revolution in Lynn* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976); Brian Palmer, *A Culture in Conflict: Skilled Worker and Industrial Capitalism in Hamilton, Ontario, 1860-1914* (Montreal: McGill/Queen's University Press, 1979); Paul Faler, *Mechanics and Manufacturers in the Early Industrial Revolution: Lynn, Massachusetts, 1780-1860* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1981); Laurie, *Working People of Philadelphia*; Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic: New York City and the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788-1850* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984); Steven J. Ross, *Workers on the Edge: Work, Leisure and Politics in Industrializing Cincinnati, 1788-1890* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985); James R. Barrett, *Work and Community in the Jungle: Chicago's Packinghouse Workers, 1894-1922* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1990). Despite the growing monographic attention to sport, recreation, and working-class culture, a recent multi-volume synthesis of working-people history in the United States devotes virtually no attention to sport. See American Social History Project, *Who Built America?* (New York: Pantheon, 1992).

73. Hobsbawm, "Mass Producing Traditions," 288; Gorn, *Manly Art*, 13-14.

74. Holt, *Sport and the British*, 136-48; Adelman, *Sporting Time*, 275-76, 278; Riess, *City Games*, 26-30.

Vamplew and Holt have noted that the British were very worried about the negative moral and social effects of industrialization and urbanization, especially on the large proportion of unchurched urban workers. Consequently, middle-class muscular Christians evangelized in schools by using sport to secure conversions and shape character. Anglicans and other church members were instrumental in establishing prominent soccer teams like Aston Villa (1874). Studies of Birmingham found that 38.5 percent of notable football teams (1876-84), and 29.9 percent of cricket clubs (1880) were church related. Vamplew and Holt also demonstrated that businesses sponsored workers' sport to curtail turnover, promote loyalty, and increase productivity with fitter workers. Charles Dellheim pointed out in an article in the *American Historical Review* the noteworthy efforts of Cadburys and Rountree chocolate factories to provide substantial facilities for male and female physical training in the late nineteenth century. For example, girls under sixteen were given time off to swim and exercise at the company gym under professional instructors, and encouraged to play team sports after work. Holt found that British industrialists lagged behind Americans in establishing industrial facilities for sport, although I should point out that the latter learned about welfare capitalism from the British.⁷⁵

American industrial sports programs were probably even more important in promoting company allegiance, retaining skilled workers, hindering unionization, competing with ethnic or neighborhood teams, and gaining good publicity. Riess indicated that YMCA programs were introduced for railroad workers following the bloody 1877 riots, but for years most urban working-class men found the YMCA too middle class, too Protestant, and too expensive. The first prominent American industrial sport program was the Pullman Sleeping Car Company's in 1881. The firm emphasized elite-level competition, hosting national amateur and professional championships, and recruiting top soccer players and oarsmen with the promise of jobs. Welfare capitalism boomed soon after World War I, emphasizing mass participation, although certain major companies also sponsored quasi-professional baseball and football teams, including several original NFL clubs. As Guttman and Himes have recently pointed out, industrial sports programs were especially important for women.⁷⁶

75. Holt, *Sport and the British*, 150-51. Vamplew points out that most workingmen were not sports participants and as a whole were more interested in watching others play. Vamplew, *Play Up and Play the Game*, 52. On Cadburys, see Charles Dellheim, "The Creation of a Company Culture: Cadburys, 1861-1931," *American Historical Review* 92 (February 1987): 13-42; Katherine McCrone, "Class, Gender, and English Women's Sport, c. 1890-1914," *Journal of Sport History* 18 (Spring, 1991): 172-79.

76. Riess, *City Games*, 83-86; Wilma J. Pesavento and Lisa C. Raymond, "'Men Must Play: Men Will Play': Occupations of Pullman Athletes, 1880 to 1900," *Journal of Sport History* 12 (Winter 1985): 233-51; Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 145, 177, 180, 342, 424, 65. On industrial baseball, see Harold Seymour, *Baseball*, vol. 3, *The People's Game* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), chs. 15, 16, and, for semiprofessional baseball, ch. 17. On women and industrial recreation, see Allen Guttman, *Women's Sports* 142-46; Himes, "Female Athlete," 196.

Hargreaves and other historians have argued that by the 1880s there was significantly greater mass involvement in British organized sports because of a higher standard of living among skilled workers. Worktime became more regulated and arduous, but artisans worked shorter hours, had a half-day on Saturday, and real wages rose by one-third between 1875 and 1900. However, Hargreaves noted that amateur organizations remained firmly in the hands of gentlemen amateurs, who used sport to influence the values and behavior of respectable workers, reinforcing existing divisions between them and other working-class men. He goes on to criticize left-wing political parties for failing to establish strong sports programs comparable to Continental Social Democrats during the interwar period, although that was unnecessary since sport had become a central component of national popular culture. Increased working-class participation in the 1920s and 1930s is attributed to a big rise in standards of living, state promotion of school sport, the accelerated commercialization of sport, greater media attention, and various local accommodations, primarily by the dominant classes.⁷⁷

Holt, Stephen Jones, and the new labor historians criticized interpretations that claim sport was filtered down to the masses by social reformers and muscular Christians. They noted how ineffectively the middle classes imposed their games on lower class folk in hopes of achieving social control. Holt suggested that reformers' and bosses' main contributions were in providing facilities and organization, but had limited influence on how workers played and understood their games. Their games had little ideological impact because most clubs were worker-run (Holt describes working-class private clubs as a type of secret society with informal social network, familial and friendship ties), based on close-knit street or neighborhood groups. They stressed winning over fair play, especially against hated rivals, which Holt saw continued over into professional sport. Workers were not passive recipients of middle-class sport and ideology, but made sport part of their own milieu, stamping on them their own meanings. Working-class clubs provided different sorts of community and identity than middle class clubs, and imbued sport with a masculine value system different from muscular Christianity, emphasizing such traditional values toughness, persistence, and loyalty.⁷⁸

Jones asserted in *Sport, Politics and the Working Class* (1988) that workers took over soccer and rugby leagues to express oppositional values

77. Hargreaves, *Sport, Power, and Culture*, 108, 207. Vamplew points out that even though 41.2 percent of Scottish soccer shareholders were working class they were not budding capitalists, but fans for whom shareholding was a guarantee of "a cheap season ticket and voting rights at the annual general meeting" Workers owned about one-fourth of all outstanding shares Vamplew, *Play Up and Play the Game*, 157, 159.

78. Holt, *Sport and the British*, 137-39, 151-54, 156, 346-47. Stephen G. Jones, *Sport, Politics and the Working Class: Organized Labour and Sport in Inter-War Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 23; idem, "Working Class Sport in Manchester Between the Wars." in *Sport and Working Class in Modern Britain*, ed Richard Holt (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1990), 75 See also Alan Metcalfe, "Sport and Space: A Case-study of the Growth of Recreational Facilities in East Northumberland, 1850-1914," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 7 (December 1990): 348-64.

like partisanship, winning, disdain for authority and rules, teamwork as mutual solidarity, money payments, and a vulgar, festive crowd behavior that included over 2,000 episodes of soccer riots, vandalism, assaults, and confrontations from 1908 to 1914. Hence sport was hardly a vehicle for assimilation (decorum, order, sportsmanship) being filtered down from above.⁷⁹

Holt asserted that British sport was mainly a privately promoted male social sphere without any significant role from politicians, employers or unionists, or great institutional push like the French Church after 1905 or the German SPD. He suggested the importance of workers' agency in securing adequate play space for soccer and other sports after 1890. Municipalities bowed before workers' political clout, and made available parks previously reserved for receptive recreation. Factory workers, with employers' support, organized their own teams, secured grounds, and raised funds to support them.⁸⁰

Canadian historian Alan Metcalfe is very concerned with working-class participation, agency, and conflict with dominant groups who tried to exercise hegemony through sport. Metcalfe described Canadian amateurism as "class discrimination" that sought to restrict entry of those with different values. He found the rise of professionalization strained amateur hegemony, as monetary rewards, competition over cooperation, and victory at any cost, which all characterized working-class sport, became more important, reflecting the values of industrial capitalism.⁸¹

Metcalfe emphasized the importance of discretionary, regularized free time, first gained in the 1870s and 1880s, and Montreal's continental Sabbath, in facilitating the operation of working-class soccer, lacrosse, and baseball leagues, and even in shaping lacrosse, which became time-based in 1889. Metcalfe agrees with Bryan Palmer that baseball took root with the pre-industrial Ontario working class, and while the only game played by all classes, was dominated by blue-collarites who avoided middle-class influences. Yet Metcalfe also argued that sport embourgeoised the working class to accept the dominant ideology or lose their playing sites.⁸²

Some attention has been given to working-class agency in modern American sport, which, Riess argued, was inhibited until the 1920s by the

79. Jones, *Sport, Politics and the Working Class*, 25, 57; Patrick Murphy, John Williams and Eric Dunning, *Football on Trial: Spectator Violence and Development in the Football World* (London: Routledge, 1990), 42-55; B. Murray, *The Old Firm: Sectarianism, Sport and Society in Scotland* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1984); H. F. Moorhouse, "Professional Football and Working Class Culture: English Theories and Scottish Evidence," *Sociological Review* 32 (May 1984): 285-315. Guttman interprets the data on violence differently. He considers an average of 8.8 incidents a week for all of England as minimal, and suggests the English workingmen had internalized considerable middle-class restraint. Guttman, *Sports Spectators*, 123.

80. Holt, *Sport and the British*, 151-53, 346-47. By 1930, Liverpool had 172 pitches and 89 cricket fields, *Ibid.*, 152. On French workers' sport, see, e.g., Bernard Deletang, "Le Mouvement Sportif Ouvrier: La République à L'épreuve du Socialisme," in Arnaud, *Les Athlètes de la République*, 341-57.

81. Metcalfe, *Canada Learns to Play*, ch. 4, esp. 130.

82. Metcalfe, *Canada Learns to Play*, 50, 65, 93, 129, 130. Palmer incorrectly argues that the baseball teams were vehicles of an independent artisan culture. They were not the boys of pleasure revolting against the dominant middle-class core values. See Palmer, *Conflict in Culture* 60, 241; Riess, *City Games*, 83.

processes of industrialization, urbanization, and immigration. While the old immigrants often brought a familiarity with sport, the heavily proletarianized new immigrant workforce had little familiarity or interest in sport, lived in crowded slums where there was little space for athletics, and were further limited by a low standard of living and Sunday blue laws. Blue-collar sports fans were limited in their opportunities to attend sporting events, but could keep up with their favorite sports through the penny press and specialized sporting periodicals like the *National Police Gazette*, available in all sites of the male bachelor subculture. Their participatory options were largely limited to indoor facilities like taverns, boxing gyms, billiard parlors, bowling alleys, and ethnic facilities like *turnvereins* and social and athletic clubs. There were occasional picnic games with track and field contests in the late nineteenth century sponsored by businesses to gain worker loyalty, urban politicians seeking votes, and unions to raise money, encourage a sense of community, and attract favorable publicity. In the inter-war period, certain unions like the International Ladies Garment Workers sponsored significant recreation programs to counter welfare capitalism and promote identification with the union.⁸³

American historians over the past decade gave considerable attention to working-class influence in the construction and use of public parks. Rosenzweig examined in *Eight Hours for What We Will*, an excellent study of working-class leisure, class conflict over the utilization of open public space in Worcester, Massachusetts. Rosenzweig emphasized the role of working-class Irish community organizations, athletic clubs, and their political representatives in securing the city council's support in 1884 for neighborhood parks. However, at best, a class system of parks was established. Inner city parks got little money, were poorly maintained, and were regarded as dumps.⁸⁴

Rosenzweig/Blackmer give considerable attention to the role of the lower classes in determining the uses of Central Park. During the 1860s only one-eighth of all visitors were blue-collar, predominantly artisans, because they lived far away, had limited leisure time, and preferred more boisterous,

83. Riess, *City Games*, 3-8, 23, 72-86, 254, and on ethnicity, 21-23, ch. 3; Ralf Wagner, "Turner Societies and the Socialist Tradition," in *German Workers Culture in the United States, 1850 to 1920*, ed., Hartmut Keil (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1988), 221-240. There are many insights into the male Jewish working-class sporting culture in Peter Levine, *Ellis Island to Ebbets Field: Sports and the American Jewish Experience* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992). For an excellent study of sport in a black working-class community, see Rob Ruck, *Sandlot Seasons: Sports in Black Pittsburg* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1987).

84. Roy Rosenzweig, *Eight Hours for What We Will: Workers and Leisure in an Industrial City, 1870-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 130-36. Francis Couvares found that in late-nineteenth-century Pittsburg there was considerable opposition to the large parks by inner-city folks who were unable to take advantage of innovations like the gift of Schenley Park in 1889 that mainly benefitted the middle class. Twenty years later the park system was still "not at all serving the democratic needs of Greater Pittsburgh." See Francis Couvares, "The Triumph of Commercial Class Culture and Mass Culture in Pittsburgh," in *Working Class American Essays on Labor, Community, and American Society*, ed. Michael H. Frisch and Daniel J. Walkowitz (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1983), 118, 131-32. He claims that Polish and black workers refused to be patronized by the city's Playground Association. *Ibid.*, 118.

commercialized and active recreations than were originally permitted. Thereafter the composition of park users changed, especially on Sundays, although there were restrictive blue laws, mainly because of a higher standard of living which resulted in greater discretionary time and money to pay for transportation. However, at the turn of the century, poor families seldom went to the park and, instead, sought small neighborhood parks.⁸⁵

The small park movement was also supported by industrialists and moral reformers who expected users to learn proper behavior. They were shocked to discover working folk loafing, drinking, engaged in promiscuity, and playing active sports proscribed at middle-class parks. As Rosenzweig pointed out, "Parks . . . were providing a setting for precisely the sort of behavior they were supposed to inhibit." Parks provided space for working-class ethnic groups to preserve their culture, and, as Riess indicated, for their young men to fight over.⁸⁶

TRADITIONAL WORKING-CLASS SPORT

Scholars have gone a long way in the past decade to recover the history, resiliency, and continuity of traditional sport, a sphere over which workers exercised nearly total agency. Although pre-modern sports were most popular in remote rural communities of miners in England and frontiersmen in America, U.S. historians have mainly been interested in the impact of industrialization upon customary life-styles. Rader, for example, has explained how antebellum American workers' recreational options began to be altered by the decline of small artisan workshops in certain industries like textiles and shoemaking, and were replaced by an increasingly proletarianized modern capitalist production system characterized by time-work discipline and weakened ties between workers and management. Men turned to their leisure, rather than work over which they had little control, for fulfillment, identity, a sense of manliness and satisfaction. Adelman noted that for many artisans participation in sport served as an extension of their desire to preserve traditional values and venerate physical prowess. These conditions supported a preindustrial sporting world that centered around plebeian billiard halls, fire houses, gambling halls, and especially taverns, where saloonkeepers arranged competitions, and the clientele played table games and other contests, attended athletic events like prize fights, risked money and honor on forthcoming events, previewed contests, and subsequently analyzed them over and

85. Rosenzweig and Blackmer, *Central Park*, 232-34, 308-09, 388. The official ban on adult baseball on Central Park was not lifted until the 1920s. *Ibid.*, 312. See also Riess, *City Games*, 133, 136-40. Rosenzweig Blackmer somewhat overdo their emphasis on working-class agency. Ironically the greatest benefits to the masses come from the leadership of autocratic Robert Moses during the Depression when the park was largely rehabilitated. On the problems of English miners in securing public space for sports, see Metcalfe, "Recreational Facilities in East Northumberland," 349-56, 358. Workers did achieve greater agency in the inter-war period. David Bowker found that working-class demands in Ashton-Under-Lyne resulted in the 1920s in a dramatic increase in municipal bathing facilities, and nearly tripled the number of swimmers. David Bowker, "Parks and Baths: Sport, Recreation and Municipal Government in Ashton-Under-Lyne Between the Wars," in Holt, *Sport and the Working Class*, 84-100.

86. Rosenzweig, *Eight Hours for What We Will*, 136-40, 137 (quote), 148-52; Riess, *City Games*, 146-49

over again. The Anglo-American sporting fraternity included slumming elites, but primarily blue-collar single-male WASPS and Irish immigrants, who, Rader indicated, rejected Victorianism for an alternate life-style of gambling, drinking, wenching, and violent sports.⁸⁷

The tavern subculture was largely imported from Ireland and from Great Britain, where Holt found neighborhood pubs to be a major source of continuity among the British bachelor subculture. Publicans promoted street sports, bowling contests at adjacent common land, and backroom boxing matches. Northern English pubs were especially sites of gambling, soccer clubs, and sports conversation. A neighborhood orientation in sport was also apparent in the names of soccer and cricket teams.⁸⁸

Couvares considered volunteer firemen as among the best organized and most popular mid-century working-class sportsmen. Fire company rivalries intensified in the 1840s with the loss of elite members, the increasing ethnic identity of certain companies, and the rise of a "rowdy element." They not only raced to fires, but fought at the scene of fires with knives, guns, and axes, and set fires to ambush rivals.⁸⁹

Among the earliest competitive American working class sports was rowing. Adelman discovered that early races involved matches between river and harbor laborers who competed for wagers and to display their speed to pilots and salesmen looking for fast boats to meet incoming ships. Races became especially popular after the War of 1812, and in 1824 a crowd of at least 20,000 saw the Whitehallers defeat a British crew. Couvares found that a working class rowing tradition was preserved in post-Civil War Pittsburgh whose top oarsmen were craftsmen, tradesmen, clerks, and laborers. Rowing races were as popular or more so than baseball until about 1885, drawing crowds in the 10,000s, and offering purses in the \$1,000s. The nearly 20 racing clubs were often named for neighborhoods or local notables.⁹⁰

Elliott Gorn's masterful and multifaceted *The Manly Art* is the best study of working-class sport, integrating the history of bareknuckle boxing with gender, folklore, and working-class culture. Gorn (as well as Dennis Brailsford) has described the early-nineteenth-century boxing fraternity as

87. Elliott J. Gorn, "'Gouge and Bite, Pull Hair and Scratch': The Social Significance of Fighting in the Southern Backcountry," *American Historical Review* 90 (1985): 18-43; Ted Ownby, *Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation and Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1990) for a discussion of field sports and cockfighting in the evangelical South. On traditional life-styles and sport in the cities, see Rader, *American Sports*, 27-47; Adelman, *Sporting Time*, 223-24, 232; Gorn, *Manly Art*, 140-47, 181, 208; Michael T. Isenberg, *John L. Sullivan and His America* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 44-59; Riess, *City Games*, 15-21. On the American tavern scene, see Rader, *American Sports*, 21-34; Gorn, *Manly Art*, 131, 133; Adelman, *Sporting Time*, 231, 241-42; Riess, *City Games*, 15, 17-20, 73-78, 252-53; Couvares, *Remaking of Pittsburgh*, 43.

88. Neil Tranter found that 37 of 68 Stirling's soccer clubs founded between 1876-1895 had neighborhood names; a study of 1890 Liverpool found that 61 of 148 cricket clubs were also geographically named. See Holt, *Sport and the British*, 150-51. See also Joe Maguire, "Images of Manliness and Competing Ways of Living in Late Victorian and Edwardian Britain," *British Journal of Sports History* 3 (December 1986): 265-87.

89. Couvares, *Remaking of Pittsburgh*, 45-46.

90. Adelman, *Sporting Time*, 189, 192; Couvares, *Remaking of Pittsburgh*, 45-46.

comprised of aristocrats, young dandies, the urban underworld, and workingmen who supported a culture antagonistic to the prosperous middle class who believed in hard work, humanitarianism, self-control, accumulation of property, and devotion to domesticity. Boxing matches stood for pleasure and “symbolically denied the inevitability of progress, displaying instead man’s penchant for evil.”⁹¹

Gorn argued that boxing upheld the idea of craftsmanship, displaying skill in a world that threatened labor’s competence. Boxing, along with the less organized frontier gouging, was a means to preserve and gain honor and demonstrate prowess, courage, and virility. Gorn found that the sporting fraternity gained its sense of manliness in the company of other men, where they admired the bodies of athletes, found a refuge from the family, and achieved honor within the group. “The ring celebrated the high-stakes gamble, the outrageous boast, the love of strife,” and “dramatized a world of victory for the socially downtrodden.”⁹²

Metcalfe pointed out the culture of popular working-class Canadian sports in the late nineteenth century were also traditional. These contests were often violent and escapist, tied to drinking and gambling, and rejected middle-class values. The Montreal Shamrocks, a Catholic working-class team devoted to winning at all costs, broke with middle-class values and lacrosse conventions. Despite its middle-class directors, they did not play as “gentlemen.” They took money, gambled, engaged in disorderly conduct on and off the field, harassed referees, and attracted a rowdy crowd. Metcalfe found that 28 percent of first-class games had disputes, violence, and even rioting.⁹³

Holt saw the tension between change and continuity as the key to understanding the inner meanings of working-class British sport. There were, for instance, 150,000-200,000 working-class anglers in 1914 and 500,000 pigeon fanciers in the 1930s who comprised a submerged and largely traditional sporting culture. John Lowerson found that in 1914 London alone had 620 angling clubs that were mainly pub-based, sponsoring expensive Sunday outings (one day’s wages for a prosperous cutler), and competition for useful prizes.⁹⁴

Holt found workers’ sport more rational and respectable than generally recognized, but still highly traditional. He believed that sport in early Victorian Britain became less of an integrative force among the working class because the labor aristocracy adopted a culture of respectability, promoting rational recreation and supporting bans on traditional brutal sports that helped keep workers in an inferior status. Old pleasures became more confined to remote locations or marginal social groups, but did not completely fade away.⁹⁵

91. Gorn, *Manly Art*, 29, 32; Brailsford, *Bareknuckles*, 23-32.

92. Gorn, *Manly Art*, 137, 141-43, 145, 146 (quotes).

93. Metcalfe, *Canada Learns to Play*, 183, 187-89, 192-203.

94. Holt, *Sport and the British*, 193, 194; Lowerson, “Angling,” 17, 19, 20, 21, 24, 26.

95. Holt, *Sports and the British*, 42-43, 194.

The popularity and persistence of traditional sports was further examined in Holt's splendid anthology *Sport and the Working Class in Modern Britain* (1990), which described patterns and structures of participation, and examined the meanings of hero worship and fan support. These essays entailed a great deal of painstaking digging into local history, employing obscure newspapers, census records, and oral testimony. The contributions offered sophisticated analyses that recognized the continuing strength of pre-industrial traditions; the persistence of paternalistic behavior, and the profound impact of local and regional identities. For instance, Korr's analysis of West Ham United and the East End community examined how class solidarities were mediated through, or even overshadowed by localism and nationalism. Dai Smith analyzed how Welsh boxers united the working-class people of Wales, and Tony Mason scrutinized soccer star Stanley Mathews as a regional, national and respectable working-class hero, a gentleman and master craftsman who embodied the rags to riches myth. Douglas A. Reid analyzed bullbaiting and cockfighting in Birmingham and the wider West Midlands. He pointed out that a pub-centered brutal sport subculture was sustained well into the second half of the nineteenth century, when it was forced underground.⁹⁶

Metcalfe's fascinating essay on potshare bowling supports Hugh Cunningham's contention that traditional miners' sports survived and adapted better than generally realized. The sport had no written rules or formal organizations, and was mainly limited to Northumberland and Durham miners, drawing up to 20,000 spectators. Potshare bowling reflected the power of miners' traditions of independence, sociability and love of gambling. Its persistence illustrated how colliers created a subculture and resisted efforts by school, church, and mine owners to change their values and behavior. Potshare bowling's popularity was enhanced in the mid-1880s when innkeepers began to sponsor handicap events, and in the early 1900s introduced weeknight and weekend games, and reduced admission from 5 to 2 shillings. As late as 1914, the sport attracted as many participants and spectators as soccer.⁹⁷

N. L. Tranter examined nineteenth-century quoits in the villages around Stirling in Central Scotland, where it almost supplanted soccer. Older craftsmen, miners, and semiskilled industrial workers found tossing the six-lb. weight, which required experience, strength and stamina, since matches lasted for hours, very appealing. Contests were mainly for community honor

96. Charles Korr, "A Different Kind of Success: West Ham United and the Creation of Tradition and Community" in Holt, *Sport and the Working Class*, 142-58; Dai Smith, "Focal Heroes: A Welsh Fighting Class," *ibid.*, 198-217; Tony Mason, "Stanley Mathews," *ibid.*: 159-78; Douglas Reid, "Beasts and Brutes: Popular Blood Sports c. 1780-1860," *ibid.*, 12-28.

97. Alan Metcalfe, "'Potshare Bowling' in the Mining Communities of East Northumberland, 1800-1914." in Holt, *Sport and the Working Class*, 29-44. On traditional miners' sports, see also Alan Metcalfe, "Football in the Mining Communities of East Northumberland, 1882-1914," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 5 (December 1988): 269-91; and *idem*, "Recreational Facilities in East Northumberland." 348-64.

and entertainment, although there were money matches. Tranter argued that quoits played a vital role altering the violent and cruel image of working-class sport, and the dominant classes judged it the only harmless, innocent, and physically improving traditional game. Tranter felt that in certain ways quoits' contribution to an organized working-class sporting culture surpassed soccer because it had formalized clubs and regularized rules much earlier.⁹⁸

The old game of cricket, so strongly identified with the elite, has been recently analyzed from a more plebeian perspective. Kirsch pointed out that working-class English immigrants played a major role in popularizing the sport in America in the 1830s and 1840s. By 1860, players in the largest cities were mainly upper middle class, but in antebellum factory towns like Newark, New Jersey, the pattern was very different; nearly 85 percent were blue-collar, and over 75 percent were artisans. Stratton has claimed that in Australia the working class used cricket to identify with civilization, nationalism, and entertainment rather than the hegemony of middle-class ideology. Stratton felt that Australian cricket lacked the tradition of class-based division of middle-class batters and working-class bowlers.⁹⁹

Jack Williams studied inter-war cricket in Bolton where the semipro and recreational leagues included artisans, miners, and low-level office workers who were limited by the reluctance of parks departments to permit workers to use public space. Bolton had few pub elevens and a lot of church teams that avoided Sunday matches. Nonetheless, local games, especially intra-neighborhood rivalries, were so competitive that they required outside umpires. Williams asserts that such contests, mainly played by the more respectable workingmen, deepened, rather than unified divisions within an already fragmented working class.¹⁰⁰

Jeffrey Hill examined league cricket, a competitive one-day working-class spectator sport in middle-class Durham and working-class Nelson between 1900 and 1940. Its culture was significantly different from first-class cricket, where matches were mainly attuned to middle class fans, and whose governing elite resisted commercialization until the 1960s. League cricket was middle-class sponsored, but teams had working-class members, and would not have survived without working-class spectatorship that helped reshape it into something distinctly different from the elite game. Saturday

98. N. L. Tranter, "Organized Sport and the Working Classes of Central Scotland, 1820-1900: The Neglected Sport of Quoiting," in Holt, *Sport and the Working Class*, 45-66. See also Tranter, "The Social and Occupational Structure of Organised Sport in Central Scotland During the Nineteenth Century," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 4 (December, 1987): 301-14.

99. Kirsch, *Creation of American Team Sports*, 134-35, 154; Stratton, "Australia—This Sporting Life," 89, 98, 99. For an alternative analysis, see Ian Harris in "Cricket and Bourgeois Ideology," in Lawrence and Rowe, *Power Play*, 180. Harris argues cricket was a cultural manifestation of the hegemony established by agrarian capitalists. He finds evidence of that in the structural characteristics of cricket, its leisure-pace emphasis on cerebral rather than physical, importance of harmony, social obligations and polite behavior.

100. Jack Williams, "Recreational Cricket in the Bolton Area Between the Wars," in Holt, *Sport and the Working Class*, 101-20. Williams also found that, in the 1960s, the working-class presence in Bolton leagues declined, which he suggests was connected to the greater encouragement given cricket at the more selective schools and spatial limitations in poorer neighborhoods. See Jack Williams, "Cricket" in Mason, *Sport in Britain*, 128-34.

afternoon games drew 5-6000 well-behaved spectators paying 6d-8d for accommodations more comfortable than soccer matches, with "enthusiasm of football-like proportions." League cricket was market-oriented, and adopted a playing style in line with working-class expectations, but was not an alternative subculture because it accepted traditional norms of fair play and gentlemanly conduct and acceded to a subordinate role as a training ground for first-class clubs.¹⁰¹

THE FUNCTIONS OF WORKING-CLASS SPORT

Social Values

Holt pointed out that working-class sports fans were male chauvinists, nationalists, and advocates of the competitive ethic. Working-class sport remained rough and ready, was played to win by men quick to bend the rules, and their games comprised a potentially explosive moment. Soccer was the most important working-class British sport, and was reshaped by the lower classes from an elite sport into a game that expressed their own values and traditions. Soccer and other British sports provided such instrumental functions as improved health, heroic role models, outlets for competition unavailable at work where cooperation was stressed, and opportunities to exercise control and independence that also no longer existed at the workplace, such as by wagering. Sport also promoted working-class masculine cohesion that supported such traditional values as roughness and rudeness rather than fair play and sportsmanship. Team sports, in particular, offered a sense of common identity and community. Fans vicariously enjoyed their team's victory at the pitch or field, and challenged authority by barracking the referee, umpire, or racing official. Similarly, playing baseball and other sports gave American and Canadian workmen an opportunity to display prowess, win respectability, and gain prestige in their own communities.¹⁰²

Yet sport did not necessarily promote a shared working-class culture or even class-wide values as Williams and Hill found with English cricket, and Metcalfe with the embourgeoisement of amateur Canadian sport. Adelman has shown that artisan participation in early baseball and other organized American sports, was for many workers a reflection of their efforts to demonstrate middle-class status. He properly disagrees with Gelber's assertion that baseball's popularity was associated with its congruence with the work experience at the factory workplace, although it does seem complementary to the

101. Jeffrey Hill. "League Cricket in the North and Midlands, 1900-1940," in Holt, *Sport and the Working Class*, 121-41.

102. Holt, *Sport and the British*, 154-56, 160, 165, 170, 173, 267, 352; Adelman, *Sporting Time*, 141. H. F. Moorhouse, "Shouting Stars: Footballers and Working Class Culture Twentieth-Century Scotland," in Holt, *Sport and the Working Class*, 179-97, demonstrates what soccer and its star players meant or symbolized to the Scottish lower classes. Mark Dyreson argues that in the 1920s, the era of mass sports in the U.S., sport was considered more of a mass entertainment whose heroes were idols of consumption than in the Progressive Era when the philosophy of athleticism had emphasized sport's uplifting social functions. See Dyreson, "The Emergence of Consumer Culture and the Transformation of Physical Culture: American Sport in the 1920s," *Journal of Sport History* 16 (Winter 1989): 261-81.

work experience of bureaucrats who needed to cooperate and work together.¹⁰³

Gambling

The central role of wagering in working-class sport is well-known; however, exciting new research has delved deep into lower-class British sports gambling. Jones pointed out in *Sport, Politics and the Working Class* that Victorians mainly feared gambling among the rougher proletariat who could not afford to attend races or be accepted by bookmakers as credit customers. Horse-race gambling particularly united gentry and plebeian traditions against middle-class morality that saw gambling as indecent and profiteering without hard work, and feared the gambling poor would become criminals or public charges.¹⁰⁴

Andrew Davies argues in *Leisure, Gender and Poverty* (1992) that inner-city sporting interests were greatly focused around gambling. The English masses gambled on horses with back-entry bookmakers, and bet on foot races, whippet races, pigeon flying, and cockfighting on the street or in the factory. Davies interprets the 1906 Street Betting Act as class legislation that sought to stamp out horse-race cash betting in artisan neighborhoods while allowing the upper and middle classes to wager at the track and bet on credit with licensed bookmakers. Nonetheless, illegal bookmaking flourished until 1960 when cash betting was legalized, and the bookmakers were prominent figures in working-class neighborhoods. In the 1920s, legal lower-class betting greatly increased when most impoverished urbanites bet by credit on soccer pools and on dogs at the new "poor man's racecourse," which was an instant success. By 1932, 18 million admissions were sold at the more than 220 dogtracks, making it the second most popular British spectator sport.¹⁰⁵

Mark Clapson's fascinating *A Bit of a Flutter* (1992) examines gambling's resiliency to public opposition and government bans in industrial Lancashire, a prominent site of proletariat gambling. Clapson agrees with Ross McKibbin that gambling was largely a rational, moderate behavior for people with few alternatives to economic success. The working class

103. Williams, "Recreational Cricket"; Hill, "League Cricket"; Metcalfe, *Canada Learns to Play*, 129; Adelman, *Sporting Time*, 8. On the debate over the congruence of baseball with working conditions, see Steven Gelber, "Working at Playing: The Culture of the Workplace and the Rise of Baseball," *Journal of Sport History* 16 (1983): 3-22; Gelber, "'Their Hands Are All Out Playing': Business and American Baseball, 1845-1917," *Journal of Sport History* 9 (1984): 5-27, and Melvin L. Adelman, "Baseball, Business and the Work Place: Gelber's Thesis Reexamined," *Journal of Social History* 23 (1989): 285-301. Sociologists generally believe that blue-collar workers look to their recreation for behavior and values that is quite different from their working experiences. See, e.g., Arthur Shostak, *Blue-Collar Life* (New York: Random House, 1969).

104. Jones, *Sport, Politics, and the Working Class*, 56-57.

105. On sports gambling in poor working-class neighborhoods, see Andrew Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty: Working-Class Culture in Salford and Manchester, 1900-1939* (Buckingham, Eng.: Open University Press, 1992), ch. 6. The unemployed might pool resources to come up with a shilling bet. *Ibid.*, 164. See also Mark Clapson, *A Bit of a Flutter: Popular Gambling and English Society, c. 1823-1961* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), 27, 29-30, 38; Jones, *Sport, Politics and the Working Class*, 60-61; Jones, "Working-Class Sport in Manchester Between the Wars," 74-75. David C. Itzkowitz, "Victorian Bookmakers and Their Customers," *Victorian Studies* 32 (1988): 25-26, points out there is little data on middle-class gambling. On greyhound racing, see Clapson, *Bit of a Flutter*, 156.

gambled in moderation which made sports more fun to follow and gradually undermined attempts to marginalize popular gambling and led to its legitimization. Clapson points out that people from all social levels participated in the post-World War II soccer pools, with higher level working-class and lower middle-class folk the most active. He sees participation to be a means of dealing with low wages, poor working conditions, and boredom, by providing a popular topic of conversation.¹⁰⁶

Clapson also examines dog racing and informal uncommercialized sports like short-distance pigeon racing, a working-class hobby first popularized in the late nineteenth century for friendly competition, self-esteem, and wagering. Clapson attributes the sport's decline in the inter-war period to a downturn in the tavern business and changing leisure tastes that favored more modern entertainments, to which Davies adds the impact of the Depression.¹⁰⁷

Politics

Holt and Hargreaves found the Left and the Labor Movement relatively detached from British working-class culture. Moralists detested the gambling element and the strong ties with the liquor industry; intellectuals loathed the nationalism and partisanship of sport, and socialists scorned commercialized spectator sport "design[ed] to distract the workers from the historic mission of the proletariat." However, Couvares found that in the USA sports-minded workers might mobilize themselves on behalf of sport ahead of the class struggle. Thus organized labor fought as much for Sunday ball (and against Prohibition) as much as it did for any cause until the 1930s. And even then, labor played an active role in protesting the 1936 Nazi Olympics.¹⁰⁸

Stephen G. Jones in *Sport, Politics and the Working Class* denied that inter-war British sport was hegemonized by powers unsympathetic to the Left. He argued that sport was not simply controlled by capitalists, but that socialist organizations, trade unions, and cooperative societies exercised collective self-determination in sport, even though the workers' sports movement was marginal. Yet Jones did acknowledge that sport was low in labor's priorities and prominent socialists were hostile or indifferent to sport.¹⁰⁹

Jones argued that inter-war sport was a site of class struggle, an oppositional culture, and continuous debate in which the working classes were a force in politicizing leisure. The workers' sports movement used such tactics

106. Clapson, *Bit of a Flutter*, 174, 176-77. Clapson provides a valuable history of the national regulation of gambling. He finds that by the 1860s legal credit bookmakers had a largely middle-class clientele who could afford to keep a checking account with the bookmaker. *Ibid.*, 27.

107. *Ibid.*, 138, 140-43, 144, 146, 156; Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty*, 44, 161. Pigeon hobbyists supported a long-lived periodical called the *Racing Pigeon* that was first published in 1898. Clapson, *Bit of a Flutter*, 97-100. See also Ross McKibbin, "Work and Hobbies in Britain, 1880-1950" in *The Working Class in Modern British History*, ed. J. Winter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 127-46. On pigeon and greyhound racing, see also Holt, *Sport and the British*, 185-88.

108. Hargreaves, *Sport, Power and Culture*, 79-80, 92-93; Holt, *Sport and the British*, 146; Couvares, *Remaking of Pittsburgh*, 125; Edward S. Shapiro, "The World Labor Athletic Carnival of 1936: An American Anti-Nazi Protest," *American Jewish History* 74 (March 1985): 255-73.

109. Jones, *Sport, Politics and the Working Class*, 11-12, 196-200.

as direct action (mass trespass) and formal channels of persuasion at local and national levels in conjunction with Labor and Communist reform demands. Yet, he continued, workers' sport was not simply an alternate or oppositional culture because it was tied to the established sporting order (the British Workers' Sports Federation and the National Workers' Sports Association were affiliates of the bourgeois Amateur Athletic Association), and shared many middle-class criticisms of commercialized sport, such as the exploitation of workers through gambling. Jones argued that rural elite hegemony was widely contested by the left-wing; however, by 1939 only limited successes were achieved against trespass laws and other restrictions on the popular rambling fad.¹¹⁰

Jones's argument that left-wing recreational support was very significant is not convincing, especially since he found few concrete accomplishments, and because the workers' sports groups had only 15,000 members, minuscule in comparison to the workers' sports movement on the Continent. Workers in the inter-war era were very involved in mainstream commercialized sport, and could afford tickets to popular spectator sports, which meant there was no need for left-wing sport to supplant proletariat sports based in clubs, pubs, street, or workplace.¹¹¹

Left-wing organizations played a minor role in modern American sport, although socialist turners were very prominent as early as the 1850s. Riess showed that working class machine politicians in the late nineteenth century organized picnic games, sponsored sports clubs like social and athletic clubs, and often helped develop accessible small parks, especially if there was patronage to be gained. In addition, they were prominent promoters of professional sports, including prize fighting and horse racing, both very popular with working-class constituents, in large part because of the gambling aspect. Riess demonstrated the crucial nexus that emerged between the business of professional sports, boss-riddled municipal governments, and the underworld.¹¹²

V. CLASS AND SPECTATOR SPORTS

One of the most remarkable books published in the past decade was Allen Guttman's *Sports Spectators*, which in 125 pages of text analyzed sports crowds and their deportment from antiquity to modern times, and then

110. Ibid., 11-12, 73-163, 196-200. See also Helen Walker, "The Popularisation of the Outdoor Movement, 1900-1940," *British Journal of Sports History* 2 (September 1985): 140-53; Ann Holt, "Hikers and Ramblers: Surviving a Thirties Fashion," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 4 (May 1987): 56-67.

111. Jones, *Sport, Politics and the Working Class*, 12, 61, 198. Jones does concede that certain labor leaders and socialists were apathetic to sports, and finds that in the context of Labour's preoccupation with bread-and-butter issues that "the very emergence of a workers sports movement is in itself creditable." Ibid., 198.

112. Wagner, "Turner Societies and the Socialist Tradition," 221-40; Riess, *City Games*, 23-24, 76-78, 96-99; Bruce Levine, *The Spirit of 1848: German Immigrants, Labor Conflict, and the Coming of the Civil War* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 91-94, 245-46. On urban machine politics and sport, see Riess, *City Games*, 6, 20-21, 82, and ch. 6.

in 60 pages examined the varied forms and behavior of contemporary spectators. He found that sports crowds became more orderly over the course of time until the late nineteenth century, particularly because of the decline of blood sports and the rise of “the civilizing process.”¹¹³

Most historians interested in sports crowds have focused their attention on baseball and soccer. British historians agree that skilled urbanites dominated crowds until the interwar period, facilitated by Saturday half holidays and higher incomes. Most avid fans preferred spectatorship to participation, and were more interested in competition rather than athletic displays of skill. Andrew Davies asserts that while higher-paid workers and young men without familial responsibilities enjoyed soccer matches and other increasingly diverse amusements at the turn of the century, impoverished men’s options were severely limited, preventing them from attending horse races or first-division soccer matches. He concludes that the recreational division among the workers should encourage historians to reconsider their emphasis on the remaking of the working class in the late nineteenth century.¹¹⁴

Holt argued that skilled workers were displaced as the core component of soccer crowds during the interwar period when crowds and the “rough” working class became fully represented. Working-class spectators were typically middle-aged men and women who always stood in the same place and got to know one another. Fans could afford sixpence for a soccer game if employed regularly, but not if they worked irregularly or were unemployed. Their cheap sections were uncovered and lacked toilets and refreshment stands. Men on the dole during the Depression did not attend games. Davies contradicts Stedman Jones and Ross McKibbin who claimed that the unemployed filled up stadiums, pointing out that loss of work led to widespread exclusion from many commercial activities, especially pigeon racing, spectator sports, and even tavern pleasures. Davies concludes that when Manchester United and the Salford Rugby team reduced prices for unemployed fans, it indicated management’s recognition that unemployment hurt attendance.¹¹⁵

Soccer crowds declined by half from the early 1950s to the early 1980s, and became comprised of unsupervised single young men who congregate in

113. Guttman, *Sports Spectators*, esp. 81, 82. For a fascinating discussion of this ambitious work, see “Spectators and Crowds in Sport History: A Critical Analysis of Allen Guttman’s *Sports Spectators*,” *Journal of Sport History* 14 (Summer 1987): 209-225, which consists of an interchange among Donald G. Kyle, Melvin L. Adelman, and Guttman.

114. Holt, *Sport and the British*, 159-75, esp. 160, 165, 170, 173, 333-34; Tony Mason, “Soccer,” in Mason, *Sport in Britain*, 152, 168-69; Vamplew, *Play Up and Play the Game*, 66-67; Jones, *Sport, Politics and the Working Class*, 44-45; Dennis Brailsford, *Sport, Time and Society: The British at Play* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 105-10. See also N.B.F. Fishwick, *English Football and Society, 1910-1950* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989); Davies, *Leisure, Sport and Gender*, 2, 38.

115. Holt, *Sport and the British*, 160, 165, 170, 173, 333-34; Jones, *Sport, Politics and the Working Class*, 44-45; Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty*, 38, 43, 44. Davies feels that level of skill was less important in determining leisure alternatives than age and gender. *Ibid.*, 2. Of course, the ticket price reductions may have been a demonstration of management’s public-spirited qualities. Davies goes overboard to criticize Hobsbawm who quite reasonably suggested that by 1900 professional football was central to English working-class culture, by noting that women and many men did not attend games. See E. J. Hobsbawm, *Worlds of Labor: Further Studies in the History of Labor* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1984), chs. 10, 11.

the ends, making the game and its rituals into a surrogate community. They travel to distant games because of cheap transportation, a higher standard of living, and a willingness to spend an increased share of income on their leisure. Hooliganism reemerged in the 1960s with novel styles of behavior that provided for many an assertion of hardness and attachment to locality, perpetuating traditional values in new ways.¹¹⁶

Richard Cashman examined in great detail Australian cricket crowds in *'Ave a Go, Yer Mug!* (1984) which were patrician dominated for most of the nineteenth century. This was particularly the case for international matches until the 1880s because admission prices, equal to one-third the average daily wage, were prohibitive. Crowds at lesser matches became increasingly plebeian by the late 1870s, reflected by considerable rowdy behavior, including drinking, gambling, barracking, anti-social "Larrikins," and riots. By the 1890s the working class began to dominate sub-international matches as 1/tickets to the outer field were within the reach of most fans. Lower-class fans were well behaved in the inter-war period, but by the early 1960s, hooliganism and crowd invasions became commonplace. On the other hand, in Great Britain, cricket crowds remained much more middle class and more orderly than soccer audiences, which Vamplew felt was because "structural strains relating to social or economic deprivation might be less intense" for middle-class fans.¹¹⁷

Holt and Vamplew pointed out that thoroughbred racing was a very democratic spectator sport that attracted lower class and elite punters by the late nineteenth century when the racing calendar increased, rail service boosted public access, and the sporting press expanded coverage. Virtually all British tracks made a concerted effort to attract working-class attendance by charging 1s for admission (except Sundown Park which charged at least 2s 6d), which was still high compared to cricket and soccer. In regard to American racing, Riess pointed out that after the Civil War, the elite Jerome Park made no effort to secure a mass audience. Similarly, in the early 1900s, New York's new Belmont Park charged \$3 for admission, which was very expensive. Large crowds were common at elite courses on Opening Day and for major stakes races, but graduated ticket prices kept the masses physically segregated from the elite. On the other hand, proprietary tracks became popular in the 1880s by seeking the plebeian betters. They were located closer to town, charged just 50 cents for admission, and permitted low minimum wagers. A few even operated year-round.¹¹⁸

There has been considerable debate on the composition of baseball crowds, although historians agree that they were relatively democratic. Kirsch pointed

116. Holt, *Sport and the British*, 334-40; Vamplew, *Play Up and Play the Game*, 3, 6, ch. 18; Guttman, *Sports Spectators*, ch. 7. For a survey of the history of soccer hooliganism prior to and after 1914, see Patrick Murphy, John Williams, and Eric Dunning, *Football on Trial: Spectator Violence and Development in the Football World* (New York: Routledge, 1990), chs. 3, 4.

117. Richard Cashman, *'Ave a Go, Yer Mug! Australian Cricket Crowds from Larrikin to Ocker* (Sydney: Collins, 1984), 11, 14-15, 30-34, 41-42, 60, 72-73, and on hooligans and riots, see 26-35, 55-58, 77-81, 127-28, 174-81; Vamplew, *Play Up and Play the Game*, 276.

118. Holt *Sport and the British*, 181; Vamplew, 50, 56-58; Riess, *City Games*, 211-13.

out that in 1860 spectators at the Atlantic-Excelsior championship series exemplified contemporary class and ethnic antagonisms, as working-class Irish backed the Atlantics, and middle-class nativists backed the Excelsiors. Deep-seated antagonisms contributed to the rowdy crowd that forced the Excelsiors to leave the field in the sixth inning of the deciding third game while leading 8-6. After the Civil War, promoters regularly charged admission to top matches to make expenses, if not a small profit, and also to discourage lower-class “roughs,” pickpockets, and “the blackleg fraternity.”¹¹⁹

Guttman asserted that major league baseball was mainly a lower class spectator sport, pointing to the rowdy play and crowd behavior, the large Irish presence, cheap bleacher seats, and especially the American Association (1882-91) that sought a plebeian crowd with 25 cent tickets, beer, and Sunday games. He might have also pointed out the strong efforts to secure women spectators through Ladies’ Day promotions to elevate the social composition of crowds. Nonetheless, most scholars still feel that while all classes attended games, the semiskilled and unskilled were disproportionately absent until the 1920s. James Sullivan has recently found that during the 1880s blue-collar fans were underrepresented in Cincinnati (AA), because, with the exception of Sunday, attendance in the more expensive sections surpassed that in the quarter seats. Riess particularly argued for the middle-income dominance of crowds until the 1920s because of costs, limited accessibility, popularity with middle-class women, and Sunday blue laws. Then a higher standard of living, relatively low ticket prices, and the ending of Sunday proscriptions resulted in baseball drawing more representative audiences.¹²⁰

VI. SPORT AND SOCIAL MOBILITY

A number of scholars have considered the significance of professional sport as a vehicle for social mobility. Hargreaves believes that soccer, boxing, rugby league, jockeying, and car racing were avenues of advancement

119. Kirsch, *Creation of American Team Sports*, 68, 180, 182, 193-94

120. Guttman, *Sports Spectators*, 112-13. Guttman more recently points out in support of his argument that newspapers widely read by the lower classes covered baseball extensively, while *Outing*, a popular middle-class [actually it was upper-middle-class] periodical rarely covered baseball, and the upper-class *Book of Sport* (1901) did not at all. (Of course, newspapers read by the middle classes also covered baseball extensively.) He further pants as evidence of lower-class dominance of baseball his own observation as a youth in the 1930s at Comiskey Park and conversations with Francis Couvares, whose book, *The Remaking of Pittsburgh*, reinforced his perspectives. See Guttman, “Response to Donald Kyle and Melvin Adelman.” (“Spectators and Crowds in Sport History”), 224-25. However, Couvares has very little evidence on baseball crowds, and what he had was largely from Fred Lieb, *The Pittsburgh Pirates* (New York: Putnam, 1948) who noted that hundreds of workers attended games after work on Saturday, although high prices and working hours kept down working-class crowds during the week. See Couvares, *Remaking of Pittsburgh*, 123. Labor historian Robert Weir has argued that historians have misunderstood baseball’s cultural significance, stressing its working-class dimensions. See “Take Me Out to the Brawl Game: Sports and Workers in Gilded Age Massachusetts.” in *Sports in Massachusetts: Historical Essays*, ed. Ronald Story (Westfield, MA: Institute for Massachusetts Studies, 1991), 16-36. I have always agreed with Guttman that baseball was very popular with the lower classes in the 1920s, but the data on lower-class spectatorship in earlier eras seems to point differently. See Dean A. Sullivan, “Faces in the Crowd: A Statistical Portrait of Baseball Spectators in Cincinnati, 1886-1888,” *Journal of Sport History* 17 (Winter 1990): 354-65; Riess, *City Games*, 67-68; Steven A. Riess, *Touching Base: Professional Baseball and American Culture in the Progressive Era* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980), 31-33.

for young white British working class males. Vamplew indicated that there were a lot of professional British sportsmen at the turn of the century, including 400 jockeys and apprentices (moderately successful jockeys in the 1890s made about £1,000 in a good year), 2,500 full-time soccer players, and hundreds of county and league cricketers. However, soccer players were modestly compensated; a £4-per-week maximum was set in 1900 (raised to £18 in 1919), and many players worked a second job.¹²¹

Contemporaries categorized British professional athletes as working class, although they had no clear sense of class consciousness. However, they were identified as semiprofessional white-collar workers in the United States. Soccer players mainly came from artisan families and Nicholas Fishwick claimed they enjoyed a higher social status than most workers. Vamplew found that professional sportsmen at the turn of the century earned twice as much as artisans, but did not consider them labor aristocrats because they had no long-term job security, lacked power to restrict entry to the occupation, had little control over working conditions, were treated paternalistically by bosses, could not readily move from job to job, and had little ability to use sport for further social or economic advancement. They had a few moments of fame and fortune, and then slid back into the mass of workers.¹²²

Nineteenth-century cricket drew professionals from working-class backgrounds, although it currently recruits from declining middle-class social groups. Top players could aspire to benefits staged for amateurs and professionals with at least 10 years' experience. The profit from these games in the 1890s averaged £816, enough to set up a man in business. Cricket clubs considered them a way of deferring income that helped them hold on to their stars. Professionals were considered servants (scorecards placed their initials after surnames), and had separate entrances and changing rooms. As late as the 1960s, pro cricketers earned less than average blue-collar workers.¹²³

Riess examined the potential of American professional sport as an alternate avenue of social mobility for athletically gifted youth from the bottom of

121. Hargreaves, *Sport, Power and Culture*, 127-28; Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game*, 54, 56-57, and 183-256, esp. 204-238; Holt, *Sport and the British*, 294-300. Maximums were only eliminated in the 1960s caused by pressure from the players' union and competition for top players from foreign teams. Jones pointed out that run-of-the-mill British boxers in the interwar era earned less than the average industrial wage. Jones, "Working Class Sport in Manchester," 72. On Welsh boxing, see Dai Smith, "Local Heroes," 198-217.

122. Professional athletes were regarded until very recently as skilled workers. Wages for first division players were not calculated by market value. They were about double what other artisans earned. Holt, *Sport and the British*, 288. Vamplew points out the reluctance of British pro athletes to join unions, and only soccer players tried to establish a permanent organization prior to the war, but the Football Players' Union (1907) had limited success. Vamplew argued unionization was hindered by the athletes' short tenure, geographic dispersal, high expectations, lack of shared interests, and the greater freedom of jockeys and cricketers to change employers. Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game*, 238-53, 255. Professional salaries began becoming lucrative by the late 1960s with the influence of television an important factor. By 1985, 87 players were earning in excess of £50,000, although 40 percent of the registered 1,950 players earned less than £10,000. Mason, "Football, 158-63. See also Fishwick, *English Football and Society*.

123. Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game*, 127-28. Players today identify themselves as relatively well-paid working class, while cricketers identify themselves today as middle class and superior to soccer players. Ibid. On the continued working class origins of soccer players, see Stephen Wagg, *The Football World: A Contemporary Social History* (London: Harvester Press, 1984), 124-25.

the social ladder and found it limited in the short run by discrimination, the small number of jobs, and brief tenure, while in the long run, uneducated athletes frequently suffered a sharp occupational decline after retirement. Scholars agree that boxers came up from poverty following a pattern of ethnic succession, starting with the Irish, then eastern and southern Europeans, and finally people of color. Impressionistic and quantified data indicates that average fighters ended up economically about where they had started out. One-third of a sample of contenders and champions ended up in blue-collar jobs and the rest in low-level white-collar occupations. These results may well exaggerate the success of fighters who ended up physically broken, mentally impaired, and generally destitute.¹²⁴

Professional basketball players were also largely drawn from inner-city neighborhoods, but fared far better. The earliest players did not need college experience to get started, yet pre-1940s professionals were five times as likely to attend college as their peers, which enabled about 95 percent to end up with white-collar jobs. In the 1950s virtually all NBA players were collegemen with high rates of graduation even though just one-fifth were from middle-class backgrounds. Few earned lucrative salaries in the NBA, but nearly all ended up with excellent careers after basketball.¹²⁵

Pre-1926 National Football League players were drawn in substantial numbers from industrial teams, and about one-fifth had never attended college. Thereafter virtually all players had college experience and their social origins changed because during the Depression jobs became scarcer and the occupation became more socially acceptable. Between 1933-1945 most players were college graduates (85.5 percent), and sons of white-collar fathers (57.8 percent). Then in the 1950s, when one-third of NFL players were second-generation new immigrants, blue-collar athletes regained their dominance (52.2 percent). Nonetheless, both cohorts ended up over 90 percent white-collar.¹²⁶

The most detailed attention was given to baseball. Adelman suggested that early pro baseball was a vehicle for mobility since over 70 percent ended up with white-collar jobs. However, only 26.9 percent ended up higher than the semiprofessional category, and an equal proportion skidded into

124. Adelman, *Sporting Time*, 235, 237, 353 ns. 85, 86, as well as Gorn, *Manly Ars*, and Brailsford, *Bareknuckles*, for the bareknuckles era. For the modern era, see Steven A. Riess, "Professional Sports as an Avenue of Social Mobility in America: Some Myths and Realities," in *Essays on Sport History and Sport Mythology*, ed. Donald G. Kyle, and Gary D. Stark, The Walter Prescott Webb Memorial Lectures, 24 (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1990), 85-86, 88-89; idem, "A Fighting Chance: The Jewish-American Boxing Experience, 1890-1940," *American Jewish History* 74 (March 1985): 233-54.

125. Riess, "Professional Sports as an Avenue of Social Mobility," 91-95.

126. Riess, "Professional Sports as an Avenue of Social Mobility," 95-102; idem, "A Social Profile of the Professional Football Player, 1920-80," in *American Professional Sports: Social, Historical Economic and Legal Aspects*, ed. Paul Staudohar and J. A. Mangan (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 222-46. The socioeconomic background of African-American NFL players who comprised just a handful in the 1950s was below, that of their white peers. Two-thirds (64.7 percent) of a sample of African-American stars active in the 1950s-1980s were of blue-collar origins (mainly semiskilled or unskilled), compared to half (48.8 percent) of white stars. *Ibid.*, 230-31.

blue-collar jobs.¹²⁷ Riess's recent research found that top players born in 1860-79 were predominantly blue-collar (53.7 percent) and modestly educated, but this pattern changed after the turn of the century when the occupation became more respectable, high paying, and attracted college ballplayers. Only one-third of players active from 1900-1939 had blue-collar backgrounds. In the 1940s manual players became dominant, largely reflecting a substantial increase in second-generation immigrant players, but since the 1950s, white-collar players have again dominated.¹²⁸

Approximately 80 percent of retirees in the period 1900-1950 ended up with white-collar jobs, substantially worse than the better educated basketball and football players. Fame helped athletes get their first job after sports, but thereafter education and social backgrounds were the dominant factors. Until the recent era of skyrocketing salaries, the greatest benefit of a sports career has been as a vehicle for getting an education.¹²⁹

VII. NEW QUESTIONS, NEW DIRECTIONS

The subject of sport and class remains an extremely fertile area for future research. For example, it would be interesting to test Guttman's proposition in *Sports Spectators* that outside of horse racing, participants and spectators tended to come from the same social strata. There is a need for comparative studies that cross cultural and national boundaries. Scholars interested in the rich and well-born might test Hobsbawm's hypothesis that elite Continental groups influenced by British upper-class education copied the sporting life to form a ruling elite on the British model.¹³⁰ Another paradigm to consider is British historian David Cannadine's supposition that in the late nineteenth century when the British aristocracy began to decline, there was a shift from a socially responsible leisure class who enjoyed sport and other recreations, but were expected "to discharge the responsibilities which great rank, birth and vast possessions entail," to an irresponsible pleasure class, mainly interested in having a good time.¹³¹ Issues of power and hegemony remain to be explored. Scholars might consider the long-term relationship of sports clubs and social status. Are the leading clubs of 1880

127. Adelman, *Sporting Time*, 181-82. His findings were generally consistent with an earlier study that found over one-third of players active in early major league baseball (1871-82) ended up with blue-collar jobs. See Riess, *Touching Base*, 151-60.

128. Riess, "Professional Sports as an Avenue of Social Mobility," 102-10. Since the 1960s, class has been closely correlated to race. Three-fourths of white stars born after 1940 were white-collar, while four-fifths (83.3 percent) of blacks were blue-collar. *Ibid.*, 108.

129. *Ibid.*, 107-11.

130. Guttman, *Sports Spectators*, 63-64; Hobsbawm, "Mass Producing Traditions," 299-300. For comparative studies, see Alan Metcalfe, "Leisure, Sport, and Working Class Culture: Some Insights from Montreal and the North-East Coal Field of England," in *Leisure, Sport and Working Class Cultures*, ed. Hart Canleton and Robert Hollands (Toronto: Garamond Press, 1988), 65-77; Christiane Eisenberg, "The Middle Class and Competition: Some Considerations of the Beginnings of Modern Sport in England and Germany," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 7 (September 1990): 265-82.

131. Cannadine, *Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*, 386-87. Quote is from Lady Jeune, "London Society," *North America Review* 154 (1892): 611, in *ibid.*, 386.

still the highest 'status organizations? If so, what does that tell us about the dynamics of social structures? Have we exaggerated elite control of national amateur sport and underestimated the influence of the upper middle class? We need more biographies on the role of elites in international sport like Allen Guttman's biography of the self-made Avery Brundage, *The Games Must Go On* (1984). The role of elites as boosters, promoters, and executives in commercialized sports like baseball and thoroughbred racing merits additional attention. Why did rich men like Jacob Ruppert and Tom Yawkey get involved in the business of sports? How successful have rich sportsmen been in attaining elite status? Has ownership of major sports franchises become a means to secure elite status? What was the role of elites on the rise of interloping professional sports leagues?¹³²

Several major areas beckon for future studies of middle-class sport, especially their role as sports entrepreneurs. Hardy points out the need to give greater attention to the social origins of sports entrepreneurs and the life-cycle of sports businesses, and the stages at which upwardly mobile individuals or higher-status folk get involved. Were the middle-class businessmen the risk takers? How did entrepreneurs open new markets, invent novel game forms, or secure fresh sources of labor? How significant were motivational factors like civic duty, love of sport, and egotism for sports promoters? Did social and economic backgrounds affect style of entrepreneurship, innovation, or labor relations? How do sports franchise ownerships compare cross-sport, cross-national, and cross-cultural lines?¹³³

There are a number of areas for future research in working-class sport. More attention needs to be given to working-class women's sport, ranging from nineteenth-century professional sports (boxing, rowing, track, weightlifting, etc.) to welfare sports programs. Why were poor African-American women encouraged to participate in sports, but not lower-class

132. On amateurism, see Stephen Hardy, "Entrepreneurs, Organization and the Sport Marketplace," *Journal of Sport History* 13 (Spring 1986): 23, which cites James B. Connolly's 1910 challenge to the conventional wisdom that the elite controlled track and field, but reinforces the idea that any group could not hope to achieve unopposed mastery of any part of sportsworld. On traction executives in American professional sports, see Riess, *City Games*, 181, 194, 208-9, 214-16. On international sport and elites, see Allen Guttman, *The Games Must Go On: Avery Brundage and the Olympic Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984); Jean Marie Brohm, "Pierre de Coubertin et L'avenement du Sport Bourgeois," in Arnaud, *Les Athletes de la République*, 283-300; Vyv Simson and Andrew Jennings, *Gold, Power and Doping: The End of the Olympic Idea* (New York: SPI Books, 1992); Jaime Boix and Arcadio Espada, *El deport del poder, vida milagro Juan Antonio Samaranch* (Madrid: T.N., 1991). For a comparative study of Canadian NHL entrepreneurs Coo Smythe and Peter Pocklington, see David Mills, "The Blue Line and the Bottom Line: Entrepreneurs and the Business of Hockey in Canada, 1927-90," in *The Business of Professional Sports*, ed. Paul Staudohar and James A. Mangan (Urbana IL: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 175-201; and on corporate ownership of the seven Canadian NHL franchises, see Rob B. Beamish, "The Impact of Corporate Ownership on Labor-Management Relations in Hockey," *ibid.*, 202-21.

133. On business, see Hardy, "Entrepreneurs, Organization and the Sport Marketplace," 14-33; Hardy, "Adopted by all The Leading Clubs: Sporting Goods and the Shaping of Leisure, 1860-1900," in *For Fun and Profit: The Transformation of Leisure Into Consumption*, ed. Richard Butsch (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), ch. 4; and Hardy, "Entrepreneurs, Structures, and the Sportgeist: Old Tensions in Modern Industry," in Kyle and Stark, *Essays on Sport History*, esp. 52-65. On Jewish sports entrepreneurs, see Riess, "A Fighting Chance," 247, 248-52.

white women? Scholars should devote more attention to working-class sponsorship of traditional sports, neighborhood athletics, semiprofessional sport, and international competitions like the 1931 Vienna Workers' Olympics. Blue-collar sports like billiards, bowling, darts, snooker, and stock car racing have received little attention. However, H. F. Moorhouse has recently examined the history of drag racing, which he argues began as the hobby of hot rodding in 1940s among young men who cultivated an outlaw image and modified cars for illegal city street racing.¹³⁴

In the past decade, sport historians and other scholars have done a remarkable job researching and analyzing the role of class on the development of modern sport, and considerable work on the influence of sport upon issues of class. We have every reason to be proud of our scholarship and contributions to the historical literature. A useful step in the future could be to take a broader perspective on our field. The time has come for a comparative approach to studying sport history across national, cultural, and even time boundaries. This can help us avoid the pitfalls of increasingly narrow research by broadening our horizons, and taking the opportunity to reexamine our fundamental assumptions and the questions we ask.

134. H. F. Moorhouse, *Driving Ambitions: A Social Analysis of the American Hot Rod Enthusiasm* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), 17, 46, 50, 57; Guttman, *Sports Spectators*, 83-84, 94-95, 100. On women, see Guttman, *Women's Sports*, 98, 100, 103-4, 142-46 (U.S.), 159-63 (Western Europe); McCrone, "Class, Gender, and English Women's Sport," 159-82; and Monys Ann Hagan, "Industrial Harmony through Sports: The Industrial Recreation Movement and Women's Sports" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, 1990), which mainly focuses on the post-1930s. For a current review of the literature on German working-class sport, see Arnd Kruger, "German Sport Historiography of the Eighties," *Journal of Sport History* 17 (Summer 1990): 266-67. On the workers' Olympics and related topics, see, e.g., Shapiro, "The World Athletic Carnival of 1936"; Jonathan F. Wagner, "Prague's Socialist Olympics of 1934," *Canadian Journal of History of Sport* 23 (May 1992): 1-18; W. J. Murray, "The French Workers' Sports Movement and the Victory of the Popular Front in 1936," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 4 (September 1987): 203-32; William J. Baker, "Muscular Marxism and the Chicago Counter-Olympics of 1932," *ibid.*, 9 (December 1992): 397-410.