

UNGERLEIDER, STEVEN. *Faust's Gold: Inside the East German Doping Machine*. Thomas Dunne Books. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2001. Pp. 256. Appendices, index, black & white photos. \$23.95 cb.

On November 17, 1988, the *New York Times* began a five-day series of front-page articles related to drug use and sports, claiming that "at least half of the 9,000 athletes who competed at the Olympics in Seoul used performance-enhancing drugs in training, according to estimates by medical and legal experts as well as traffickers in these drugs. These experts also contend that the drug testing programs of the IOC and other sports associations have had no impact in reducing the use of such drugs" (quoted by Jan and Terry Todd, "The History, Ethics, and Social Context of Doping." In *Doping in Elite Sport: The Politics of Drugs in the Olympic Movement*, 91. Edited by Wayne Wilson and Edward Dorse. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 2001). The dry facts are now accompanied by a highly emotional story on the *State Plan 14.25* on doping in the GDR where almost all of the athletes competing internationally were doped—but not caught.

Ungerleider did not write a history book. He is completely uncritical of his sources. He fully trusts in the married couple Berendonk/Franke, who have been involved in the hunt for East German dopers—but helped their doped friend, West German Dieter Baumann, as advisors in his unsuccessful legal case to get cleared of doping charges. Ungerleider's other sources are the doping court cases in Berlin. The book has no footnotes, nor literature cited.

Doping by mutual consent is not a crime under the law of most countries including Germany. Therefore, *mutual consent* becomes the court issue. In the case of minors, consent should have been given by the parents. The parents did not know that their children were doped so they could not consent—often the minors only suspected the use of anabolic steroids themselves when they were given "vitamin pills."

The courts specifically addressed the cases of female swimmers where the performances are highly influenced by the application of anabolic steroids and where world class performances can be reached at a relatively young age. Although female gymnasts and figure skaters are even younger at their peak, the use of steroids is far less prevalent in these sports. The use of drugs in most other sports have also been reported, but under a statute of limitation, criminal cases that had not been prosecuted in the GDR had to be tried under the unified German law within a ten-year limit after unification—with exception of capital crimes. So, swimming was providing "easy" results for the courts.

In the court cases, the responsible doctors and sport administrators generally received fines in the neighborhood of \$5,000 or suspended jail sentences between six months and two years for "willful intent to do bodily harm to minors." The indicted MDs were permitted to continue to practice medicine. If you cause an accident when driving drunk, the sentences are similar if not stiffer. Why then all the fuss about the systematic application of anabolic steroids by the GDR? The book highlights the plight of the victims. The thousands who were happy within the system and refused to be part of the court cases are just mentioned in passing.

Ungerleider puts his book into the context of the Nuremberg trials of war criminals, the SS increasing the fighting spirit of their members by steroids and Nazi doctors killing people in human experiments (p. 83f.). Although he partially uses this positioning as a quotation by one of the prosecution lawyers in the trial ("but we did get [the media] attention"), it helps to disqualify the book as serious scholarship—as his aim is the same as the lawyer's. The charges against the GDR doping experts by the author are way out of proportion—as can be seen by the sentences of the courts.

Doug Gilbert believed everything he was told in the GDR when doing research for his *Miracle Machine* (Doug Gilbert, *The Miracle Machine*. New York: Coward, McCann & Goeghegan, 1980), now Ungerleider believes everything he is told in GDR bidding. Of course, it is dreadful if a government takes charge of the doping scene in a country. But what do you expect of a state run system where the government is in charge of almost everything? Is it any better if high school kids use steroids themselves to get a college scholarship—or just a good-looking physique? The development of new steroids and other doping agents was not done just in the GDR, but in the United States and other Western countries.

The advantage of pointing with fingers to the GDR is that researchers have access to the STASI (Secret Police) files about the whole sports scene, including doping. The STASI did not know what people were actually taking in terms of drugs; they only knew what they were supposed to be taken—and who was in charge of providing the drugs. As there was a flourishing black market for steroids in the GDR, some were obviously taking more and some taking less than prescribed. In fact, an untranslated STASI paper in the appendix (p. 216) points out that drug testing of athletes who were not officially supplied with steroids had to take place, to assure that the coaches did not "illegally" (i.e., outside the official channels of the state) supply the steroids to them. In the case of the GDR, one can show that most international athletes were supplied with anabolic steroids up to the very end in 1990. But was it any different in the other countries? As historians we have learned that the absence of sources is not identical with the absence of the phenomenon. Unannounced out-of-competition drug testing did not take place internationally until the end of the GDR, and it is still not the rule in many countries today.

Ungerleider is a brilliant polemic writer, but he lacks a sense of proportion and apparently his knowledge of German is limited. *Faust's Gold* would have benefited from proper proof reading (there are plenty of misspellings of German names, misdating and mislocating West Germans into East Germans and vice versa) and a glossary explaining all the (East) German abbreviations. The emotional book is a good piece of muckraking.

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