

SPORT, SCIENCE, AND MEDICINE

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R. Tait McKenzie's Medical Work, and the Beginnings of Physical Activity Programs for People with Disabilities

The origins of physical activity and sport for people with disabilities are rooted in medical concern in the late 1880s in Canada, Great Britain and the United States, for the “correction” of physical disabilities through the use of exercise and physical therapy. While disability sport in its present form would not grow out of the use of physical activity as medical therapy until after World War II, the idea of using activity for its therapeutic value arose quite some time earlier. One of the earliest leaders in the development and use of physical therapeutics was Canadian-born doctor R. Tait McKenzie. McKenzie was a great leader in therapeutic medicine and his work largely came out of strong humanitarian concerns. However, this work did not occur in a vacuum – it must be regarded in terms of wider social processes in physical education, medicine and society, in order to be more fully understood.

McKenzie's medical work can be divided into three stages in terms of his writing, the type of medical practice that he was engaged in, and his location. During the first stage, while at McGill University in Montreal from 1885-1904, he kept a private medical practice and wrote largely about physical activity as treatment for spinal curvatures and preventative medicine. Major influences upon his work during this time included a heavy involvement in various gymnastics movements, and an association with Dr. Dudley Sargent of Harvard University and his work in Anthropometry. The second stage, the pre-War years at the University of Pennsylvania from 1904- 1915, saw him produce two volumes of his book Exercise in Education and Medicine, a groundbreaking book in both physical education and medicine. In these books, McKenzie demonstrated a profound knowledge of the burgeoning field of physical therapy, which he would put to great use in the third stage, during the First World War. At the outbreak of the War, McKenzie sailed to England and enlisted in the Royal

Army Medical Corps. By the War's end, McKenzie had impacted upon literally thousands of people, through his work in the Royal Army, and his writings on physical therapies and rehabilitation from disabilities. Wider societal pressures to rehabilitate injured soldiers, with roots in both humanitarian and economic concerns, were at work during this time and had a great impact on the medical field.

R. Tait McKenzie was one of the first promoters of the therapeutic value of exercise, and significant in the development of physical activity and exercise programs for people with disabilities. Despite being a great figure in the field, he was still subject to wider societal discourses and currents, which influenced the type of work he did, and the forms of disability he was concerned with. These influences helped create and define the meaning of physical activity for people with disabilities in its beginnings as therapy, for McKenzie and the rest of the medical field.

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**The Concept of Self in the Science of Sport
Performance: An Analysis of Research on Muscular
Strength Development from 1955 to 1988**

Muscles belong to an organism (for our purposes a human organism). Based on this premise, two major questions emerge about the research on muscular strength development in regards to human performance. First, how is the self conceived in the research regarding muscular development? What notions of the person, both implicit and explicit, inform and direct the research on muscular physiology? Secondly, what implications does this research have in terms of understanding and defining human performance? How do we interpret the conclusions of science for real persons?

From the founding of the American College of Sport Medicine to the 1988 Summer Olympics, science emerged as a vitally important discipline for investigating physical development and sport performance. With a proliferation of research (found in a proliferation of articles in a plethora of research journals) on muscular development, not to mention other forms of human performance, scientists questioned both how muscles function and