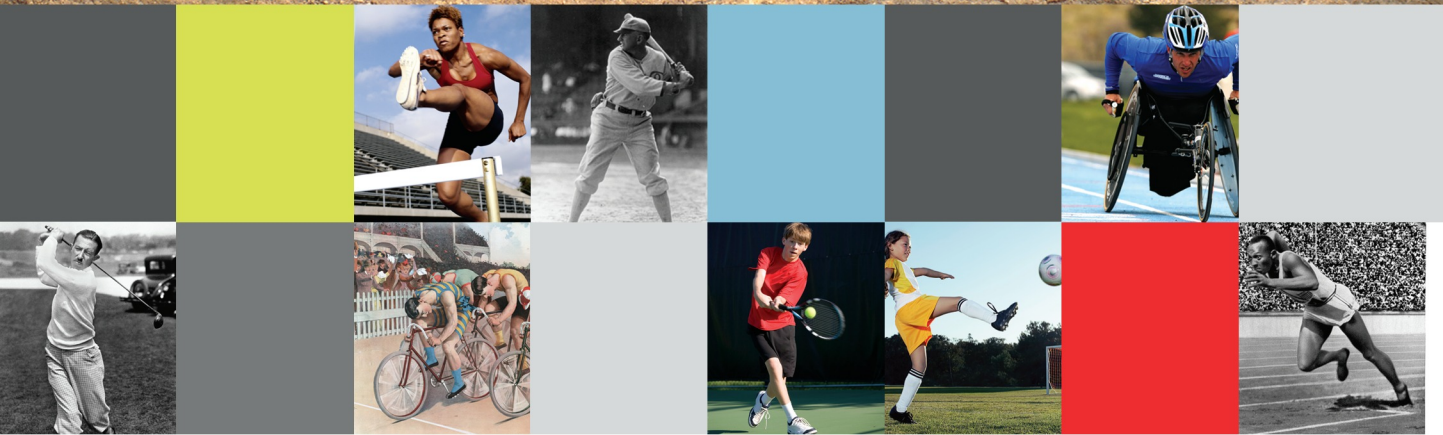


*Sixth Edition*

# A History and Philosophy of Sport and Physical Education

*From Ancient Civilization to the Modern World*



Robert A. Mechikoff

Sixth Edition

# A HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF SPORT AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

*From Ancient Civilizations  
to the Modern World*

**Robert A. Mechikoff**  
*San Diego Christian College*





A HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF SPORT AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION: FROM ANCIENT CIVILIZATION TO THE MODERN WORLD, SIXTH EDITION

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# PREFACE

This edition, unlike the previous five editions, has been reorganized to reflect the chronology of historical and philosophical content as opposed to the thematic approach utilized in the previous five editions. While Sections I and II remain the same (Chapters 1–8) the rest of the text has been revamped and a new chapter has been added.

Chapters 3 and 4 Ancient Greece and Rome, have new photos and new information. Of particular note is the new information about Greek and Roman sport as seen from the perspective of the Jews during this time. This insightful and revealing account is taken from the Roman historian Josephus who was a Jew and fought the Romans on more than one occasion before he decided to become a Roman.

Section III, The Historical and Philosophical Development of Sport and Physical Education in America begins with Chapter 9, which has not changed in regard to content, and ends with Chapter 10. This chapter has new material relating to pragmatism and how segregation was a fact of life in American society and was rampant in sport, especially baseball. New information about African-American baseball teams and players are found within this chapter.

Section IV, The Theoretical and Professional Development of American Physical Education, is where the reorganized chapter sequence comes into

play. In previous editions, the chapter titled The Impact of Science and the Concept of Health on the Theoretical and Professional Development of Physical Education: 1885–1930, was Chapter 9. It is now Chapter 11. This chapter uses original documentation that was written over 100 years ago to warn early physical education professionals about the charlatans and quacks who would exploit the profession for the sole purpose of making money while claiming to be credible.

The “old” Chapter 10, The Transformation of Physical Education: 1900–1939 is now Chapter 12, and remains essentially the same relative to content. In this edition, Chapter 13, The Evolution of Physical Education: 1940 and Beyond, is brand new and provides the reader with the status of physical education and sport during World War II and beyond. During this time, long before Title IX was enacted, physical education departments in schools and colleges were segregated by gender and many men and women wanted to keep it this way. It was also a time when physical education came under attack at the University of California, Berkeley by university faculty who saw little if any value in the degree and worked very hard to eliminate it. This assault on the credibility of the physical education degree was partly due to the Conant Report which is discussed in this chapter along with the contributions of Franklin Henry, who campaigned for

the academic discipline of physical education at the expense of the profession of physical education and the All American Girls Professional Baseball League

Chapter 14, Sport in the Twentieth Century (formerly Chapter 13) has new content about women's basketball. Students will learn about the Flying Queens of Wayland Baptist University, and Coach Pat Summitt of the University of Tennessee.

Section V, A Social and Political History of the Modern Olympic Games, (Chapters 15–17) has been updated to reflect the latest research and the story of the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games.

When appropriate, new discussion questions are introduced along with a few new Internet sources and suggested readings. The online learning center contains PowerPoint presentations, extensive photos that cannot be accommodated in the text, plus additional resources that should inspire and stimulate the reader.

My inspiration is derived from multiple sources; however, a few of the more inspirational people and institutions who have made a great contribution

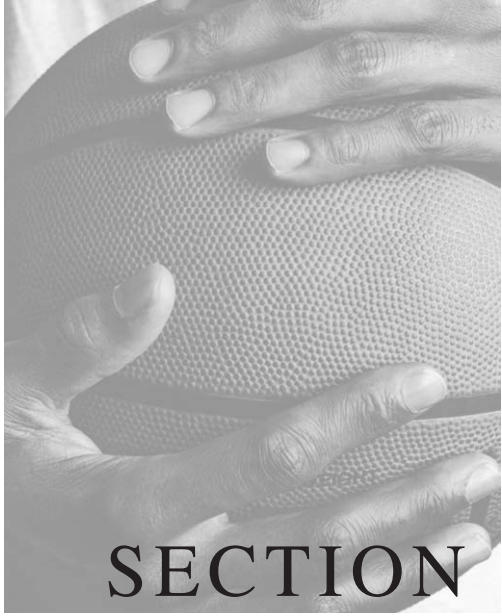
to my life and consequently, my way of thinking deserve to be recognized.

Orange Coast College (OCC) provided me with an excellent educational experience and the opportunity to continue playing football after I graduated from high school. While I am certain the students and faculty who study and teach there today are stellar, my enduring appreciation goes to the 1967 and 1969 OCC football team, the students and professors who opened my eyes to all sorts of new ideas and experiences, and especially the OCC football coaches: Dick Tucker, George Mattias, Jack Fair, and Dale Wonacott.

To the Martot family: Kelly, David, Anna, and Yuri for their encouragement and support, and to all my students and colleagues at home and abroad, your questions, insights, and conversations continue to be a profound influence.

**Robert A. Mechikoff, Ph.D**

Professor and  
Chair—Department of Kinesiology  
San Diego Christian College



# I *Ancient Civilizations*



## C H A P T E R

# 1

# *History and Philosophy of Sport and Physical Education*

## O B J E C T I V E S

Upon completing this chapter, you will be able to:

- Understand the rationale and purpose of historical study in general.
- Appreciate the historical contributions that sport and physical education have made to society.
- Apply selected definitions as they relate to the concept of play, games, and sport, and understand the need for these definitions.
- Discuss selected methods of historical study.
- Describe modernization theory and how it applies to the study of the history of sport and physical education.
- Recognize how urbanization and industrialization affected the development of sport and physical education.
- Understand the rationale and purpose of philosophical inquiry and its utility to comprehending the philosophical positions that the human body has been assigned throughout history.
- Understand the nature and application of metaphysics to the study of sport and physical education.
- Understand the nature and application of epistemology to the study of sport and physical education.
- Apply fundamental philosophical processes and terms.
- Recognize the impact that metaphysical dualism has had on the historical development of sport and physical education.
- Understand the difference between dualism and monism and their influence on epistemology specific to the use of the body/senses as a source of valid information for acquiring accurate knowledge.
- Identify selected philosophies of the modern world, and discuss their impact on perceptions of the worth or value of the human body and consequently the utility of sport and physical education.

Before we begin describing the process of “doing” history, a basic question needs to be asked and answered: Why study history? It may not be immediately obvious that the study of history in any area, including sport and physical education, can lead to a more enlightened and productive life. Many people argue that knowing history is irrelevant to their lives. One aspect of our character is the prevailing belief that we are headed “into the future,” and the most obvious aspect of history is that it is in the past—and so, over. Making things even more problematic is that the study of history (even sport history) is sometimes perceived as boring, repetitive, and not connected in any immediate way to the lives of those who read about history. As the argument goes, because the players and events in history are behind us, these events and people have no relevance in our lives.

This skeptical perspective relative to the study of history can be at least partially dismissed with a few observations. Students of history have found that it often provides an illuminating perspective on why we behave and think in the present and offers a basis for forecasting the future. History is not, however, *the only* answer as to why we think and act as we do, nor is it *the only* manner in which we can forecast what will happen. History provides a particular perspective—and when done well, an enlightened perspective—on why we think and behave the way we do and how we ought to think and behave in the future. This argument for understanding history was put most eloquently by philosopher George Santayana (1863–1952): “Progress, far from consisting in change, depends on retentiveness. . . . Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”<sup>1</sup> The eminent scholar and journalist Norman Cousins (1915–1990) held a similar view: “History is a vast early warning system.”

Apart from Santayana’s and Cousins’ prophetic belief, there are additional reasons to study history. Historical study/inquiry can serve as a dramatic source of inspiration and motivation. Epic achievements and accomplishments—as well as disappointments and defeats—brought about by

individuals, groups, or entire civilizations provide exciting testaments to courage, bravery, and sacrifice in the name of monumental achievements—and colossal failures. Your ability to “think outside the box,” a skill prized by employers and one of the hallmarks of intellectual achievement, is largely dependent on your understanding and application of the critical thought process. Understanding and applying the lessons of history—especially the history of ideas and their track record of success or failure—will serve to demonstrate your analytical ability to think outside the box and go beyond the status quo.

The study of history is replete with examples of ideas, beliefs, social experiments, and architecture that have either been consigned to the dustbin of history because they failed or have withstood the test of time to the extent that they (ideas, beliefs, and so on) remain as vital and beautiful today as when they were first created. In many cases, timeless ideas and approaches that we use today were developed centuries or even millennia ago. For example, the ancient Greeks employed the term *stadion*, which in the beginning was actually a unit of measurement, about 600 ancient feet. The inventive Greeks then instituted a foot race that covered 600 feet and, as you may have guessed, referred to this race as the “stadion” (sometimes called the “stade race”). Not long after, the term *stadion* was used to identify the location where the race was held. Over time, the stadion became known as a venue where athletic competitions took place—and the rest, as they say, is history!

Another tradition that has been carried over from the ancient to the modern world is found in horse racing. This sport was very popular in antiquity, especially in Rome. In the chariot races, often held in the 250,000-capacity Circus Maximus, teams were represented by four factions or syndicates that could be identified by their respective colors: the Reds, Blues, Greens, and Whites. The drivers wore these colors so the fans who wagered their money on the outcome could watch the progress of the races and cheer their drivers or jockeys on to



victory. And today, jockeys wear silks of various colors that identify the horse and its owner.

In this sense, some things may never change if the original idea is sound. These ancient ideas and practices that have withstood the test of time remain just as appreciated today as the day they were introduced. The great works of literature, such as *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*; the thoughts and ideas of ancient philosophers like Socrates and Plato; great architectural monuments like the pyramids of Egypt, the Parthenon in Athens, or the Colosseum in Rome—all are part of the rich social and cultural fabric that is both history and inspiration.

Of course, history can mean different things to different people. Although we are utilizing history to study sport and physical education, history is also widely used to study politics, theology, warfare, weather science, economics, and other fields and disciplines that influence the human race and planet Earth. Historians, anthropologists, sociologists, and archaeologists study men and women who have played a significant role in shaping the course of history, ancient and modern. Do you believe there is any truth to the adage “The more things change, the more they remain the same”? As we shall see later in this book, many of the same concerns, goals, hopes, and dreams that most of us have today were shared by men, women, and children who lived five centuries or even four or five millennia ago.

There is some comfort in knowing that men, women, and children who lived long ago enjoyed many of the same sports that we do today. Ancient athletes competed in wrestling, boxing, swimming, horse racing, discus and javelin throw, and footraces, among other events. Today’s athletes have much in common with the athletes who competed for fame, glory, and riches in the ancient world. What may be particularly illuminating is that the “extreme sports” that have become so popular in the twenty-first century pale in comparison with the competitions and athletic prowess of the ancients. After reading Chapters 2–4, you can draw your own conclusions about the extreme sports and

athletes of the modern world as compared with the competitions that drew hundreds of athletes and tens of thousands of fans to huge stadiums in the ancient world.

Assuming that the arguments given support the importance of the study of history, can these arguments be applied to sport and physical education? The answer would seem to be yes. Sport and physical education can be understood through the methods of history, as can any other human activity. In so doing, we understand how past events shaped the present and how future events in sport and physical education will be affected by “current events.” Furthermore, understanding how a culture plays tells us much about how that culture operates outside of sport and physical education. Play, in the form of games and sport, can be seen as serving certain functions in a culture, what Brian Sutton-Smith calls “buffered cultural learning” (learning necessary survival skills in a safe environment) to the expression of specific cultural values (such as discipline and teamwork).<sup>2</sup> Sociologist Jacques Barzun observed that “whoever wants to know the heart and mind of America had better learn baseball.”<sup>3</sup> Barzun argued that baseball and its rules, the way we interact with the game, and its importance to our culture over the past 150 years tells us much about how we think and behave today.

## DEFINITIONS

It will be helpful if we define commonly used words and concepts so that our discussions of history and philosophy can begin from some common basis. We will begin with a brief definition of the concept of “sport” because the word will appear frequently throughout this book. Sport is a modern term first used in England around A.D. 1440. The origins of the word *sport*, or its etymology, are Latin and French. In French, the word *de(s)porter* has its roots in the Latin word *deportare*, which means “to amuse oneself.” Over time, the meaning of the term *sport* grew from merely “amusing oneself” to an interpretation that was used extensively

throughout England, referring to competition in the form of games, individual athletic exploits, and hunting.

Sport cannot be understood, however, without understanding something about the nature of play and the nature of games, for play is a larger domain than sport. While it can be argued that all sport is play, it does not follow that all play is sport. Johan Huizinga, who wrote the classic *Homo Ludens (Man the Player)*, developed the general hypothesis that play is precultural and permeates all facets of life.<sup>4</sup> Huizinga argued that play is a “significant function,” that there is some sense to it, and that this aspect of human existence—play—defines the nature of being human and the nature of culture. In short, one of our defining characteristics as human beings is that we are playful and seek activities that are fun. According to Huizinga, play is

a free activity standing quite consciously outside “ordinary” life as being “not serious,” but at the same time absorbing the player intensely and utterly. It is an activity connected with no material interest, and no profit can be gained by it. (p. 13)

Huizinga’s work has withstood the test of time and has been added to by Roger Caillois,<sup>5</sup> Brian Sutton-Smith,<sup>6</sup> and others.

As you might expect, achieving complete consensus on what constitutes play is unlikely. While many scholars who study the phenomenon of play agree on certain aspects of its nature, there are points of departure; this is also true for sport, games, physical education, dance, and athletics. For example, although Huizinga and others have reached somewhat complementary definitions of play, J. Levy further refines these definitions, arguing that play has three fundamental characteristics:

1. *Play is intrinsically motivated.* We are born with the desire to play; we don’t have to be taught to do this. Huizinga also agrees with this tenet.

2. *Play involves the temporary suspension of normal/typical reality and the acceptance of alternative realities.* We can be so immersed in the “play experience” that we enter a reality that is highly personal and out of the norm.
3. *Play involves an internal locus of control.* We believe that we have control over our actions and outcomes while engaging in various forms of play.<sup>7</sup>

You may be wondering about the heavy emphasis on the definition of play (several more definitions will follow in this chapter) and other seemingly abstract issues. This is a reasonable question. The necessity of this information is based on the intellectual level of study—the sophistication and nature of the area of study—as well as the opportunity and ability to develop, expand, and engage in critical thought. The level or status of your intellectual and personal growth as a college student will be determined, to a large extent, by exposure to different schools of thought and the opportunity to engage in the process of critical thinking—to assess the value of the information you obtain through readings, research, lectures, discussion, and reflection. After examining the material/information, as a critical thinking-student, you must determine whether it is significant, insignificant, or somewhere in the middle. For example, the various definitions and characteristics of play help to illustrate the level of interest in this area, as well as the fact that the initial definition by Huizinga has been modified by others. In addition, play, games, sports, and athletics are essential elements within the realm of human movement and are one of the cornerstones of the scholarly study of kinesiology and physical education. It is imperative that students of kinesiology and physical education have a basic understanding of these terms.

Definitions are critical to the study of specific academic areas or issues. If individuals are not “on the same page” relative to the meaning of various concepts, confusion is likely to result, and the

educational value and critical-thinking opportunities will likely have been squandered. In short, the level of academic rigor and the intellectual demands of the area that is under study—such as kinesiology and physical education—can significantly enhance the interested student’s intellectual, personal, and professional growth. In contrast, if the academic rigor and intellectual and physical demands reflect low expectations or weak/minimal content, the student has been cheated out of “elevating his or her game and going to the next level,” to use a sports metaphor. At the risk of moralizing, I believe that this latter situation is both untenable and unethical; do you agree? Accepting the rationale for presenting and understanding definitions that are integral to the study of sport and physical education, we will proceed with a few more essential definitions.

A *game* is a somewhat more organized effort at play, where the organized and playful elements of the activity become more evident. All of us have “played games,” so we have a good idea of what to expect when we do so. This structuring of the playful impulse leads to the following definition of a game:

a play activity which has explicit rules, specified or understood goals . . . , the element of opposition or contest, recognizable boundaries in time and sometimes in space, and a sequence of actions which is essentially “repeatable” every time the game is played.<sup>8</sup>

Arriving at a definition of sport based on play and games, however, is not without its difficulties. This is because when factors such as religion, social class, and historical period are considered, sport may not easily fit into a universally accepted definition. For example, throughout history, dependent upon one’s socioeconomic status, one person’s sport may have been another person’s work. Kings and noblemen would often hunt on their private reserves for the enjoyment of the sport, while their peasants worked at developing their skills as hunters in an effort to put food on the table and survive one more day.

Another example of differing viewpoints is how sport was conceived and practiced by the ancient Greeks. The Greeks strove to achieve *arete*, a unique Greek concept. Greek athletes, under the watchful eye of their coaches, underwent rigorous training striving to achieve individual (not team) excellence. What is even more striking is that the ancient Greeks did not encourage team competitions in everyday athletics, in the Olympic Games, or in any of the four great Crown Games: Olympia, Nemea, Isthmian, and Delphi. Rather, the emphasis was on individual excellence and performance to honor specific gods, city-states, and families. Tens of thousands of fans would travel to the great athletic festivals of antiquity to watch their favorite athletes compete. In this respect, little has changed from ancient times to modern times.

The ancient Romans, who eventually conquered the Greeks in 146 B.C., did not have the cultural belief in individual excellence to the same extent that the Greeks did—if at all. Roman sport, if we can call it that, took place in massive arenas (much bigger than anything ever built by the Greeks) that held up to 250,000 fans, who were entertained by watching bloody gladiatorial combats in which hundreds of fighters and animals would be slain in a single day. Another form of mass entertainment took place in the infamous Colosseum, where hapless “enemies of the state” were fed to lions, tigers, bears, and crocodiles or consigned to other horrific deaths in front of 50,000 Romans and others. The vast majority of Romans were bored with the Greek version of sport, even as most Greeks were repulsed by the Romans’ forms of entertainment.

For our purposes, a general definition of sport will include the following characteristics: continuity, division of roles, dynamic interaction with an audience, and a supporting establishment.<sup>9</sup> Continuity refers to the longevity of a game. For instance, American football has been played in its current form for over 100 years and as such meets the criteria of continuity. In philosopher Paul Weiss’s words, a game is an occurrence; a sport is

a pattern. The pattern of the game of football is one characteristic that defines it as a sport.

We have provided a definition of sport that will be used throughout this book. However, as a critical thinker, there are other definitions that you may want to consider. Betty Spears and Richard Swanson have fashioned the following definition:

Sport will be considered to be activities involving physical prowess and skill, competition, strategy and/or chance, and engaged in for the enjoyment and satisfaction of the participant and/or others. This definition includes both organized sport and sport for recreational purposes. It includes sport as entertainment and also encompasses professional sport.<sup>10</sup> According to the definition used by Spears and Swanson, would you agree that what the Romans enjoyed watching in the Colosseum and other venues qualifies as sport or mass executions?

Professor John Charles of The College of William and Mary observes that “contemporary analysts disagree as to whether the history of [American] college sport may be characterized more accurately as pluralistic or as hegemonic in nature.”<sup>11</sup> Professor George Sage, a distinguished sport sociologist, describes the differences between these two models:

In the pluralistic model, sports and physical recreational activities are seen primarily as innocent, voluntary social practices that let people release tension and enjoy themselves. . . . [In] the hegemonic perspective, sport is viewed as promoting and supporting the social inequality endemic to capitalism. This is seen in class, gender, and race social relations and the control, production, and distribution of economic, political, and cultural power in sport.<sup>12</sup>

It should be apparent that Sage’s explanation has sport serving either as a voluntary recreational and entertainment activity for college students or as a vehicle to promote capitalist ideas of social inequality and related topics of domination and social control.

Roberta J. Park, professor emeritus of the University of California and one of the premier historians in our field, suggests that, viewed broadly, sport is “a category term that includes, at the least, agonistic (characterized by the struggle of competition) athletics, vigorous recreational pursuits, and physical education, and intersects with aspects of medicine, biology, social reform, and a host of other topics.”<sup>13</sup> This broad definition of sport introduces elements of medicine, social reform, and biology.

A number of definitions of sport have evolved from the academic disciplines of history, sociology, archaeology, philosophy, physical education, kinesiology, and classical studies, to name but a few.<sup>14</sup> The study of sport is not limited to scholarship in physical education and kinesiology. Indeed, the history of sport and physical education and related fields (dance, exercise science, and so on) has a storied past. Sport and physical activity served as a central focus of ancient cultures long since buried under the sands of time. In modern times, individuals, groups, and nations continue the worship of athletes that started long ago. As a universal construct, the societal and cultural impact of sport and physical education has been nothing less than profound. The magnitude of sport in the twenty-first century may have eclipsed the importance of art, music, and religion as the icon of the masses. Or has it? At some point in the future, historians will weigh in on this issue. We turn our attention to the methods of history in general and to how sport history is “done” in particular.

## “DOING” HISTORY

Having defined sport, play, and games, we are ready for a definition of history that can guide us in our studies. *History* is the study of change, or the lack of change, over time. Therefore, sport history is the study of how sport has changed (or not) over time.<sup>15</sup> Looked at in this way, sport, play, and physical education as we know them are the latest rendition of all of the changes that have

occurred in the past. To study these activities as they have been practiced and viewed in the past is to understand what sport and play are now. This textbook can help kinesiology and physical education students understand our current attitudes and behaviors in sport and play by understanding how these attitudes and behaviors evolved. The following example of how sport has changed, and how we understand sport as a result of this change, will illustrate this point.

Michael Oriard in *Reading Football* tells the story of the development of the game of football and how our attitudes toward it came to be.<sup>16</sup> Students at American colleges played football for decades before the first intercollegiate game between Princeton and Rutgers in 1869. Football was played primarily because it was fun, but it also served the purpose of hazing new freshmen on campus and was a popular form of interclass rivalry. The game most students played, however, was more like soccer than what we now know as football. Only Harvard used rules that we would recognize today as something like modern football, which allows for running with the ball and tackling.

In 1876, Harvard and Yale, which played both games, agreed to use what they called the “Concessionary Rules,” rules similar to those governing the Harvard rugby style of football. In November 1876, representatives of Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and Columbia met to formalize these rules and to create the Intercollegiate Football Association. These new, formalized rules distinguished American football from its soccer and rugby counterparts, and these differences remain with us for the most part.

While this change that occurred in the 1870s tells us much about how football evolved from rugby and soccer, it also tells us much about being an American in the nineteenth century. Why did Americans change the rules of rugby to make a distinctly American game? Specifically, Oriard asks why Americans ran with the ball from the line of scrimmage instead of playing rugby as their

British ancestors did and why they began to use judges and referees:

The interesting question is, why these most basic alterations? The evolution of football’s rules has left a fascinating record that demands interpretation. Why Americans’ initial preference for the running and tackling rather than the kicking game? [And] why our insistence on amending the Rugby Union code once adopted? (p. 27)

Why, Oriard wonders, did these changes occur? Football changed from something like soccer or rugby to something like the contemporary American game. What can these changes tell us about Americans and American sport? Among other things, Oriard argues that referees were needed because Americans had a different attitude toward rules than did our British ancestors. British amateur athletes operated on a code of honor associated with the peculiarities of their elitist social class, a code that was as old as the games they played. Adherence among upper-class British boys to the code of honor was enforced by the captains of each team, and in so doing, both the social nature of the contest and the social status of the players were supported.

Americans, in contrast, had no such social understanding—Americans argue to this day that we are of the “middle class” and so have no code of honor to break. This difference in culture is reflected in our games, and Oriard argues that Americans wish to exploit the rules of the contest as much as they wish to adhere to them. The American attitude toward rules, then, is reflected in the change from the British games of soccer and rugby to the American game of football. Oriard concludes that

this attitude toward rules—a recognition of the letter but not the spirit, a dependence on rules in the absence of tradition yet also a celebration of the national genius for circumventing them—expressed an American democratic ethos, a dialectical sense of “fair play” [embracing both “sportsmanship” and

“gamesmanship”] that was very different from the aristocratic British version. (p. 30)

The point is not to describe the development of the modern American game of football, at least not yet. Rather, it is to show that sport history can be understood in a way that demonstrates how and why sport has changed. In so doing, we can understand a variety of changes that occurred: the evolution of football rules, the different attitudes that cultures and nations have toward sport, and the ways in which all of these changes are manifested in the American character.

### Interpretive Versus Descriptive History

The previous example of how sport has changed uses a basic assumption—that the changes that have occurred can be interpreted. Not all written histories are interpretive, however. The two basic types of traditional historical research are descriptive and interpretive.<sup>17</sup> *Descriptive history* describes objectively and in as much detail as possible, what happened in the past. Descriptive history tries to provide the who, what, when, and where of the past, and it tries to do so without injecting ideas, values, and judgments from the present onto the events of the past. Many early historical works are descriptive and are literally records of the past.

*Interpretive history* evaluates the evidence and attempts to explain the how and the why of events that happened in the past. For example, Oriard sought to discover how football changed from its rugby origins and why it changed in the manner it did. What makes interpretive history different from descriptive history is that an interpretive history introduces the narrator’s perspective into the interpretation, and the history is no longer “just the facts.” Using a particular perspective does not, however, make interpretive history less valuable. On the contrary, the use of some perspective allows much of the fullness and the richness of history to come forth and makes the historical explanation more open to discussion. Between descriptive and interpretive histories,

one is not better or worse than the other; they are merely different accounts of what occurred.

To write either descriptive or interpretive history, we must have access to different types of information, and two main sources are used in historical research. The first is a *primary source*, one that was part of the event being studied. Examples of primary sources include an eyewitness account of an event, a contemporary newspaper story, a picture or painting made at the time of the event, a video recording of the event, a record of the event kept by an observer, and an ancient inscription or account of the event. *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, epic poems by Homer, are frequently used as primary sources. Primary sources, then, are firsthand accounts of historical events. *Secondary sources* of historical research are written by those who did not participate in or observe the event being studied. Examples include some magazine articles, many history textbooks, and other accounts of the event, like Hollywood movies. In 2007, *300* premiered in cinemas around the world. The movie was a loose account of the Battle of Thermopylae. Some parts of the movie were historically accurate, but most of it was rubbish. *300* would not qualify as a primary or secondary source.

As stated earlier, this textbook is an attempt to understand how and why sport, play, and physical education have changed (or not changed) over time. As such, it is much more of an interpretive history than a descriptive one, although we use many who, what, when, and where descriptions of historical events. The perspectives used most often to explain how and why sport and physical education have changed involve the concepts of modernization, urbanization and industrialization, and, finally and most importantly for understanding the first half of this textbook, metaphysics. None of these perspectives provides a complete or perfect explanation for how and why behaviors and attitudes toward sport, play, and physical education changed as they did. Rather, the variety of these four perspectives, and the ways in which they are