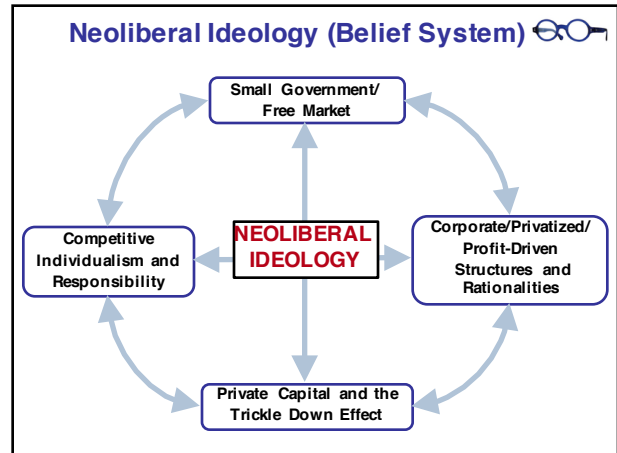


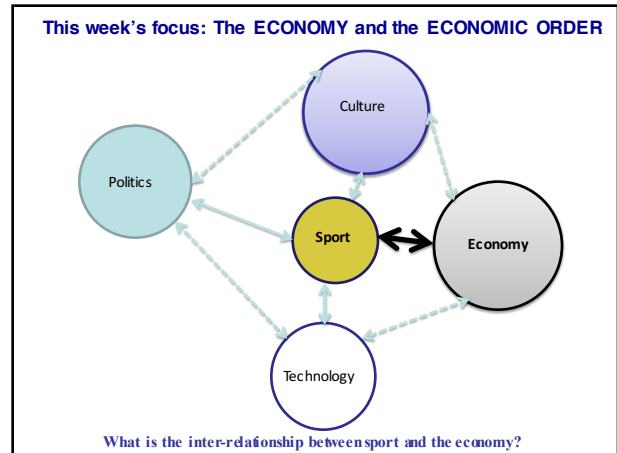
KNES 287 Sport and American Society: Module 1 Topic 1

“The Corporeal Economy of Sport”

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Physical Cultural Studies Program



NEOLIBERALISM is a **STATE-BASED POLITICAL IDEOLOGY** with very definite assumptions related to the **FUNCTION** and **ROLE** of the **ECONOMY**.



CORPOREAL Economy?



The **SELLING** and **BUYING** of **BODIES**.

Theme 1:

The Corporatization and Commercialization of Neoliberal Sport

Contemporary American society is dominated and defined by the production and accumulation of:

CAPITAL

(hence it is a CAPITALIST society)



Capitalist HEGEMONY



Despite a degree of resistance against it, MOST people do not question whether or not CAPITALISM is the right economic system for the U.S.:

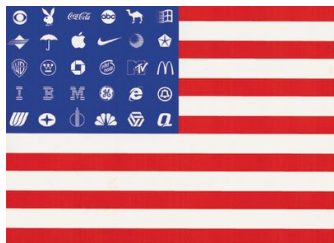


They view it as the NORMAL and NATURAL way of being.

Hence it is possible to refer to a CAPITALIST HEGEMONY operating in American society.

Commercial Corporation

Profit-driven institutions generating CAPITAL for private individuals (shareholders).



CORPORATIZATION OF AMERICAN LIFE

Corporatization is the process whereby social (of various kinds) institutions adopt the:



- institutional structure
- managerial hierarchies
- profit-driven focus

Of commercial corporations.

COMMERCIALIZATION the process whereby institutions or phenomenon are structured primarily for the purposes of generating PROFIT (capital).



Industrial Capitalism (1850-1950)



Capital generated from mass production and consumption of MATERIAL products

Rigid Regime of Accumulation

Cultural (Late) Capitalism (1950-present)



Capital increasingly generated from production and consumption of CULTURAL products

Flexible Regime of Accumulation

Cultural [Late] Capitalism (1950s onwards)

Health
Education
Services
Leisure/ Entertainment
Information/ Knowledge
Religion



Expanded/Flexible Regime of Accumulation:
CORPORATIZATION and COMMERCIALIZATION
of virtually all sectors of society/life.

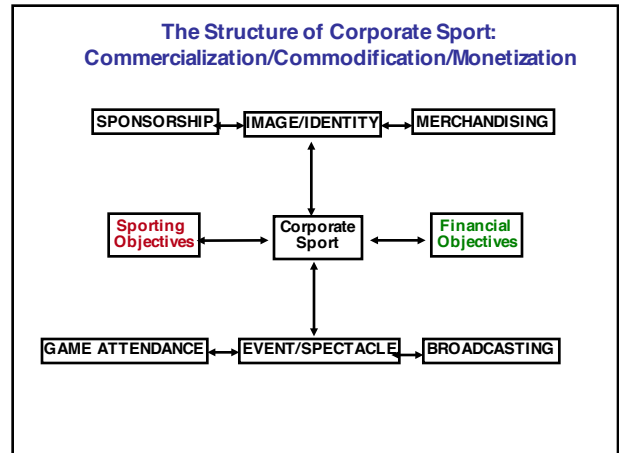


Cultural [Late] Capitalism:
The **CORPORATIZATION**
and **COMMERCIALIZATION**
of **SPORT**




Sport has been **INCORPORATED** into, and **MOBILIZED BY**, the **CORPORATE CAPITALIST** economy.

Sport has become an important target of **CAPITAL INVESTMENT** and source of anticipated **CAPITAL ACCUMULATION** (profit).



Elite sport has been effectively and efficiently re-organized in accordance with **capitalist logics of economic rationality and profit maximization**.

A particular version of highly commercialized, entertainment oriented, and media-driven sport has become the hegemonic structure of sport organizations around the world.



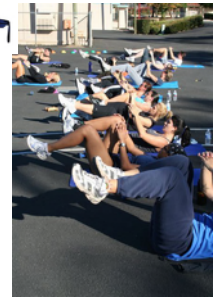
This has been referred to as:

- Elite/HighPerformance Sport**
- “Achievement sport”** (Maguire et al, 2002)
- “Prolympic sport”** (Donnelly, 1996)
- “Corporate sport”** (Donnelly, 1996)

Corporate Sport

A highly regulated, controlled, and predictable mass entertainment product, designed to generate maximum profit across numerous revenue streams.

The CORPOREAL/PERFORMATIVE Core of the SPORT ECONOMY



The Public Body
(Commodity 1)

The Private Body
(Commodity 2)

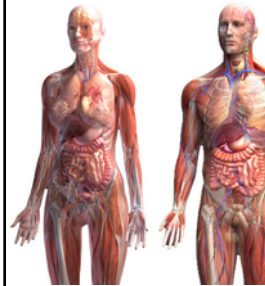
Active Body as Object

Active Body as Instrument

Theme 2:

A Corporeal Economy?

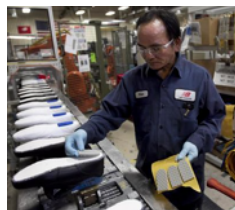
CORPOREAL: Relating to the BODY



The body is the primary **INSTRUMENT** and **OBJECT** of physical/sport culture.

The body is both **MADE** by, and **MAKES**, physical/sport culture.

Corporeality of Industrial Economy



Worker's body a secondary instrument in the manufacturing process

Corporeality of Sporting/Cultural Economy



(1)



(2)

Athlete's body produced by sport as a manufacturing process (1), and simultaneously a central component manufacturing the sport product (2)

When we consume CORPORATE SPORT (either through spectating or remote viewing), we are effectively consuming (or we expect to consume) HIGH-PERFORMANCE ATHLETIC BODIES.



They are the efficient MACHINES which individually and/or collectively MANUFACTURE and CONSTITUTE the PRIMARY PRODUCTS (sporting events or spectacles) of the SPORT INDUSTRY.

Sport Science

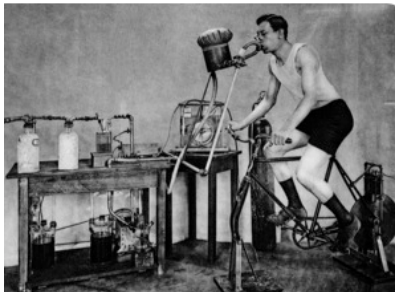
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Sporting Taylorism

F.W. Taylor's Time and Motion studies (1880s-1910s) were motivated by the desire to create ever **more efficient and economically productive** workers (scientific management of the workplace)



Harvard Fatigue Laboratory (1927-1947)



Advances in exercise physiology in many ways an extension of **TAYLORISM**.



Sport science is motivated by the desire to create ever **more efficient/successful, thereby and economically productive, athletes** (scientific management of sport performance)

MORTAL ENGINES

The Science of Performance and the Dehumanization of Sport



JOHN HOBERMAN

Sport Science treats the human body as a **MACHINE**—a “mortal engine”—whose performance can be **analysed and improved** according to **scientific principles**.

Source: Hoberman, J. (1992). *Mortal engines: The science of performance and the dehumanization of sport*. New York: The Free Press.

Analysing the Ronaldo “Machine”



See Video Clip 1

“Performance-Based” Sport Science



Elite/High-Performance/Corporate demands athletes continually strive for improved performances, for fear of losing the consuming audience.

Hence, considerable resources are poured into RESEARCHING and DEVELOPING new performance-related strategies, technologies, and behaviors.

These are designed to allow athletic bodies to train and perform more efficiently and effectively.

Industrial Manufacturing



Worker's body harnesses technology to manufacture product

Sporting Manufacturing



(1) Producing the High-Performance Body



(2) Producing the High-Performance Sport Product

Athlete's body harnesses technology to manufacture itself (1) and the end sport product (2)

Performance Analysis

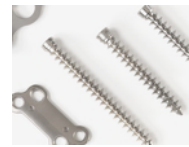


See Video Clip 2

Performance Technology



Medical Technology



Motivational Technology



“When you walk through those doors, you can’t be human any more. A human effort is not good enough, you have to become a beast, you must turn into a beast, a MACHINE...I am reborn, I am a MACHINE, I am no longer human, I am a MACHINE I am a relentless, unstoppable, and the gym is my battlefield.”



**Supplement/
Dietary
Technology**

**Sporting
Taylorism**


**Kinesio
Tape
Technology**




See Video Clip3 **The New Cole Field House**

COLE FIELD HOUSE
Terrapin Performance Center
Academy of Innovation and Entrepreneurship
Center for Sports Medicine,
Health and Human Performance

**“Where Tradition Meets Innovation”
Manufacturing Ever More Efficient Athletic Bodies**

The boundaries between the **NATURAL** athlete and **TECHNOLOGY** has been blurred. Today’s elite athletes are often extensions of, and/or manufactured by **TECHNOLOGY**. 

According to Miah (2003), they are “**CYBORG ATHLETES.**”



Source: Miah, A. (2003). Be very afraid: Cyborg athletes, transhuman ideals and posthumanity. *Journal of Evolution & Technology*, 13(2).

Cyborgs:
Blurring Boundaries Between Nature/Biology and Technology



CYBORG ATHLETES

The **BLURRING** of the **BOUNDARIES** between **"NATURAL" BODIES** and **"ARTIFICIAL" TECHNOLOGIES** in order to create ever more **PHYSICAL EFFICIENT** and **ECONOMICALLY PRODUCTIVE BODIES**.



Oxygen Tent



Reconstructive Surgery



Shark-Skin



EPO, or erythropoietin Doping

Cyborg Athletes: Technological Fusion



Cyborg Athletes: Technological Fusion

TRUSOX

THE TECHNOLOGY SPORTS SHOP NEWS CONTACT US



Cyborg Athletes: Technological Fusion



Industrial Manufacturing



Worker's body harnesses technology to manufacture product

Sporting Manufacturing



(1) Producing the High-Performance Body



(2) Producing the High-Performance Sport Product

Athlete's body harnesses technology to manufacture itself (1) and the end sport product (2)

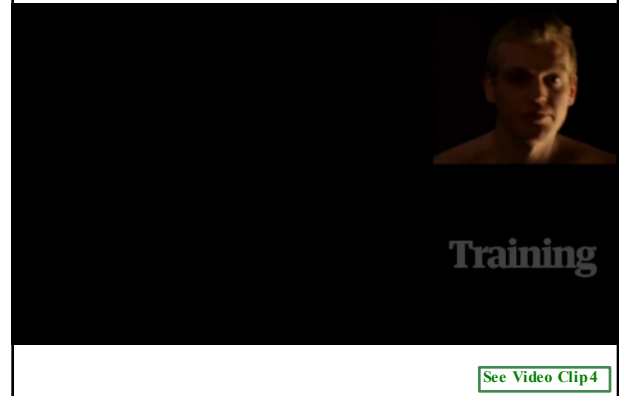
Theme 3:

The McDonaldization of Elite Sporting Bodies

The manufacturing of **successful** high-performance/corporate sport organizations and events, depends on the scientific manufacturing of high-performance and highly specialized athletic **BODIES/MACHINES**.



Manufacturing the Elite Sport Body



The Production of Activity/Sport Specific **BODIES**



The manufactured specialization of **HIGH-PERFORMANCE** athletic machines/bodies exists **WITHIN** as well as **BETWEEN** sports.



Max Weber's "Iron Cage" 



Max Weber

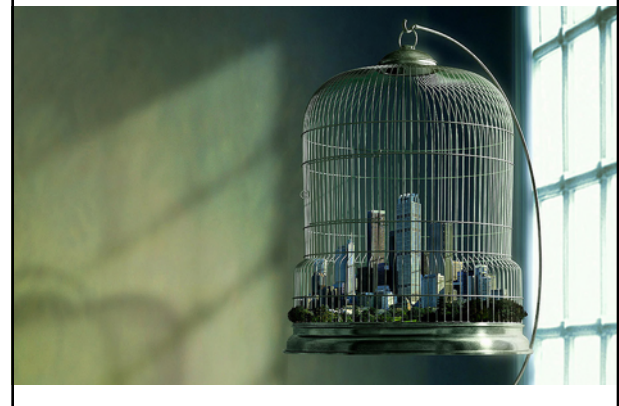


The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism

The German sociologist, Max Weber developed the concept of the **"iron cage"** to capture the notion of the increased **bureaucratization and rationalization** of human existence in **MODERN CAPITALIST SOCIETIES**.

According to Weber, the **"iron cage"** of capitalism traps individuals in **highly organized structured and rule-based (bureaucratized) and productivity and goal oriented (rationalized) forms of existence.**

Capitalism's "Iron Cage" of Rational Efficiency



The Weberian Understanding of McDonaldization

Influenced by Weber's theories of rationalized and bureaucratized productivity, the renowned University of Maryland sociologist, George Ritzer, developed the concept of "McDonaldization".



According to Ritzer:

"McDonaldization...is the process by which the principles of the fast-food restaurant are coming to dominate more and more sectors of American society as well as of the rest of the world".



Ritzer, G. (2004). *The McDonaldization of society* (Revised New Century Edition ed.). London: Sage.

The Core Components of McDonaldization



Increased Commercial Bureaucratization and Rationalization

1. Efficiency
2. Calculability
3. Predictability
4. Control

Ritzer, G. (2004). *The McDonaldization of society* (Revised New Century Edition ed.). London: Sage.

The McDonaldization of Society

Home Cooking

Tourism

Shopping



Higher Education

Entertainment

Health Care

Religion

McDonaldization I: Efficiency

"Efficiency means choosing the optimum means to a given end" (p. 43)

The streamlining of production processes, and the simplification of products and services.

Ritzer, G. (2004). *The McDonaldization of society* (Revised New Century Edition ed.). London: Sage.

The End of the Lateral Pass



Playing the "percentage game" and football EFFICIENCY.

McDonaldization II: Calculability

"Calculability...an emphasis on the quantitative aspects of products sold (portion, size, cost) and services offered (time it takes to get to the product offered)." (p. 13)

Products and services are evaluated according to objective (quantifiable) as opposed to subjective (personal preference/taste) measures.

Ritzer, G. (2004). *The McDonaldization of society* (Revised New Century Edition ed.). London: Sage.

Calculability and Football *Sabermetrics*

2011 TOTAL QBR LEADERS									
Rank	Name	Pass EPA	Rush EPA	Sack EPA	Pen. EPA	Total EPA	Action Plays	Clutch Weight Avg	Total QBR
1	Aaron Rodgers	103.6	9.8	-17.0	6.3	102.7	557	0.9	87.0
2	Drew Brees	95.5	0.8	-12.5	1.8	85.6	569	0.9	79.5
3	Tom Brady	103.7	0.9	-18.7	2.2	88.1	565	1.1	76.6
4	Tony Romo	91.7	-1.5	-16.0	-0.2	74.0	514	1.1	71.0
5	Matt Schaub	50.1	-0.7	-11.7	0.7	38.4	352	1.0	66.7
6	Ben Roethlisberger	70.6	1.2	-23.4	2.7	51.1	524	0.9	66.2
7	Matt Hasselbeck	53.4	-0.3	-14.5	4.6	43.2	473	0.9	64.0
8	Matt Ryan	58.0	4.3	-18.6	9.8	53.5	556	1.0	63.1
9	Eli Manning	81.0	-4.1	-22.6	4.9	59.2	544	1.1	62.3
10	Jay Cutler	41.5	-1.3	-12.8	2.9	30.3	404	0.9	59.5
11	Matt Moore	42.9	1.4	-20.9	4.4	27.8	321	1.0	59.1
12	Ryan Fitzpatrick	48.0	-5.7	-9.8	8.2	40.8	518	1.0	58.7
13	Michael Vick	35.9	7.7	-8.9	-0.6	34.1	421	1.0	58.1
14	Jason Campbell	23.9	0.0	-6.1	1.4	19.2	216	1.1	58.1
15	Cam Newton	56.5	17.7	-26.7	2.7	50.2	596	1.1	56.8
16	Philip Rivers	56.6	1.4	-20.2	4.0	41.7	551	1.0	55.9
17	Joe Flacco	49.1	-0.7	-20.2	8.5	36.7	546	0.9	55.3
18	Matthew Stafford	57.6	0.0	-18.8	-0.5	38.2	584	0.9	55.1
19	Carson Palmer	25.7	-3.3	-8.4	-0.5	13.5	231	0.8	55.1
20	Christian Ponder	18.1	8.9	-14.4	1.2	13.8	278	0.9	49.0

McDonaldization III : Predictability

“Predictability...the assurance that the products and services will be the same over time and in all locales” (p. 14)

Creation of institutionally uniform and standardized products and services.

Ritzer, G. (2004). *The McDonaldization of society* (Revised New Century Edition ed.). London: Sage.



Standardized and Predictable McNugget



Standardized and Predictable Linebacker?



Standardized and Predictable Cheeseburger



Standardized and Predictable Gymnast?

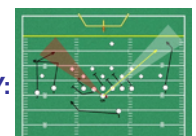
McDonaldization IV: Control

“Control...[by rules, regulations, procedures, and technology in an]...effort to reduce people’s behavior to a series of machine-like actions.” (p. 106)

The increased influence of rules, regulations, and non-human technologies over the experience of workers and consumers.

Ritzer, G. (2004). *The McDonaldization of society* (Revised New Century Edition ed.). London: Sage.

Playbook Football



Controlling football PRODUCTIVITY: Producing“machine-like” actions.

Theme 4:

The Corporeal Perils of Sporting McDonaldization

According to the McDonaldization theory, McDonaldized sport (sport as a rationally organized and efficient machine) can negatively effect the feelings of:

- PLEASURE
- FREEDOM
- CREATIVITY
- INDEPENDENCE



Which attracted many people to sport in the first place.

Within wider society, individuals lose much of their **freedom and autonomy**—the control over their lives—as their individuality becomes **bureaucratized and rationalized out of existence**. Their once **ENCHANTED** (relatively autonomous, free, and expressive) lives become a source of **DISENCHANTMENT** due to by their lack of control over them.

People become **DISENCHANTED** with their lives, because their existence is now **externally controlled by the rational predictability and productivity demanded by the “iron cage” of capitalism**.

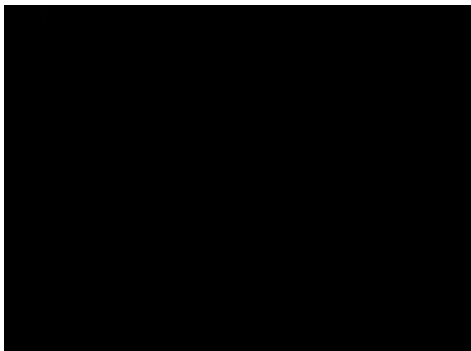


The rational productivity focus of capitalism, leads to the control of individuals by rationally productivist rules and regulations, and non-human technology

This leads to the:

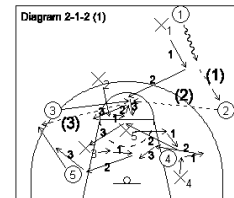
DEHUMANIZATION of the MODERN INDIVIDUAL

Modern “Dehumanizing” Times



See Video Clip5

DEHUMANIZED (externally controlled) and DISENCHANTED (lacking freedom) ATHLETES in the SPORTING MACHINE



Replaceable COGS in the MACHINERY of the SPORT INDUSTRY?

There are numerous other perils of SPORTING MCDONALDIZATION:

1. Overtraining/Abusing the Body



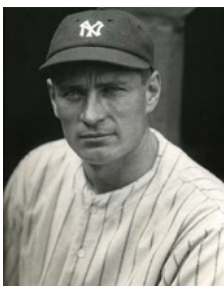
"On average, I run 100 to 120 miles a week. Naturally, that will have an impact; we're pushing our bodies to the absolute limit. The back and knees are most likely to have problems, and most athletes will find they become stiffer after years of 'running abuse'."

Mo Farah, London 2012 5,000 and 10,000 gold medalist, (2012, July 6). *The Guardian*.

The Finite Elite Sport Body

[See Video Clip6](#)

2. Playing/Training While Injured (Violence Against One's Own Body)



Wally Pip



Lou Gherig

Robert Griffin III 2013 Injuries

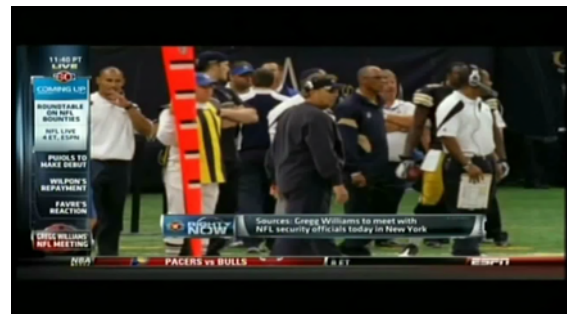
V Baltimore Ravens/Seattle Seahawks



3. Playing to Injure (Violence Against Other's Bodies)



New Orleans Saints Bountygate (2009-2011)



Bonuses paid for injuring players forcing them to leave games.

[See Video Clip7](#)

Violence Against Self and Other's Bodies



Source: ABC World News (2012, September 5). NFL Players Risk Death From Alzheimer's Disease, ALS. Retrieved from: <http://abcnews.go.com/Health/Wellness/nfl-players-risk-death-alzheimers-disease-als/story?id=17159360#.UEiOZULKmfR>

See Video Clip8

A Presidential Problem

Question: Sticking with the culture of violence, but on a much less dramatic scale: I'm wondering if you, as a fan, take less pleasure in watching football, knowing the impact that the game takes on its players.



Answer: I'm a big football fan, but I have to tell you if I had a son, I'd have to think long and hard before I let him play football. And I think that those of us who love the sport are going to have to wrestle with the fact that it will probably change gradually to try to reduce some of the violence. In some cases, that may make it a little bit less exciting, but it will be a whole lot better for the players, and those of us who are fans maybe won't have to examine our consciences quite as much.



Source: <http://www.newrepublic.com/article/112190/obama-interview-2013-sit-down-president#>

Friday Night Tykes: It's Not Just Elite Sport!

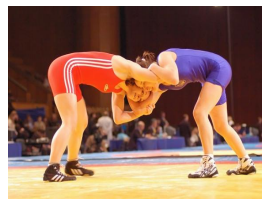


See Video Clip9

4. Extreme Body Modification/Control I: Enlarging the Athletic Body



5. Extreme Body Modification/Control II: Constricting the Athletic Body



6. Supplement/Pharmaceutical Abuse

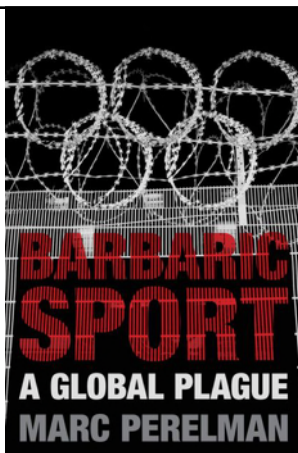


The Rationalization and Normalization of CORPOREAL ABUSE/SPORTING DEVIANCE



Source: Brewer, B. D. (2002). Commercialization in professional cycling 1950-2001: Institutional transformations and the rationalization of "doping". *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 19(3), 276-301.

“barbaric sport...the inhuman intensity of preparatory training...How ‘healthy’ really is a swimmer who has spent her entire youth doing lengths in a fifty-metre pool? What is the effect on health of lifting cast iron weights for years on end?”



Source Perelman, M. (2012). *Barbaric sport: A global plague* (p. 29). London: Verso.

How Healthy is High-Performance Sport?

It is difficult to ascertain, as there is definitely conflicting evidence (for example, some have argued that NFL players life expectancy is considerably lower than the general population, others have argued the complete opposite).



Source: Korth, J. (2006, January 29). A huge problem: Strength isn't enough: NFL linemen have to be so big, their health may be at risk, *The Tampa Bay Times*.

How Healthy is High-Performance Sport?

However, the most scientifically-grounded study suggests the following:

- Regular moderate physical activity led to increased life expectancy (between 0.4 to 6.9 years)
- Aerobic endurance athletes had greater life expectancies
- The results were inconclusive for “power sports” and “team sports”

Source: Reimers, C. D., Knapp, G., & Reimers, A. K. (2012). Does Physical Activity Increase Life Expectancy? A Review of the Literature. *Journal of Aging Research*.



“Great sport begins at a point where it has ceased to be healthy”

Bertolt Brecht (German playwright, 1898-1956)

The **BENEFITS** of Elite [McDonaldized] Sport and Bodies

- Brings **employment** and **financial reward** to athletes
- Generates **capital** for sport franchise owners/event organizers
- Represents an important **focus** and **source of identity** for athletes
- Provides **enjoyment/enchantment** for athletes and **spectators**



The **COSTS** of Elite [McDonaldized] Sport and Bodies

- Can lead to significant **short and long term health problems**
- Focus on sport can lead to **neglect of other aspects**, important for post-sport life
- Can involve **lack of control and independence**
- Can lead to the **dehumanization and disenchantment** of athletes



The McDonaldized Corporeal Sport Economy:

Positive or **Negative**?

In need of **reform** or **not**?

A hegemonic institution unlikely to be altered?

See course website for related required readings, video clips, key concepts, thematic review questions, and essay question.