

SPORT IN THE GLOBAL SOCIETY: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

The Visual in Sport

Edited by
Mike Huggins and Mike O'Mahony



The Visual in Sport

This comprehensive, novel and exciting interdisciplinary collection brings together leading international authorities from the history of sport, social history, art history, film history, design history, cultural studies and related fields to explore the ways in which visual culture has shaped, and continues to impact upon, our understanding of sport as an integral element within popular culture. Visual representations of sport have previously been little examined and under-exploited by historians, with little focused and rigorous scrutiny of these vital historical documents. This study seeks to redress this balance by engaging with a wide variety of cultural products, ranging from sports stadia and monuments in the public arena, to paintings, prints, photographs, posters, stamps, design artefacts, films and political cartoons. By examining the contexts of both the production and reception of this historical evidence, and highlighting the multiple meanings and social significance of this body of work, the collection provides original, powerful and stimulating insights into the ways in which visual material assists our knowledge and understanding of sport.

This collection will facilitate researchers, publishers and others with an interest in sport to move beyond traditional text-based scholarship and appreciate the powerful imagery of sport in new ways.

This book was previously published as a special issue of *the International Journal of the History of Sport*.

Mike Huggins is Professor Emeritus of Cultural History at the Ambleside Campus of the University of Cumbria. He has published many books, chapters and articles on the history of sport and leisure in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Mike O'Mahony is Senior Lecturer in Art History at the University of Bristol. His recent research has focused on representations of sport and physical culture in official and unofficial Soviet art, and he is now exploring the representation of sport and the Olympic Games in visual culture.

This thought-provoking collection seeks to place visual culture at the heart of new agendas for the history of sport. It fulfils that ambition admirably. Wide-ranging in its chronological and geographical sweep, embracing a rich variety of cultural forms from fine art to postage stamps and stadium architecture, it is a genuinely inter-disciplinary work that will form the starting point for much new thinking about sport and the visual.

Professor Dave Russell, Leeds Metropolitan University

Mike Huggins and Mike O'Mahony have recruited an all-star team of scholars to explore how modern cultures see sport. These novel essays range from meditations on statuary dedicated to athletes to the analysis of sport in popular cartoons to interpretations of sporting depictions in fine art—and beyond. This volume tackles the visual meaning of sports in high-brow, middle-brow, and low-brow art from a global perspective. This refreshing contribution provides new methodologies and new subjects for readers interested in understanding the power of sport in modern history. This is a collection that will change the way that many of us see sport.

Professor Mark Dyreson, Penn State University

This terrific volume provides even further proof of the explosion of sports studies in recent years. Sport is unimaginable without the visual, and the authors here beautifully and intelligently show us why.

Professor Robert Edelman, University of California, San Diego, two-time winner of the North American Society of Sports Historians annual book awards

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Edited by

Mike Huggins and Mike O'Mahony

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The publisher would like to make readers aware that the chapters in this book are referred to as articles as they had been in the special issue. The publisher accepts responsibility for any inconsistencies that may have arisen in the course of preparing this volume for print.

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SERIES EDITORS' FOREWORD

On January 1, 2010 *Sport in the Global Society*, created by Professor J.A. Mangan in 1997, was divided into two parts: *Historical Perspectives* and *Contemporary Perspectives*. These new categories involve predominant rather than exclusive emphases. The past is part of the present and the present is part of the past. The Editors of *Historical Perspectives* are Mark Dyreson and Thierry Terret.

The reasons for the division are straightforward. SGS has expanded rapidly since its creation with over one hundred publications in some twelve years. Its editorial teams will now benefit from sectional specialist interests and expertise. *Historical Perspectives* draws on IJHS monograph reviews, themed collections and conference/workshop collections. It is, of course, international in content.

Historical Perspectives continues the tradition established by the original incarnation of *Sport in the Global Society* by promoting the academic study of one of the most significant and dynamic forces in shaping the historical landscapes of human cultures. Sport spans the contemporary globe. It captivates vast audiences. It defines, alters, and reinforces identities for individuals, communities, nations, empires, and the world. Sport organizes memories and perceptions, arouses passions and tensions, and reveals harmonies and cleavages. It builds and blurs social boundaries, animating discourses about class, gender, race, and ethnicity. Sport opens new vistas on the history of human cultures, intersecting with politics and economics, ideologies and theologies. It reveals aesthetic tastes and energizes consumer markets.

By the end of the twentieth century a critical mass of scholars recognized the importance of sport in their analyses of human experiences and *Sport in the Global Society* emerged to provide an international outlet for the world's leading investigators of the subject. As Professor Mangan contended in the original series foreword: "The story of modern sport is the story of the modern world—in microcosm; a modern global tapestry permanently being woven. Furthermore, nationalist and imperialist, philosopher and politician, radical and conservative have all sought in sport a manifestation of national identity, status and superiority. Finally for countless millions sport is the personal pursuit of ambition, assertion, well-being and enjoyment."

Sport in the Global Society: Historical Perspectives continues the project, building on previous work in the series and excavating new terrain. It remains a consistent and coherent response to the attention the academic community demands for the serious study of sport.

Mark Dyreson
Thierry Terret

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Holding up More than Half the Sky

Dong Jinxia

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Preface: New Agendas and New Questions for the History of Sport

J.A. Mangan

Emeritus Professor, University of Strathclyde, UK

Preamble

The hunger of the eye is not to be despised, and they are to be pitied who have [not] starvation.¹

Dressed metaphorically in academic ‘Lincoln green’, let me commit an act of well-intentioned but admiring larceny! To slightly adapt the words of Huggins and O’Mahony, ‘The Visual in Sport’ shines a light on the meanings of sport as sharp as archives or theories.

These two academics are Argonauts of innovative enquiry, voyaging over a relatively new sub-disciplinary sea. One clear attraction of this collection is that their considerations of the visual in sport add confident substance to earlier hesitant suggestions. Another attraction is their assured self-belief in a navigation that transcends past uncertain explanations. There is a certainty of conviction in the early progress of these bold academic adventurers across still uncharted waters. And a still further attraction, to move from metaphor to metaphor, is that ‘The Visual in Sport’ resembles an eager chrysalis broken free of its restrictive carapace, stretching new-grown wings.

To employ yet another different but complimentary metaphor, with a sharp, bright, fresh blade their plough has broken new ground and made deep furrows. In time there will be a rich harvest from the tilled soil.

I was delighted to offer Huggins and O’Mahony the opportunity of publication via the *International Journal of the History of Sport* Conference Workshop global network scheme I initiated for just this purpose. I am delighted to see the publication in print. Congratulations are in order.

Prelude

In *Encounters: Essays on Literature and the Visual Arts*, John Dixon Hunt considers encounters between literature and art, bleakly. He argues that modern literary criticism and formal discussion of the visual arts have proceeded along separate paths and there often appears little scope for *rapprochement*.² Here, I suggest, we can

add to the acreage covered forensically by Huggins and O'Mahony. Hunt adds enticingly that the joint encounters between literature and the visual in the exploration of parallels and continuities (and discontinuities) of ideals, may still yield important insights.³ He adds sound caveats, in particular warning against the strange phenomenon of visual illiteracy and asserting brutally that 'the student of words rarely knows how to look at images; worse still he seldom acknowledges this blindness'.⁴ Thus instruction is needed in the use of visual imagery in attempts to enlarge 'historical sensibility'.⁵ Huggins and O'Mahony have lent a helping hand here.

Historians of sport, now from the multiplicity of sub-disciplines and disciplines involved, can metaphorically roll up their sleeves. There are exiting challenges ahead. A final compliment to Huggins and O'Mahony, via my appreciative and shifting kaleidoscope of metaphoric images: they have thrown down a challenging first gauntlet.

Notes

1. Joseph Addison, *The Spectator*, quoted in Tripp, *The International Thesaurus of Quotations*, 411.
2. Hunt, 'Preface'.
3. Ibid., 8.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.

References

- Hunt, John Dixon Hunt. 'Preface', in *Encounters: Essays on Literature and the Visual Arts*, ed. John Dixon Hunt. London: Studio Vista, 1971.
- Tripp, Rhoda Thomas, comp. *The International Thesaurus of Quotations*. New York: Thomas Cronell, 1970.

Prologue: Extending Study of the Visual in the History of Sport

Mike Huggins^a and Mike O'Mahony^b

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This paper highlights the value of images and materiality associated with sport in the past, and explores the range of sociocultural practices associated with them. It provides a critique of the neglect of such sources by many historians and notes that interest is now substantially growing in visuality and visual material. It emphasises the huge breadth and depth of sports-related evidence that can now be accessed, from stamps to stadiums and from posters to sports paraphernalia. It then examines the multiplicity of methodologies that can potentially be used to exploit the visual, its sites of production and sites of reception and seeing.

This stimulating collection of essays seeks to integrate an analysis of sport within a broad range of visual culture activities and to highlight the value of such images and materiality as key texts that cast further light on a broad range of sociopolitical and sociocultural practices. Indeed, as Stephen Hardy et al. have recently reminded us, such analysis 'shines a light on the meaning of sport as bright as that emanating from archives and deep theory'.¹ Each essay here examines different aspects of the visual within the representation of sport and its histories, and demonstrates how visual meanings are always contextual. Together they seek radically to extend existing knowledge of the history of sport, by setting new agendas and posing new questions.

Over the last two centuries sport has become central to global culture. Its images are potent, popular and pervasive, yet its meanings are multiple, complex and often conflicting. While rigorous analytical explorations of the intersections between visual culture and the history of sport are still relatively new, they are now beginning to attract scholarly interest. Such interest partially reflects the global move to a world increasingly saturated by images, and resultant changes in wider scholarship. 'The pictorial turn', as W.J.T. Mitchell coined it in 1992, or 'the visual turn' as it is now more commonly termed, first began to attract widespread attention in the 1980s, and grew in strength thereafter with the growth of visual studies courses in universities.² New critical and theoretical underpinning has both enhanced and facilitated further investigation into visual culture, visual technologies, scopic regimes, the gaze, ocular-centrism and specularity.

It is highly surprising therefore that, given the centrality of the visual to all forms of modern and early modern sport, historians of sport have been slow to enter this field, and contributions are still few. Only a minority of scholars have explored the links between sport, history and culture, exploiting some of the new methodologies and engaging with a wider range of sources, voices and perspectives. For many, this neglect of visual sources may be a consequence of a lack of the time and opportunity to develop further skills in 'visual literacy'.

This limited attention devoted to sport and the visual within the sub-discipline of sport history, and a concomitant neglect of representations of sport within visual culture studies, provided the initial impetus for this edited collection. It should, however, also be of relevance to a wider audience, hopefully helping researchers, students and others with an interest in sport to move beyond traditional text-based scholarship and engage with the many and powerful images of sport in new ways.

What Are the Collection's Aims?

Clearly sport and the visual is a potentially substantial field in real need of further development. By addressing this issue directly, the editors had four aims in mind.

- First, to promote research and publications that would significantly encourage and further advance scholarship addressing sport and visuality.
- Second, to extend awareness of, and direct attention towards, the very extensive and important range of visual sources ripe for exploitation, including painting; sculpture; photography; cinema; and mass culture. The collection also addresses some of the strategic means by which this material can be deployed, while simultaneously pointing out some of the potential pitfalls.
- Third, to be inclusive rather than exclusive, drawing upon the expertise of scholars from sport history, social history, art history, film history and visual culture studies. This interdisciplinary and inter-theoretical approach takes account of recent developments, drawing on a wider range of methodologies and approaches than merely those of sport history. We hope it generates excitement and controversy, as well as helping to forge new questions to stimulate the field.
- Finally, and perhaps most importantly, such a collection is intended to encourage both academic researchers and students from a number of disciplines with interests in sport to engage with visual resources alongside texts and oral testimony. We contend that by analysing the cultural context, multiple meanings and social influences of visual culture, critically examining the traditional ways of using such material and grappling with alternative models, sport history as a discipline can be considerably enhanced.

The initial stimulus for this project was a well-attended international conference organised by the two editors at the University of Bristol in June 2009. Of the two organisers, one had research interests in the history of leisure and sport, and the other in art history. Accordingly, notices were circulated across a wide range of disciplines. Following the conference, contributions were solicited for a collection of papers on sport and the visual. The editors then adopted the relatively unusual approach of holding a follow-up conference-workshop solely for contributors, held at White Hart Lane, the Premier League football ground in London. The event was

supported by the publishers Routledge and by St Thomas More Roman Catholic School, a specialist sports college. A notable aspect of the school's involvement in the project was the production of a series of artworks by the pupils, including paintings, drawings and sculptures, as well as the display of a number of posters specially produced for the event. The extremely high standard of the works produced suggests just how stimulating the link between sport and the visual can prove to be. The close involvement of the school and the engagement with, and celebration of, the pupils' work at the conference also shows the ways that academic research can both impact upon, and engage in dialogue with, the wider community.

The workshop allowed contributors to be more deeply involved in the planning process than is normally the case, and provided a critical environment which enhanced the development of the philosophy and approach taken by the collection as a whole. First drafts of written papers were circulated in the month before the workshop for pre-reading and evaluation, and presentations were relatively brief, focusing on sources and methodology. There was time for follow-up discussion of papers and a more critical edge to peer review, which was a central part of the process. Those colleagues unable to attend also circulated papers and comments, while those present during the discussions shared ideas, methods and approaches, and helped deepen each other's understandings. As a result the workshop was an excellent collegiate opportunity to modify and redraft work, so as to improve the quality of the papers.

The collection has a number of strengths. It is interdisciplinary by design, consciously drawing on scholars from a wide diversity of research disciplines including sport history, social history, art history, film history, design history, visual culture studies and related fields. This much enhances the value of the collection, since many of the essays offer new ideas, understandings and alternative theorising to traditional sport history, using a combination of illuminative case studies and methodological essays, in which critical analysis is well embedded. The chronological range encompasses contemporary examples of sport as well as material from the last two centuries and medieval and renaissance Italy. It includes well-known and proven experts as well as some up-and-coming authors. The coverage, though primarily anglophone, avoids monoculturalism by adopting a substantial element of global coverage, drawing on authors from Europe, the United States and Australia.

Previous Neglect of Visual Evidence

It was only a few years ago that historians, most especially those of the modern and early modern period, still clung rigidly to text, too often treating visual images with reluctance or even condescension. As Australian sport historian Richard Cashman has pointed out, most scholars used visual sources only to enhance and add to written monographs.³ Even today sport historians who use visual materials for other than mere illustration are still very much in a minority. Works on the sporting image have tended to lack historical perspective, have generally been restricted to one type of image and concentrated on one sport or sporting event. They have also too frequently overlooked the constructed nature of such representations and the ways in which they both draw upon, and operate within, wider modes and conventions of visual representation. Conversely, in disciplines that focus predominantly on the visual, sport has often been regarded as of secondary interest. With the possible

exception of canonical works such as Leni Riefenstahl's 1936 film *Olympia*, the visual representation of sport has remained firmly on the periphery of visual culture studies.

Increasingly, however, there has been a greater recognition of the centrality of the visual for a deep understanding of sport. Indeed, sport historian Douglas Booth has argued that 'an understanding of sport, which is inextricably tied to corporeality and movement, would be nigh impossible without the testimony of images that appear in numerous media such as paintings, lithographs, posters, coins and medals, ceramic arts, stone and metal sculptures, photographs and films'. Booth has been extremely critical of the way that historians of sport have used visual material. He argues that in general historians of the reconstructionist, empirical type, when looking at film, for example, see 'little of evidential quality', though they acknowledge the power of the medium for connecting events with people and its role in propaganda.⁴ Further, where visual media have been deployed evidentially, there has too often been inadequate recognition that these products are far from neutral reflections of an uncontested reality. Rather such evidence needs to be critically analysed, deconstructed and contextualised as part of a diverse range of cultural practices, the sporting and visual as well as the more broadly social. Further, consideration also needs to be given to the unstable status of such artefacts as evidence, particularly with regard to their reception and interpretation among disparate social and political groups. Photographs, for example, despite the mechanical process of their production, need to be seen as highly mediated forms of visual representation, a point made clearly by Douglas Brown in his analysis of early Canadian mountaineering photographs.⁵ Far from simply reproducing what is seen by the photographer after shaping and selecting the shot (and even later retouching or digitally modifying), they also constitute extensions of what he or she desired to feel and see, and may simultaneously be read by the viewer in a variety of ways that challenge, even undermine, the intentionality of the producer.

The nature of academically generated knowledge, and the way the sporting past is represented, is contingent on the nature of the sources used and the forms deployed to represent that knowledge. The form and consequent *textuality* of visual sources offers different challenges to that of written text, and our response to them. For example, visual materials may change naturally or be altered artificially over time. Paintings, drawings and photographs, for example, can fade, or (like text) be cropped and edited. Collections of images can be broken up, decontextualising the original significance of a given body of work, and reassembled to suggest alternative significatory processes. In historical terms too, images can/perform different functions and may be analysed and interpreted in diverse ways at different historical moments. Major technological innovations, ranging from the development of image printing techniques in the early modern period through the rise of photography in the nineteenth century to the television and Internet explosions of the twentieth century, have both expanded the sheer volume of visual material available as well as the means by which such material is publicly accessed.

Further, the intellectual shifts in the ways that society has both engaged with and problematised such products of visual culture inevitably pose challenges for the historian of sporting culture. Here the power dynamics and relationships of gender, class, ethnicity and nationalism act on such material objects in complex ways.

Growing Interest in the Visual

Both within mainstream sport history literature and in the wider field of cultural studies, publications now increasingly employ sport's visual forms to explore its potential meanings. The movement is gaining recognition, gathering momentum and garnering research projects. For example, a cultural historian of boxing, Kasia Boddy, has argued that the move to visual culture 'capitalizes on, or interrogates, the symbolic resonance of specific individuals, objects and events'.⁶ In her work she has analysed over 150 posters, film advertisements, postcards, paintings and other visual sources to demonstrate boxing's cultural diffusion and popular appeal. The historian of sport Tony Mangan, a pioneer in the use of visual sporting symbolism in the early 1980s, more recently used Nazi public sculpture to demonstrate how masculine Aryan bodies were co-opted in support of particular eugenic ideologies.⁷ Donna Landry's work on the racing thoroughbred and English culture draws heavily on paintings such as Stubbs's portrayal of Lord Rockingham's horse Whistlejacket, while Michael Flannery and Richard Leech examine fifteenth-century French illuminated manuscripts in their analysis of the origins of golf.⁸ The sports film too, while long cherished and despised alike by sports fans, has increasingly entered the academic fold. Here early publications, such as Ronald Bergan's *Sports in the Movies* (1982), have been superseded by more nuanced and theoretically grounded studies such as Emma Poulton and Martin Roderick's recent volume of essays published under the title *Sport in Films* (2008).⁹ The representation of sport on television has also come under scrutiny in works such as Gary Wannell's study of the prehistory of television sport and the problems of reconstruction.¹⁰

Work with a more specifically art-historical focus has been appearing for some time, though at sporadic intervals. For example, Mary Ann Wingfield's 1988 *Sport and the Artist*, followed nearly a decade later by Peter Kühnst's *Sports: A Cultural History in the Mirror of Art* (1996), both attempted to present a broad survey of representations of sport within the fine arts. While these volumes are richly illustrated, their ambitious chronological coverage inevitably limited the scope for extended analysis of the diverse ways in which such representations emerged and operated within more specific cultural contexts.¹¹ British sporting art has gained extensive coverage among art historians, not least as a consequence of the popularity of artists such as Sir Edwin Landseer and George Stubbs, yet few of these studies have extended beyond the conventional art-historical agendas to draw upon the work of sport historians. More ambitious and engaging work has been produced by art historians examining representations of boxing, mostly as a consequence of the work of American artists such as Thomas Eakins and George Bellows. Here, in particular, both Michael Hatt and Martin Berger have analysed concepts of masculinity and male spectatorship in boxing, and pose new and vital questions with wide pertinence to sport historians.¹²

Within sport history there is growing attention to visual sources at conferences, though it is still rare for such papers to exceed ten per cent of presentations. But there are straws in the wind. In 2007 the European Committee for Sport History organised a congress at Lorient in France on the subject of *L'Art et Le Sport*, at which over 60 papers were represented.¹³ Similarly a conference jointly organised by the *Archives nationale du monde du travail* and the *Centre d'histoire de Sciences Po*, held in Roubaix in 2008, brought over 20 European scholars to address the subject *L'Image de Sport: archives, histoire, droit*. Among key participants at that event were

the French scholars Michel Brousse, Patrick Clastres and Paul Dietschy, all of whom contributed papers at the Bristol conference in 2009. Scholars in Germany, too, have recently been active in engaging with the visual representation of sport, particularly with regard to developments in the Soviet Union. For example, a specialist research group set up to study the social and cultural history of sport in the Soviet Union, headed by Nikolaus Katzer at Helmut Schmidt University in Hamburg, recently published a collected volume with contributions examining sport paintings, photographs, sculpture and architecture.¹⁴ Some of this work draws upon and extends Mike O'Mahony's 2006 analysis of the importance of sport as a subject for Soviet artists in *Sport in the USSR*.¹⁵ At the 2010 NASSH conference there was also a specific strand dedicated to sport and the visual that included papers on funeral processions, Andy Warhol and American painting.¹⁶ Papers on race and embodiment also utilised visual material effectively. Increasingly, scholars have called for a 'broadening of horizons' to embrace the visual more fully, and opportunities to establish international networks to bring together scholars working within sport history with those from other fields, including visual culture studies, are now beginning to emerge.¹⁷

Source Availability

Whether scholars are interested primarily in the historical or cultural aspects of sport, relatively few have embraced the sheer depth and breadth of available visual sources. In Britain alone there is a huge amount of visual material buried, and often not separately catalogued, in the files of the National Archives at Kew and in local and county archives. This ranges from promotional posters for sports organisations to collections of photographs. But there are also good opportunities for potential research projects in more specialist collections. Visual histories of sporting architecture and design can be pursued in the Design History archives at Brighton University; there are good photographic representations of sport in the *Daily Herald* Collection at the National Media Museum archive in Bradford; a good example of very early sports films can be found in the Mitchell and Kenyon collection at the British Film Institute in London; there are a number of useful regional film archives such as the North-West Film Archive in Manchester; and sporting cartoons could be explored at the British Cartoon Archive at the University of Kent.

Within and beyond Britain, sports museums offer perhaps even more fruitful opportunities, though historians seem rarely to tap the resource riches that such museums contain.¹⁸ For example, in an earlier call for sport historians to make use of artefacts of sport and extend their methodology Wray Vamplew pointed out that historians of sport have a symbiotic relationship with sport museums but that for most, museums' roles have often been merely to provide and assess illustrative material.¹⁹ The last 30 years or so have witnessed the growth and expansion of sport museums and sport halls of fame throughout the world. While these institutions doubtless reflect shifting trends in tourism and the more diverse and specialist demands of an ever-shifting museum-going public, they also highlight the ways in which the material culture of sport has acquired a greater prominence within the public domain. Such venues have thus become more important for sport historians as they increasingly provide a focus for the acquisition and display of much visual material related to sport. While museology and reception studies have long been a staple of visual culture studies, they are only beginning to be embraced in the field of

sport history. Yet, as Sharon Macdonald has pointed out, the way that museum collections are broken up for exhibition, and the acquisition and display choices forced upon museum curators will inevitably impact upon how specific items and the collection in general are viewed, gazed at and received.²⁰ Museum studies theorists, by virtue of the educational functions of museums, have paid more attention to the vexed question of audience reception, recognising the barriers to access related to economic, cultural, ethnic and cultural status and cultural capital, and increasingly using sociological and psychological constructions to break down the 'general public' into a myriad of variously defined 'audiences', 'potential audiences', 'learners' and 'participants'.²¹

In Europe, the culture of collecting emphasises the value of sport history heritage, and the material found in sports museums is often extremely wide. One way of outlining this breadth and its potential value to sport historians is to begin to classify and analyse the types of materials held and catalogued in sport museum collections. In general, sport museums contain relatively few examples of what is frequently, though not unproblematically, termed 'high art': namely, paintings, sculptures and other forms of decorative art, not least as such works have traditionally been collected by, and exhibited within, museums of art. There are, of course, notable exceptions here. For example, the Olympic Museum in Lausanne holds a significant number of paintings, sculptures and decorative works, many originally produced for the Olympic Art competitions held between 1912 and 1948, or donated as gifts to the International Olympic Committee by host nations of the games. In other collections, portraits of sportsmen and women tend to constitute the main type of work executed in these media. Several of the authors in this collection engage in various ways with such artefacts. Within the field of art history, the relatively flourishing but low status sub-field of sporting art has tended to focus more on the patron-dominated topics of racing, hunting and other 'gentry' sports. In recent years, however, the agenda has widened, as illustrated earlier.

Film and video frequently constitutes a major category in the holdings of sport museums. These include fictional film, newsreels, documentaries and cartoons/animation. Film helps summon up the spirit of a past age through surface and space, and sporting films and television have been of interest in the USA for some time, as the regular reviews in the *Journal of Sport History* indicate. Sport has been widely used in fictional films and documentaries as a metaphor for social life and culture. Among historians of sport, it is perhaps film that has received the most sustained attention of all visual sources in recent years, with several monographs exploring various aspects of American sports, from Dan Streibel's work on the way early boxing films impacted on the landscape of American culture and the complex fascinations they engendered, or Ron Briley et al.'s work on film and sporting celebrity, to growing work on the impact of newsreels on sport. Recent studies of newsreels in England, Ireland and North America have shown how this widely disseminated form of visual culture had a very substantial impact, especially between the two world wars, through the way it addressed notions of class, gender, politics, region and identity.²²

Frequently, the largest collection of images held within sport museums are constituted by photographs, postcards, negatives and slides. Certainly sports photographs are now beginning to be exploited, deconstructed and analysed in a variety of ways. Photography has long played a key role in representing sport and its participants, providing factual photo-finish evidence, memorialising sporting acts or,

from Eadweard Muybridge onwards, scientifically analysing movement. But as we know only too well, the seeming realism and unambiguous surface of such cultural artefacts can be deceptive, since they can be read in many different ways. A recent paper by John Bale uses visual anthropology to contextualise particular sporting cultural photographs taken in Africa, to deconstruct their spatial aspects and interpret their incorporation in a variety of European discourses, thus providing a clear example of photography's ambiguities.²³ Walter Benjamin described postcards as life's ephemera or detritus, yet like photographs they too can play a very important part in constructing and reconstructing the past. Picture postcards, the social networking tool of the Edwardian era, offer a visual discourse on power and sporting status and likewise have ambiguous, multiple meanings, but as yet have been little studied.

Another important category within sport museum collections is that of posters, advertisements and illustrated books, materials now of increasing research interest, as shown by Margaret Timmers's recent publication on Olympic posters, which shows how mainstream artists and designers such as David Hockney or Andy Warhol have used competition and competitors as metaphors for the spirit of human endeavour.²⁴ Sport posters, with their eye-catching imagery and popular appeal, have been widely exploited as a communication medium and can capture the distinctive characteristics of an event.

On a smaller scale, the humble stamp also has a significant role to play in the visual representation of sport, as the various examples at the British Postal Museum & Archive show. In Britain, early examples included stamps issued in July 1948 to commemorate the Olympic Games in London, and in 1958 in conjunction with the Sixth British Empire and Commonwealth Games held in Cardiff. The Royal Mail also produced a hugely popular set of stamps to mark England's hosting of the World Cup in 1966. Following England's victory, one of the existing designs was modified to include the celebratory words 'England Winners'. Four years later, prior to the 1970 World Cup, the Royal Mail produced special designs in case England won again. The stamps were never to be released.

Other forms of graphic art, ranging from diplomas for victors and signs and typefaces specially designed for sports events to personalised bookplates and cartoons published in the press, are also valuable examples of visual culture often held in sport museums. The latter have been explored in a number of recent papers, including a useful article on cartoons, women and sport in *Punch*, and another on sporting cartoonists working within Manchester's sporting press.²⁵ Cigarette cards, too, have a substantial cartophilic following, offering commercial opportunity for British companies, such as Murray Cards International Ltd., which produces books and catalogues, though their scholarship level is narrow in its focus, lacks a cultural dimension and offers real scope for further research.²⁶ Children's collectable sports cards were in existence even in the late nineteenth century, as a recent paper by Alexander Jackson reminds us, and, like more recent Panini stickers and Match Attax cards, helped to shape children's notion of sports heroism and culture.²⁷

Sporting paraphernalia, including trophies, medals and the numerous examples of popular consumer goods and souvenirs produced in conjunction with major events such as the Olympic Games and World Cup competitions, also provide fascinating visual evidence for sport historians, while sports equipment and sportswear also find a place in the collecting and display protocols of the sport museum. Here, an analysis of the shifting trends in the design of both sport

equipment and costumes can highlight widely changing historically and culturally formulated notions of taste and fashion, while scientific developments in textile and fabric manufacture have contributed to enabling particular forms of physical movement to enhance sporting performance. A study of sportswear also raises the spectre of the potentially voyeuristic and erotic dimension frequently inherent within both the spectatorship of, and participation within, sport, a point made by Allen Guttman in *The Erotic in Sports*.²⁸

Other materials that frequently form part of a sport museum collection include badges, coins, emblems, armbands, flags, standards and pennants. All these artefacts provide insights into the history of both sport as an activity and broader, ever-changing trends in visual culture. The changing role and function of the sporting tattoo, seen increasingly once again on the bodies of sporting celebrities of both sexes, is another unexplored topic. Tattoos can be ironic, may be linked to socio-economic background, particular types of sports or to particular cultures, as in the Samoan tattoos on the body of WWE wrestling star 'The Rock'.²⁹

This broadly defined classification of material held in sport museums simply gives a general indication of the relative survival of such material. Whatever list is chosen is unlikely to exhaust the possibilities. Further, no system can fully encapsulate the vast range of such material. Categories overlap, and any classificatory model deployed inevitably has implications for how we think about and conceptualise the body of material represented. Readers might, for example, compare this to Hardy et al.'s ninefold typology of the material culture of sport, which includes playing equipment, venues, training equipment and sports medicine technology, sportswear, prizes, symbolic artefacts, performance-measurement technology, ephemera/detriment and memorabilia.

The very disposition of sport space and buildings can also be a powerful conveyor of meaning. The landscape-dominating architecture and design of sports stadiums are of growing research interest, not least in their impact on bodies, which they can control across lines of class, gender and race, as Patricia Vertinsky and Sherry McKay have shown.³⁰ Stadiums are often sites of almost religious fan fervour. As Mark Dyreson notes they are 'cathedrals of sport'.³¹ Venues have a long-standing and powerful association with community, with fan identification and memory, but are now often subject to radical structural or spatial change in the face of fan opposition.³² Wood and Gabie's paper in this collection focuses on the artistic legacy of a former stadium, Ayresome Park, in the Teesside landscape in an industrial area of northern England. Replaced by a housing estate, the site is now a place where, according to Simon Inglis, 'the echoes of the crowd come courtesy of the wind'.³³ This statement also reminds us that the sounds of sport are still, so often, sadly neglected.

Social and cultural memory is a boom area for the new cultural history and so iconic statues, tombstones and other forms of commemoration, and the ways their meanings are constructed and reconstructed, denoted and connoted, are becoming of more interest. Recent publications such as Maureen Smith's work on the multiple meanings and memories associated with the San Jose statue of athlete Tommie Smith and John Carlos and their Mexico City so-called 'Black Power' salute, Mike Huggins's work on the cultural symbolism of tombstones of Victorian sporting heroes, or Joyce Woodridge's work on the symbolism of memorials associated with the Manchester United Munich disaster are all useful examples of work of sporting memorialisation.³⁴

Methodologies

When we look outside the sub-field of sport history, it is clear that what we might term the different communities of the interpretation of visual material have focused largely on the three key sites at which their cultural and other meanings might be made: the site of the *visual image or object* itself; sites of *production*; and sites of *reception and seeing*. According to visual studies scholar Gillian Rose, developing a more critical visual methodology might involve a number of complementary approaches: mastering compositional interpretation; content analysis; audience and reception studies; semiology to lay bare the prejudices and ideologies beneath the surface; psychoanalysis to explore the gaze, physical pleasure and visual disruption; discourse analysis exploring context, text, intertextuality and ways of seeing; and anthropological analysis directly observing the social life of visual objects.³⁵ Approaches using iconography, the analysis of images through the analysis of detail, and iconology, the study of their meaning through the analysis of subject matter, symbolism and imagery, style and medium and historical context, are a standard feature of art history, and have been applied to sporting art by a number of authors, including Stephen Deuchar.³⁶ By contrast deconstructionists, drawing on ideas formulated in the writings of Jacques Derrida, have challenged the idea that a work of art is logical and comprehensible, emphasising its resistance to interpretation, and emphasising indeterminacy and the open play of signs. In recent years studies of sport have begun to open up deconstruction, largely with application to printed texts, so theoretical development of visual deconstruction is in its beginnings. More attention is now paid to practices and representations, and Murray G. Phillips in his recent collection demonstrates sport history's growing interest in postmodernism and deconstruction.³⁷

Currently many scholars of sport are still at the stage of finding questions that would support an approach from a particular theoretical perspective. A recent paper, for example, on the 'visual turn' in sports history offered some help with examples of historical and methodological questions that might help address approaches to context, the 'sporting gaze', iconography, iconology, semiology and deconstruction.³⁸

Attention to *the image* itself might variously focus on material form, its components, their arrangement and the relationship between them, its technology and its genres. The content of an image may appear clear and direct, but its meanings have always to be applied and interrogated. Images can, as cultural historian Peter Burke reminds us in *Eyewitnessing*, help us to reconstruct the material culture of the past, and his book provides a useful guide for the ways visual sources have their rules for source criticism when used purely as historical evidence.³⁹ But a materiality focus can be useful in other ways. Gary Osmond's recent analysis of the photograph of Smith, Carlos and Peter Norman on the medal dais at Mexico City is an example. He demonstrates how, in the multiple subsequent appearances of the photograph in a variety of published contexts, cropping, captioning and differential positioning changed the emphasis, focus and meaning.⁴⁰ A concentration on the *production* of a visual source would focus more on questions about its making, its genre, who made it, when, why and for what reasons, or the social identities and relations between owner, patron, maker or subject. Such object-centred analysis clearly needs to be supported by documentary evidence specifically related to it, and generally yields fairly narrow and specific conclusions.

Historians of sport in recent years have shown how sport has responded to changes in wider society. Many have portrayed sport as a reflection of society. But sport also helps to shape society. As Michael Oriard has reminded us in his study of inter-war American football, ‘neglected sources’ such as the 94 football movies made between 1925 and 1943, or the surviving newsreel footage, provided multiple voices and perspectives and were ‘powerful forces’ in constructing a football culture in the USA.⁴¹ Clearly such visual materials impact on social understandings of sport.

This suggests how important it is to focus on *audience* – although it is still rare to find studies of sport that do so – and to ask questions about the sorts of people seeing such images at different places and times. In part this is because in sport, as Oriard admitted, ‘the hearts and minds of actual fans must remain elusive’, though in his own work he had ‘those audiences always in mind’.⁴² But it is also because some of the more theoretical approaches now increasingly employed, such as discourse analysis, semiology or psychoanalysis, largely neglect the processes of reception, implying that it is the image itself that produces audience and seeing. Questions of the relationship between image and actual viewers, the differences between groups of viewers, the different ways they ‘read’ the image, the conventions they follow and their behaviour while viewing are important ones in sport, as Oriard’s work, or modern studies of ‘fandom’ in soccer, reveal.

The papers in this collection draw on the variety of methodologies outlined above and move beyond. Some contributors draw upon the writings of specific theorists to inform the development of their arguments. Thus Flowers utilises iconography alongside Henri Lefebvre’s framework of spatial analysis while presenting a tentative typology of stadiums as sites of symbolic activity, while Wells uses a theoretical analysis based on Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht’s theory of ‘fascinations’ in sport. Similarly, Cohen employs material culture scholar Bernard Herman’s techniques of ‘object-centred’ and ‘object-driven’ analysis, and Osmond and Phillips draw on Alun Munslow’s concept of historical ‘story space’, semiotic theory and the new museology. Site specificity also plays a significant role in several of the contributions. Wood and Gabie, for example, explore the multiple meanings ascribed to an art project centred on the former site of a football stadium while Schultz’s focus on the erection of the Arthur Ashe monument on Monument Avenue in Richmond, Virginia, highlights the ways in which the specific arena in which such works are encountered inevitably impacts upon the dialogues and debates they generate, as well as transforming the cultural landscape they inhabit. Schultz’s reference to a broader, postmodernist discourse, made explicit in her deployment of Jean-François Lyotard’s concept of the ‘master narrative’, is also evident in other contributions. Miner, for example, draws explicitly on the work of Roland Barthes and Susan Sontag to inform his analysis of Cuban sports posters and photographs, while the tension between concepts of spectatorship and spectacle are explored in several of the contributions. Thus Fagg examines the wider sociopolitical significance, in the context of 1930s Depression America, of the illicit spectator becoming the subject of the artist’s gaze in the work of Ben Shahn, while O’Mahony’s analysis of Cyril Power’s linocut print representing a boat race on the Thames explores the ways in which contemporary tensions regarding values assigned to spectatorship and participation and the growing professionalisation of sport could effectively be inscribed and articulated within new visual vocabularies drawn from wider developments in contemporary art and design. Veder introduces yet another dimension to the relationship between performing, looking and representation in her