

Fair Play

REVISTA DE FILOSOFÍA, ÉTICA Y DERECHO DEL DEPORTE
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Interview to Warren Fraleigh

1. What is philosophy of sport like? What is the philosophy of sport?

Philosophy of sport is an examination of the basic philosophic issues in a widespread common human endeavor.

It is similar to philosophy of art, of education and law. It undertakes problems and issues peculiar to its particular social practice attempting to clarify the structure of the problem or issue and then to investigate answers to the questions there.

2. How did you end up working on a discipline so peculiar and, we can say, uncommon? How did you end up working in a discipline that a few decades ago was so uncommon?

When I joined the faculty of the State University of New York, College at Brockport I taught a course there on the philosophy of sport. I, also, was the Dean of the Faculty of Physical Education in which we had a liberal arts major which included the history, philosophy, sociology and psychology of sport in addition to physiology, bio- mechanics, sports themselves and teaching.

I became friends with colleagues in the philosophy department and together we sponsored conventions on the philosophy of sport. Out of that, I knew Paul Weiss and together we started the Philosophic Society for the Study of Sport which became the present International Association for the Philosophy of Sport.

It is the attempt to undertake a fundamental look at a worldwide, very important human social practice.

3. What are your most recent lines of research? What is the state of the discipline in your country?

I am now retired (age 87) and have most recently written a short piece on cheating for Cesar Torres new book. Also, I have been interested in the issue of intentional rules violations.

4. What philosophical conception do you feel more comfortable with? What text or thinker has influenced you the most? Why?

I have in my 87 years encountered many sources which have impacted on me. My doctoral thesis was on play and its impact on social and emotional development. From there I have looked at many different writers including Huizinga's *Homo Ludens*, Neihbour's *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, Suit's *The Grasshopper-Games, Life and Utopia*, Baier's *The Moral Point of View*, Richard's *A Theory of Reasons for Action*, Fletcher's *Situation Ethics*. and many more. I am also interested in phenomenological analysis of sport as illustrated by Kretchmar and Breivik. Also, Morgan's *Why Sports Morally Matter* and Simon's *Fair Play*.

From these and many unmentioned sources I have gathered many insights into a developing philosophy. In short explanation, I believe that philosophy is a continuous expansion where previous conclusions are questioned by penetrating contributions from many sources.

5. What do you think about the future development of the philosophy of sport?

Since the world of sport continues to expand it will remain an area of interest. It has grown in the past forty years from one organization to more than four worldwide, the number of scholarly journals is now, at least,

four. The continued internationalization in meetings of the International Association for the Philosophy of Sport, its publication of translation of articles into languages other than English and its publication of three editions of *The Journal of the Philosophy of Sport* will enhance its spread.

The continued worldwide importance of sport and the expansion of scholarship will feed a wider audience.

6. What could be the most important problem that sports will face in the foreseeable future?

Since sports are becoming worldwide connected I see at least two internal problems. One is the considered reaction to gene doping. The second is achieving a worldwide understanding of sport ethics. This second problem may have to be individualized to each sport since it is doubtful that one ethic can cover the differences in all sports. This may require international organizations to deliberate on the internal problems of each sport.

Hopefully, these organizations would seek the advice and counsel of sport philosophers who have an understanding of each sport.

7 & 8. What would be the best way to increase the institutionalization of this discipline? What would be the best way to help the discipline grow? What is the proper place of philosophy of sport within academia: Sport faculties, philosophy faculties and/or humanities faculties?

Since these two questions are related I shall answer them together. Where philosophy of sport is housed in higher education is dealt with in several ways. In connection specifically to teaching of sport, it could be in physical education (kinesiology) or education. In institutions without physical education departments it could be housed in philosophy departments. In some institutions relationships between those departments interested in philosophy of sport should be developed. In humanities faculties it could be housed along with history and sports literature. What ever decision is made in a particular institution should take into account two factors. One, the faculty involved should have personal knowledge of sport(s). Two, faculty must have a background study in philosophy.

9. How did sport influence your dedication to the philosophy of sport? what sport was the most relevant to you ?

I have participated in many sports. I played American football, basketball and baseball in school. I have played in tournaments in volleyball and badminton after school. I have coached basketball and baseball. I have also played four wall handball, racquetball and golf for years. All of these experiences have encouraged me to look into the philosophy of sport. In addition, my study of educational philosophy and theology have also encouraged me to consider, along with my sports experiences, philosophy of sport. I have experienced the inner values of sport in a variety of sports, therefore, I have an internal knowledge of sport which, according to MacIntyre, only those who have pursued excellence in a social practice can understand.