



# PHYSICAL CULTURES OF THE BODY III CONFERENCE

OFFICIAL PROGRAM // JANUARY 13, 2023

An international conference on the symbolic and cultural importance of the healthy and active body with reference to issues of race, gender, injury, strength, performance, eugenics, and much more.

THE H. J. LUTCHER  
**STARK CENTER**  
FOR PHYSICAL CULTURE & SPORTS  
The University of Texas at Austin

# PHYSICAL CULTURES OF THE BODY III

## Conference Schedule

### 8AM

Dr. Basudhita Basu - Physical Exercise as Preventive Medicine: Looking Back at Colonial Bengal (circa 1860 – 1947)

Dr. Namrata Ravichandra Ganneri - Bombay's Forgotten Fitness Promoter-cum-Entrepreneur: Tehmurasp Hormusji Sarkari (1897-1987)

### 9AM

Maria (Natascha) Louw, Francois Johannes Cleophas, and Wilbur Kraak - Reconstructing Performance Narratives of Three Historically Significant Springbok Women Rugby Players Between 2002 and 2016

Una Tamlyn Visser, Francois Johannes Cleophas - Rhythmic Gymnastics: A Woman's World?

### 10AM

Anastasija Ropa - When Body Physical Becomes Body Political: Russian and Ukrainian Athletes in Latvian Sports Media, February-October 2022

Airnel T. Abarra, Tamás Doczi, and Janice Juaban - Dynamics of Coaching Female Bodybuilders vis-à-vis On-Site and Virtual Environments: An Ethnographic Approach

Elsa Richardson - Diversions Day by Day: Gamification and the Edwardian Workplace

### 11:30AM

Harry Hayfield - A History of Muscle: From the Dawn of Time to the Modern Age

John Fair - "On The Horns of a Dilemma": The Beleaguered Life of Hitler's Greatest Weightlifter

Conor Heffernan - Professor Szalay and the Birth of British Weightlifting

### 1PM

Adam Mills - Edward 'Ned' Hanlan: A Role Model of Canadian Values

Charles Stocking - The Meaning of Marathon: New Evidence on an Old Problem

### 2PM

Eduardo Galak - A Transnational Image of the Educated Body: Physical Culture in Newsreels from Argentina, Spain, and Italy (1934-1944)

David Edgar - Transformations of Flesh and Cement: Fieldnotes from Medellin

### 3PM

Graham Hudson - The Art Work Out

Alec S. Hurley - Physical Culture and Social Conservatism: Examining Progress through Paradox in Frederick Law Olmsted and Bernard McQuaid's Parks Development in Rochester, NY

### 4PM

Max Leconte - Les Nouveaux Rois de la Force: The Forgotten Culture of French Weightlifting During the Interwar Period

Rachel Ozerkevich - Glamorous, Feminine, and Muscular: The Problem of the Strongwoman in French Advertising Posters, 1879-1899

David Chapman - Wrestling at the Fête Foraine: Force, Farce, and Film



**Basudhita Basu** is an assistant Professor in The Amity University, Jharkhand. She completed her doctoral degree in 2022 from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Her thesis titled 'Sports and Culture: Colonial Bengal through the Prism of Sports' expanded the scope of the rich body of works on British colonial policy in India through an innovative case study of the physical education curriculum in schools of Bengal. She is the recipient of Iswarchandra Vidyasagar Bicentenary Fellowship in 2020, Early Research Grant from The British Society of Sports History, Travel Grant from British Society of the History of Science, Foreign Travel Grant from Indian Council for Historical Research. Apart from presenting papers in various national and international seminars/conferences, she has avidly published in various national and international journals.

## Physical Exercise as Preventive Medicine: Looking Back at Colonial Bengal (circa 1860-1947)

With the current global scenario being disrupted by the Novel Corona Virus 2 (SARS- COV 2) pandemic, the beneficial effects of physical exercise have resurfaced. Interestingly, the concern for physical well-being and the role of physical exercise as preventive medicine can be traced back to earlier times. The public schools of Victorian schools, believing in the concept of social Darwinism and eugenics, forged a close connection with the 19th century health movement. The British inclination towards physical exercise in the 19th century and its gradual dissemination towards the East, specifically in Bengal, predate the modern world's aspiration of being physically fit. This paper explores the complex correlation between physical exercise and deteriorating health issues in Colonial Bengal, an important administrative center of the colony. Embedded in the contemporary theory of 'Exercise is Medicine' the paper works to develop a critique of how physical exercise was considered preventive medicine in the metropole and colony of the British Empire. The paper argues that the British policies of spreading physical exercises in schools were part of their public health policies. This paper also discusses how the British perception of physical exercise influenced the cognitive space of Western-educated Bengalis.



**Namrata Ravichandra Ganneri** is Assistant Professor in History at S.N.D.T. College of Arts & S.C.B. College of Commerce and Science for Women in Mumbai. Her research interests include physical culture, Indian history, women's history, and the history of medicine. She won a fellowship from the Digital Archive Tasveerghar to produce a visual essay on traditional Indian sports and wrestling and the essay was published in 2019.

## Bombay's Forgotten Fitness Promoter-cum-Entrepreneur: Tehmurasp Hormusji Sarkari (1897-1987)

Studies on Indian physical culture pioneers have grown exponentially in the past few decades. Whilst outstanding faces and voices like the wrestlers Gama and Gobor Guha, and even the bodybuilder Kolar Venkatesh Iyer, have received scholarly attention, there remain several understudied individuals. One such forgotten figure is the Bombay-based Parsi strongman-performer and fitness promoter Tehmurasp Hormusji Sarkari (1897-1987). Sarkari established a commercially oriented physical training center, instituted mail-order courses, organized bodybuilding competitions, and was an influential presence in western India's sporting and fitness community through several decades of the twentieth century. To this day, Sarkari's physical culture feats are legion among the Parsis, a numerically small community over-represented in the bodybuilding and fitness world. Nonetheless, Sarkari's friends, admirers, and clients hailed from all of Bombay's numerous communities and what is particularly remembered is his ardent advocacy of physical culture.

This presentation will spotlight Sarkari's career and demonstrate his work in the popularization as well as the commercialization of health and fitness primarily through surviving visual material in contemporary periodicals and other archival collections. My research underscores that Sarkari was able to sell the dream of corporeal transformability to his audiences primarily through images of his own hyper-muscled body. This physical culture commerce, virtually invisible in other mainstream archival sources, introduces the work of one of Bombay's earliest fitness entrepreneurs and affirms Indian links to the transnational physical culture movement.



**Maria (Natascha) Louw** is a former provincial rugby player. Her Master's thesis unpacked the life herstories of three historically significant Springbok rugby players. She is currently working on a PhD proposal about Springbok women's rugby statistics.



**Francois Johannes Cleophas** is senior lecturer in Sport History at Stellenbosch University. His focus areas are physical culture and sport in minority groups in the Western Cape, South Africa. He has presented over 40 papers at national and international conferences, published two edited book volumes and also published over 40 articles in national and international peer reviewed journal articles. He is currently working on a monograph about physical culture amongst minority groups in South Africa.

**Wilbur Kraak** is the current Head of Division Sport Science and associate professor at Stellenbosch University with over 40 published articles in national and international peer reviewed journals.

## Reconstructing Performance Narratives of Three Herstorically Significant Springbok Women Rugby Players Between 2002 and 2016

Early Western ball games, played by men, can be viewed as a reference point in understanding the history of rugby. From the Greeks that played Episkyros, to the modern-day professional game of rugby, the game has always been brutal and not for the faint-hearted. Consequently, rugby developed a broadly defined masculine character. This paper reconstructed performance narratives of three herstorically significant Springbok women rugby players between 2002 and 2016, namely Ingrid Botha, Yolanda Meiring and Lorinda Brown. These players were selected according to the following criteria: they all played national rugby between 2002 and 2016; they played either fifteens, sevens or both codes at international level; each won the player-of-the-year award and/or captained the national team and they participated in at least one World Cup tournament. The performance narratives of these three Springbok women start a discourse of addressing the void, unlike the Springbok men, that exists in biographical research about South African women's rugby history. This void points to a broader unmapped African women's rugby herstory landscape that needs herstorical intervention.



**Una Visser** is a BScHons Sport Science (Performance Sport) graduate from Stellenbosch University with a passion for research and a specified interest in the sport of rhythmic gymnastics. Visser has 16 years of experience in gymnastics, participating competitively as gymnast, and working as a qualified coach and judge.



**Francois Johannes Cleophas** is senior lecturer in Sport History at Stellenbosch University. His focus areas are physical culture and sport in minority groups in the Western Cape, South Africa. He has presented over 40 papers at national and international conferences, published two edited book volumes and also published over 40 articles in national and international peer reviewed journal articles. He is currently working on a monograph about physical culture amongst minority groups in South Africa.

## Rhythmic Gymnastics: A Woman's World?

Rhythmic Gymnastics (RG) is a female-only sport that was constructed to be the more feminine sister discipline of women's artistic gymnastics. Its roots are embedded in a male hegemonic European history, through which key role players such as François Delsarte, Émile Jaques-Dalcroze, Isadora Duncan and George Demeny greatly influenced its development. Having found its inception as competitive sport during the 1940's in the Soviet Union, RG grew until it was officially recognised by the International Federation of Gymnastics in 1962. Thereafter, in 1963, the sport enjoyed its first World Championships, and RG became increasingly more popular worldwide. However, there is very little research on RG in its embryonic years. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate social and political factors that contributed to the development of the sport since its origins in European gymnastics systems, with a focus on the first decade following its recognition: 1963-1973. Through analysis of historical sources, supplemented with research articles and books, this study also uncovers significant historical events during this decade, as well as the key players. Though it was found that the sport did not directly challenge male hegemonic systems, women within the sport found ways to expand upon societal gender norms.



**Anastasija Ropa** is lead researcher at the Latvian Academy of Sport Education, Department of Sport Management and Communication Science. She specialises in the history of sports, in particular equestrian sports, and is co-editor of *Cheiron: The International Journal of Equine and Equestrian History* and the series of books, *Rewriting Equestrian History*, published by Trivent.

## When Body Physical Becomes Body Political: Russian and Ukrainian Athletes in Latvian Sports Media, February-October 2022

Latvia is an ex-Soviet country with Latvian and ethnically Russian populations and a history of uneasy relationships with Russia, including the love-hate relationship with Russian sports. Many athletes and trainers working in Latvia have competed and were trained in Russia and for the older Soviet Union generation, shared a common understanding of physical culture. However, Russia and Russian-speaking Latvian residents, including the citizens of Latvia, have been long viewed with suspicion and have been the subject of discrimination at times of crisis.

This paper examines the representation of the sports sanctions against Russia in Latvian sports media from February 2022 to the end of September 2022. The material is sourced from the main news portal of Latvia, *Delfi*, which has Latvian-language and Russian-language versions. The comparison of news items presented on the two interfaces, which are not identical, and analysis of the readers' comments to them, show that the media uses emotionally charged vocabulary, which is mirrored in readers' comments. This tendency of the media to politicize athletes and their bodies leads to obscuring athletes' physical achievements, relegating athletic culture to the back row.

The linguistic and hermeneutic study conducted on the corpus of the texts reveals politisation of the athletes' bodies, both when athletes themselves publicize their national identity and/or political position, such as wearing pro-war symbols, and when athletes make no such claims. The conclusion is that athletic bodies in high achievement sports become political tools rather than physical entities, belonging to the state and the international arena, no longer to the athletes themselves.



**Airnel T. Abarra** is a PhD Student at the Doctorate School of Sport Sciences at the Hungarian University of Sport Science, Budapest, Hungary. His research topic is about women bodybuilders and physique athletes and identities. Before his PhD studies, he was the Grade School Sport Officer and Head Coach of the Track and Field Team of Ateneo de Davao University, Davao City, Philippines. He became interested in life and works related to women bodybuilders and physique athletes because of its unique subculture and quest for the ideal physique and strength. He is open to different collaborations related to women bodybuilding, cultural studies in strength sports, and gender studies.



**Tamás Doczi** currently works as an associate professor at the Department of Social Sciences, University of Physical Education. Tamás does research in sociology of sport, on topics such as sport and globalization, sport and national identity, sport and social inclusion, sport participation and fandom. He is member of the Advisory Board of the International Sociology of Sport Association (ISSA).

**Janice Juaban**

## Dynamics of Coaching Female Bodybuilders vis-à-vis On-Site and Virtual Environments: An Ethnographic Approach

Studying bodybuilding and fitness as sport disciplines involves an individual and actual approach as most practitioners of these disciplines prefer personal contact and rely on the trust of their coaches and immediate community. As physique and fitness sports involve total connection between coach and athlete, it is important to see the different dynamics of an athlete being self-coached, coached by their immediate partners, or hiring a professional coach. The relationships on the manner of coaching are worthy of interest as there are only a few studies that focus on bodybuilding and fitness. The purpose of this study is to investigate the relations of different types of coaching especially on online platforms and how the relationship of the athlete and coach were affected by shifting to an online connection. Through qualitative methods such as interviews, field observations, and social media thematic analysis, this paper will discuss three different perspectives of coaching: self-coached, coached by their immediate partners, or coached by a professional coach, and how the similarities and differences of these relationships matter. It is seen that the dynamics between athletes and coaches, especially in social media and its relation to their coaching and training experiences provides understanding on how female bodybuilders find space and empowerment in their industry and how they can be empowered and dependent on their subculture especially their coaches and other influencers.





**Elsa Richardson** is a historian of health based at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow. Her research bridges medical and cultural history to consider the relation of heterodox practices, beliefs, and movements to mainstream society and orthodox knowledge. Recent projects have examined Edwardian health reformers, the history of the radical publisher C.W. Daniel, interwar life reformers and health exhibitions in Victorian London. She is currently working on a popular history of the gut-brain connection and cultures of digestion.

## Diversions Day by Day: Gamification and the Edwardian Workplace

Gamification—the application of game systems such as rewards and competition to non-game environments like fitness, work, and productivity—is a ubiquitous feature of modern life, facilitated by smartphones and encouraged as part of a broader drive toward personal optimisation. Critics have rightly described this as the application of play to neoliberal ends, but their assumption that it represents a peculiarly modern phenomenon is misguided. As this paper will argue, part of the history of gamification lies with the physical culturists of the early twentieth century. Works by famous health reformers like Eustace Miles's *Through the Day* (1921) and *Diversions Day by Day* (1905), which was co-written with the novelist Edward Frederic Benson, encouraged their readers to incorporate elements of game-playing into the working day. As well as advocating for the general applicability of good sportsmanship to the world of business, these books offered specific instructions on everything from how to play golf the office to how to use your desk for a quick game of table tennis at lunch, to tips on livening up the daily commute with a round of hide and seek in the London fog. More than simply 'diversions', these moments of play were imagined as a means of cultivating the mind and body of the white-collar worker. Thinking through the Edwardian antecedents of gamification, this paper examines the role of game playing in the making of the modern urban worker.



**Harry Hayfield** comes from Cardigan County, Wales, United Kingdom and has been interested in the history of physical culture since 2007 when he was invited to become a member of the forum established by the late David Gentle where, since his passing as a result of the pandemic, he was asked to become the administrator of the Facebook page by Diane Robert (widow of Leo Robert).

## A History of Muscle: From the Dawn of Time to the Modern Age

Throughout history, those endowed with strength greater than the average person have been hailed as heroes and those heroes have then gone on to influence others. "A History of Muscle" is a listing, in chronological order, of those people who fulfill this description starting during prehistoric times and ending up with the winner of the Mr. Olympia 2022.

The people I have nominated (and the period of time they cover):

Prehistory: Samson  
 The Classical Era: Milos of Croton  
 The Roman Conquest: Ursus  
 The Dark Ages: Orm Storolfsson  
 The Renaissance: Issac du Porthau  
 The Modern Era: Thomas Topham  
 The Era of Iron: Eugene Sandow  
 The Era of Theatrical Strength: Arthur Saxon  
 The Era of Muscle as Entertainment: Steve Reeves  
 The Era of Muscle as Art: Arnold Schwarzenegger  
 The Era of Muscle on Film: Lou Ferrigno  
 The Era of Muscle online: Richard Armstrong

During each era I shall explain why I have nominated them (a result of a feat of strength or achievement), what impact they had on the person next nominated, and how many of them were influenced by the person before them.



**John Fair** (Ph.D. Duke, 1970) is author of eight books, 155 scholarly articles, and 109 book reviews. As an undergraduate, he played intercollegiate tennis, and from 1964 to 2015 he competed in seventy-five weightlifting/powerlifting meets. Dr. Fair retired as Professor of History (Emeritus) from Auburn University (1997) and from Georgia College (2012). He is currently Adjunct Professor of Kinesiology at the Stark Center for Physical Culture and Sports at the University of Texas, Austin.

## “On the Horns of a Dilemma:” The Beleaguered Life of Hitler’s Greatest Weightlifter

As Germany’s premier heavyweight, Josef (Sepp) Manger set eleven world records from 1935 to 1941, was Olympic gold medalist in 1936 at Berlin, and world champion in Paris (1937) and Vienna (1938). His fame as one of the world’s strongest men easily made him vulnerable for political exploitation by Adolf Hitler’s totalitarian regime. Correspondence between Manger and John Terpak after World War II, however, reveals that Manger was at best a reluctant Nazi. In 1933, after Hitler’s takeover, he publicly voiced his opposition to National Socialism and was expelled from his health club in Bamberg. Manger seemed locked on the horns of equally irksome alternatives, either become a Nazi or give up his sport. Ultimately his propaganda value as an Olympic and world champion spared him of his anxieties. Manger was exempted from full party membership and was allowed to serve as an administrator on the home front during the war. After the war, however, he was confronted with a new dilemma. Stigmatized by American occupying forces as an enemy operative, he could not escape the deprivation of his civil rights or the many other disabilities most Germans endured. In a poignant appeal to Terpak, as a long-time weightlifting friend, he requested an appeal to occupying American authorities in 1946 for reinstatement to civilian status. As a result of this intervention, Manger’s rights were restored, and he became financially successful as well as a respected citizen of Bamberg.



**Conor Heffernan** is a researcher interested in health and fitness cultures of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In 2021 Conor published *The History of Physical Culture in Ireland* with Palgrave MacMillan. Conor is currently working on a monograph on Professor Szalay and British weightlifting in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

## Professor Szalay and the Birth of British Weightlifting

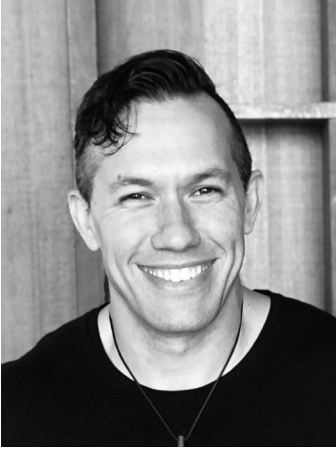
Hungarian born weightlifter, administrator and barber, Josef Szalay, is one of the important, yet curiously neglected, figures in the development of British weightlifting. Born in 1861 and moving to London in 1885, Szalay established a gymnasium at 12 Culum Street which came to become a hotbed of legitimised weightlifting. One of the original founders of the British Amateur Weightlifting Federation, and an active athlete in his own right, Szalay's influence came to stem from his organisational abilities and, more importantly, his coaching nous. Praised favourably by contemporaries, Szalay's legacy is felt strongest in the Olympic successes of his athlete Launceston Elliot, winner of a gold medal in weightlifting at the 1896 Olympic games. At the height of his popularity in the late nineteenth-century, Szalay lost both fame and fortune in the early 1900s following a legal case over patents with famed bodybuilder Eugen Sandow. He disappeared from weightlifting, only to return briefly in 1912 when a charitable benefit was set up in his honour. Using newspapers, census records from England and Austro-Hungary, weightlifting magazines and Szalay's own writings, this presentation seeks to do two things. First it presents the fullest biography to date on Szalay, a figure commented on passingly in previous work. Second it stresses Szalay's place in the development of British weightlifting and explores why his legacy was forgotten within a generation.



**Adam Mills** is a master of arts student in the Cultural, Social, and Political Thought program (Kinesiology) at the University of Lethbridge. Mills' thesis focuses on Canadian rower Edward 'Ned' Hanlan in the mid-late Victorian era and his representations in illustrations found in Canadian magazines. Specific areas of interests include addressing the ideals and values of how the male athletic body was represented through a consideration of hegemonic masculinity, nationalism, and promoting whiteness.

## Edward 'Ned' Hanlan: A Role Model of Canadian Values

This paper will focus on Edward 'Ned' Hanlan who was a Canadian professional rower that became nationally and internationally famous in the mid-to-late Victorian Era (1870s-90s). Hanlan's rise to fame was the result of his dominance as a rower where he gained the attention of the print media. This paper interrogates Hanlan's representation in the various illustrations in Canadian magazines including *Grip* and *The Canadian Illustrated News* where he was physically represented to promote a form of white manhood and nationhood in the newly formed nation of Canada. Hanlan's physical body was used to demonstrate a desired masculine ideal for Canadian boys and men to aspire to. Politics will also be considered as editors used Hanlan's body to symbolize appropriate masculinity. For example, the editor/founder of *Grip*, J.W. Bengough, used Hanlan's physical form to promote his own political interests in relation to Canada's desire to become an independent nation. Whereas Georges Desbarats, the editor/founder of *The Canadian Illustrated News*, had similar interests but aligned with the Conservative party of Canada's desire to remain linked to Britain when using Hanlan's physical form as a symbol of an independent Canada.



**Charles Stocking** is an associate professor of Classics at Western University in Ontario, Canada. He took his BA and Master's degrees at Stanford University and did his doctorate at the University of California at Los Angeles where he also worked for the Athletic Department as a strength coach. Dr. Stocking has written four books, including two recent releases in 2021: *Ancient Greek Athletics: Primary Sources in Translation* (co-authored with Susan Stephens) for Oxford University Press, and *A Cultural History of Sport in Antiquity* (with Paul Christesen) for Bloomsbury Press.

## The Meaning of Marathon: New Evidence on an Old Problem

It is well acknowledged that the marathon race of today is in fact a historical construct. Although the first modern Marathon from the 1896 Olympics was inspired by ancient Greek history, it was never a competitive event in ancient times. Furthermore, it has also been shown that the ancient story of the run at Marathon involves several contradicting accounts, which have never been resolved. This paper will present an additional historical narrative from ancient Greece, which has gone entirely unnoticed by Classical scholars and sports historians alike. This additional account, I suggest, may be dubbed the "original run" at Marathon and ultimately captures the underlying logic of both the ancient myth and the modern event. Ultimately, I argue, this "original run" at Marathon presents the act of running itself as a symbolic life and death struggle that is co-extensive with the real life and death struggle of war. The paper concludes by showing how the symbolism of this "original run" at Marathon parallels some of the most important moments in the history of the modern race.



**Eduardo Galak** is a Physical Education Teacher, has a Master's degree in Body Education and a PhD on Social Sciences, with postdoc in Educação, Conhecimento e Integração Social (UFMG -Brazil). He is currently an Adjunct Researcher at CONICET and a Professor at the Universidad Nacional de La Plata (Argentina). He is the chief editor of the journal *Anuario Historia de la Educación* and editor of *Educación Física & Ciencia*.

## A Transnational Image of the Educated Body: Physical Culture in Newsreels from Argentina, Spain, and Italy (1934-1944)

The aim of this paper is to question documentary informational cinema used as a cultural artifact understood as a pedagogical device. For this, a set of newsreels filmed in Argentina, Spain, and Italy in the second quarter of the 20th century are analyzed to understand how a symmetrical aesthetic was formed to narrate a physical culture: sports and massive gymnastics exhibitions organized by the government for schoolchildren.

The informative documentary cinema, especially the newsreel genre, consisted of a massive media resource to communicate national and international cultural, social, and political activities. Precisely, the films produced by the Argentine main newsreel between 1938 and 1955, "Sucesos Argentinos" show familiarity with other European ones filmed in the second quarter of the 20th century, especially in Italy ("Cinegiornale LUCE" and "Cine GIL") and Spain ("NO-DO"). Indeed, in addition to having a strong economic, political, and cultural influence, especially because of historical immigration, these countries also exchanged ways of narrating physical activities organized by the governments.

Based on nationalist rhetoric characteristic of the interwar period and of the Second World War, it can be said that there was a transnational aesthetic of how to narrate the correct bodily and cultural techniques. Therefore, images that were mandatorily projected in these three countries in all cinemas between 1934 and 1944, a decade of political and aesthetic affinities in the construction of the national image of the correct body, are analyzed.

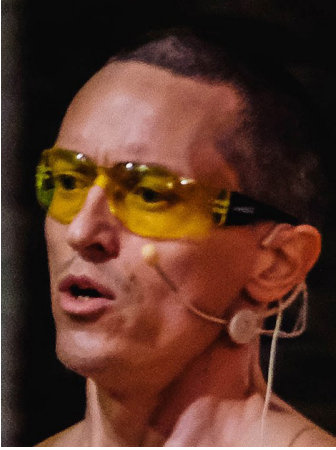


**David Edgar** is a PhD candidate in the Anthropology department at University College London. He is currently undertaking fieldwork in Medellin, Colombia, gathering material to inform his doctoral thesis and an ethnographic film. The working title of his project is “Good Bodies: Affective Economies of Fitness in ‘Pre-Post-Conflict’ Urban Colombia.”

## Transformations of Flesh and Cement: Fieldnotes from Medellin

I am currently engaged in a 12-month period of ethnographic fieldwork in Medellin, Colombia, where I am researching contemporary fitness practices and cultures, chiefly by means of participant observation. The project seeks to enhance our understanding of how the emerging global fitness paradigm is manifesting in the Global South. In Colombia specifically, I seek to uncover how fitness relates to inequalities, gender, urbanization, and the “pre-post-conflict” condition. In this paper I will share fresh, relatively “raw” data from the field with some initial reflections, relating to three key themes: 1) infrastructure and state provision of facilities in light of the legal recognition of “fitness as a right;” 2) the dialogue between urban architecture, development, and fit bodies in terms of “progress;” and 3) links between masculine physical cultures and the burgeoning erotic webcam industry.





**Graham Hudson** is a research academic on the sculpture program at The Royal College of Art, London, based in the Health and Care research area. He is also a qualified practicing fitness instructor and PhD candidate at Loughborough University and The Natural History Museum, London, working on the Eugen Sandow Sculpture.

## The Art Work Out

The Art Work Out will consider how the physical territories and political contexts of the body are explored, experienced and understood through contemporary and historical art practice.

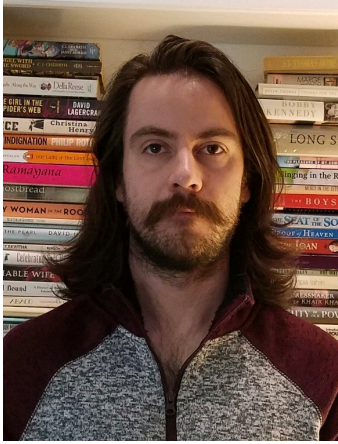
In Ahmet Ogut's 'Jump,' paintings are viewed via a trampoline. In Huma Bhaba's sculptures, the body becomes a site of monstrosity. These are two examples of how the body infiltrates and influences contemporary art. To understand the contemporary, we must also understand the past. In ancient Greece, the body of the athlete was seen as a god-like form, Plato's Academy and Gymnasia were one and the same. Sculpture was a pursuit of math as well as beauty. The Farnese Hercules and the Doryphoros are as relevant today as in ancient times.

In the 20th century, Andy Warhol loved to lift weights and hang out with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Grace Jones. Marcel Duchamp even included Eugen Sandow (who modeled himself on classical art) in his modernist masterpiece 'The Large Glass' (1915-1923).

Revisiting historic artworks through the lens of physical culture can be insightful and revealing. What kind of training would Judith undertake to pin down Holofernes, then decapitate him? Strength training yes, but probably with some cross training influence. To be a female renaissance painter, Artemisia Gentileschi, would've required incredible strength and fortitude.

Leaning back into the contemporary, performance art evolved from feats of endurance, but in the 21st century, performance art is marked by the professional bodies of dancers and actors, where fitness is highly prevalent.

The presentation will conclude with a brief insight into Hudson's own current research process, where strength training and HIIT classes are presented as artwork scripts, instructions for collaboration and performance, valuing community and timeless sculptural traditions.



**Alec S. Hurley** is an adjunct professor in sport management at St. John Fisher University in Rochester, NY. He has published and presented on the impact of Catholic morality as an alternative to evangelical Protestant recreation across North America and Western Europe.

## Physical Culture and Social Conservatism: Examining Progress through Paradox in Frederick Law Olmsted and Bernard McQuaid’s Parks Development in Rochester, NY

The central theme examined in this work is the contradictory nature of morality as a driver of 19th century physical culture. The development of Rochester, NY’s park system in the 1890s provides an ideal environment to address this theme. The transformative development of outdoor physical culture and recreation infrastructure provided by Olmsted and McQuaid obfuscated their preference for traditional social values and leisurely pursuits. This work draws on archival research from the Monroe County library and the Rochester city archives. Personal papers on Bernard McQuaid, specifically his legacy of morality-based recreation development, come from visits to the Monsignor Noe Field Archives and Special Collections at Seton Hall University. Finally, papers on Olmsted’s contributions to Rochester come from the digital archives at the U.S. National Parks Service. This work expands on the calls to examine the intersection of outdoor recreation and morality made by Steven A. Riess and Stephen Hardy. As such, this presentation embraces their understanding of the city as an organic environment with changing and occasionally contradictory influences (Reiss 1991, Hardy 2003). Studies at the nexus of morality, recreation, and physical culture in the 19th century United States have often prioritized the impact of Protestant and evangelical ideologies. This work provides a departure from that narrative through an examination of the Catholic response. Further, this work explores the internal conflicts of two preeminent figures whose impact on the progressive development of physical recreation is undeniable and yet rests at odds with their more traditional social views.



**Max Leconte** is visiting assistant professor of French Studies at Trinity University, San Antonio, TX. His research focuses on the development—cultural, social, and historical—of modern sport in France during the 19th and 20th centuries. His works are published in several journals, including the *International Journal of the History of Sport*, *Etudes Francophones*, and *Sport and Society*.

## Les Nouveaux Rois de la Force: The Forgotten Culture of French Weightlifting during the Interwar Period

Amid the political, social, and cultural turmoil of the interwar period, a new generation of French athletes rose to fame and conquered several coveted trophies and records. Suzanne Lenglen (nicknamed “La Divine”) ruled over international tennis between 1921 and 1926. Charles Ledoux dominated the world of bantamweight boxing between 1919 and 1923. However, we could argue that some of France’s most significant sporting feats of the time remain both overlooked and underestimated: spurred by savvy trainers and entrepreneurs, a new culture of strength blossomed between 1920 and 1936 in the Hexagon. During sixteen years, the country became a pillar of Olympic weightlifting and established itself as a spectacular bastion of strength. In addition to the understandable fervor produced by the sight of medals collected in Antwerp, Paris, Amsterdam, Los Angeles, and Berlin, the French public also appeared to suddenly share an authentic passion for l’haltérophilie (weightlifting) and its practitioners, as demonstrated by the great popularity of the Cadine-Rigoulot duel which crowned the strongest man in the world in 1925. Yet and in spite of its past glory, little research has focused on the reasons that propelled weightlifting’s success in France. How did France abruptly excel in weightlifting? Can we objectively describe l’haltérophilie as a social phenomenon in France during the time? In this presentation, we will strive to shed a light on the role played by men such as Edmond Desbonnet in the popularization of weightlifting in France, before providing reminders regarding the growth of l’haltérophilie during the interwar period. To conclude, we will share the portraits of some of France’s nouveaux Rois de la Force in an attempt to explain their success.



**Rachel Ozerkevich** is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Modern Art History at Kenyon College where she teaches courses on modern art and the history of photography. She received her PhD in Art History from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2022. Her research focuses on representations of athletes in French popular culture and the fine arts between the 1880s and the 1920s.

## Glamorous, Feminine, and Muscular: The Problem of the Strongwoman in French Advertising Posters, 1879-1899

Prior to the First World War, women who wanted to forge a career in strength performance had to rely largely on translations of their bodies into poster form. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and Jules Chéret created many of these advertisements of female strength performers. Though many of these artists' works concern allegorical figures crafted to embody consumer goods—like café-concert and liqueur posters presenting female bodies as signs of sensuality, frivolity, and escapism—some of their images are adaptations of real strongwomen's bodies and personas meant to sell performance tickets. Yet even those posters promoting acts by real women use a confusing blend of allegorical and recognizable visual cues, at once attaching normative cultural values to strongwomen's bodies while alerting viewers to their gender norm-defying shows.

Women who performed feats of strength between 1880 and 1914 were difficult to present to mainstream audiences since their bodies and acts toed the line between reflecting conventional femininity and being a "masculine" threat to the social order. This juxtaposition made strongwomen unique and exciting, but problematic. Artists needed to carefully negotiate how to depict their bodies: they used caricatured body shapes to present exaggerated versions of female beauty ideals while celebrating overt muscularity and athletic conditioning. Their images were therefore crafted with care, balancing expectations of what women "should" look like with consumer desires to be shocked and entertained. This presentation addresses a number of works by Toulouse-Lautrec and Chéret that present real female strength performers. It argues that these representations relied on abstracted forms to personify conventional standards of femininity. Yet they simultaneously functioned as icons of lucrative and titillating entertainment based on gender-bending, erotic, and exoticizing visual language that helped make the poster form so popular in this period.



**David Chapman** is an independent scholar who has published extensively on the history of physical culture and bodybuilding. His most recent book is an annotated translation of French historian Edmond Desbonnet's 1911 work, *The Kings of Strength: A History of All Strong Men from Ancient Times to Our Own* (McFarland, 2022).

## Wrestling at the Fête Foraine: Force, Farce and Film

In 19th century Paris, audiences regularly encountered muscularity at the seasonal fairs that dotted the French calendar. There, visitors could see weightlifters, fencing aces, clowns and other entertainments, but it was wrestling that drew the crowds. An unusual aspect of these wrestling booths was that they encouraged amateurs in the audience to fight with the professionals. It was an opportunity for mainly working-class men to earn both glory and a few centimes by fighting their more skilled adversaries. The popularity of fairground wrestling is even more astounding when considering that there was very little real competition in play since the matches were almost always faked. Despite the phony athletics, they sensitized the French public to sport and introduced many to the legitimate wrestling tournaments at more prestigious venues.

Fairground wrestling had engrained itself so thoroughly into French society that it invaded another medium that also appealed to a wide audience: motion pictures. Several brief, primitive French films were made between 1896 and 1908 that glorified wrestling and its humble, proletarian roots. Such prestigious early directors as Albert Capellani and Georges Méliès made movies that used the milieu of fairground wrestling. This interest in wrestling is hardly surprising considering that the "sport" that it was based on was more theater than legitimate competition. This presentation will explain the importance of wrestling and physical culture in the context of social class and popular entertainment.