



PHYSICAL CULTURES OF THE BODY V CONFERENCE

OFFICIAL PROGRAM // JANUARY 16-17, 2025

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

Conference Schedule, Day One

16 January 2025 — Online

9:00AM

Suvam Maiti - Physical Exercises and the Bengali Hindu Women in the First Half of the 20th Century (1920-1947) as Represented in Bengali Periodicals

Sohini Saha - The Politics of Physical Cultures in 20th Century Colonial Calcutta

10:00AM

Hendrik Snyders - The “Puck Body” in Exile - from Berlin to Hurlingham, Johannesburg - the South African Ice Hockey Career of Rudi Ball, 1948-1952

Graeme Plint - Physical Culture and the South African Cadet Movement, 1912-1939

11:00AM

Dimitris Regalos - Resilience, Toughness, and Physical Education in the 20th Century USA

Conor Heffernan - Strength for Service: American Physical Culture in World War II

12:00PM

Emma Pihl Skoog - Strength, Success, and Social Mobility: Success Narratives in Early 20th Century Strength Sports

Tatiana Konrad - The Body of a Woman: Gender, Disability, and Adaptivity in *Soul Surfer*

1:00PM

Alec Hurley - Television and the Reemergence of the “Nimble Fat Man,” Exploring Depictions of Athleticism in Popular Culture from Jackie Gleason to Peter Griffin

Eduardo Galak - “To Remain United in Spite of All Vicissitudes”: Images of the Consequences of the Firpo-Dempsey Fight (1923) and its Political Uses

2:00PM

David Chapman - Life is Movement: A Great-grandson’s Search for Sandow

John Fair - *VIM* and *VIGOUR*, Branding Beefcake & Barbells in Early Muscle Magazines

3:00PM

Louis Neymon - The Sportification of French Weightlifting in the Beginning of the 20th Century: Evidences from *La Vie au Grand Air* and *l'Education Physique*

Keith Rathbone - Jim Thorpe in France: A Transatlantic Consideration of American and American-Indian Physical Culture

PHYSICAL CULTURES OF THE BODY V
Conference Schedule, Day Two
17 January 2025 — In-Person & Online

9:00AM

Emilio Landolfi - Exercise Addiction

Simon Bronner - "No Pain, No Gain": Cultural and Psychological Dimensions of Overcoming Bodily Limits in Strength Athletics

10:00AM

Peter Miller - The Bright Sunrise of Physical Culture: Felix Oswald and the Ancient World

Broderick Chow - The Physical Cultural Politics of the American Occupation of the Philippines: Camp John Hay and the Igorot Villages

11:00AM

Kristen Wilson - "When We're in the Water, We're Not in This World": Women Aquatic Athletes of the Early 1900s and the Boundaries of Public Sport

Emalee Nelson Stone - The Bicycle and the Body: Revisiting the Victorian Vehicle in a Complicated Post-*Roe v. Wade* Era

Erin Crownover - "Chasing Excellence": The Visionary Athletic Trainer, Tina Bonci

12:30PM - 1:30PM — LUNCH BREAK

1:30PM

Derek Charles Catsam - Why are Long Jumpers No Longer Jumping Long? Track and Field Records and the Social Element of Human Limits

2PM

Corey H. Johnson - Autolykos the Pankratiast and the Body of a Mixed Martial Artist

Ben Miller - The Renaissance Origins of Fencing as a Strength-Enhancing Practice

Rachel Ozerkevich - Bodies in Motion? Naïve Painting and Bareknuckle Prizefighting

3:30PM

Jason Shurley - "Remarkable Lifting for Anyone, but Especially for a Woman": A History of Women's Powerlifting

Jan Todd - "How Do I Train to Get Stronger?" Fan Mail and the Evolution of Early Powerlifting Training Methods

5:00PM — RECEPTION



Suvam Maiti recently completed his M.Phil in History from Jadavpur University, India. His thesis was titled, “Women’s Participation in Sports in the First Half of the 20th Century Bengal.” He has completed a masters degree in History as well. His specialization focuses on gender studies, social history, and the history of sports. Apart from academic endeavours his interests in women sports, specifically in women’s cricket, led him to write online articles for several websites.

Physical Exercises and the Bengali Hindu Women in the First Half of the 20th Century (1920-1947) as Represented in Bengali Periodicals

Colonial efforts that transcended the boundary of high politics to invade and reshape the daily lives of the colonized population were reflected not only in the food, dress, educational system, and cultural practices, but also in the body, which became one of the tools through which they tried to juxtapose their superiority, while embarking upon the idea as a civilizing mission. Rebuking the Bengali as a non-martial race who loved to sleep rather than walk, the colonial government found another area that championed their cause: the deplorable condition of women’s health in Bengal. One of the ways that the Bengali middle-class intelligentsia tried to address the issue, as well as their fear of degeneration during the first half of the 20th century, was by encouraging women to participate in physical activities. However, rather than being concerned about the emancipation of women in the fields of physical activities and sports, the Bengali middle-class intellectuals focused on the production of healthy babies to secure the future of the nation and the enhancement of the beauty of females’ bodies. This article will examine selected Bengali periodicals and contemporary newspapers of the early 20th century to show how Bengali women left the household and gradually started to participate in the sporting arena. It also explores the difference between how male authors and female authors have written about the development. Furthermore, the paper argues that the media coverage of women participating in sports and physical exercise ultimately centered on the beautification and sexualization of their bodies and their role of becoming a good “producer” of babies rather than the Bengali Hindu women’s advancement in the field of sports in early 20th century Bengal.



Sohini Saha is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at St. Xavier's College (Autonomous) Kolkata, India. Her research interests lie in the field of gender and masculinity studies, sexuality studies, sociology and anthropology of the body. She completed her PhD titled "Bayam, Male Body and Masculinity: An Exploration of the Bayam Samitis and Akharas of Kolkata" in 2022 from the Department of Sociology, Jadavpur University. Her thesis explored the political history of *byayam samitis* (traditional gymnasiums) of Kolkata, India, formed in the early 20th century and studied the practice of *byayam* (exercise). Through an ethnographic study, her thesis explored ideas of health, brahmacharya (celibacy), breathing and bodily pain in these embodied practices of body cultivation.

The Politics of Physical Cultures in 20th Century Colonial Calcutta

This paper studies the *byayam samitis* (traditional gymnasiums) of Kolkata, India, formed in the early 20th century. The aim is to understand how the popularity of these gymnasiums connected to the history of anti-colonial struggle in Bengal that enmeshed the politics of physical culture with nationalism. First, the effort is to understand how the colonial politics of effeminizing Bengali Hindu men led to the emergence of a body politic centered on cultivating masculinity through an indigenous means. It looks into this nexus of colonial politics and anti-colonial struggle that was enacted on the native male body. The cultivation of an "indigenous" or "native" Hindu masculinity against colonial modernity and masculinity, was nonetheless rooted in a language of modernity. Within a rising scientific-modern discourse of Brahmacharya, an Indian conception of celibacy, the effort was made to revive masculinity among the so called effeminate Bengali (Hindu) men. While women's bodies and the nationalist discourse have been extensively studied, this paper argues for studying the politics of the male body in the colonial-nationalist period.

Second, the paper examines how this native masculinity was placed within a Hindu religious discourse. The cultivation of Bengali Hindu masculinity was also tied up in a communal context aimed at the religious "other," particularly Muslim men. The emergence of communal tensions and conflicts in the 1920s in colonial Calcutta also reflects the increasing urge among Hindu men to consolidate their identity and place. The *byayam samitis* thereby were solely created for Hindu men and communal politics were attached to their very formation. Through a historical ethnographic study in these *byayam samitis*, the paper engages with these places to understand how communal and nationalist politics became enmeshed in the creation of native Hindu masculinity.



Hendrik Snyders is a Senior Researcher at the Centre for Military Studies at the South African Military Academy (Faculty of Military Science at the University of Stellenbosch), and a Research Associate at the Department of History, Free State University as well as a Honorary Research Associate of the National Museum Bloemfontein. His research focuses on the military, race, sport, masculinity, memory, heritage, public history, and colonialism. He has published extensively in peer-reviewed journals and edited volumes and has co-authored *Tries and Conversions: South Africans in Rugby League* with Peter Lush of London League Publishers (UK) as well as *Umbhoxo: Making Rugby an Afrikan Game* with Philani Nongogo (Tshwane University of Technology), Buntu Siwisa (University of the Witwatersrand), and Mzukisi Jeffrey Twala, (2023, Cape Town: Ukufezwa Kweminqweno). His most recent monograph is titled, *Blitzboks: A History of Rugby Sevens in South Africa, c. 1904 - 2019* (Naledi - Published on 21 May 2021).

The “Puck Body” in Exile - from Berlin to Hurlingham, Johannesburg - the South African Ice Hockey Career of Rudi Ball, 1948-1952

International Ice Hockey Hall of Fame inductee, Rudi Ball, one of the most spectacular European and German ice hockey players from the 1930s right up to his emigration to South Africa in 1948, is a controversial figure in both German and Jewish sports history. Ball, a Jew for some historians, and a “semi-Jew” for others, left his native Berlin (with his brothers) in 1933 when the Nazis took over the government of Germany to continue his professional hockey career in Switzerland and Italy. He returned after three years when, despite his status as a Jew, he was invited to represent Germany at the 1936 Olympics in Garmisch-Partenkirchen. Under normal circumstances, given his long career as a German representative in four World Championships and winner of both a World Championship silver (1930) and an Olympic bronze medal (1932), his inclusion would have been a non-event. His inclusion, however, followed in the wake of the Nazi regime’s decision to exclude those with Jewish ancestry from representing Germany and Ball represented the country at a time that others were either excluded or refused inclusion as a result of race or, as a sign of their rejection of national-socialism. After negotiating a deal to participate for Nazi Germany in exchange for free passage for his family to South Africa, Ball continued to represent Germany in the international arena until 1948. Thereafter, he also emigrated and joined his family in South Africa. His arrival coincided with the implementation of Apartheid, but also intersected with the consolidation of ice hockey as a representative sport in the country. This paper offers a reflection on his South African career.



Graeme Plint is a researcher at the Centre of Military Studies at the University of Stellenbosch. His areas of interest include cyberwarfare and the military in society. He has served in the South African Navy for 30 years. He is currently a PhD candidate studying “the South African Cadet Movement (1910-1957).”

Physical Culture and the South African Cadet Movement, 1912-1939

The South African Cadet Movement, as an offshoot of the British Cadet Movement, was immersed in the post-Victorian physical culture tradition. Closely aligned to the Arnoldian school ethos, Christian masculinity played an important part in the movement. The South African Cadet Movement balanced the expectations of military, school, and society in shaping the white boy’s mind and body. For Darries, this nexus between military training and physical education in South Africa is almost self-evident.¹ She cites Willemse, without elaboration, who claims that in the main the Cadet Movement presented physical training in white public schools.² Cleophas illustrates that the Brigade Movement replicated this nexus in the coloured community.³ Furthermore, in public discourse, the public held the view that the Cadet Movement could remedy the defects of an inactive society. However, despite the Cadet Movement’s location at the nexus of physical culture and military training, it has escaped the attention of South African historians. This article aims to address this gap in the historiography by describing the interrelationship of physical culture and the South African Cadet Movement from 1912 to 1939.

1. Anell Stacey Daries. 2024, “Build the body, build a nation: the making of nationalist physical education in South Africa, 1920–1947,” *Sport in History*, 4.

2. Johannes Wilhelmus Willemse, 1969, *Die Invloed van die Sweedse Stelsel van Formele Oefeninge of die Ontwikkeling van Liggamlike Opvoeding in Suid-Afrika*, Masters Dissertation, Potchestroom University, 169.

3. Francois Cleophas, 2015, *Physical Education and Physical Culture in the Coloured Community of the Western Cape, 1837-1966*, Doctoral Thesis, Stellenbosch University.



Dimitris Regalos holds a BSc in Physical Education and Sports Sciences from Democritus University of Thrace, an MSc in Olympic Studies and Olympic Education from the University of the Peloponnese, and is currently pursuing an MA in Sports Ethics and Integrity at KU Leuven. This program is part of an international collaboration with Charles University, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Swansea University, the University of the Peloponnese, and University Pompeu Fabra. With experience as a lecturer and educator, his research interests include philosophy of education, philosophy of sport, history of sport, and the Olympic Movement.

Resilience, Toughness, and Physical Education in the 20th Century USA

This paper explores how physical education (PE) in the 20th-century U.S.A. embraced toughness and resilience as essential qualities, reflecting the country's shifting social landscape and ideals. As society navigated wars, economic upheaval, and educational reform, PE evolved into more than a program of physical conditioning - it became a space for building character, fostering resilience, and shaping individuals prepared for life's demands. Key figures like Dr. Dudley Allen Sargent pioneered approaches that balanced personal resilience with physical culture, drawing inspiration from ancient Greek ideals of arete and kalokagathia, which celebrated the unity of physical, intellectual, and moral excellence.

Through an analysis of curricula and educational policies, this study traces how toughness in PE mirrored American values of self-reliance and strength, embedding resilience into the nation's educational identity. By highlighting the human stories behind these shifts, this research brings to light PE's role in nurturing the whole person as an athlete and a resilient, adaptive citizen. In connecting historical resilience-building practices to today's fitness culture, the study suggests that the roots of modern wellness goals lie in PE's century-old commitment to preparing individuals to face both physical and personal challenges.



Conor Heffernan is Lecturer in the Sociology of Sport at Ulster University. He is currently working on a book detailing the globalization of fitness practices in the nineteenth century.

Strength for Service: American Physical Culture in World War II

The aftermath of the Second World War (1939-1945) witnessed a definitive boom period in American physical culture. As is well documented, the United States experienced its golden era in Olympic Weightlifting, the early roots of the West Coast bodybuilding scene took hold, and a slow, but eventually, solid connection was built between weightlifting and athletics in American sport. While much is known about these processes, relatively little has been written about weightlifting in American military camps during the war itself. Using service magazines, physical culture periodicals and popular newspaper reports, this presentation examines how barbell cultures emerged in military camps in Europe and Asia among enlisted American troops. These sources reveal a far more complicated and nuanced relationship with weightlifting than is often discussed. Military publications like *Attack* reveal heated debates about weightlifting's utility, with critics dismissing it as impractical and potentially harmful, while advocates defended it as the "King of All Sports." This tension between acceptance and rejection characterized weightlifting's wartime status. Despite institutional resistance, servicemen demonstrated remarkable initiative in maintaining their training, fashioning makeshift equipment from tank parts and establishing impromptu gyms. Sources reveal how troops in both European and Pacific theaters created ad hoc training facilities, often using salvaged military equipment. This grassroots movement, combined with growing but uneven official military recognition, helped legitimize weightlifting beyond its pre-war subculture status. Examined in this way, the presentation provides a context for later studies while also stressing the need for greater research on physical culture during the War itself.



Emma Pihl Skoog holds a PhD in History from Stockholm University (2017). In her thesis, she discussed issues related to embodiment, class, and gender in strength sports and boxing. She is also an archivist and is, at the time of writing, lecturer in Archival Science in the Department of Historical and Contemporary Studies, Södertörn University.

Strength, Success, and Social Mobility: Success Narratives in Early 20th Century Strength Sports

This paper explores the success narratives within strength sports as avenues for social mobility, particularly emphasizing the role of physical strength over education in attaining financial and social advancement. Through autobiographies and newspaper articles, the study investigates how these narratives intertwine with themes of body, class, and ideology, with a focus on the “rags to riches” archetype that has deep roots in North American ideals like the American Dream. In the Swedish context, this cultural model is particularly revealing, as it highlights the tensions between individualistic success and the collective values inherent in Sweden’s welfare-state ideology.

The paper examines how athletic success narratives emphasize the physical body as a form of capital essential for mobility. Unlike educational capital, physical capital in this context represents an athlete’s inherent or developed physical abilities, positioning these attributes as keys to transcending social and economic barriers. However, these narratives do not universally endorse all bodies but rather idealize specific physical forms perceived as fitting for success, thus reinforcing a selective and stratified view of who can achieve upward mobility through sport. A paradox emerges in these stories: while romanticizing the athlete’s journey from poverty to fame, they also serve ideological functions, subtly promoting the liberal-capitalist ideal of individual effort as the path to success. These values, while celebrated in the narratives, stand in tension with Sweden’s collective welfare values, where social support systems, rather than individual prowess, are traditionally viewed as mechanisms for equal opportunity. The study thus positions these narratives as simultaneously hopeful and limiting—while they inspire the idea of betterment, they also subtly reinforce social structures that restrict mobility based on body and class.

The paper also addresses the precarious nature of success in strength sports. Athletes who attain wealth and fame are often depicted as vulnerable to decline, facing challenges such as financial mismanagement, indulgence, and lifestyle changes that detract from their physical prowess. These stories of decline, frequently portrayed in the media, serve as cautionary tales, emphasizing the fragility of physical capital and underscoring that success achieved through the body is not easily maintained. The success narrative thus not only promotes the dream of rising to fame but also underscores the societal expectation that athletes must vigilantly maintain their physical and economic assets to avoid downfall.

In this context, the paper contributes to a broader understanding of how physical capital in sports functions as both a means of potential uplift and a reinforcement of existing class boundaries, positioning the body as a site of both empowerment and constraint within the ideological frameworks of the early to mid-20th century.



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Tatiana Konrad is a postdoctoral researcher in the Department of English and American Studies, University of Vienna, Austria, the principal investigator of “Air and Environmental Health in the (Post-)COVID-19 World,” and the editor of the “Environment, Health, and Well-being” book series at Michigan State University Press.

The Body of a Woman: Gender, Disability, and Adaptivity in *Soul Surfer*

In 2003, at the age of 13, an American surfer Bethany Hamilton lost her left arm to a shark attack. Despite that tragic event, Bethany continued to surf—she is now one of the most famous athletes in the world. Sean McNamara’s *Soul Surfer* (2011) tells Bethany’s story: from her childhood to life after the attack. This paper examines the film’s story of Bethany, which is about accepting and ultimately overcoming her disability. Bethany once commented on disability in sport as follows: “I think disabled is a very degrading title for athletes. I feel like I’m an incredibly abled person... If anything, I encourage ESPYs to... change the category to Best Adaptive Athlete, so athletes that have adapted to unique situations in their life. I would have been stoked to be in the category if that was what it was called.”¹ This paper focuses on Bethany’s strategy to adapt to the new reality, as portrayed in *Soul Surfer*. The film does not portray disability as a drawback but rather views it as a way of being. Inevitably, the paper examines the intersection of disability and gender, and argues that adaptivity not only foregrounds disability as a legitimate, normal condition, but also communicates gender as an important aspect in the athlete’s professional career. That Bethany “surfs like a girl” is celebrated through her ability to adapt. In my discussion of adaptivity, I will also provide an ecocritical reading of Bethany’s disability and gender, arguing that the film naturalizes Bethany’s body through the images of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami that caused death and devastation in Thailand (Bethany comes to help the affected individuals).

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2016/aug/25/bethany-hamilton-surfing-espy-award>.



Alec Hurley is a lecturer in sport management at Cardiff Metropolitan University in Wales. His research addresses historical intersections of identity, place, and space in sport. He has presented on the sporting and cultural aspects of Fat Men's Clubs at leading scholarly conferences over the last three years.

Television and the Reemergence of the “Nimble Fat Man,” Exploring Depictions of Athleticism in Popular Culture from Jackie Gleason to Peter Griffin

By the mid-1950s, Fat Men's Clubs, prolific across the United States as recently as the 1910s, all but ceased to exist. In their place, a new candidate emerged as the outlet which inadvertently ushered in a new generation of the “nimble fat man.” Despite their half-century of cultural relevance as social and sporting institutions, Fat Men's Clubs have received limited scholarly attention (Mackert, 2014; Morris, 2003). In addition, recent scholarship on media portrayals of obesity highlights the sedentary and incompetent aspects of overweight male leads (Himes, 2007; Stanford, 2019).

As such, this presentation seeks not only to connect the emergence of the dynamic, athletic “fat man” of the televised era with the sporting prowess of the Fat Man's Clubs of the prior century, but also to explore the kinesthetic grace, joy, and power as demonstrated through several of television's most celebrated corpulent stars. To facilitate this study, this work will employ both critical media studies and masculinity studies frameworks to properly situate the depictions of leading men in popular televised sitcoms from the 1950s through the early 2000s. Case studies of Jackie Gleason's dancing prowess as the bellowing Ralph Kramden on *The Honeymooners*, John Goodman's surprising everyday athleticism portraying Dan Conner on *Roseanne*, and the unrestrained corporeal mastery of Homer Simpson and Peter Griffin upend the existing stationary and ineffectual narrative. As such, this presentation connects the physical culture legacies of the “televised fat man” with his 19th-century predecessors to reveal a long, uninterrupted, and spirited history of the “nimble fat man.”



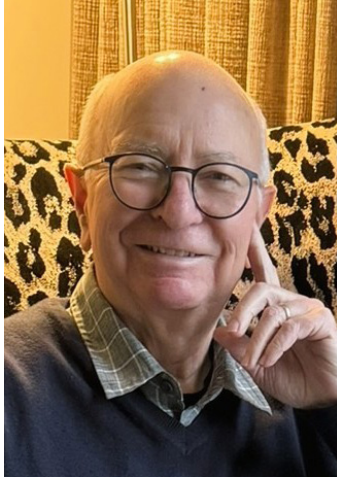
Eduardo Galak is a Physical Education Teacher with a PhD in Social Sciences. He is currently an Independent Researcher at CONICET and a Professor at the Universidad Nacional de La Plata (Argentina). He serves as the chief editor of *Educación Física & Ciencia* journal .

“To Remain United in Spite of All Vicissitudes”: Images of the Consequences of the Firpo-Dempsey Fight (1923) and its Political Uses

Can one be a sporting hero when one's most notable achievement is, in fact, a celebrated defeat? The 1923 boxing match between Jack Dempsey and Luis Ángel Firpo, called the “Fight of the Century,” is often remembered for the 17 seconds when Dempsey was knocked out of the ring by the Argentine. The fight has been referenced in literature, paintings, and popular culture, as seen in films and cartoons. Firpo, the Wild Bull of the Pampas, was the first Latin athlete to contend for a world title (Corpas, 2023) and has been defined as an archetype of the Argentine male, representing the virility and Latinity of his time (Scharagrodsky, 2021).

This defeat created an image of a national hero politically exploited by Juan Domingo Perón and his government from 1946 to 1955. This paper analyzes images from 1923 and contrasts them with newsreels from 1954, when boxing celebrated Perón as “the first sportsman.” During this period, newsreels transformed into propaganda tools (Kriger, 2009; Galak, 2017) used to shape sporting images (O’Mahony, 2012). A hermeneutic analysis is conducted of images from the Argentine “official” newsreel, *Sucesos Argentinos*, alongside two US newsreels (*Universal Newsreel*) reporting on the meeting between Dempsey, Firpo, and Perón.

While Firpo is part of an international history of boxing that associates Latin Americans with issues of race and masculinity (LaFavor, 2020), this sporting event can thus be seen as a fundamental step in the development of the image of Latin male athletes: virile, strong, *wild*.



David Chapman is an independent historian who has written books and articles on such diverse subjects as sport history, gender studies, cinema, jazz and popular culture. David has around twenty books to his credit, and he has written extensively for both popular and academic journals. One of his first books was *Sandow the Magnificent* (1994), a biography of the famous vaudeville strongman and bodybuilder. His latest book is *The Kings of Wrestling* (2024), a translation of a French work from 1910 that includes pictures and biographies of famous Greco-Roman wrestlers.

Life is Movement: A Great-grandson's Search for Sandow

Eugen Sandow (1867-1925) is generally considered one of the founders of bodybuilding and physical culture, but very little is known about his origins or his private life. Many of those gaps began to be filled in when Chris Davies, Sandow's great-grandson, became interested in his illustrious ancestor. Chris wanted to make sure that the bodybuilding pioneer would never be forgotten. It was thanks to him that an English Heritage blue plaque was put on the man's former London residence, a stone monument was erected on his previously unmarked grave, and the Sandow family was enlisted to help with inside biographical information. In 2016, he began making *Life is Movement*, a documentary film that chronicled his research. I will show excerpts from this hitherto unseen film, and I will talk about the Sandow family's messy genealogy, and give a few thoughts on what lessons we can learn from deeply personal biographies.

Chris Davies led a varied and rather peripatetic existence first as a squash instructor in Germany and later as a professional juggler. Despite his somewhat random and irregular life, he was able to do some truly original research on the life of Eugen Sandow, and he added a significant amount to our knowledge of his ancestor. Unfortunately, Chris died unexpectedly in 2018 at the age of 64, and he never finished or showed his documentary to a wide audience, but he was able to chronicle his search for meaning through the life of his ancestor. It was Chris's dream to complete it since he was certain that it would be greeted with great success. This showing will be, in effect, its "world premiere."



John Fair is Professor Emeritus at Auburn University and author of ten books, including *MuscleTown USA* (Penn State, 1999), *Mr. America* (Texas, 2015), *Muscles in the Movies* (Missouri, 2020), and *Tommy Kono* (McFarland, 2023). He is an Adjunct Professor of Kinesiology at the University of Texas, Austin.

VIM and VIGOUR, Branding Beefcake & Barbells in Early Muscle Magazines

The World War II era coincided with an increased interest in weightlifting and bodybuilding and the appearance of a pair of muscle magazines in Columbus, Ohio, and London, England, headed respectively by Roger Eells and co-editors John Barrs and Henry Atkin. The former, entitled *VIM* (for vigor, intellect, and might), catered to reader demands for a magazine “devoted exclusively to instructive articles on bodybuilding and weightlifting” that would provide “more detailed information than they have been able to obtain from other publications.” Eells’ vowed to be open-minded in soliciting views from every writer in the field. *VIGOUR* was established on a more official footing as the official organ of The British Amateur Weight Lifters’ Association (BAWLA). Although the editors favored all vigorous sports, they were convinced that “weight-training is the finest means of building better bodies, and that weight-lifting is the best and most manly sport.” They believed in the “Three Olympic Lifts” as “the most suitable set for championships.” Not unlike *VIM*’s earlier claim to be “The Vital Magazine,” *VIGOUR* branded itself as “The Vitality Magazine.” While the former’s shelf life was just seventeen monthly issues over two years, the latter produced 115 over nine years. A final phase of branding beefcake and barbells occurred with the publication of *Vim - The Magazine of Vigorous Living* in 70 issues from 1954 to 1960. It epitomized the concept of openness and potential for muscular development but with a twist toward representing the body as an object of erotic desire.



Louis Neymon is a PhD student in social sciences of sport at the Paris-Saclay University. His thesis aims to study the history and development of French strength sports, particularly these last few years. He is particularly interested in the evolution of masculinities and of the sociodemographic profiles of strength athletes.

The Sportification of French Weightlifting in the Beginning of the 20th Century: Evidences from *La Vie au Grand Air* and *L'Education Physique*

The aim of this communication is to show how *La Vie au Grand air* and *L'Education Physique* contributed to the sportification of weightlifting in France, and to expose the strategies used to legitimize the culture physique in France: first, distinguishing weightlifting from the practices of circus strongmen and wrestlers, accused of cheating the weights; then, the progressive standardization and the resort to the medical discourse to use its symbolic capital. All these elements, I argue, enabled a French subculture of lifting to emerge, deeply influenced by a context of rapid economic and technological changes, and by the rise of a nationalist masculinity.

The sources of this study are a corpus of articles dealing with weight training from *La Vie au Grand Air* and *L'Education Physique*, from 1901 to 1910. After a careful selection and reading of these articles, the aim would be to notice the patterns of justification and defence of weight training, as well as the processes of distinction from ways of lifting that are deemed inferior (be they from other countries and cultures or illegitimized instances, such as circus performers).

The constructivist framework of this research would underline the importance of the sport press in building the modern weightlifting rules, showing how alliances with certain actors rather than others built the foundations of weightlifting in France. Rather than seeing the establishment of rules as a linear and rational process, this communication would aim to show its contingencies and non-rational aspects, particularly through its mode of justification.



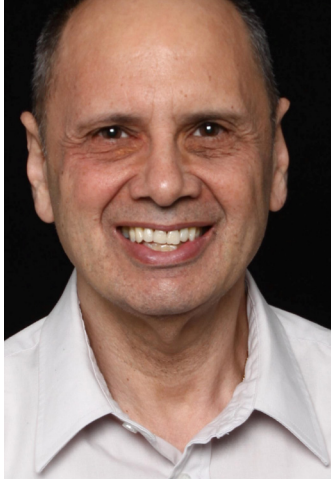
Keith Rathbone researches 20th century French social and cultural history. His book, entitled *A Sport and Physical Culture in Occupied France: Authoritarianism, Agency and Everyday Life* (Manchester University Press, 2022), examines physical education and sports in order to better understand civic life under the dual authoritarian systems of the German Occupation and the Vichy Regime.

Jim Thorpe in France: A Transatlantic Consideration of American and American-Indian Physical Culture

In 1912, the Sac and Fox Nation American Jim Thorpe won two gold medals at the Stockholm Games. His dominant performances in the pentathlon and decathlon catapulted him into broader conversations in Europe about physical health and strength. The French magazine *La Culture Physique*, a journal devoted to a scientific and sporting examination of bodies, lauded Thorpe's physique. He was called the most ideal athlete, more so than Eugen Sandow, the founder of modern body building, because his muscles came from natural or wild exercise. Their emphasis on "sauvage" exercise clearly related to Thorpe's racial background and *La Culture Physique* relied on racialized language to argue that "mixed types," like Thorpe, produced the most balanced and healthy bodies.

In this paper, I will examine how French physical culturalists wrote about bodily health through Native American and outdoorsman tropes. There were many opportunities for them to comment upon and see Native American athletes travelling in Europe in the early part of the 20th century such as at Wild West Shows, especially Buffalo Bill's Wild West Tour that performed at the Exposition Universelle of 1899, and numerous other occasions in France until 1913. I will pay special attention to these moments and unpack them through a close reading of newspaper articles from a range of French physical cultural and sporting press periodicals.

The bodies typical of Native Americans and frontiersmen generated interest in natural living and played into larger European conversations about a need to return to the land. Physical cultural reformers already asserted that physical activity helped to build natural muscle, believed to ameliorate the bodies damaged by the decadence of the Belle Epoque and interwar period. The need to return to the land informed the formation of a number of early 20th century athletic organizations including Scouting groups. An increasingly large number of French people—from small working class children to grown adults—started to envision living *la vie en plein air*, in order to become stronger and healthier.



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Exercise Addiction

This work examines the nature of exercise addiction. It presents a broad, congruent and discerning literature review with the aim of providing a deeper understanding of the condition “exercise addiction,” including symptoms and options for treatment. In addition, guidelines are provided with respect to “healthy” levels of exercise. The review highlights some of the key distinctions between healthy levels of exercise and exercise addiction. The findings suggest that an individual who is addicted to exercise will continue exercising regardless of physical injury, personal inconvenience, or disruption to other areas of life including marital strain, interference with work, and lack of time for other activities. “Addicted” exercisers are more likely to exercise for intrinsic rewards and experience disturbing deprivation sensations when unable to exercise. In contrast, “committed” exercisers engage in physical activity for extrinsic rewards and do not suffer severe withdrawal symptoms when they cannot exercise. Exercisers must acquire a sense of life-balance while embracing an attitude conducive to sustainable long-term physical, psychological, and social health outcomes. Recommendations by the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology (and ACSM) state that all apparently healthy adults between 18 and 64 years of age should accumulate at least 150 minutes of moderate (5 or 6 on a scale of 0–10) to vigorous (7 or 8 on a scale of 0–10) intensity aerobic physical activity per week in bouts of 10 minutes or more, also expressed as 30 minutes per day distributed over 5 days per week, would be a good start. I will also briefly discuss some of the qualitative aspects of my most recent project, which examines differences in physical activity patterns between those who engage in “organized” vs. “self-scheduled” exercises. The focus group sessions have definitely resulted in interesting dialogue.



Simon Bronner is Distinguished Professor of Social Sciences at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He has previously taught at Harvard University, Penn State University, Leiden University (Netherlands), and Osaka University (Japan). He has received lifetime scholarly and academic leadership achievement awards from the American Folklore Society and American Studies Association. The author or editor of over 40 books, his current research is on the politics and psychology of strongman performance. Besides editing book series and scholarly journals on material culture, folklore, and ethnology, he serves on the editorial board of *Iron Game History*.

“No Pain, No Gain”: Cultural and Psychological Dimensions of Overcoming Bodily Limits in Strength Athletics

Writing on what he called “somatic proverbs” as evidence of folk ideas that compose a modern American worldview of valuing physical appearance, folklorist Wolfgang Mieder identified a corpus of sayings linking bodybuilding with growing muscle and enduring pain. Drawing from textual collections, he found significance in proverbs such as “hustle for the muscle” and “pain is just weakness leaving the body” that rationalize, to his puzzlement, an “emphasis on physical exercise to the point of exhaustion.” Mieder hypothesized that somatic proverbs about strength function to motivate individuals to pursue bodily pain, despite the mind’s tendency to avoid it. Further, he viewed a correlation of this function with a modern tendency, if not American cultural priority, on thinness exuding youthful sexual attraction. In this paper, I test his hypothesis with participant-observation and posit that certain groups in the material context of the gym ritually enact stylized speech and utilize motivational signs and images, exemplified by the most common proverb of “No Pain, No Gain,” to create a Batesonian play/social frame in which athletes, especially men, embrace pain to the point of gratification and encourage or invoke masochism. Further, these practices are used to create mythological personas and performance fantasies that characterize if not distinguish strongman competition. Such situations suggest a cognitive connection to speech practices that are psychosomatic in the sense that physiological functioning of the body is affected by perceived mental tensions and pressures, often blamed on societal problems.



Peter J. Miller is Associate Professor and Chair of Classics at the University of Winnipeg. He is the author of *Sport: Antiquity and Its Legacy* (Bloomsbury, 2023) and *In Praise of Greek Athletes: Echoes of the Herald's Proclamation in Epinikian and Epigram* (Cambridge University Press, 2024). His current Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada project is entitled, *Classical Antiquity and Physical Culture*.

The Bright Sunrise of Physical Culture: Felix Oswald and the Ancient World

This paper examines the life and works of polymath, popular historian, and physical education advocate Felix Oswald (1845-1906). Oswald's work spans across genres and modes, including travel writing (*Summerland Sketches; Or Rambles in the Backwoods of Mexico and Central America*, 1880), the history of religion (*The Secret of the East; Or, the Origin of the Christian Religion*, 1883), and physical health and education (e.g., *Physical Education; Or, The Health-Laws of Nature*, 1882). Beyond his book publications, Oswald's physical education writing appeared in magazines and newspapers, including early issues of Bernarr Macfadden's *Physical Culture*; he and Macfadden co-authored a physical culture book, *Macfadden's Fasting, Hydropathy and Exercise* (1903). While Macfadden and others have been covered extensively in scholarship, Oswald's contribution to late-nineteenth century physical culture has been understudied. Here, I suggest that Oswald's work, especially insofar as he integrates the ancient Greek and Roman world into modern theories of physical culture, is a precursor to the deep influence of Greece and Rome on other early physical culture publications. Oswald's use of Classical history demonstrates a knowledge of and appreciation of ancient sources, though, as this paper shows, Classical Antiquity's influence is not pervasive across Oswald's physical health writing. His particular focus on ancient Greek and Roman contributions to specific areas (e.g., diet and gymnastics) foreshadows the turn to Greece and Rome in the early years of other physical culture publications.



Broderick Chow is Reader and Director of Learning, Teaching and Inclusion at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, London, UK. His research investigates fitness and physical culture and the construction of masculinities. He is the author of the book *Muscle Works: Physical Culture and the Performance of Masculinity* (Northwestern University Press, 2024).

The Physical Culture Politics of the American Occupation of the Philippines: Camp John Hay and the Igorot Villages

This paper draws on sources from the University of Michigan’s Philippine Special Collection to examine the intersection of physical culture and coloniality. In the early years of the American occupation of the Philippines (1898-1946), regarded by scholars (Rodriguez 2010) as genocide in both scale and intent, Camp John Hay was established as a hill station in the Cordillera Mountains where soldiers and officers suffering from “tropical neurasthenia” were sent to recuperate. It replicated “exercise cures” in America, such as former wrestler William Muldoon’s sanatorium. Around the same time, Indigenous peoples from the same area colonized and displaced by Camp John Hay were displayed in recreations of traditional villages in places like the St. Louis World’s Fair (1904), where they performed dances, rituals, and displays of athletic ability, primarily tree-climbing. Framing Cordilleran peoples as “children of nature,” “primitive,” or “wild people,” the “Igorot Villages” justified the occupation by exaggerating racial difference. But the advertising and reviews of the performances also praised the bodies of Igorot men: “Their lithe bronzed bodies are the embodiment of physical performance. Their muscles are like bands of steel [...]” (1912). The conjuncture of these two sites—the recuperation of the white male body and admiration of the bodies of those that they were eliminating—signals that the practice and language of physical culture was used to position Filipinos as “abject” subjects, both desired and rejected. Performances and ethnological photographs of Cordilleran men during occupation are therefore an important colonial outpost of the larger physical culture story.



Kristen Wilson is a graduate student in American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. Her work focuses on pre-Title IX women’s sports and athletic facilities as well as the introduction of quantification to sports and physical culture at the end of the nineteenth century.

“When We’re in the Water, We’re Not in This World”: Women Aquatic Athletes of the Early 1900s and the Boundaries of Public Sport

In the 1910s and 1920s, as American women negotiated their access to public, competitive sporting contests, aquatic sports proved an important foundation for future women’s sports. Aside from concerns about the corruptive nature of competitive sports, opposition to women’s athletic contests were often premised on fears of spectatorship—that men would be watching. In 1896, the first women’s intercollegiate basketball game featured a total of three points, an all-woman audience, and a flurry of hisses at male spectators attempting to watch the game through the windows.¹ While aquatic sports contained many of the same competitive elements as land-based sports, they offered a visual obfuscation that created distance between competitors and spectators, allowing aquatic athletes to act as disrupters and pioneers in women’s sports in the United States.²

Together, groups like the Wellesley and ZLAC rowing crews and the Los Angeles Athletic Club water polo team and superstars like Gertrude Ederle and Aileen Riggin Soule competed and undermined narratives about the physical and moral infirmity of women athletes. The particular combination of women’s bodies obscured, either in the water or by the distance of spectators on the bank, with the difficult, often endurance-based nature of aquatic sports challenged assumptions about women’s abilities while conforming—at least superficially—to ideas about feminine beauty and modesty.

1. *The San Francisco Call*, “Stanford Wins at Basket-Ball,” April 5, 1896, 9.

2. For prior discussions of visual obfuscation in water-based sport see: Bale & Vertinsky (2004), Kokai (2017), and Vivier (1998).



Emalee Nelson Stone is an Assistant Professor of Instruction in the Department of Kinesiology and Health Education at The University of Texas at Austin. Her research and teaching specializations lie at the intersections of sport, history, society, and culture. Specifically, she studies American women's experiences in sport.

The Bicycle and the Body: Revisiting the Victorian Vehicle in a Complicated Post-*Roe v. Wade* Era

The bicycle, a seemingly simple invention, emerged as a powerful symbol of women's liberation during the Victorian era. While this presentation will revisit the historical and cultural significance of the bicycle and emphasize how cycling challenged traditional gender roles and paved the way for greater freedom and independence for women, it also aims to identify modern modes of fitness as liberation for women. Given the political, social, and cultural turmoil in recent years, American women have sought to regain empowerment through physical expressions of the body. This presentation will identify key connections between the late 19th century women challenging societal norms through movement and women striving to reclaim personal bodily autonomy in the midst of unprecedented ongoing revoking of reproductive rights, notably following the 2022 *Dobbs v. Jackson Supreme Court* ruling. To tell this story, this presentation will incorporate Progressive Era primary source material alongside present day examples and research on fitness, the body, and womanhood. Through this comparison, we can gain a deeper understanding of the bicycle's enduring legacy and its influence in shaping contemporary discussions about gender equality and mobility.



Erin Crowover is a Doctoral Candidate in the Physical Culture and Sports Studies program at the University of Texas at Austin. She received a B.S. in Kinesiology from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and an M.S. in Kinesiology at the University of Texas at Austin. Erin's research interests surround racial and gender attitudes in sports history and early athletic training.

“Chasing Excellence”: The Visionary Athletic Trainer, Tina Bonci

Few sports historians have taken an interest in the fascinating story of the field of early athletic training, specifically at the University of Texas at Austin. UT-Austin, an elite academic and athletic institution, is long considered one of the country's most powerful and successful athletics programs. UT Athletics remains synonymous with the names of Longhorn coaching legends such as Clyde Littlefield, Dana X. Bible, and Darrell Royal, football players Clyde Littlefield and Earl Campbell, and women's basketball player Clarissa Davis. But who were the Longhorn trainers who helped maintain the bodies of these legends? The name Christina (Tina) Bonci most likely does not come to mind as a Longhorn legend. The treatment provided to female student-athletes today and the opportunities available for women in the athletics training profession are due to the vision of individuals like Bonci. Associated with UT-Austin from 1985-2014, she was one of the first in the profession to research women's predisposition to specific injuries and urged companies to create athletic shoes and apparel specifically designed for women. Bonci pioneered a wellness program to prevent unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) among student-athletes and served as lead author of a National Athletic Training Association (NATA) position statement on the detection and prevention of eating disorders in athletes. This paper will focus on the impact of Tina Bonci as an athletic trainer at UT-Austin and on the field of athletic training as a whole. Sources for this paper come from the archives of the H.J. Lutcher Stark Center for Physical Culture and Sport, UT-Austin athletics council meeting minutes, and numerous interviews the author has conducted.



Derek Charles Catsam is Professor of History and the Kathlyn Cosper Dunagan Professor in the Humanities at the University of Texas-Permian Basin and is Senior Research Associate at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa, where he spent 2016 as the Hugh Le May Fellow in the Humanities. His most recent book is an edited collection, *Struggle for a Free South Africa: Campus Anti-Apartheid Movements in Africa and the United States, 1960-1994* (Routledge, 2024). He is currently working on a book on one pivotal day in the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s and another on bus boycotts in the United States and South Africa in the 1940s and 1950s.

Why are Long Jumpers No Longer Jumping Long? Track and Field Records and the Social Element of Human Limits

Beware evocations of golden ages, of glory days, of past greatness that people want to achieve again. This is the stuff of gauzy romanticization, of the worst kinds of pitiable nostalgia, and is the roots of retrograde politics and lousy policy. “Glory days” should be a Springsteen banger, not a political platform. That said, there was a day when men and women ran fast and jumped long. Very, very long. Yet bizarrely, in an era when we take for granted that for a host of reasons athletes today are superior to those who came before them, and in the vast majority of events in track and field all evidence points to that being the case, the long jump is almost literally stuck in the 1980s and 1990s. The world record in the men’s long jump, set by Mike Powell at the Track and Field World Championships in 1991 has not even been approached since. The women’s world record is somehow even older, having been set in 1988. These records are not outliers inasmuch as the all-time long jump lists reinforce the message: Of the all-time men’s top-ten long jumps, only three are from the 21st century, and the best of those only ranks tied for 5th on the all-time list and comes from 2009. The women’s list tells the same story – of the top eleven, due to ties at the 10th slot, only three jumps come from this century, the best being the 5th best jump from 2002. This paper will explore the reasons for this bizarre set of facts less from a scientific perspective than from a socio-cultural one.



Corey H. Johnson has an MLS from North Texas University, a BA in Classics from Texas Tech University, and is a faculty member at Texas Tech University. With over 20 years of international combat sports experience as a mixed martial artist and coach, his research interests and projects consist of ancient Greek sports, athletes, and culture.

Autolykos the Pankratiast and the Body of a Mixed Martial Artist

This paper is part of a larger study of MMA and the ancient Greek pankration. Xenophon's Symposium opens with the spotlight on young Autolykos, a recent victor in the pankration. Autolykos' virtuous character and suitability for learning philosophy are enhanced by his physical beauty, giving him a kind of aura: "just as the sudden glow of a light at night draws all eyes to itself, so now the beauty of Autolykos compelled everyone to look at him."

Of primary interest here is that the paragon of athletic beauty should be a pankratiast, and I situate this within the contention articulated by myself and others that today's Mixed Martial Artist is the closest equivalent of the ancient pankration athlete. This provokes several questions: how is the body of the MMA-athlete assessed? How do onlookers (and the fighters themselves) "read" the body of a combatant in terms of its potential, its technical virtuosity, its vulnerabilities? What is the nexus of desire and admiration at work in this process and how does the modern pankratiast "perfect" his body for the octagon?

The paper will explore these questions with specific examples, using comments by fighters and spectators, and images of ancient pankratiasts juxtaposed with those of exemplary MMA fighters, including Yoel Romero, Brock Lesnar, and Tony Ferguson. Size, muscularity, and durability interact in the individual body, allowing the athlete to go beyond training in combat skills.



Ben Miller is a graduate of NYU film school and has worked in Hollywood for many years as a writer-producer. His study of historical fencing and physical culture at the Martinez Academy of Arms led to his authoring a number of books on those subjects, and the co-founding of the YouTube channel Physical Culture Historians. His current focus is on Pehr Henrik Ling's Swedish method, the German Turner school of physical culture, and fencing history.

The Renaissance Origins of Fencing as a Strength-Enhancing Practice

The Renaissance is not typically regarded as an era rich with primary sources for physical culture—aside from Mercurialis's *De Arte Gymnastica*, and a few texts on vaulting, there being no treatises devoted to the use of calisthenics, weightlifting, or strength training. However, this gap is somewhat filled by the fencing treatises of the era, a number of which contain instructions pertaining to the strength-enhancing benefits of swordsmanship, and which have found little to no mention in modern histories of physical culture.

The earliest fencing treatises (from the late Middle Ages) discuss strength as a virtue and necessary attribute for the practice of the art, but do not mention the value of fencing as a vehicle for the development of health, being strictly concerned with fencing's *raison d'être* of self-defense in armed combat. However, with the increasing dissemination of hygienic texts based on the works of Galen and Hippocrates, and with the publication of several important Italian, Spanish, and English fencing treatises, the "art and science of defense" came to be seen as a vehicle for physical, mental, and spiritual development, as well as for strength cultivation.

In this paper, I examine this evolving idea of how fencing developed strength, and the specific type of strength that it was said to cultivate. In particular, I trace two parallel lines of thought: 1) the idea that exercising with heavier weapons or weighted training implements strengthened and prepared one for the practice of fencing, and 2) the notion that the general practice of fencing itself cultivated health and strength. This last line of thought is significant, as it predates the existence of the first known fencing treatise by approximately two centuries. Additionally, I look at how the weight of fencing weapons, as well as various socio-cultural attitudes, affected notions of strength enhancement via fencing, and discuss auxiliary exercises inspired by fencing practices and techniques, specifically designed to increase strength. In conclusion, fencing should be considered an important part of the history of physical culture, and this relationship deserves further examination.



Rachel Ozerkevich is an Assistant Professor of Instruction in Physical Culture and Sport Studies in the Department of Kinesiology at the University of Texas at Austin. She received her PhD in Art History from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her work focuses on historical and contemporary sports photography, physical culture and the visual arts, and the history of the sports press.

Bodies in Motion? Naïve Painting and Bareknuckle Prizefighting

In George Hayes' *Bare Knuckles* (c. 1870-1885), there is no visible violence. Bareknuckle prize fighting's characteristic pain, gore, and exhaustion are entirely absent from the canvas. Instead, every element in the painting is eerily halted as the artist depicts what should be a brutal activity in a painstakingly deliberate manner, giving every component of the work equal treatment. The composition is packed full, yet every feature is flat and pattern-like thanks to Hayes' "naïve" painting style. Painting at a charged time in prize fighting's history, Hayes explores the sport's setting, costuming, and emerging new regulations using a flattened pictorial language seemingly unsuited to such a fast-paced and violent sport. Hayes' *Bare Knuckles* merges American folkloric painting traditions with an illicit form of popular culture at a time of rapid social change.

This presentation is a brief attempt to deconstruct several important details in Hayes' strange painting—namely, its portrayal of fighters' bodies and its rendering of charged space. I merge a brief discussion of the painting's formal features with its content: the bare-knuckle prize fight and its complex role in mid-late nineteenth century American society. What does it mean to depict an activity so fraught with the period's anxieties over propriety, male violence, and class, in a painting style marked by folk practice and a lack of conventional artistic training? I demonstrate that the visual language effectively stunts our understanding of the sport's violence and motion. The result is a work that turns many of our expectations of boxing and its sensory characteristics on their heads.



Jason Shurley is a Professor of Kinesiology at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. His research focuses on the history of strength training, with a particular interest in the history of professional strength and conditioning. In addition to being a sport historian, he is also a Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC) and Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist (CSCS).

“Remarkable Lifting for Anyone, but Especially for a Woman”: A History of Women’s Powerlifting

The YMCA-YWCA of Nashua, New Hampshire, buzzed with excitement the morning of Sunday, April 17, 1977. Inside of the large hall where the lifting would take place, spectators gathered to near capacity as journalists from *Time-Life* and *womenSports* magazines, as well as local radio and newspaper reporters, and even the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, prepared to record, transcribe, and describe what they were about to witness. And what they were about to witness was an event that Terry Todd would describe as “the official birth of women’s competitive lifting.” While the formal title of the contest was the “First Annual All-American Women’s Powerlifting Meet,” it was effectively the first all-women’s national powerlifting championship. Prior to this contest in 1977, women who were interested in lifting competitively often were limited to entering men’s contests, though there were a handful of all-female lifting competitions before 1977. This presentation will tell the story of the origins and early years of women’s powerlifting as a competitive sport. It will touch on the evolution of the sport itself, from odd lift contests to a modern sport with standardized lifts and rules, and how this sport slowly lost its sex-segregated status as a male-only preserve. Sources for the presentation include physical culture magazines, like *Iron Man*, *Muscular Development*, and *Iron Man Lifting News*, as well as other assorted periodicals.



Jan Todd, the Roy J. McLean Centennial Fellow in Sports History, is a professor in the Department of Kinesiology and Health Education at The University of Texas at Austin. Todd founded and directs the PhD program in Physical Culture and Sport Studies and oversees both the graduate and undergraduate Sport Management programs at UT-Austin. She is the Director of the H.J. Lutchter Stark Center for Physical Culture and Sports.

“How Do I Train to Get Stronger?” Fan Mail and the Evolution of Early Powerlifting Training Methods

In 1964, Terry Todd won the heavyweight division of the first national powerlifting meet sanctioned by the Amateur Atheltic Union. Todd, who was then working on his Ph.D. at the University of Texas in Austin had already begun writing a few articles for both *Iron Man* and *Strength and Health* magazine, but after this victory he was invited to move to York, Pennsylvania, and then helped launch a new magazine called *Muscular Development* that covered both bodybuilding and the new sport of powerlifting. Although he only stayed in York for a short time and returned to Austin to defend his dissertation in 1966, Todd continued to be recognized as an expert on the sport and, over the next decade or so, received dozens of letters from both famous and unknown lifters who wanted to learn how to train for powerlifting.

This presentation uses Todd's private fan mail as a lens to examine the evolution of training ideas in the first decade of the sport's official history. Written by teenagers, novice lifters, and some well-known champions, the letters vividly convey the lack of scientific understanding of training theory in this era and they also help explain why, when Todd published *Inside Powerlifting* in 1977, that the book's inclusion of actual training programs showing sets and reps was as important to the book's success as the biographies of the nine champions he profiled.