

A Further Personal Perspective: Thirty Years in view, IJHS

There is no cure for birth and death save to enjoy the interval. [1]

To set the scene briefly: in the modern world sport is everywhere; it is as ubiquitous as war. E. J. Hobsbawm, the distinguished Marxist historian, once called it one of the most significant of the new practices of late nineteenth century Europe. Today it is one of the significant practices of the world!

Such is its power, politically, culturally, economically, spiritually, aesthetically, that sport beckons the historian more persuasively and compellingly than ever, to borrow and refocus an expression of the radical historian Peter Gay, 'to explore its familiar terrain and to wrest new interpretations from its inexhaustible materials'. [2] As a subject for enquiry, it is replete with profound 'questions unanswered and for that matter, questions unasked'. [3]

Sport seduces the teeming 'global village'; it is the new opiate of the masses; it is one of the great modern experiences; its attraction astonishes only the recluse; its appeal spans the globe.

Without exaggeration, sport is a mirror in which nations, communities, men and women now see themselves. The reflection is sometimes bright, sometimes dark, sometimes distorted, sometimes magnified. This metaphorical mirror is source of mass exhilaration and depression, security and insecurity, pride and humiliation, bonding and alienation.

Sport for many has replaced religion as a source of emotional catharsis and spiritual passion, and for many it is among the earliest of memorable childhood experiences—so it infiltrates memory, shapes enthusiasms, serves fantasies. To co-opt Gay again: it blends memory and desire. None of them ready made. [4]

In consequence of all this, it demands the attention of the historian.

Some reached this conclusion over 25 years ago. One outcome was *The International Journal of the History of Sport*. It was 'conceived' in the London Offices of the visionary academic publisher Frank Cass in 1981, 'born' after a long gestation in 1983 as *The British Journal of Sports History* and since the 'infant' proved sturdy, was renamed, in 1985, as always intended, as *IJHS* and sent out into the world.

It had two robust 'parents': the well received monograph *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School* published by Cambridge University Press in 1981, and the British Society of Sports History, formed a little later.

2 J.A. Mangan

The ever-alert Frank Cass noted both 'parents' and invited me to meet him. He recognised that sport was inexcusably neglected in academia; he appreciated that its time had come. It was a time of change and a time for change.

IJHS, an academic Topsy, grew and grew. The first number had 107 pages; the first number of 1997 had 245 pages. The Editorial Boards steadily accumulated distinguished academics from all parts of the world. The annual numbers progressively increased—three in 1985, four in 1998, five in 2002, six in 2004 and eight in 2005.

In passing, it should be noted that there were later Cass 'offspring' closely related to *IJHS*. These were the journals *Sport, Culture and Society* (now *Sport in Society*), *Soccer and Society* and *The European Sports History Review* (now *The International Sports History Review*) and the very successful series, *Sport in the Global Society*.

Frank Cass retired in 2003. He will always be remembered by this founding Editor of *IJHS*. His 'child' was adopted by Routledge (T&F) Journals. It has been a happy and successful adoption. Shortly before his retirement, Robert Hands of *The Times* wrote—fittingly and pleasingly in his case:

The growth of sports studies in the past 20 years has been considerable. Most of [the] intelligent research in the public domain has been published by Frank Cass under the aegis of Professor J.A. Mangan . . . and social historians everywhere have reason to thank this double act for their tenacity in seeking out this new field.

IJHS was a Cass child; it is now a Routledge (Journals) adult. Many nurtured it through childhood; academics, publishers and one invaluable 'housewife'. It is an appropriate moment to thank them all for their enthusiasm, energy and support.

The introduction of the Regional Numbers, the Annual Supplementary Collections, the Bi-Annual Collections, the Global Network of Conference Workshops and the forthcoming expansion of the editorial team to include a host of senior academics greatly respected in academia covering Europe, North America and Asia who will add greatly to the quality of the editorial membership -all these innovations will enhance further the international standing of *IJHS*.

J. A. MANGAN

Founding and Executive Academic Editor
The International Journal of the History of Sport

Notes

[1] Santayana, "War Shrines", 535.

[2] Gay, *Style in History*, 2.

[3] Gay, *Style in History*, 2.

[4] Gay, *Style in History*, 12.

References

Gay, Peter, *Style in History*, New York: W.W. Norton, 1974.

Santayana, George, "War Shrines", in *Soliloquies in England*, quoted in Angela

Partington (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.