



Historical Perspectives Related to Physical Activity

KIN 251
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What is History?

According to the American Historical Association:

History is the never-ending process whereby people seek to understand the past and its many meanings. The institutional and intellectual forms of history's dialogue with the past have changed enormously over time, but the dialogue itself has been part of the human experience for millennia.

We all interpret and narrate the past, which is to say that we all participate in making history. It is among our most fundamental tools for understanding ourselves and the world around us.

American Historical Association Website: <http://www.historians.org/governance/pdf/ProfessionalIssues.cfm>

Introduction

- How is history constructed?
 - Multiple perspectives
 - Multiple sources of information
- What does it mean to be a historian?
 - They interpret and analyze evidence to form conclusions
- What are the processes of historical research and inquiry?
 - Investigation of evidence through sourcing, corroboration and contextualization

Introduction (cont)

- Historical research does not have the traditional parts of a quantitative (or qualitative) study.
- Even though the structure is more like storytelling, it *is* systematic.
- Defining research paradigms
 - What is historical evidence; what counts as data?
 - How does social change proceed? Is it cumulative and linear or in spurts?
 - Exploring lines of inquiry and particular topics
 - Investigating *secondary* sources
 - Developing good questions

Historical Sources

Primary Sources

Primary sources are first-hand accounts of an event or time in history that has yet to be interpreted by another person.

- Examples of primary sources include:
 - diaries, journals, letters, interviews, speeches, memos, manuscripts and other first-person accounts
 - memoirs and autobiographies
 - official records such as government publications, census data, court reports, police records

Historical Sources

- minutes, reports, correspondence of an organization or agency
- newspaper and magazine articles, viewed as a whole, during the time of the event
- photographs, paintings, film and television programs, audio recordings which document an event
- research such as opinion polls which document attitudes and thought during the time of an event
- artifacts such as objects, tools, clothing, etc. of the time period or event
- communication through multimedia venues such as listservs, chatrooms, and electronic journals

Historical Sources (cont)

Secondary Sources

Secondary sources are scholarly books or articles that are based on primary source data and analyze, critique, report, summarize, interpret, or restructure that data. They can also be based on a reading of other secondary sources or a combination of primary source data and secondary sources.

- Examples of secondary sources include:
- reference books such as encyclopedias, handbooks, etc.
- reviews
- textbooks
- most scholarly books
- most magazine and journal articles

Historical Sources (cont)

Tertiary Sources (Finding Tools)

Tertiary sources are finding tools that index and/or document available primary and secondary sources.

- Examples include:
- library catalog
- magazine, journal, and newspaper databases or print indexes
- government documents databases or print indexes
- bibliographies
- literature guides
- finding aids to archival collections

Proceed with caution...

- In the case of historical sources, it is important to ask critical questions. Indeed, one's paradigmatic stance (as we shall see) certainly have an important bearing on the conclusions one may draw...

Research Paradigms

- The Modernization Paradigm
 - Show how characteristics of modern society are found in sporting practices (but there were problems) Guttman's *From Ritual to Record*
- "Human Agency" Paradigm: People are 'makers of their history' rather than reactive to historical conditions Gorn's: *The Manly Art*
- Splinter paradigms that focus on issues of power with respect to gender, race and class
- Postmodern Paradigms: reject absolute objectivity, and 'master narratives.' Foreground language and knowledge production

Research Paradigms

- Argue that particular sports or particular people will have particular histories
 - Who writes history?
 - What 'evidence' do they use?
 - Can history change? How?
- Most historians use a combination of paradigms

Research Questions?

- So, what would make a good research question?
- Let's take Baseball for example:
 - Many dimensions of baseball remain under- studied
 - Info on local teams
 - Experience of women and minorities
 - International understandings
 - Issues of power between owners and players
 - Others?
- Useful to examine Secondary Resources

Designing the Research

- Descriptive history: What happened
 - A map of what happened
 - Landmarks or markers on the map
- Analytical history: How and why it happened
 - How did this come to be?
 - Why did this come to be?
- Narrative history emphasizes a story but uses both 'tools' of analytic and descriptive history.

Working With Evidence

- Questions asked become more specific as one works with the evidence.
- Locating primary sources: Go where the sources are.
- Criticizing the sources
 - External criticism: Is this authentic?
 - Internal criticism: Is it credible?
- Reading the evidence: What is this evidence of?
- Considering the context
- If History is not just uncovering facts, what is it??

Evidence Revisited

Evidence Revisited: Interpreting Historical Materials in Sport History

- According to Booth: Facts are one thing, but interpretation OF those facts is something altogether different.
- Offers three objectives and epistemological assumptions of sport history:
 - Reconstructive
 - Constructive
 - Deconstructive

Evidence Revisited (cont)



Table 4 Epistemological Assumptions of Oral Testimony (and Memory)

Historical material	Epistemological assumptions		
	Reconstructionism	Constructionism	Deconstructionism
Oral testimony	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral evidence produced through structured interviews Detachment from subjects essential <p>1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral testimony contextualized within theory to reveal reality <p>2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral evidence produced in negotiated dialogue Involvement with informants a virtue <p>3</p>
Memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Memory variously an obstacle to, or a databank of, the past Memory & forgetting: distinct conditions Truth & falsity: absolute values <p>4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Memory contextualized within theory to reveal reality <p>5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Memory a creative construction produced in dialogue Memory & forgetting: one & the same Truth & falsity: obsolete concepts <p>6</p>

Evidence Revisited (cont)



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Table 5 Epistemological Assumptions of Photographs and Films

Historical material	Epistemological assumptions		
	Reconstructionism	Constructionism	Deconstructionism
Films	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentary films & historical practice generally incompatible Films: powerful mediums for transporting viewers to events <p>1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Films contextualized within theory to reveal reality <p>2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentary films & historical practice both fictional creations <p>3</p>
Photos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Photographs represent <i>prima facie</i> evidence Reception resides in non-theorized context & circumstances of the image which limit alternative interpretations <p>4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Photographs contextualized within theory to reveal reality Reception resides in theorized context and circumstances of the image which limit alternative interpretations <p>5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Photographs: ambiguous texts passed through many mediating filters New theories—semiology, structuralism, psychoanalysis—assist interpretation Different interpretations are normal <p>6</p>

Pope: The New American Sport History

- Moving from a modernization theory of sport (i.e. Guttman's work) Pope challenges sport historians to embrace "new" paradigms from cultural studies and critical sport sociology to re-examine sport in America.
- National Culture
- Gender and the Body
- Class Race & Ethnicity
- Markets & Audiences

1919 Chicago Black Sox Scandal

- A multi-textual historical media analysis of the 1919 Chicago Black Sox Scandal
 - *Baseball*
 - *8 Men Out*
 - *Field of Dreams*
 - *Dream Fields*
