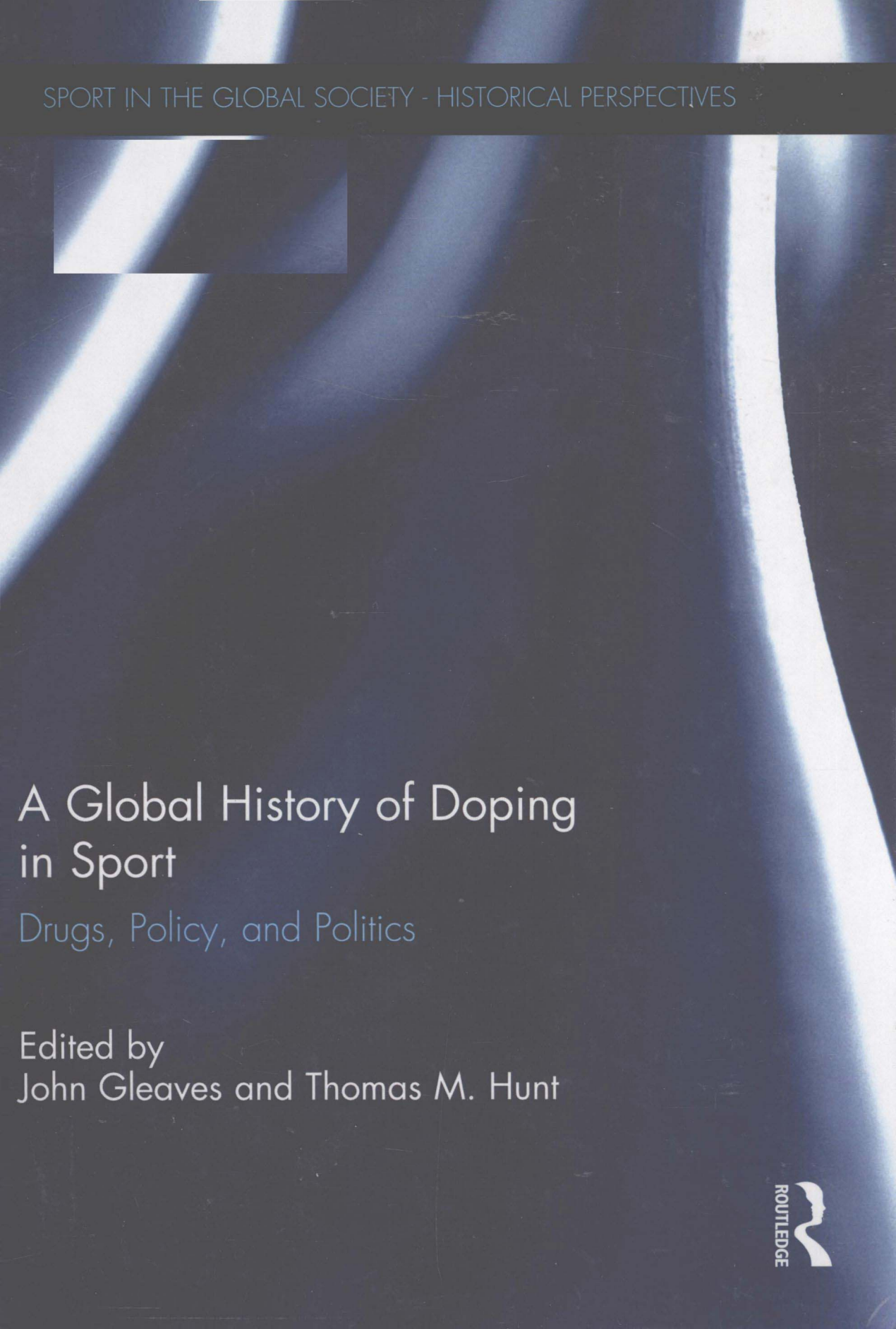
SPORT IN THE GLOBAL SOCIETY - HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES



A Global History of Doping in Sport

Drugs, Policy, and Politics

Edited by
John Gleaves and Thomas M. Hunt

ROUTLEDGE

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A Global History of Doping in Sport

From turn-of-the-century horseracing to the monolithic anti-doping attitudes now supported by sporting organisations, the development of anti-doping ideology has spread throughout modern sport. Yet heretofore few historians have explored the many ways that international sport has responded to doping. This book seeks to fill that gap by examining different aspects of sport's global efforts to respond to athletes doping. By incorporating cultural, political, and feminist histories that examine international responses to doping, this book aims to better articulate the narrative of doping. The work starts with the first mention of doping in any sport. It examines not only the first efforts to ban doping but also the athletes who sought performance enhancers. Focusing on specific framing events, authors in this book examine the history of doping and how it has indelibly marked the sporting landscape. The result is a work with both breadth and focus. From stories of Japanese swimmers to Italian runners to American jockeys, the work spans the range of doping history. At the same time, the authors remain focused around one single issue: the history of doping in sport.

This book was originally published as a special issue of the *International Journal of the History of Sport*.

John Gleaves is an assistant professor at California State University, Fullerton and the co-director of the International Network of Humanistic Doping Research. His research on doping examines the historical and ethical dimensions of performance-enhancement and the cultural conversation that surrounds the practice. He has authored numerous articles and book chapters exploring the socio-cultural issues related to doping and performance enhancing drugs in sports in refereed journals.

Thomas M. Hunt is an assistant professor of Kinesiology & Health Education at the University of Texas and the H.J. Lutcher Stark Center for Physical Culture and Sports Assistant Director for Academic Affairs. He specialises in the political history of doping in sport as well as sport policy, law, and history. He is the author of many articles on doping and has recently published the book *Drug Games: The International Olympic Committee and the Politics of Doping, 1960–2008*, which examines the history of the International Olympic Committee's reaction to doping.

Series Editors' Foreword

On January 1, 2010 *Sport in the Global Society*, created by Professor J. A. Mangan in 1997, was divided into two parts: *Historical Perspectives* and *Contemporary Perspectives*. These new categories involve predominant rather than exclusive emphases. The past is part of the present and the present is part of the past. The Editors of *Historical Perspectives* are Mark Dyreson and Thierry Terret.

The reasons for the division are straightforward. SGS has expanded rapidly since its creation with over one hundred publications in some twelve years. Its editorial teams will now benefit from sectional specialist interests and expertise. *Historical Perspectives* draws on *International Journal of the History of Sport* monograph reviews, themed collections and conference/workshop collections. It is, of course, international in content.

Historical Perspectives continues the tradition established by the original incarnation of *Sport in the Global Society* by promoting the academic study of one of the most significant and dynamic forces in shaping the historical landscapes of human cultures. Sport spans the contemporary globe. It captivates vast audiences. It defines, alters, and reinforces identities for individuals, communities, nations, empires, and the world. Sport organises memories and perceptions, arouses passions and tensions, and reveals harmonies and cleavages. It builds and blurs social boundaries, animating discourses about class, gender, race, and ethnicity. Sport opens new vistas on the history of human cultures, intersecting with politics and economics, ideologies and theologies. It reveals aesthetic tastes and energises consumer markets.

By the end of the twentieth century a critical mass of scholars recognised the importance of sport in their analyses of human experiences and *Sport in the Global Society* emerged to provide an international outlet for the world's leading investigators of the subject. As Professor Mangan contended in the original series foreword: 'The story of modern sport is the story of the modern world – in microcosm; a modern global tapestry permanently being woven. Furthermore, nationalist and imperialist, philosopher and politician, radical and conservative have all sought in sport a manifestation of national identity, status and superiority. Finally for countless millions sport is the personal pursuit of ambition, assertion, well-being and enjoyment.'

Sport in the Global Society: Historical Perspectives continues the project, building on previous work in the series and excavating new terrain. It remains a consistent and coherent response to the attention the academic community demands for the serious study of sport.

Mark Dyreson
Thierry Terret

SPORT IN THE GLOBAL SOCIETY –
HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Series Editors: Mark Dyreson and Thierry Terret

A GLOBAL HISTORY OF DOPING IN SPORT

Sport in the Global Society: Historical Perspectives
Series Editors: Mark Dyreson and Thierry Terret

As Robert Hands in *The Times* recently observed, the growth of sports studies in recent years has been considerable. This unique series with over one hundred volumes in the last decade has played its part. Politically, culturally, emotionally and aesthetically, sport is a major force in the modern world. Its impact will grow as the world embraces ever more tightly the contemporary secular trinity: the English language, technology and sport. *Sport in the Global Society* will continue to record sport's phenomenal progress across the world stage.

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Chapter 6

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Kathryn Henne
International Journal of the History of Sport, volume 31, issue 8 (April 2014) pp. 884–901

Chapter 7

Drugs, the Law, and the Downfall of Dancer's Image at the 1968 Kentucky Derby: A Case Study on Human Conceptions of Domesticated Animals
Thomas M. Hunt, Scott R. Jedlicka and Matthew T. Bowers
International Journal of the History of Sport, volume 31, issue 8 (April 2014) pp. 902–913

Chapter 8

Minor Problems: The Recognition of Young Athletes in the Development of International Anti-Doping Policies
Sarah Teetzel and Marcus Mazzucco
International Journal of the History of Sport, volume 31, issue 8 (April 2014) pp. 914–933

Chapter 9

Who Guards the Guardians?
Verner Møller
International Journal of the History of Sport, volume 31, issue 8 (April 2014) pp. 934–950

Chapter 10

Why Lance Armstrong? Historical Context and Key Turning Points in the 'Cleaning Up' of Professional Cycling
Paul Dimeo
International Journal of the History of Sport, volume 31, issue 8 (April 2014) pp. 951–968

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Contents

INTRODUCTION

A Global History of Doping in Sport: Drugs, Nationalism and Politics

John Gleaves

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The philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein admonished his fellow philosophers, saying 'Don't think, but look!'[1] Wittgenstein protested his field's desire to overly theoritise in lieu of actually going out into the messy world and getting some mud on their boots. It is not that thinking, or theory, was bad – after all, Wittgenstein was a philosopher – but it is that the thinking, when it replaces looking, when it comes before looking, can cause investigations to miss the very phenomena they are after. We mistake our assumptions and theories for immutable truths and miss the inconvenient messiness that often lurks in the real world. To grasp the important things, Wittgenstein concluded, we need not do more reasoning or theoretising, but rather look more attentively at what lies before us.

Such an admonition from the likes of Wittgenstein seemed appropriate for the historical understanding of doping research. From Lance Armstrong and Barry Bonds to the Cold War 'Big Arms' race between the USA and the Soviet Union and rumours of Nazi steroid use, sport and stories about performance-enhancing substances capture the public imagination.[2] This interest has generated numerous discussions among academics as well as the media and the general public, who in large part reference historical examples to illustrate general lessons about the nature of doping. Yet such conversations – as well as some academic writing – have come littered with myths, half-truths and unverified assumptions.[3] However, recent work has illustrated the value of the 'Don't think, but look' approach and deconstructed a handful of these historical narratives, questioning their accuracy and functional value and illustrating the ability for historians to shed insights on culturally loaded topics.[4]

Why is Wittgenstein's quote to 'Don't think, but look' so prescient for the field of sport history in general and doping in particular? The historian Paul Dimeo self-reflexively notes in the prologue to his work *A History of Drug Use in Sport* that he

> had been reading around in sports history, thinking of getting into the methodological debates then emerging on textuality, discourse and representation. The question of doping and anti-doping seemed ripe for a deconstructionist-type approach that unpicked the cultural and political values underpinning the ostensibly 'good' anti-doping ideology ... However, it was frustrating to read, in so many different places, passages of historical narrative that failed to meet even the most fundamental requirements of reasonably good historiography. They did not use primary sources, they unquestioningly repeated secondary sources that contained no evidence, they used invented stories from the past to prove points about the present, and they failed to ask any contextual questions.[5]

Dimeo's frustration grew in the case of Arthur Linton, a Welsh cyclist widely cited as the first ever death from doping. Citations for Linton's death range from academic

publications by Barrie Houlihan and Ivan Waddington to institutional claims found on the website of the World Anti-Doping Agency and the United Nation's UNESCO report on drugs in sport.[6] The claim, more or less, holds that Arthur Linton died after the Bordeaux–Paris race of 1886 after taking trimethyl. How these authors arrived at such hard evidence is unclear since the authors provide no citations of any record or any good source of evidence. Reproducing uncited claims is bad enough, but even worse, Dimeo points out, is that this story is a falsehood. Based on contemporary media accounts including his obituary in the *London Times*, we can say that Linton did not die in 1886 but in 1896, not from drugs but from typhoid fever, and successfully won more cycling races in the decade between his alleged death and his obituary's publication. Such evidence should at least cast doubt for any scholar wishing to cite Linton's death as the earliest example of a doping-related fatality.[7]

Now to be sure, there are objective historical facts. History cannot be written any which way. And while how historians interpret and understand these facts is a subjective process laden with biases and reflexivity and the sources historians use do not exist inert in a valueless state, it is also true that historians can, more or less, get closer to these objective facts by looking. It also seems useful for these more or less verified facts to guide historical analysis and context; with such facts in place, historians can begin making sense of the past in ways that mean something to the present.

This process, which each author has contributed to, is so important in historical scholarship because, as Dimeo noted, the field of doping is ripe with myths and unquestioned stories. A case in point was that of the Danish cyclist Knud Enemark Jensen. Jensen, the first athlete to ever die during an Olympic Games, was alleged to have died from amphetamines at the 1960 Rome Olympic Games. News reports went so far as to allege the amphetamines as the cause of death and you can still find today sources linking the stimulants to Jensen's demise. However, like Linton, this story turned out not to be true. The Danish scholar Verner Møller examined the case and found no evidence of Jensen's use of amphetamines. Møller, citing the direct language from the autopsy report, concluded that 'the death of Knud Enemark Jensen was caused solely by heatstroke' and that post-mortem examinations showed no signs of amphetamines.[8] True, Jensen had taken a vasodiollator roniacol (the opposite of a stimulant) which may have worsened his condition, but this still does not support the press accounts linking his death to amphetamines. In fact, on the World Anti-Doping Agency's website, you can still find the following: 'The death of Danish cyclist Knud Enemark Jensen during competition at the Olympic Games in Rome 1960 (the autopsy revealed traces of amphetamine) increased the pressure for sports authorities to introduce drug testing'.[9] So I point this story out as simply a tale of caution. We must critically consider our sources and, when citing documents which we have not accessed, must be sure to note this fact.

As mentioned previously, the historiography of doping illustrates a proclivity towards accepting certain truths – that doping causes death, was not banned until after a cyclist died or contradicts the tradition of sport – that conform with popular views of doping today. This, as the behavioural psychologist Daniel Kahneman argued, is a common cognitive fallacy known as confirmation bias.[10] Confirmation bias is the tendency to interpret information in a way that confirms one's preconceptions. In academia, where scholars tend to reproduce accepted views through citations and references to secondary work, confirmation bias becomes even easier so that when Waddington cited Houlihan's recounting of Linton's death, preconceptions become strengthened into accepted paradigms. With Jensen's death, the willingness to believe a cyclist died from amphetamines, despite no evidence supporting this claim, still lives on in popular lore.