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Chapter 18

USA

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USA

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The shadows of slavery and its aftermath long distorted the study of sport's connection to race and ethnicity in the USA. Scholars, public intellectuals, and the public discussed race's nexus with sport almost exclusively as a binary matter involving African-Americans and Caucasians. Both of these groups were largely portrayed as homogeneous racial aggregations, their internal class, ethnic, and regional differences muted. Meanwhile, indigenous people and immigrants from North America, the Caribbean basin, Asia, and the Pacific were pushed to the sidelines as the African-American struggle to gain access to the mainstream of sport drove the overarching historical narrative. Stressing a before-and-after dynamic, scholars addressed either the impact of African-Americans' exclusion from, or their subsequent inclusion in, the nation's sporting life. Painting with a broad brush, they treated segregation as lamentable and integration as redemptive, but neither segregation's upside nor integration's downside were broached.

This binary approach also distorted and downplayed study of the disparate European immigrant communities that began forming in the USA during the nineteenth century. Little was made of old country traditions that shaped immigrants' sporting lives in their new homes. Instead, importance was placed on gaining access to the sporting mainstream and succeeding at the highest levels once there.

The sons and grandsons of mid-nineteenth-century immigrants from Ireland were lauded for rising to the upper ranks of boxing and baseball, and Irish-American athletic accomplishments were considered as evidence of their successful Americanization. This was part of the Irish, as some argued, "becoming white." As they gained a degree of power in the workplace, local politics, the church, and sport by the early twentieth century, Irish-Americans enjoyed substantial economic mobility and were portrayed as having assimilated into society. Melding into white America, their acceptance was facilitated by their symbolic success in the boxing ring and on the baseball diamond, as well as by skin color.²

The arrival of later waves of European immigrants from Southern, Eastern, and Central Europe, like that of the Irish diaspora before them, brought a virulent nativism to the surface. But unlike African-Americans, these new immigrants and their children were not denied the chance to prove themselves in most sporting venues. Indeed sport, especially baseball, was thought to be a meritocracy, a vehicle that affirmed white immigrants and their sons' capacity to overcome the disadvantages of class or nationality, and thus prove themselves worthy of

citizenship: of being considered as Americans. Like the Irish, these varied wayfarers were ultimately perceived as Europeans whose whiteness underscored their capacity to Americanize. The stigma these new immigrants faced gradually faded, especially after the *Quota Acts* of the 1920s curtailed immigration from the parts of Europe from which they hailed. By the end of the Second World War, their children and grandchildren had gained a larger degree of acceptance. That opportunity to fit in and be perceived as American citizens, however, was denied to those who were not Caucasian.

A few of the new immigrants' descendants, like Hank Greenberg or Joe DiMaggio, were lionized as athletic icons and regarded as harbingers of Jewish or Italian acceptance. But little attention was paid to the connections between sport and the Jewish or Italian-American communities from which they emerged. Instead, the emphasis on segregation and the perception of race as a black or white affair diverted attention from the distinctive sporting patterns that had taken shape among these diverse European-American communities at a time when they had yet to be recognized as white by many native-born Anglo-Saxons. That binary also ignored class and skin color tensions within the African-American community; instead, it treated them as one homogeneous mass.³

But during the 1960s and 1970s, the civil rights movement and a turn toward social history triggered a sea change in the ways in which historians and other scholars connected sport to race and ethnicity. The energy generated by the civil rights struggle, especially as it morphed into a black power movement, spurred efforts to uncover the critical arenas where African-Americans exerted control over their own sporting lives. Meanwhile, social and labor history, which drew strength from the social and political movements taking to the street, identified common sporting ground in which parallels regarding the roles and meanings of sport could be drawn across racial and ethnic boundaries. Though the racial binary continues to hang over the study of sport in the USA, it no longer remains unchallenged, sucking up all the oxygen in the academy.

Sport was a terribly underdeveloped field of study in the USA until the 1970s. While European scholars were in the vanguard of those investigating the social and historical importance of sport, American academics lagged behind. Their studies of sport in North America focused on institutional and biographical actors but lacked in-depth analysis and did not resonate with either a larger scholarly audience or the public. The stress on teams and champions also fostered an almost exclusive focus on boys and men. Women, who were on the unacknowledged side of the gender binary, never entered the frame and their absence was rarely questioned, much less challenged. Few poked into what Lara Putnam described as "the spaces of informal sport in non-white, working class communities (streets, alleys, fields) [that were] open to girls."⁴ When notions of race became part of the discussion, they usually concerned the institutional racism that segregated American sport all the way from the professional level down to scholastic play and neighborhood recreational facilities. Other more ambiguous or complex aspects of sport's racial nexus were ignored.

Most scholars and journalists addressing these issues decried segregation's unfairness, underscored the lost opportunities or difficulties men like Fleetwood Walker, Jack Johnson, or Jessie Owens encountered, or heralded their against-the-odds triumphs. Only a few intrepid African-American public intellectuals and scholars, notably Edwin Henderson and Ocania Chalk, sought to legitimize African-American sport during the decades when a color line prevailed. Their work also dealt primarily with institutional sport and its pantheon of heroes, but these pioneers began to address some of the class differences among African-Americans and how that affected sport.⁵

By changing the point of view, and looking at matters from the other side of the color line, scholars ventured beyond a narrative of victimization. Instead of depicting African-Americans

as at the mercy of segregated professional leagues and colleges, they began exploring what sport meant to the creation of a sense of community on the local and national levels. They recovered a sporting scene that had been downplayed because it was the by-product of segregation and, for some, an embarrassing or guilt-inducing reflection of those times. These efforts, along with the social history sensibility that infused many scholars and public intellectuals, explored how sport figured into constructing different notions of race and racial identity. They allowed a more nuanced sense of class, ideas of respectability, and identity to emerge.⁶

The new social history, moreover, prompted a history-from-below perspective that energized the study of sport. Since then, the story of African-Americans in sport has been rescued from the condescension of a limiting binary narrative that revolved around integration. Scholars subsequently expanded the definition of race to bring indigenous peoples, Hispanics, Asian-Americans, and Pacific Islanders into the story and delved into the ways in which Irish, Italian, Jewish, and other European immigrants used sport to shape and comfort their lives. Asking new questions and looking at the past from a different vantage point, they are reshaping our sense of the nation's sporting past.⁷ They are bringing girls and women, as well as new questions regarding sexuality and sport, into the conversation.

Perhaps it was inevitable, as Patrick Miller and David Wiggins wrote in the preface to their edited volume, *Sport and the Color Line*, that what they called the "long and arduous struggle to relegate Jim Crow to the sidelines in American sport during the course of the twentieth century" took center stage in both popular and academic consciousness.⁸ While the failure to reconstruct American society after the Civil War marred sport, as it did most aspects of life, the essays that Miller and Wiggins assembled showed how much sport illuminated these larger socio-political realities. They divided their book into three sections: "Sport and Community in the Era of Jim Crow," "The Ordeal of Desegregation," and "Images of the Black Athlete and the Racial Politics of Sport." The essays in the volume offered a comprehensive picture that stretches from the sporting institutions that African-Americans built in segregated community and educational institutions to the significance of barrier breakers like Joe Louis and Jackie Robinson, and transcendent figures like Muhammad Ali and Michael Jordan.

That Wiggins was the volume's co-editor should come as no surprise. Perhaps no other scholar has written more widely about the black sporting experience in the USA. His essays, ranging from the play of slave children, portraits of largely forgotten nineteenth-century black boxers and jockeys, the efforts of African-American journalists like Wendell Smith, to the debate over genetics, race, and sport, became the starting point for other scholars.⁹ Previous efforts stressed the barriers excluding African-Americans from a whites-only sporting mainstream and obscured the world that African-Americans created for themselves on the other side of the color line. Wiggins and his fellow travelers began to look at the ways in which African-Americans socialized and entertained themselves on plantations during slavery and in free black communities in the North before and after the Civil War. Wiggins, whose scholarly coming of age was shaped by the reemergence of an emphasis on slavery and race in the academy as well as the ethos of the 1960s, drew upon the slave narratives conducted by the Works Progress Administration and edited by George Rawick. They brought African-American voices into the conversation; scholars like Wiggins kept them there.¹⁰

Wiggins was not the only scholar to re-cast the connections between race, sport, and ethnicity in new and revealing ways. Some of that work maintained an institutional and biographical focus; other studies soon began posing new questions and approaches. Randy Roberts' biographies of boxers Jack Johnson, Jack Dempsey, and Joe Louis, Jules Tygiel's *Baseball's Great Experiment: Jackie Robinson and His Legacy*, and Peter Levine's *Ellis Island to*

Ebbets Field: Sport and the American Jewish Experience are scholarly yet exceptionally accessible and revealing narratives anchored in contexts that tell stories about sport, race, and ethnicity.¹¹ They went well beyond the uncritical hagiography that characterized most earlier biographies of athletes. Others followed in their wake.

Steven Riess, Linda Borish, and Jeffrey Gurock developed American Jewry's sporting experience in a number of articles and books, including women in the story. Others did much the same with the Irish.¹² George Kirsch and his co-editors assembled a comprehensive encyclopedia of ethnicity and sport in the USA, bringing sports like lacrosse, Gaelic football, European-American gymnastic societies, and *bocce* into the discussion.¹³ But these sports and their ethnic ties remain relatively understudied, at least in comparison to the scholarly and popular emphasis on sport in African-American urban communities.¹⁴

Many of these and related studies beg the question as to whether their subjects are collectively defined by race, nationality, religion, or a combination of such markers. Moreover, to what degree did these collective identities evolve or disintegrate over time. While these classifications can be elastic and mutable, they can also oversimplify matters and sometimes confuse as much as they clarify. Perhaps it is best to think of these categories as overlapping, ambiguous, and malleable, instead of static and definitive distinctions.

In addition to considering the damage wrought by segregation, these new interlocutors asked what the sporting world that African-Americans created meant for African-Americans, as well as for other races, and for sport itself. They focused on African-American sport where it was most able to develop – in the urban North – and examined its evolution from the Civil War through the Great Migration, the Second World War, and the civil rights movement. By looking at the Negro Leagues as a by-product of the Great Migration to the North rather than as a sorry spectacle resulting from segregation, different points of emphasis emerged. The Negro Leagues, black sandlots, and other institutions that African-Americans created for themselves revealed that sport was a force for cohesion after the tumultuous Great Migration. Baseball and boxing bridged differences among African-Americans based on place of birth, social class, and skin color. They lent a sense of national identity to African-Americans scattered across a greater geographical area. Sport also offered a cultural counterpoint to the discrimination encountered in the workplace or in politics, one where African-American power and ability fostered a stronger self-image. The shift in focus meant that new questions emerged regarding the nature of integration in sport and what was lost in the process. Integration caused the death of independent black baseball; as a result, the black community lost a significant degree of control over its own sporting life. As that turn of events affected the role that sport would play in African-American communities, sport was increasingly perceived more as a way out of the community than a way to create the social capital to build it. Not only the Negro Leagues but other black institutions – newspapers, historically black colleges and universities, and businesses – often suffered because of the ways in which integration occurred. They lost the captive clientele that segregation had created and found it difficult to compete with better capitalized, white-owned concerns after integration. The consequences of how sport and other institutions integrated have continued to plague African-Americans.

The cultural turn, critical race theory, and gender studies also inspired new questions. In 1989, Susan Birrell called for a conception of race “as a culturally produced marker of a particular relationship of power, to see racial identity as contested, and to ask how racial relations are produced and reproduced through sport.” Others, notably John Hoberman, Adrian Burgos, and Ben Carrington, have ably answered her call.¹⁵ In 1994, a few years after Birrell's challenge, Jeffrey Sammons wrote a prodigious critique of scholarship pertaining to race in North America. After comprehensively surveying the field, he concluded that its “scholarship remains wedded

to dated methods, limited theory, and narrative structure.” Sammons called for greater use of newer research methods and more openness to multidisciplinary and cultural approaches. In the last 20 years, as a younger cohort of scholars embraced new ways of studying race and sport, some of his challenge has been answered. These scholars are posing new research questions that reflect the intellectual work that molded their formative years.

Ironically, the study of the Negro Leagues opened up a more transnational agenda for the study of sport in the USA. A two-way flow of players between the USA and the Caribbean basin has characterized professional baseball for over a century. Significant numbers of Latinos, especially Cubans, played in the Negro Leagues, while those able to cross the color line that had been drawn in the 1890s entered white professional baseball. Meanwhile, hundreds of Negro Leaguers and major leaguers played winter ball in and around the Caribbean. This flow of Caucasians, descendants of the African diaspora, indigenous people, and mixes thereof within professional baseball confused both participants and the sporting public as to notions of race and nationality. Oftentimes, it was not so easy to determine a person’s nationality or race. In the early 1900s, black teams sometimes masqueraded as Cubans in order to skirt racial boundaries and play to larger crowds.

In Latin America, a more fluid and nuanced definition of race prevailed, one that ventured beyond the binary racial code of the USA. Racism’s contradictions became more apparent when men who were teammates in Cuban or Mexican winter leagues went their segregated ways in the USA during the summer season. After integration, darker-skinned players from the Caribbean often found themselves in trouble after unwittingly – or defiantly – transgressing the racial code in the American South.¹⁶

In writing about Jackie Robinson, the Negro Leagues, and the barnstorming black ballclubs who were part of this transnational circuit, Jules Tygiel, Donn Rogosin, Neil Lanctot *et. al.* brought an increasingly transnational dimension to their work. Adrian Burgos went even further, questioning notions of racial categories in baseball, a pastime prized as much in parts of the Caribbean basin as in the USA.¹⁷ Alan Klein expanded this transnational picture by studying baseball on the border between the USA and Mexico, emphasizing a different set of racial, cultural, and national tensions.¹⁸

Black and Latin baseball were inextricably linked by their relation to major league baseball’s racial policies. After Jackie Robinson’s success opened the way for Latin players with darker complexions, their numbers in the major leagues edged upward throughout the 1950s and 1960s and then exploded. So did the Hispanic American population in the USA, which would outnumber people of African descent in the nation by the early twenty-first century. The number of Latinos in major league baseball, meanwhile, surpassed that of African-Americans. In recent years, Latinos have comprised over one-quarter of all major leaguers and 40+ percent of minor leaguers. The Latin cohort is currently more than three times larger than the number of African-Americans in major league baseball. Their presence meant that questions of race and nationality in sport became salient and that they could no longer be seen as simply a matter of black and white. The growing number of Japanese and Korean players has brought another group of athletes to the field. A few outliers from Southeast Asia and Africa might join them within the decade, injecting even more nuances to popular and scholarly understanding of race and ethnicity in American sport.

Baseball was the harbinger of American sport’s globalization, one that has brought Africans, Canadians, West Indians, Polynesians, Australians, Japanese, and others to compete in the USA, especially at the collegiate level, in recent years. These border-hopping players have become part of the conversation. Africans compete in collegiate track and field and basketball as well as on the road-racing and marathon circuit. Some come as seasonal sporting migrants who train and

compete (and often attend school) but retain residency in their homelands. Other African boys moved here in high school to play basketball and seek college scholarships and/or a path to professional play. The sons of other African émigrés who were born or grew up here have become a presence in high school football. This trend reflected the large increase in African migration to the USA.¹⁹ While only about 80,000 Africans resided in the USA in 1970, their numbers have more or less doubled every decade since, reaching 1.6 million in recent years, or about 4 percent of the foreign-born population. Many go on to play NCAA ball and a select few will make it to the NFL. Similarly, Haitian boys who grew up playing football in Florida and Polynesians, especially Samoans and Tongans, who did the same in Hawai'i, California, and Utah have appeared at higher levels of the game. Samoan football and rugby players, South African swimmers, Jamaican runners, Brazilian volleyball players, and soccer players from several continents reflect American sport's increasingly global as well as its racially and ethnically mixed make-up.

Scholars have reaffirmed the importance of viewing questions of race and ethnicity in sport from more transnational and global perspectives. Theresa Runstedler demonstrated the power of those connections in her study of Jack Johnson and the global color line at the turn of the twentieth century. Walter LaFeber addressed how, a century later, another black American sporting icon, Michael Jordan, became the face of American sport in an age of global capitalism. Both were iconic figures not just in the USA but around the globe. The difference in how Johnson and Jordan were perceived could hardly be more striking. Johnson was seen in heavily racialized ways while Jordan's athletic and commercial success meant that his race mattered far less than his global celebrity and marketing cachet. Lara Putnam has written about some of these transnational dynamics in boxing, describing how fighters with some African ancestry circulated in a circum-Caribbean world and transcended nationality. She describes how boxing, in contrast to cricket, "offered a vocabulary of identification centered not on island and empire but on nation and race." Penny Von Eschen placed African-Americans in the context of anti-colonialism and the Cold War, while Amy Bass plumbed the 1968 Mexico Olympics and its impact on what she calls the "Making of the Black Athlete." These studies reflect how well sport's racial nexus can be used to get at deeper issues and offer a tantalizing glimpse of future work.²⁰

As the presence of a more international group of athletes changed the racial conversation about US sport, scholars of sport followed in pursuit. Much of this terrain remains unexplored and will entice younger scholars in the years ahead. But while the transnational study of sport is reaching critical mass, more localized studies of the role of sport in Hispanic American, Asian-American, indigenous, and Pacific Islander communities have remained underdeveloped. So have broader interpretative accounts.

For that to change, a solid evidentiary base must be built for each of these demographic groups as well as an understanding of how they fit into the larger narrative of sporting history. It's difficult to analyze sport in a vacuum, much less develop interpretative frameworks when the narrative is absent or ambiguous. Who played? Why did they play and what roles did sport play for them? How did they organize their sporting institutions, be they clubs, teams, leagues, or community institutions? What were the internal fissures over class, religion, color, or gender that factored into sport? Who had the power to define and control sporting life in the community? To what degree did they interact with mainstream, Caucasian sport?

Answers to these questions emerge from the building blocks of sport history – biographies and memoirs of athletes, team histories, and studies of grassroots community institutions, as well as the factories, reform groups, and governments that intervened in community sport with their own agendas. They allow scholars to attempt to describe both context and trajectory. Invariably, two fundamental questions that have defined much of American sporting history should be answered for each demographic. How did sport relate to that group's larger effort to

“Americanize” and how did their sporting history fit into sport’s evolution from community-based pastime to global capitalism?

Given the incredible diversity among the portion of the US population dubbed as Latino or Hispanic American, it’s understandable that few would dare tackle research that attempted to cast them as a unified group. Some Hispanic Americans reside on land that was their ancestral home long before the USA took that territory over. Others hail from Mexico, the Caribbean basin, or South America; they and their predecessors arrived in different historical moments and faced dramatically different receptions. They brought different sporting traditions with them as part of their cultural baggage. Class and racial diversity further complicated their experiences, more so than for the disparate descendants of the African diaspora that formed the African-American population of the USA due to the latter’s experience with slavery. Perhaps that explains why there have been fewer community studies of Latino sport along the lines of those that looked at the role of sandlot and Negro League baseball in Kansas City, Newark, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh.²¹ Nor has a native-born Hispanic gained the celebrity that propelled Jack Johnson, Joe Louis, and Muhammad Ali into the global limelight. Only Puerto Rican-born Roberto Clemente, who became a pan-Caribbean hero after the 1971 World Series and his subsequent death en route to Nicaragua after the 1972 earthquake devastated the Central American nation, has received comparable attention.²²

To generalize about indigenous people is even more difficult than it is to treat Hispanic Americans as homogeneous. The number of indigenous groups, their differing lifestyles and political economies, and the varied ways in which they encountered European power turn such efforts into Herculean tasks. But a growing number of more focused studies have launched the examination of particular groups in specific locales. They look at the complex set of relationships between these disparate groups and sport’s mainstream in many of the ways in which scholars have considered African-Americans, Hispanic Americans, and European immigrant groups. But they also raise other questions, including notions of traditional religion that might pertain more to indigenous peoples and their varied experiences. Efforts to universalize these experiences and discuss indigenous people and sport in a more comprehensive way will likely emerge only when these more specific studies have established a solid foundation.

Biographies of Jim Thorpe, Chief Bender, and Billy Mills, explorations of basketball on the reservation, studies of running and lacrosse, as well as dozens of other investigations are under way.²³ Joseph Oxendine’s *American Indian Sports Heritage*, Jeffrey Powers Beck’s *American Indian Integration of Baseball*, and Peter Nabokov’s *Indian Running* are among them.²⁴ Richard King has edited volumes, *Native Americans in Sports* and *Native Athletes in Sport and Society*, whose authors address several of these questions, while Frank Salamone edited a volume that focuses on questions of identity and culture. John Bloom’s *To Show what an Indian Can Do: Sports at Native American Boarding Schools*, which captures the often contradictory impact of sport as both a means of assimilation and of resistance, is part of that project. Matthew Gilbert Sakiestewa has focused on Hopis and running and David Wallace Adams and Tom Benjey have written about the Carlisle Indians, whose star, Jim Thorpe, remains the best known indigenous athlete in US history.²⁵ These scholars pose a raft of questions and help readers understand the role and meaning of sport from an indigenous vantage point, not simply as a function of exclusion and discrimination within a mainstream sporting world.

US imperial expansion in the Pacific forced other groups of people to become part of the nation’s sporting story. These demographics often carried dual identities. While their origins were in the Hawaiian islands, the Samoan archipelago, the Federated States of Micronesia, and Guam, they were also perceived as members of a broader designation known as Pacific Islanders. Still other people from this region have migrated to the USA from Japan, Tonga, Fiji, and

elsewhere. Their experiences with the USA have varied considerably. Hawaiian islanders endured a demographic disaster as well as the loss of their autonomy, while those living on Tutuila and the Manu'a islands that became the territory of American Samoa were better able to withstand these epidemiological and political traumas.

A small but vibrant group of academics are exploring these sporting connections. Some describe and analyze the evolution of sport among Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders on the mainland and in Hawai'i. Sayuri Guthrie Shimuzu's sweeping history of Japanese baseball in a pan-Pacific context connects Japanese communities in Hawai'i and the mainland to a larger narrative that reveals a tension between becoming "American" and holding on to native culture.²⁶ That transnational context is virtually unavoidable for scholars of Asian-Americans, Pacific Islanders, and sport. It is also evident in Samuel Regalado's *Nikkei Baseball: Japanese American Players from Immigration and Internment to the Major Leagues* and Joel Franks' books about "Asian Pacific cultural citizenship" and a barnstorming squad made up of a diverse population of Hawaiians, as well as Robert Fitt's biography of Hawaiian Wally Yonamine, who made his mark on two sports in two countries.²⁷

Lauren Shizuyo Morimoto's dissertation on barefoot football leagues in sugarcane and pineapple towns on Kaua'i shows that Japanese in the diaspora played something other than baseball. Linda Espana-Maram devotes part of her study of working-class Filipinos in Los Angeles to the role of boxing, the most popular pastime among Filipino immigrants and their descendants in Hawai'i and the mainland, and one that has figured prominently in conceptions of masculinity. Rachel Joo connects the growing numbers of Korean athletes in the USA to a larger global diaspora and plumbs the roles they played across the Pacific.²⁸ Vicente Diaz's exploration of football in Guam examines how race, gender, identity, and American empire coalesced in the youth football league established there.²⁹

Scholars have also begun to plumb the extraordinary contributions of Samoans in football and raise questions regarding how sporting identities have been reformulated in ways that bring together race, nationality, gender, and culture. Questions of masculinity and racial identity are central to a fascinating piece by Ty P.K. Tengan and Jesse Makani Markham, "Performing Polynesian Masculinities in American Football: From 'Rainbows to Warriors'." Markham led the way in placing Samoan football players in the archipelago and the USA on the map in a master's thesis that tracks the growing involvement of Samoans and members of the diaspora in high school, college, and professional football.³⁰

Lisa Uperesa's studies of football and culture in American Samoa and among Samoan communities in the USA expand upon Markham's pioneering work. Taken together, they establish a critical framework for understanding Samoan sport. Markham systematically sketches the political economy of football for Polynesian boys and how they make their way from Big Boyz and youth football to higher levels of the game. He also explores cultural concerns that Uperesa is developing to an unprecedented degree in her current work. An exceptional piece of research and scholarship, her revised dissertation will become the launching point for future scholars. Uperesa and Markham make clear why Samoans are significantly over-represented in football at each level of the game. While comprising only a tiny sliver of the population, they often dominate high school football in Hawai'i and parts of California.³¹

This Polynesian micro-culture of sporting excellence in football begs a question that has long roiled the study of sport and race. What causes such clusters to emerge? Are they due to some inherent genetic advantage or, as Uperesa and Markham suggest, the product of an enduring culture, socioeconomics, and the growth of a sporting infrastructure? This argument is redolent of ones that have raged in both barrooms and arenas, as well as in journals and classrooms, where many declare that sporting excellence is a matter of collective racial athletic

superiority. David Epstein's *The Sporting Gene* is a welcome addition to the discussion. It focuses on particular genetic patterns and variations that allow groups of outliers to emerge in sport and perform at exceptionally high levels. It also helps explain why different individuals respond better to certain conditions and training regimens than others. But history, class, culture, and environment are more relevant factors. There are few if any "sports genes" that affect broader demographic groups.

Culture matters more than other factors in the Samoan case. A still-strong traditional culture that stresses discipline, collectivism, and hierarchy has been reinforced by military and religious (especially Church of the Latter Day Saints) connections. That's a perfect recipe for football. Uperesa underscores how much *fa'a samoa*, "in the way of Samoa," has influenced the making of Samoan football. Her deeply anthropological interpretation is grounded in both sport and Samoa's fiercely competitive culture. Nobody has isolated a "warrior gene" that might explain the athletic brilliance of a Junior Seau or Troy Polamalu. But Uperesa and Markham take apart the ways in which a warrior identity has been racialized and exploited, as well as analyze how and why it matters.

As the study of sport in the USA reaches critical mass and attracts a younger cohort of scholars who have engaged with sport in different ways than those who preceded them, a new agenda will emerge. Sport history is now attracting significantly greater numbers of female scholars who grew up after Title IX took effect and with more exposure to cultural studies along the way. Their experiences and sensibilities will break the gender binary, which like the black and white racial binary, has distorted understanding of sport. They will incorporate women and gender into the story of race, ethnicity, and sport in new, more substantive, ways. They will answer the question posed by Jennifer Bruening, "Are all the women white and all the blacks men?" when it comes to the study of sport. They will consider representations of the body, the construction of gender, and questions yet to be formulated.³² They might ask, Lara Putnam suggests, how "racialized perception and norms regarding gender and sexuality" shaped the "kinds of admiration, attention, and acceptance ... open to which athletes."³³

This will constitute both a generational and philosophical shift. The study of sport has always been at its strongest when it draws upon the best prevailing historical scholarship of society. The generation of scholars who were made in the 1970s and 1980s drew insight from the popular movements animating the nation and demanding attention to race and the roles and status of women. They were schooled in social and labor history and their work reflected these concerns. But new cohorts of younger scholars profoundly influenced by feminism and cultural studies are exploring new questions and coming up with new answers. They will draft the next edition of sport's historical connections to race and ethnicity.³⁴

Notes

- 1 I want to thank Lisa Uperesa and Lara Putnam for their suggestions and insight regarding this chapter.
- 2 Bryan Di Salvatore, *A Clever Base-Ballist: The Life and Times of John Montgomery Ward* (New York: Pantheon, 1999); Steven A. Riess, *Touching Base: Professional Baseball and American Culture in the Progressive Era* (Urbana and Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1990); see also James R. Barrett, *The Irish Way: Becoming American in the Multiethnic City* (New York, NY: Penguin: 2012).
- 3 Peter Levine, *Ellis Island to Ebbets Field: Sport and the American Jewish Experience* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1992); Richard Ben Cramer, *Joe DiMaggio: The Hero's Life* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2000); Jack Moore, *Joe DiMaggio: A Bio-Bibliography* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1987); Nicholas P. Ciotola, "Spignesi, Sinatra, and the Pittsburgh Steelers: Franco's Italian Army as an Expression of Ethnic Identity, 1972-1977," *Journal of Sport History* 27, 2 (2000), 271-89.
- 4 Lara Putnam, "The Panama Cannonball and the Queen: Migrants, Sport, and Belonging in the Interwar Greater Caribbean," *Journal of Sport History* 41, 3 (2014), 401-24.

- 5 Edwin B. Henderson, *The Black Athlete: Emergence and Arrival* (New York, NY: Publishers Company, 1968); Ocania Chalk, *Pioneer of Black Sport: The Early Days of the Black Professional Athlete in Baseball, Basketball, Boxing, and Football* (New York, NY: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1975); see also Art Rust, Jr., *Get that Nigger Off the Field* (New York, NY: Delacorte Press, 1976); Art Rust, Jr. and Edna Rust, *Joe Louis, My Life* (New York, NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978).
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- D. Wiggins, eds., *DC Sports: The Nation's Capital at Play* (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 2015), 147–64.
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- 34 See the roundtable re: “State of the Field: Sports History and the ‘Cultural Turn,’” *Journal of American History* 101, (2014), 148–72, in which Amy Bass addresses some of these questions and Lisa Doris Alexander, Adrian Burgos Jr., Daniel A. Nathan, Randy Roberts, and Rob Ruck respond.