

A STUDY OF THE TYPE OF ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION AND  
IT'S RELATIONSHIP TO, ATTITUDES EXPRESSED TOWARDS  
ATHLETIC COMPETITION

by

BARRY STUART KREISBERG

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Approved by:

  
Major Professor

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

According to Cratty, child rearing practices in America have shifted from an emphasis on socialization to an emphasis on achievement.<sup>1</sup> Our society is governed by certain cultural beliefs such as our orientation to the world of the here and now separating us from societies who place greater importance upon aesthetic, mystical, or other worldly affairs.<sup>2</sup> It is a society that is highly competitive where fixed social class has been minimized, believing in the Horatio Alger story and glorifying the self-made man. All societies demand proficiency and reward those individuals meeting standards of excellence. What distinguishes American culture is its tendency to identify personal excellence with competitive occupational achievement.<sup>3</sup>

A parallel may be found in American sports. Many prominent coaches and sports figures have promoted the importance of success in terms of winning an athletic contest. For example, Paul Dietzel, Director of Athletics and Head Football Coach at the University of South Carolina, in describing the qualifications to be a successful coach said, "Coaching has to be your life's work. In the same breath, it must be said that nothing can succeed like success. Nothing adds more to morale than winning. Winning of

course, must be an obsession. After you win then everything comes a little easier."<sup>4</sup> Ray Meyer, Director of Athletics at Depaul University views sports as a display of the "win-at-any-cost" philosophy. Meyer remarked, "If I can't win, I am not satisfied with losing nor do I want the players to be content. If I can't win, I want to have the best second place team."<sup>5</sup> It is to be assumed that many other coaches adhere to this philosophy and incorporate this idea into their programs.

Many sociologists and physical educators consider athletics as a microcosm of society. As such, athletics may reflect and transpose society's values or ideas which perpetuate our existence. Is it possible that the degree an individual participates in sports will foster significantly different attitudes expressed towards athletic competition? This is the basic question to which this paper addresses itself. If this question is substantiated, then the intensity of interaction an individual has with culture will determine the influence of that culture upon the individual.

#### Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between a specific ideology achievement and attitudes expressed in athletic and intramural programs. More specifically, the purpose of this study was to determine the

prevalence of "win-at-any-cost" attitude towards athletic competition of varsity athletes, intramural participants, and nonparticipants. It was assumed that the varsity intercollegiate experience represents a greater degree of individual participation than does the intramural experience and the nonparticipants will experience less individual participation than either of the previous groups mentioned.

### Hypotheses

Based on assumed relationship between certain cultural beliefs of American society and the "win-at-any-cost" philosophy towards athletic competition the following hypothesis was suggested: The higher the level of athletic participation the greater is the acceptance of the "win-at-any-cost" philosophy towards athletic competition. Three additional hypotheses were developed as criteria to accept or reject the main hypothesis. The three additional hypotheses tested were: (2) Athletes have a greater "win-at-any-cost" philosophy than intramural participants significant beyond the .05 level. (3) Athletes have a greater "win-at-any-cost" philosophy than nonparticipants significant beyond the .05 level. (4) Intramural participants have a greater "win-at-any-cost" philosophy than nonparticipants significant beyond the .05 level.

### Rationale of the Study

To fully comprehend the distinctness of American culture a working frame of reference concerning this idea must be established. The term "culture" may be conceptualized in two ways. The anthropologist believes that all social habits, religious practices, customs, in fact everything, should be examined to determine how a particular society functions. Likewise, it may be interpreted by the aesthetic experiences and achievements of a given society.<sup>6</sup>

Kluckohn states, "A culture is learned by individuals as the result of belonging to some particular group, and it constitutes that part of learned behavior which is shared with others."<sup>7</sup> He further implies that culture is our social legacy rather than an inborn trait. Culture enables us to live together in a systematic society, affording others the possibility of predicting our behavior.<sup>8</sup>

The uniqueness of the American culture has been discussed by many authors. It has been agreed upon that America acquired its roots from Puritanism, Calvinism, and Protestantism. These ideologies may be identified by the following traits: (1) emphasis on making money, (2) the excessive accumulation of property and the right to protect it, and (3) hard work is a virtue. This society believes that there is equal opportunity for all who are willing to extend themselves and that man limits himself by his actions. Generally

Americans are conceited and enjoy boasting about their accomplishments but cannot endure criticism.<sup>9</sup>

Lynd realizes that generalizations about American society are difficult to assume, since it is a blending of many subcultures. He also knows that there are certain outstanding characteristics that could be attributed to America. The following list, assembled by Lynd, acknowledges both premises; and where contrasting assumptions are indicated, Lynd has expressed both views.

- "1. The United States is the best and greatest nation on earth and will always remain so.
2. Individualism, "The survival of the fittest," is the law of nature and the secret of America's greatness; and restrictions on individual freedom are un-american and kill initiative. But: No man should live for himself alone; for people ought to be loyal and stand together and work for common purposes.
3. The thing that distinguishes man from the beasts is the fact he is rational; and therefore man can be trusted, if let alone to guide his conduct wisely. But: Some people are brighter than others; and, as every practical politician and businessman knows, you can't afford simply to sit back and wait for people to make up their minds.
4. Everyone should be successful. But: The kind of person you are is more important than how successful you are.
5. Religion and "The finer things of life" are our ultimate values and the things all of us are really working for. But: A man owes it to his family to make as much money as he can.
6. Hard work and thrift are signs of character and the way to get ahead. But: No shrewd person tries to get ahead nowadays by pinching nickels. It is important to know the right people. If you want to make money, you have to look and act like money. Anyway, you only live once.

7. Honesty is the best policy. But: Business is business, and a businessman would be a fool if he didn't cover his hand.
8. Patriotism and public service are fine things. But: Of course, a man has to look out for himself.
9. Poverty is deplorable and should be abolished. But: There never has been enough to go around, and the Bible tells us that "the poor you always have with you."
10. Capital and labor are partners. But: It is a bad policy to pay higher wages than you have to. If people don't like to work for you for what you offer them, they can go elsewhere.
12. No man deserves to have what he hasn't worked for. It demoralizes him to do so. But: You can't let people starve."<sup>10</sup>

In summary then, American culture is marked by a stress upon personal accomplishment. The majority of opinion believes virtue should be rewarded particularly economic virtues as hard work and discretion. It is a society based on capitalism where competition is highly recognized. Social and economic mobility is considered an essential characteristic of American society, believing that every individual has the opportunity to change his particular situation.

Man's capacity to adjust to his culture is influenced by many factors: family and peer relationships, self-image, socioeconomic status, and a specific cultural ideology achievement. It is suggested, by this researcher, that this specific cultural ideology achievement is the dominant factor in determining whether or not an individual adapts to his culture. In addition, it is further proposed that this cultural legacy is the basis for the other factors previously stated.

Adaptation is a process by which an individual is able to cope with his culture. Sometimes adjustment is accomplished when a person accepts conditions of his surroundings and on other occasions it is achieved when the cultural environment yields to the individual. Most often adjustment is accomplished through compromise maladjustment occurring only when there is a failure to reach a satisfactory agreement. Adaptation requires that an individual have a wide range of behavior and be flexible enough to modify his actions. One who is unyielding and lacks flexibility cannot endure the stresses of life, resulting in maladjustment.<sup>11</sup>

The strain of American culture, where competition and achievement are equated with success, has placed the middle class male under extreme pressure. This social class is primarily comprised of "the white-collar workers, foremen, highly skilled craftsman, small businessman, professional and managerial people."<sup>12</sup> In order to gain recognition from both sexes he must succeed in his professional and his social life. A beautiful home and a new car represents models for him to strive for and accomplish. His social obligations force him to be hospitable, well-groomed, knowledgeable, a good mixer, and perform well in leisure time activities.<sup>13</sup>

In the lower classes there is not a great deal of emphasis placed on accomplishment. Their abilities limit them to semiskilled and unskilled occupations. Members of this class are usually depressed both mentally and socially when

unemployed and usually fill the majority of relief cases. They often believe that society has placed them in their particular situation rather than it being self-inflicted. Generally, the cultural pattern of the poor differs from the mainstream of American life.<sup>14</sup>

The American male's problems are intensified in that society expects him to act in a masculine manner regardless of the situation. This implies that the male must be stronger and better controlled than the female in difficult situations. The impression is given that man is like an oak tree, his exterior cannot be penetrated. A failure to achieve his goals will often cause guilt feelings, loss of self-esteem, and depression.<sup>15</sup> Even though emotional problems rarely cause very many men to seek help, they may be expressed in "psychosomatic illness, in vague physical complaints, and in overt neurotic reactions."<sup>16</sup>

It has been shown through examples that the American male frequently comes into conflict with a specific cultural ideology-achievement. It is inferred that this conflict creates problems which may result in maladjustment. More specifically, Tuckman and Kleiner (1962) suggest a significant relationship between a high aspiration-achievement variance and mental disorder.<sup>17</sup> Many authorities contend that achievement as an indicator of American society is also a vital part in the philosophy of sports. On April 19, 1973,



during a CBS news interview, Dr. Thomas Tutko, the noted Sport Psychologist, stated that "the intense win at any cost attitude of junior high, senior high and college athletics is caused by the adoption of the professional sports ethic."<sup>18</sup> He went on to explain that winning in professional sports is the most important thing but when this concept is accepted by younger players, then those players miss the benefits of participation. He further claimed that junior high and high school athletes tend to "burn out" under this intense pressure to win.

It has been implied by many coaches and observers of sports phenomenon that the achievement trait is deeply rooted into athletic and intramural programs and without this characteristic sports are thought to be valueless. Assuming that this parallel exists, this researcher believes that many of the problems created by the conflict between American culture and the American male are also exhibited by individuals who participate in different types of athletic competition. Based on the preceeding rationale the researcher decided to investigate which type of athletic participation promoted the attitude most closely associated with achievement.

#### Delimitations

The participants in this study consisted of 120 male undergraduate students attending Kansas State University.

They were selected from varsity athletics, intramural programs and those individuals who were determined by the researcher to be nonparticipants. All subjects in the intramural group and nonparticipant group came from residence halls and fraternities. The athletes were all residents of the athletic dorm. The instrument in the study was an attitude inventory devised by Lakie.<sup>19</sup>

#### Limitations

In essence, the validity of the construct depended upon the frankness of the subjects' responses and upon the effort of each subject to determine the actual truth of such answers. The degree of truth incorporated in the subjects' responses had to be assumed.<sup>20</sup> The results obtained are not thought to apply to any population other than the test population itself.

#### Definition of Terms

Win-At-Any-Cost. A term used by Lakie to indicate a specific attitude expressed towards athletic competition.<sup>21</sup> It is associated with a great emphasis placed on winning an athletic contest.

Athlete. A male individual who has earned a varsity letter at Kansas State University in one of the following sports: track, wrestling, tennis, football, gymnastics, baseball, basketball or golf.

Intramural Participant. A male individual attending Kansas State University who has participated in one or more intramural activities (tennis, basketball, football, track, swimming, volleyball, and handball) during the current school year.

Nonparticipant. A male individual attending who is not competing in intramurals or varsity athletics at Kansas State University.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Bryant J. Cratty, Social Dimensions of Physical Activity (Englewood Cliffs New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1967), p. 84.

<sup>2</sup>Robin M. Williams, Jr., American Society (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1951), p. 401.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 390.

<sup>4</sup>Paul F. Dietzel, Coaching Football (New York: Ronald Press Co., 1971), p. 9.

<sup>5</sup>Ray Meyer, Basketball as coached by Ray Meyer (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1967) pp. 257-258.

<sup>6</sup>D.W. Brogan, "The Culture of American Culture," American Culture In The Sixties, ed. Vineta Colby (New York: H.W. Wilson Co., 1964), p. 11.

<sup>7</sup>Clyde Kluckhohn, "Queer Customs," Mirror for Man (McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1969), p. 26.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., pp. 17-44.

<sup>9</sup>Lee Coleman, "What is American: A Study of Alleged American Traits," Social Forces, vol. 19, number 4 (May, 1941), pp. 492-499.

<sup>10</sup>Robert Lynd, Knowledge for What (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1939), pp. 60-62.

<sup>11</sup>Robert White, The Abnormal Personality (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1964), pp. 96-98.

<sup>12</sup>William S. Keezer, Mental Health and Human Behavior (Iowa: W.M.C. Brown Co., 1971), p. 164.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 164.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., pp. 164-165.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., pp. 242-245.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., pp. 244-245.

<sup>17</sup>Robert J. Kleiner and Seymour Parker, "Goal-Striving, Social Status, and Mental Disorder: A Research Review," The Sociology of Mental Disorder, ed. S. Weinberg (Chicago: Aldine Pub. Co., 1967), p. 58.

<sup>18</sup>Statement by Dr. Thomas Tutko, CBS interview, April 19, 1973.

<sup>19</sup>William L. Lakie, "Expressed Attitudes of Various Groups of Athletes Toward Athletic Competition," Research Quarterly, vol. 35 (December, 1964), pp. 497-503.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 499.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 498.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of the literature reveals an existing relationship between sports and American society. Boyle affirms, "Sport permeates any number of levels of contemporary society, and it touches upon and deeply influences such disparate elements as status, race relations, business life, automotive design, clothing styles, the concept of the hero, language and ethical values. For better or worse, it gives form and substance to much in America."<sup>1</sup> Beisser (1967) found that athletic contests provided an arena for athletes to express ideas existing in their culture through physical actions, excluding those rules governing that society.<sup>2</sup>

Psychological testing procedures have reported personality differences between athletes and nonathletes. It appears that athletes possess those characteristics which enabled them to better adapt to societies values. Why do athletes seem more prepared to cope with their environment? This researcher suggests that ideas expressed in sports and American society are similar. Therefore, the transition from one to the other should be easier for the athlete.

Schenden reported specific differences between psychological characteristics of athletes and nonathletes at

the ninth grade, twelfth grade and college levels. Ninth grade athletes possessed: 1) more qualities of leadership, 2) more qualities which led to status, 3) a greater sense of personal worth, 4) less self-doubts, 5) are able to function in a social situation, and 6) a greater intellectual efficiency. Twelfth grade athletes generally were: 1) more sociable, 2) more conventional in their responses to social situations, 3) were able to achieve in a situation where conformity was essential, and 4) had a greater sense of personal worth. College men who were nonparticipants possessed more desirable qualities than their counterparts. The nonparticipant was: 1) more conscientious, 2) had greater tolerance, 3) more capable of independent achievement, 4) had greater intellectual efficiency, and 6) more adaptable in their thinking and social behavior. The college athlete was more conventional in his responses to a social situation.<sup>3</sup> The college experience seems to have enriched the lives of the nonparticipants and molded them into a more flexible individual.

Studies have indicated that superior athletes are more aggressive, have a high level of aspiration and a need to succeed.<sup>4</sup> Ogilvie reports that top athletes have a greater achievement need, dominance need, are more aggressive and tough-minded.<sup>5</sup>

Careful investigation discloses that a specific cultural ideology achievement does, in fact, extend into our athletic and intramural programs. Man's ability to excel and achieve in game situations is crucial for his acceptance into sports society. Callous states that games are competition between individuals struggling to excel and win recognition. It is presupposed that the athlete will be diligent and have an undying desire to win.<sup>6</sup> McGraw and Tolbert (1953) reported that sociometric status and athletic ability were highly correlated. It was also shown that interschool athletics had a greater affect on popularity than intramural participation.<sup>7</sup> Biddulph (1954) reported a similar result, finding that there existed a significant relationship between athletic achievement and personal and social adjustment.<sup>8</sup>

Recognition of educational institutions adopting the "win-at-any-cost" philosophy towards athletic competition can be found in the article by Wall and Offenburger. In the article entitled "Time To Clean Up Basketball" describing the illegal practices committed by universities who subscribe to the "win-at-any-cost" philosophy towards athletic competition. Major issues covered were gambling, lack of real concern for education, crowd antagonizing of the players, and cheating in recruiting.<sup>9</sup>

The stress upon winning has forced many coaches to adopt a policy by which any means necessary to win is



acceptable. During the 1971-1972 basketball season, the University of Minnesota basketball team "beat up" players from Ohio State. Dr. Wayne Witte, father of an injured player remarked, "I'm not surprised. Musselman's (Bill Musselman, the Minnesota coach) intent seems to be to win at any cost. His players are brutalized and animalized to achieve that goal."<sup>10</sup> Exemplifying this criticism can be illustrated by the slogan over the door of the Minnesota players showers: "Defeat is worse than death because you have to live with defeat."<sup>11</sup>

Quite often the character of the athlete is just as important as winning the contest itself. Many coaches are dictatorial and profess to be knowledgeable in all areas of their particular sport. Athletes must frequently hide their personality and present one which the coach accepts. It is suggested by this researcher that one of the reasons the athlete must reflect the coach's conception of what an athlete is supposed to be like is because some coaches feel they must contribute to the shaping of the athlete. It is not enough for the athlete to win, but he must also be a certain type of individual. This combination of winning and being a certain type of person has placed the athlete under extreme pressure.

Max Rafferty, former California State Superintendent of Public Instruction believes enjoyment in athletics is

contingent upon aggressiveness, manliness and super competitiveness. He equates a meaningful experience in athletics with the won and lost percentage of the team. Talking about Oregon State University he remarks, "The Battling Beavers of OSU won a lot more games than they lost, and what's far more important they managed to win them while looking like decent human beings instead of like fugitives from a Barnum and Bailey side show."<sup>12</sup> He further implies that athletes should be subservient to their coaches wishes.<sup>13</sup>

Sylvester Hodges, a wrestler from Hayward State College in California, was also victimized by the high achievement-aspiration level of college wrestling coaches and the desire to have wrestlers conform to their models. Although a rule by the NCAA prohibits a wrestler from wearing a mustache, he was allowed to compete unbothered until the NCAA college division wrestling tournament. Coaches realizing that Hodges was the best in his class and knowing how he felt about his mustache forced the NCAA to uphold its rule. As expected Hodges refused to shave and was prevented from competing.<sup>14</sup> It appears to the researcher that winning was not the only motive of the coaches but also to prevent Hodges from establishing his own identity.

Jack Scott says that the justification for interscholastic athletics is that they be conducted for educational

purposes, otherwise they should be eliminated. Varsity athletics should be a learning experience and give the athlete an opportunity to develop his personality. He further implies many track coaches are dogmatic, refusing to allow athletes become involved in the decision making process. Totally dominated by their coach, they are told when to train and how to train. Many college track coaches are so concerned about winning that any means used to improve performance is justified.<sup>15</sup>

Dave Meggyesy reflects upon his college football experience with ambivalence. He talks in terms of it being dehumanizing and about how it slowed the process of his development into a mature being because of his dependence upon coaches for approval. It subjects athletes to a plastic world where winning is essential for success. Also, the athlete is under constant pressure to produce resulting in high anxiety and tension levels. He cites an example at Syracuse where the university falsified his brother's records in order that he remain eligible for the upcoming football season.<sup>16</sup>

So far, the review of literature has been directed towards achievement as an essential characteristic of the varsity intercollegiate experience. This paper will now focus on relationship between achievement and intramural programs. Some contend that intramurals is only the

continuation of the stresses of life. Increasingly, directors of the intramural sports programs for men are critical of the practices of scheduling extramural competition for intramural teams. They fear the end result may be a distortion of the goals of the intramural program to approximate those of interscholastic and intercollegiate athletics.<sup>17</sup> An example of competitive philosophy that has been infiltrating into intramural programs can be observed at Indiana University. Stumpner made the following comments about the program:

"Our basic philosophy on intramurals arises from a faith in the worthiness of competitive sport, although we look in many directions with various approaches. Many factors and values are involved, but the framework of our program consists of vigorous sports competition. We expand from that into all of the fringe areas, but we try not to do so at the expense of quality. Indeed, without quality, quantity will eventually diminish as well. The expansion that we contemplate should therefore be considered in terms of depth as well as breadth. We do not favor a broad base without a high peak. In this way, through the joint efforts of all who share in our total aims we hope to fulfill all aspects of the physical needs of our students."<sup>18</sup>

The intramural champion at Kansas State University is based on the total number of points a team has collected throughout the school year. An individual is awarded one point for competing in each intramural activity. Consequently, it may be assumed that some individuals participate in intramurals to accumulate points for their respective organizations exemplifying the winning attitude rather than participating for the enjoyment of the activity.

Just as the achievement motive has created problems for the American male in society, it has also created problems for individuals who participate in athletics. Schafer suggests that there are certain consequences from the involvement in athletics, either in the form of participation or spectatorship. Athletes, and fans through identification with athletes, are expected to place a great deal of emphasis upon achievement which results from our cultural themes. Quite often, where identity and self-worth are totally connected with athletic achievement, athletes will experience identity crisis when their athletic careers are over and must move on to something else. Athletes tend to view different interests and life styles in an intolerant manner which may result from their coach's influences.<sup>19</sup> Lastly, there is little information about the athlete who fails to achieve his goals. Schafer surmises that this individual might suffer "negative consequences for his self-esteem, his status among his peers, his view of the world, and his future aspirations."<sup>20</sup>

In his study of the relationship between athletes and nonathletes and the occurrence of delinquency, he found that athletes are less often delinquent. Schafer suggests two reasons: (1) athletics prevents delinquency, or (2) individuals who are considered conformers participate in athletics.<sup>21</sup>

The review of the literature indicates that many of the accepted generalizations about American cultural ideology can be attributed to athletic and intramural programs. It appears that the desire to achieve, regardless of the circumstance, is a characteristic of these respective viewpoints. Furthermore, it has been suggested that these influences upon the individual may create problems.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>John W. Loy, "Games Forms, Social Structure, and Anomie," New Perspectives Of Man In Action, eds. Roscoe C. Brown and Bryant J. Cratty (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1969), p. 181.

<sup>2</sup>Arnold R. Beisser, The Madness in Sports (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts Pub. Co., 1967), p. 228.

<sup>3</sup>Jack Schenden, "Psychological Differences Between Athletes and Nonparticipants in Athletics at Three Educational Levels," Research Quarterly, vol. 36 (March, 1965), pp. 52-67.

<sup>4</sup>John D. Lawther, Sport Psychology (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1972), p. 98.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 98.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>7</sup>L. W. McGraw and J. W. Tolbert, "Sociometric Status and Athletic Ability of Junior High School Boys," Research Quarterly, vol. (March, 1953), pp. 72-80.

<sup>8</sup>Lowell G. Biddulph, "Athletic Achievement and The Personality and Social Adjustment of High School Boys," Research Quarterly, vol. (March, 1954), pp. 1-7.

<sup>9</sup>William L. Wall and Dan Offenburger, "Time to Clean up Basketball," Sports Illustrated, vol. 36, No. 7 (February 14, 1972), pp. 20-21.

<sup>10</sup>William F. Reed, "An Ugly Affair in Minneapolis," Sports Illustrated, vol. 36, No. 6 (February 7, 1972), p. 119.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 119.

<sup>12</sup>Opinion expressed by Max Rafferty in an address (Interscholastic Athletics: The Gathering Storm), Jack Scott, The Athletic Revolution (New York: Collier-Macmillan, 1971), p. 16.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 13-22.

<sup>14</sup>Scott, "One More Victim of the NCAA," op. cit., pp. 3-12.

<sup>15</sup>Scott, "The College Coach," op. cit., pp. 35-43.

<sup>16</sup>Dave Meggyesy, "Football and Education," Scott op. cit., pp. 50-64.

<sup>17</sup>Viola K. Kleindienst and Arthur Weston, Intramurals and Recreation Programs for Schools and Colleges (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts Pub. Co., 1964), p. 262.

<sup>18</sup>Louis E. Means, Intramurals: Their Organization And Administration (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1963), p. 24.

<sup>19</sup>W.E. Schafer, "Some Social Sources and Consequences of Interscholastic Athletics: The Case of Participation and Delinquency," International Review of Sport Sociology, vol. 4 (Polish Scientific Pub., 1969), pp. 63-81.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 70.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., pp. 75-79.



### CHAPTER III

#### PROCEDURE

The competitive attitude scale administered was devised by Lakie (a copy is in Appendix A). It consisted of 22 items for the purpose of revealing what degree various athletic teams subscribed to the "win-at-any-cost" philosophy. Scores ranged from 22 to 90, and the higher the score the more the subject agreed with the "win-at-any-cost" philosophy towards athletic competition. The statements in the test were phrased so that responses were scored in a positive direction and others in the reverse direction. In accordance with established procedure, the responses of the subjects in this study were scored in the following way: 5 points for strong approval, 4 points for approval, 3 points for undecided, 2 points for disapproval, and 1 point for strong disapproval. For question 6, 13, and 18 the number of points was applied in reverse order. Bartlett's test of homogeneity of variance was used to approve the data for analysis of variance. One way analysis of variance technique with the least significant difference method of multiple comparisons was used to treat the data.

After personal interviews by the researcher 35 male varsity athletes attending Kansas State University were

selected on the basis of their willingness and availability to complete the CA scale used in this study. All subjects in the intramural group and nonparticipant group came from residence halls and fraternities the living style best simulating the athletic dorm environment, at Kansas State University. The CA scale was given to 50 male intramural participants who were selected on the same basis as the athletes. Because there is a much larger number of intramural participants at Kansas State University, a larger sample was taken from this group. The nonparticipant group had 35 males who were selected on the same basis as the previous two groups. There were fewer subjects in the nonparticipant group because it was difficult to locate individuals in fraternities who didn't compete in the intramural program. Since a ratio of 6 intramural participants to 5 nonparticipants based on school population figures, was established, fewer subjects were selected for this group.

Lakie used two procedures to measure the reliability of the test; (1) the test and retest method, and (2) an application of the KR 21 as modified by Lord and explained by Webster. The first method of testing and retesting procedures at the University of California at Davis and Los Angeles State College yield a Pearson  $r$  of .61 and .64. When applied to different groups, the second method using the modified KR 21 formula developed a reliability

coefficient of .81. Coefficients of this magnitude reveal that the reliability of the test is not great enough to predict individual behavior, but tests reporting similar reliability are used to differentiate groups.<sup>1</sup>

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Lakie, op. cit., pp. 497-499.

## CHAPTER IV

### DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The experimental hypothesis proposed that the higher the level of athletic participation the greater is the acceptance of the "win-at-any-cost" philosophy towards athletic competition. The results of this study are presented in chart form followed by the data analysis.

The CA scale was answered by 120 male undergraduate students attending Kansas State University who were categorized by the type of participation. The varsity athletes scores ranged from 37 to 75; the intramural participants scores ranged from 43 to 70; the nonparticipants scores ranged from 30 to 62. The mean scores, variances, and standard deviations for each group are shown in Table 1.

Table 1  
Mean Scores, Variances and Standard Deviations For Three  
Different Groups

	Number of Subjects	Mean	Variance	Standard Deviation
Athletic Group	35	61.942	80.526	8.973
Intramural Group	50	55.880	56.556	7.520
Nonparticipant Group	35	51.171	64.793	8.049
Totals	120	56.331	67.291	8.180

The statistical analysis of variance for the three different groups is illustrated in Table II. The computer program used for this analysis was programmed to print actual probabilities with the F statistic.

Table II  
Analysis of Variance For Competitive Attitude Scores  
For Three Different Groups

Source of Variation	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F	Probability
Between Groups	2	2043.787	1021.893	15.503	0.0000011
Within Groups	117	7712.132	65.915		
Total	119	9755.921			

The computed F was significant beyond the .05 level, therefore the statistical hypothesis that mean 1 equals mean 2 equals mean 3 is rejected and the experimental hypothesis that the means are not equal is accepted.

The least significant difference method of multiple comparisons was conducted to detect mean differences between groups. The computer program used for this analysis was programmed to print actual least significant difference figures.

Table III

## Mean Differences For Athletic and Intramural Group

Group	Means	Mean	Significant
		Difference	Difference
Athletic Group	<u>61.943</u>	6.063	3.543
Intramural Group	<u>55.880</u>		

Underline means statistically different at .05 level

The computed significant mean difference for the comparison of the athletic and intramural group is 3.543 which is significant beyond the .05 level. Therefore, the hypothesis that (2) Athletes have a greater "win-at-any-cost" philosophy than intramural participants significant beyond the .05 level is accepted.

Table IV

## Mean Differences For Athletic and Nonparticipant Group

Group	Means	Mean	Significant
		Difference	Difference
Athletic Group	<u>61.943</u>	10.771	3.843
Nonparticipant Group	<u>51.171</u>		

Underline means statistically different at .05 level.

The computed significant mean difference for the comparison of the athletic and nonparticipant group is 3.843 which is significant beyond the .05 level. Therefore, the hypothesis that (3) Athletes have a greater "win-at-any-cost" philosophy than nonparticipants significant beyond the .05 level is accepted..

Table V

Mean Differences For Intramural and Nonparticipant Group

Group	Means	Mean Difference	Significant Difference
Intramural Group	<u>55.880</u>	4.709	3.543
Nonparticipant Group	<u>51.171</u>		

Underline means statistically different at .05 level.

The computed significant mean difference for the comparison of the athletic and nonparticipant group is 3.543 which is significant beyond the .05 level. Therefore, the hypothesis that (4) Intramural participants have a greater "win-at-any-cost" philosophy than nonparticipants significant beyond the .05 level is accepted.



Within the limits of this study the data analysis supports the increased acceptance of the "win-at-any-cost" philosophy with increased intensity of participation. Therefore, the hypothesis that (1) the higher the level of athletic participation the greater is the acceptance of the "win-at-any-cost" philosophy towards athletic competition is upheld. However, it is impossible at this time to determine whether athletic participation intensifies the "win-at-any-cost" philosophy or if in fact athletics attracts those who have best conformed to this aspect of culturalization.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

#### CONCLUSIONS

It was concluded on the basis of the data collected that: (1) It is possible to differentiate between the attitudes of varsity athletes, intramural participants, and nonparticipants towards the "win-at-any-cost" philosophy in athletic competition; (2) the type of athletic participation relates to the intensity of the "win-at-any-cost" philosophy of athletics.

#### DISCUSSION

It appears that the cultural influence, as related in the introductory chapter, is extended into athletic and intramural programs. American society has been evaluated by a number of authors, resulting in generalizations made about this society. When Americans are not able to cope with their environment, they may become distraught and depressed. In 1955 the United States created a Joint Commission on Mental Illness and Health which was to report on the extent of the problem and suggest ways in dealing with it. Their findings were published in 1961 and it was estimated that 17 million people in the United States

suffered at one time or another from serious mental disorder.<sup>1</sup> Weinberg reports that mental illness in a form serious enough to require hospital care will strike about 1 in 5 families and 1 in 13 people in the course of a lifetime.<sup>2</sup> In view of above discussion it would appear that our society is faced with a mental health crisis affecting millions of Americans.

It is conceivable that male athletes, who seem to be influenced by a specific American cultural ideology achievement, may incur many of the problems associated with American society. A recent report, "Leading Components of Upturn in Mortality for Men" issued by the National Center for Health, states that women live longer than men. Males start out in this country with a numerical advantage; 105 boy babies are born for every 100 girls. But because they die off so much faster it's females by 100 to 95 in the population. In later life, the advantage increases. Between 65 to 74, the men are outnumbered by 100 to 79. Over age 75, there are only 65 men for every 100 women.<sup>3</sup>

One possible reason for this shorter life span is that man's attitudes towards his environment affects his death rate. All through his life, the male competes to achieve, to make money, to acquire prestige and status, to "be a man." He is under constant pressure to excel in all areas resulting in a limited period of time for relaxation.

Sports participation is supposed to be an outlet for man, giving him an opportunity to relax. Many researchers in physical education believe that varsity athletics and intramurals are only the continuation of the stresses of life. If this assumption is substantiated, then pre-existing ideas about sport should be altered. The researcher believes that individuals should be presented with a different perspective on sports. The participation in an activity should be based upon the inherent value of that particular activity rather than the winning or losing of the game.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>White, op. cit., pp. 559-561.

<sup>2</sup>White, op. cit., p. 559.

<sup>3</sup>Albert Rosenfeld, "Why Men Die Younger," Sunday Magazine of the Kansas City Star (October 15, 1972), pp. 29-32.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

- (1) It is recommended that a similar study be done using a competition versus cooperation test such as the Trucking Game by Deutsch and Kraus (1960).
- (2) It is recommended that studies be done to determine the competitive attitude of athletes and intramural participants across America.
- (3) It is recommended that studies be done to determine at what period in life the individual starts to assimilate cultural ideology into sports programs.
- (4) It is recommended that studies be done to determine whether an individual, upon entering a sports program, places emphasis upon winning or the inherent value of the activity.

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**THIS BOOK  
CONTAINS  
NUMEROUS PAGES  
WITH MULTIPLE  
PENCIL AND/OR  
PEN MARKS  
THROUGHOUT THE  
TEXT.**

**THIS IS THE BEST  
IMAGE AVAILABLE.**

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APPENDIX A

ATTITUDE TEST

Circle the category that indicates your feeling towards the described in each of the situations.

- 1✓ During a football game team A has the ball on its own 45-yard line, fourth down and 1 yard to go for a first down. The coach of team A signals to the quarterback the play that he wants the team to run.
- 2✓ Team A is the visiting basketball team and each time a member of the team is given a free shot the home crowd sets up a continual din of noise until the shot has been taken.
- 3✓ Tennis player A frequently calls out, throws up his arms, or otherwise tries to indicate that his opponent's serve is out of bounds when it is questionable.
- 4✓ In a track meet, team A enters a man in the mile run who is to set a fast pace for the half of the race and then drop out.
- 5✓ In a football game, team B's quarterback was tackled repeatedly after handing off and after he was out of the play.
- 6✓ Sam, playing golf with his friends, hit a drive into the rough. He accidentally moved the ball with his foot, although not improving his position he added a penalty stroke to his score.
- 7✓ A basketball player was caught out of position on defense and rather than allow his opponent to attempt a field goal he fouled him.
- 8✓ Player A during a golf match made quick noises and movements when player B was getting ready to make a shot.
- 9✓ School A has a powerful but quite slow football team. The night before playing a smaller but faster team, they allowed the field sprinkling system to remain on, causing the field to be heavy and slow.
- 10✓ A basketball team used player A to draw the opponent's high scorer into fouling situations.
- (11) The alumni of College A pressured the Board of Trustees to lower the admission and eligibility requirements for athletes.
- 12✓ Team A, by use of fake injuries, was able to stop the clock long enough to get off the play that resulted in the winning touchdown.

- 13✓. A tennis player was given the advantage of a bad call in a close match. He then "evened up" the call by intentionally hitting the ball out of bounds.
- 14✓. The coach of basketball team A removed his team from the floor in portest of an official's decision.
- (15). Between seasons a coach moved from College A to College B and he then persuaded three of College A's athletes to transfer to College B.
- 16✓. After losing a close football game the coach of the losing team publicly accused the game officials of favoritism when the game movies showed that the winning touchdown had been scored by using an illegal maneuver.
- (17). College C lowered the admission requirements for boys awarded athletic scholarships.
- 18✓. Team A's safety man returned a punt for a touchdown. Unseen by the of ficials he had stepped out of bounds in front of his team's bench. His coach notified the officials of this fact.
- (19). A collegewith very few athletic scholarships to offer, gives athletes preference on all types of campus jobs.
- (20). Several wealthy alumni of College C make a monthly gift to several athletes who are in need of financial assistance.
- (21). College K has a policy of not allowing any member of a varsity squad to associate with the visiting team until the contest or meet is completed.
- (22). The Board of Trustees at College C fired the football coach and gave as the reason for his dismissal his failure to win a conference championship during the past five years.

1- Strongly Approve, 2-, Approve, 3- Undecided, 4- Disapprove, 5- Strongly  
Disapprove

1.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	1	2	3	4	5

A STUDY OF THE TYPE OF ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION  
AND IT'S RELATIONSHIP TO ATTITUDES EXPRESSED  
TOWARDS ATHLETIC COMPETITION

by

BARRY STUART KREISBERG

B.S., Brooklyn College, 1972

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S THESIS

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requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department of Physical Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Manhattan, Kansas

1973

## Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between a specific ideology achievement, and attitudes expressed in athletic and intramural programs. More specifically, the purpose of this study was to determine the prevalence of "win-at-any-cost" attitude towards athletic competition of varsity athletes, intramural participants, and nonparticipants. It was assumed that the varsity intercollegiate experience represents a greater degree of individual participation than does the intramural experience and the nonparticipants will experience less individual participation than either of the previous groups mentioned. Because of the variance in the degree of individual participation, significant differences in attitudes expressed towards the "win-at-any-cost" philosophy is hypothesized.

## Procedure

The competitive attitude scale administered was devised by Lakie. It consisted of 22 items for the purpose of revealing what degree various sports groups subscribed to the "win-at-any-cost" philosophy. Scores ranged from 22 to 90, and the higher the score the more the subject agreed with the "win-at-any-cost" philosophy towards athletic competition.



The statements in the test were scored on a five point Likert scale. One way analysis of variance technique with the least significant difference method of multiple comparisons were used to treat the data.

After personal interview by the researcher 35 male varsity athletes attending Kansas State University were selected on the basis of their willingness and availability to complete the CA scale used in this study. The CA scale was given to 50 male intramural participants who were selected on the same basis as the athletes. Because there is a much larger number of intramural participants at Kansas State University, a larger sample was taken from this group. The nonparticipant group had 35 males who were also selected on the same basis as the previous two groups. All subjects in the intramural group and nonparticipant group came from residence halls and fraternities the living style best simulating the athletic dorm environment, at Kansas State University.

## Results

The one way analysis of variance reported an over all F of 15.503 which was significant beyond the .05 level. The multiple comparison revealed the following: (1) The computed mean differences for the comparison of the athletic group

and intramural participant group was significant beyond the .05 level. (2) The computed mean differences for the comparison of the athletic group and nonparticipant group was significant beyond the .05 level. (3) The computed mean differences for the comparison of the intramural participant group and nonparticipant group was significant beyond the .05 level.

### Conclusions

It was concluded on the basis of data collected that: (1) It is possible to differentiate between the attitudes of varsity athletes, intramural participants, and nonparticipants towards the "win-at-any-cost" philosophy in athletic competition; (2) the type of athletic participation relates to the intensity of the "win-at-any-cost" philosophy of athletics.