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Cover Page Footnote

This paper was originally presented at the 4th Annual Rockford University Sport Studies Symposium. I offer many thanks to the other scholars at the symposium for their suggestions.

Religious Discourse and Interdisciplinarity in Sport Studies

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In 2008, Scott Kretchmar wrote that disciplinary specialization and the utilitarian rationalization for the study of human movement were “silos and bunkers” that were vital to the evolution of kinesiology into a formal discipline. However, he also observed that these same bunkers and silos have a tendency to unnecessarily fracture the discipline as well as divorce research from its cultural context. These observations would seem to ring true of most formal academic disciplines, and they are especially pertinent to the broader constructs of leisure, recreation, and sport studies.

Perhaps it is no surprise then that religious and theological explorations of sport have remained few and far between,ⁱ as theological studies perceive sport and game related studies as trivial, and as leisure theorists find social scientific methods more compelling. And yet, religious traditions and thinkers have been offering accounts and ethics of leisure activities for thousands of years, and anthropological evidence suggests the origination of sport and game play arose in, or at least around, the context of religious cult activity (Huizinga, 1949; Guttman, 2007).ⁱⁱ Further, contemporary research has indicated that religion plays an important role in structuring the thought and behavior of religious persons towards their leisure (Waller, 2009) and spiritual and transcendental explanations have been increasingly considered in phenomenologies of sport and play (Parry, Nesti, & Watson, 2011) as well as therapeutic recreational models (Wozencroft, Waller, Hayes, & Brown, 2012).

Somewhat informally, the discipline has grown significantly over the last decade, and the last year alone has seen several such monographs published.ⁱⁱⁱ More formally, the Inaugural Global Congress on Sports and Christianity was recently announced to take place in 2016 at York St. Johns University along with the launch of the new *International Journal for Sports and Christianity*.^{iv}

With this evidence it seems time to recognize religious accounts or theologies of sport as a contributor to the greater field of sport studies, and one that will enable a richer understanding of the cultural context of sport.^v Along this tack, this paper will offer an introduction to such religious conceptions by looking specifically at the theology of sport discipline from the tradition of Western Christendom.

The sketch will begin by referencing the long history of Christian commentary on sporting activities by the likes of Tertullian and Richard Baxter, as well as referencing formal Church declarations. It will then overview the Victorian development of Muscular Christianity and proceed with an overview of some more recent texts which illustrate the interdisciplinary nature of theological work on sport as well as show some of the ways in which theological explorations of sport can contribute to the broader field of sport studies.^{vi} The paper will conclude with a few notes about present gaps in the discipline, with an eye toward offering suggestions for future engagement.

Historical Overview

The Patristics

The Patristic Age of church history refers to a period of time from roughly AD 100 to AD 450 — the time period around the time of the Apostle John’s death to the Council of Chalcedon (Ferguson, 2005, p. 287). It is named for the collection of figures which constitute the Fathers of the Early Christian Church, and under whose guidance many of the formal doctrines were solidified. Many of these figures, while concerned with the orthodox

formulation of dogma were nonetheless overtly pastoral figures equally burdened by caring for the many members of their spiritual communities.

Such was the case for both Tertullian and St. Augustine, and this was reflected in their voluminous writings to their churches, which included many prescriptions about how to live an ideal Christian life. Not surprisingly, this included recommendations about leisure choices, specifically including instruction on the kinds of sports and games that were unacceptable for Christian participation or spectating. And while modern readers may smirk at these puritanical prescriptions, they were nonetheless critically composed to fit within the religious framework of these early Christians. Indeed, in many ways these writings reflect a level of critical reflection about contemporary culture that present day society would do well to emulate.

Tertullian, writing at the beginning of the second century dedicated an entire treatise to issues surrounding public games. *De Spectaculus* as the treatise is titled, was primarily a polemic written to instruct against Christian participation in the spectacles and games laced with pagan cultic meaning and rituals. Chapter 18 specifically deals with forms of sport that intentionally employ violence. Of intentionally violent sports Tertullian (trans. 1885) writes, “you will not refuse to admit that the things which are done there are not for you to look upon: the blows, and kicks, and cuffs, and all the recklessness of hand, and everything like that disfiguration of the human countenance, which is nothing less than the disfiguration of God’s own image” (para. 18). Tertullian instructs that the Christian should avoid athletic contests that intentionally mar the human “countenance,” for this “countenance” bears the image of God. This brief passage provides a great illustration of theological reflection on sport as Tertullian develops his ethic out of the doctrine of the *Imago Dei* and what it means to possess the image of God.

The Medievals

If Patristic positions on sport were occasioned by deep and faithful reflections on Christian doctrine, the medieval period would eschew theological principles for more pragmatic concerns. Indeed, it seems that ecclesiastical opposition to the popular games and tournaments of the day was occasioned more as a response in support of the commencement of the crusades than as legitimate theological criticism (Harvey, 2014, pp. 41-43). In this way the Church officially condemned what amounted to the big-time organized sport events of the day because it saw the knight’s tournaments and melees as direct competition for its own agenda in the holy land. Theologian Lincoln Harvey notes that this ban was issued in 1130 and then reiterated again in 1139 and yet again in 1148 and 1179 (2014, pp. 42-43).^{vii} Though these were formal declarations of the Church, they mostly failed at offering any explicitly theological rationale for these decisions.^{viii} What resulted was a formal position of the Church against the tournaments, while the people, knight’s, and many parish clergy continued on with their popular festivals and games.

Eventually, in 1320 the Church would capitulate and rescind the ban on tournament games (Harvey, 2014, p. 44). The popularity amongst the lay population was too much to overcome, and the Church found that it could reap significant social and financial benefits by allowing — and even sponsoring — such events. Interestingly, such an instrumental view (whether for or against) of sport event pastimes possesses a striking resemblance to modern day “sports ministry” programs that aim to employ sports as a means of proselytizing. As such, it bears reflecting on whether this is an appropriate use of sport — and perhaps, to what extent it is ever appropriate to use sport at all.

The Early Moderns & Puritans

In some ways, it was the inauthentic behavior of the Church that lead figures such as Martin Luther and John Calvin to try to reform, and later separate from the Roman Church. Their efforts would spark a reformation that would come to infiltrate all aspects of continental

social and political thought and would become, if philosopher Charles Taylor (2007) is to be believed, the very grounds upon which enlightenment modernity would be founded upon. In fact, it is this very thesis that Steven Overman (2011) undertakes in his book *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Sport*, which he finds to be thoroughly rooted in Puritan principles — commitments to hard work, asceticism, personal piety, and temperance.^{ix}

These principles are readily apparent in the work of Richard Baxter, arguably the leading figure in the English Puritan movement. A prolific writer, one of Baxter's major works was his four volume *Christian Directory* (1678) which was a comprehensive survey of practical "Puritan" theology. In *Christian Directory*, Baxter presented an ethic for living on virtually every topic imaginable to the late seventeenth century imagination, including a chapter on "Directions about Sports and Receptions, and against Excess and Sin therein" (1678, pp. 460-465). His directions permitted varying forms of sport and recreation, though he placed a high premium on the suited-ness of the activity to the individual (Brailsford, 1991). In this way Baxter recognized the general ethical neutrality of most sport and recreation activities and placed the ethical imperative on the individual.

Placing the ethical impetus on the individual was a typically puritan way of including sport and recreational activities in personal piety. Baxter teased this out even further by juxtaposing leisure activities with work, and stating that leisure should be chosen such that it furthered an individual's work, which was seen as synonymous with carrying out God's will. And though Baxter recognized the benefits of recreation and even athletic activities, he cautioned against pursuing such activities for their own sake. Sport may be an enjoyable thing — which is permitted and even necessary — but for the Puritan it was never to be pursued solely for its enjoyment, as it was "to fit the body and mind for ordinary duty to God" (Baxter, 1678, p. 386).

The Puritans have suffered the brunt of much critical scholarship as it regards to their views on sports and recreation, though this is slowly being countered by recent scholarship which notes the ambivalence towards sport as recreation that is likely to be a more accurate picture of Puritan thought and behavior (Daniels, 1993). Still, regardless of the historical implications, Puritans like Baxter thought deeply about the role of sport in their lives and the ways that it influenced their Christian faith.

Victorian England and the Rise of Muscular Christianity

Victorian England was a time of political peace and prosperity, which also featured a great deal of social change and unrest. The industrial revolution gave rise to a new leisure class, and the nature of manual labor greatly changed (Cunningham, 1980). Physical and biological sciences experienced great leaps, formal disciplines like human physiology were established and in the midst of this, the strong nationalist desire to maintain the status of Britain's imperial legacy (Putney, 2001; Watson, Weir, & Friend, 2005).

All of these factors combined to make Victorian England fertile ground for a "health revolution" (Haley, 1978, p. 3; Watson, Weir, & Friend, 2005, p. 2), predictably extending into educational and religious considerations of the body. Like the Puritans, the Victorians saw the body and associated physical pursuits like sports as an instrument to be used in God's program. They differed however, in that they found sport to contribute to the positive moral formation and development of young men instead of as a road to vice and moral malformation. This belief in sports as a primary developer of moral and spiritual character came to be known as Muscular Christianity.

Charles Kingsley is generally recognized as a leading figure of the Victorian Muscular Christian movement, and his 1874 writings in *Health and Education* (1874) offer one of the most often quoted passages of the time:

... games conduce not merely to physical but to moral health; that in the playing fields boys acquire virtues which no books can give them; not merely daring and endurance, but, better still, temper, self restraint, fairness, honour, unenvious approbation of another's success, and all that 'give and take' of life which stand a man in such good stead when he goes forth into the world, and without which, indeed, his success is always maimed and partial. (para. 36)

This quote demonstrates the full embrace of sport as a tool of moral pedagogy. And as Ladd and Matthison have shown, this would later be combined with the American revivalism of figures like D.L. Moody who would take the instrumentalization of sport to a whole new level through sports evangelism and ministries (1999, pp. 28ff). Sport was thus no longer the harbinger of vice and licentiousness, and instead became one of the primary tools in the arsenal of a movement that would later spawn the fundamentalist evangelicalism that exists today.

The Beginnings of Modern Inquiry

In a chapter of the volume *The History of Exercise and Sports Science*, Scott Kretchmar (1997) locates the beginnings of the philosophy of sport discipline in philosophy of education at the end of the nineteenth century — notably converging back on multidisciplinary giants and educational theorists like John Dewey and William James at the turn of the twentieth century. Not coincidentally, this coincided with the end of the Victorian age that saw the development of Muscular Christianity. Throughout this period, “sport studies” if the anachronism can be tolerated, was primarily tied to its pedagogical potential. Because of this, any sports literature, including of religious orientation, tended to deal with sports in terms of its potential moral and character formation.^x Understandably, any work on sports from religious perspectives at this time was indeterminable from a disciplinary standpoint. Sports were a derivative category of study and a consequential discipline, of interest only for its secondary contributions to other matters of primary concern.

In 1938, and later translated to English in 1949, historian Johann Huizinga authored a groundbreaking and now classic work titled *Homo Ludens*, which proposed play as the fundamental element of human culture, standing in stark contrast to Scheler's more famous articulation of *homo faber*.^{xi} This historical anthropological work spurred an interest in the play phenomenon from a variety of social scientific and humanity perspectives, and French sociologist Roger Callois published his commentary *Man, Play and Games* (1958/1961) which built critically on Huizinga's work. In this same period, Catholic philosopher Josef Pieper published his own *Leisure: The Basis of Culture* (1948).

Gustave Thils in 1955 was perhaps one of the first to articulate a need for a “theology of the body and of sport,” though as Weir has noted, his subsequent work never went on to address this (Thils quoted in Weir, 2011, p. 6). The next two decades would see a sharp rise in theological discourse on sport and play. The first edition of Michael Novak's famous work *The Joy of Sports* was published in 1967 and is generally recognized as seen as “the first systematic study of the sports-faith interface” (Watson & Parker, 2013, p. 11). In 1970 D.L. Miller wrote *God's and Games: Toward a Theology of Play* and just two years later renowned theologian Jurgen Moltmann published his own *Theology of Play* (1972).^{xii} By the time Robert Johnston wrote his definitive *The Christian at Play* in 1983, theology of sport was finally starting to amass a significant amount of modern literature. The 1980's saw Shirl James Hoffman, Robert J. Higgs, and Joseph Price begin to publish on theology and sport, whom Watson and Parker consider as three of the four founders of the modern discipline along with Robert Novak (Watson & Parker, 2013, pp.11-12).

Since then, a number of volumes have been published in the area (Baker, 2007; Harvey, 2014; Ellis, 2014; St. Sing, 2004), as well as the establishment of several professional

societies,^{xiii} journals,^{xiv} book series,^{xv} special magazine and journal editions, and conferences.^{xvi}

Disciplinary Considerations and Case Studies

In considering theology of sport a discipline of inquiry in its own right, it seems necessary to at least briefly treat its methodology. This is perhaps especially important considering that theology of sport was developed in an interdisciplinary manner and conversations about it have often been and even continue to be hosted by parent disciplines other than theology. Indeed, to date, many authors writing on the topic have come from parent disciplines other than religious or theological studies.^{xvii}

To this end, rather than seek to establish a distinctly theological methodology for the study of sport, this section will offer several short reviews of different texts all broadly “theological” in nature. This both affirms Kretchmar’s call for more interdisciplinarity in sports studies as well as recognizes the legitimacy of theological reflection as it occurs in varied contexts and methods. To this end, Overman’s *Sports and the Protestant Work Ethic* will be presented as a work from a socio-historical theological perspective; *Touchdown’s for Jesus* by Marcia Mount Shoop will represent a more contemporary socio-cultural perspective; Randolph Feezell’s “Tim Tebow, Religious Diversity, and Religious Belief” will operate as a philosophical text speaking into and about the theological claims of religious believers; Susan Saint Sing’s *Spirituality of Sport* presents a psychological phenomenology from a religious perspective; and Lincoln Harvey’s *A Brief Theology of Sport* rounds out the field as a work of systematic theology.

Socio-historical: Overman’s *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Sports*.

Overman’s (2011) *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Sports* is a fine piece of scholarship that documents the influence that historically protestant thought has had on modern views of sport. While much of the text is historical in nature reviewing the history of protestant thought on recreation and leisure, Overman does well to establish the connections of this thought to modern day sports discourse, much as Max Weber had done in his work *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1930/2001).

Overman offers a lucid overview of the Lutheran doctrine of calling, the Calvinist doctrine of predestination, and the personal pietism of the Puritanism and connects them to the industrialized and capitalistic mechanisms hard at work in American society. This text, while written from a historical trajectory is nonetheless decidedly theological in nature, offering a historical-theological “social epistemology” of sport, as one reviewer has commented (Vannatta, 2012) and performing the kind of historical analysis that provides the foundation for constructive theological works on sport to build on.

Socio-Cultural Studies: Mount Shoop’s *Touchdown’s for Jesus*

Mount Shoop’s (2014) *Touchdown’s for Jesus and Other Signs of Apocalypse* is a recent and under-discussed work that treats a variety of socio-cultural issues facing sports like gender and race in fresh way. Mount Shoop brings a feminist theological perspective to these issues, which she terms as “apocalypses” which provide an opening into the fabric of sports. In this she levies the theological concept of apocalypse or “unveiling the truth” to provide a critical theological critique of modern sport.

But her theological critique is more than just social commentary on sport, and she ties it to the constructive project of “redeeming” sport from the classist, racist, and sexist “demons” that have come to possess it. In fact, her proposal is that once those demons are called out, then they can be exorcised which will enable the sports world to be inhabited and habituated with “new, more life-giving ways of being in the world” (2014, p. 103-104). In situating her proposal theologically, Mount Shoop recognizes the liturgical potential of sports — its power

to “inform the ways we build relationships, the way we form communities, and the way we understand purpose in our lives” (2014, p. 103). This insight about the power of sport to both form and deform the sporting individual, as well as the sporting community and society at large is deeply theological — the liturgy is after all the pedagogy of the Church — as well as deeply apposite to the often exploitative culture of modern sports.

Philosophy: Feezell’s “Tim Tebow, Religious Diversity, and Religious Belief”

Randolph Feezell has authored numerous books and articles in the areas of ethics and philosophy of sport, including an article in the *International Journal for the Philosophy of Sport* titled “Tim Tebow, Religious Diversity, and Religious Belief” (2013). The primary thrust of the article is an argument about the ethics of role model figures using their platform as a pulpit for proselytism — especially in light of the fact of religious diversity (Feezell, 2013, p. 153). Throughout the course of the article, Feezell proposes that a better model for would be moral exemplars like Tebow: to hold religious convictions “fallibly” or “tentatively” which in turn will cause the tentative believer to refrain from proselytism and other exclusivist public displays of religiosity.

Feezell’s tentative belief thesis assumes a profoundly rationalist conception of the relationship between faith and practice. In doing so he limits the possibility of realizing proselytism as an ethical communicative practice (Smith, 2015). Instead of providing the “more thoughtful, more constructive engagement between faith and sports” that Tom Krattenmaker (2009, p. 3; also quoted in Feezell, 2013, pp. 138, 152) calls for, Feezell would prefer to see faith removed from the realm of sport altogether.

And so while the article is definitively a piece of philosophy, it also forays into public and moral theology, making profoundly theological statements about both the role of faith and religious practice in the life of the believer. It also serves as a prime illustration of a work that bears theological thinking on contemporary issues in sports studies from outside of any religious establishment.

Psychology: Saint Sing’s *Spirituality of Sport*

Susan Saint Sing’s *Spirituality of Sport: Balancing Body and Soul* offers a personal window into the transcendental aspects of the sporting experience, and a kind of psychological phenomenology of the unified body and soul that participates in sport. Interestingly, Sing takes established notions of transcendental experience in sports and links them to the doctrine of the divine energies of God, which is a more obscure doctrine primarily in the Eastern Orthodox tradition that establishes the dogmatic basis of all mystical experience. According to Sing, human play “is an invitation passing back and forth between the energy of God and the energy here in this world’s creation” (2004, p. 10) so that when people play, they tap into “the energy of the universe” which is “the playfulness of God” (2004, p. 5). This participation in the divine energy establishes “the conjunction of two worlds” through the “communion of effort” (Sing, 2004, p. 13) which “coupl[es] the flesh with the spirit... creating a sacrament” (2004, p. 34).

Sing’s book is a mystical exploration of the sporting experience, but it is also a penetrating exploration of peak and flow experiences from a religiously transcendental perspective. And in many ways Sing’s proposal hearkens back to the classical Greek ideas about sport, spirit, and the body in a way that makes those ancient concepts relevant for contemporary consideration.

Systematic Theology: Harvey’s *A Brief Theology of Sport*

In his book *A Brief Theology of Sport*, author Lincoln Harvey leverages the Christian doctrine of contingency — traditionally defined “as the dependence of finite being on God’s necessary being” — to provide a theological understanding and ensuing ethic for sport (Thiel,

2012, pp. 47-48). From within this framework of contingency, Harvey posits sport^{xviii}—defined primarily by its autotelicity—as a “liturgy of creaturely contingency.” In this liturgy, God steps back to allow humankind to experience her own freedom in a celebration of her created and contingent self, as herself (Harvey, 2014, p. 94). The implication of this view is that true or good sport is sport that finds its end only within itself. Sport which is used for other purposes becomes the instrument of an ulterior *telos*. This destroys the pure being of creature hood experienced in sport, and ultimately corrupts it.

Such a view of sport has tremendous implications. It stands starkly against the instrumentalization of sport for any purpose — including the proselytizing missions of modern parochial sports programs, sport for development and peace initiatives, and of course, the capitalistic bonanza that is present day big-time sports (Smith, 2014b). And it begs everyone—religious and non-religious alike—to consider the fundamental nature of sports and the most basic reasons for participation in them.

Gaps and Future Considerations

Together, these texts illustrate the depth of religious reflection on sport, and show how theology can and does further contemporary conversations in sports studies. However they also demonstrate the relatively monolithic development of theologies of sport as a project of Western Christendom. In their extensive literature review, Watson and Parker (2014) cite seven texts on religion and sport from traditions outside of Christianity and include a brief note about the possibility of comparative approaches for work on religion and sport.^{xix} Future work on sport could be greatly expanded by considering other religious perspectives.

Tangentially related, theology of sport conversations would be enriched by contributions from feminist and liberation theologies. Feminist theology would have particular saliency for issues of embodiment and gender plasticity in sport, which have been almost completely ignored in Christian commentary on sports but which are quickly developing as major themes in the broader context of sports studies. Similarly, liberation theology could help to moderate discussions about the ethics of sport development and peace programs which are often blindly promoted as forces of good in the world, despite serious ethical concerns (Smith, 2014a).

Lastly, adopting the idea that sports operate with an internal logic and pedagogy that shapes the form of individuals and cultures, it would seem beneficial to consider and evaluate the forms of the sports themselves. That is, if it is accepted that different sports possess different ludic pedagogies, and if it is at least partially the place and purpose of religion to contribute to humanities understanding of the good life, then it would seem profitable to examine the value that each sport might offer. Doing so is likely to lead to tough questions about the appropriateness of certain sports, much in the way that Tertullian admonished against boxing. And while some of these conclusions could prove unpopular, theological perspectives on the values and virtue of sports could help to provide a much-needed corrective to the voyeuristic spectacles that have come to dominate the modern sporting landscape.

Conclusion

This paper has taken a birds eye view of the development of religious reflection on sport and as the commentary on these texts has shown, theological accounts of sport provide a relevant contribution to the overall discipline of sports studies and help to work against the “silo and bunker” mentality that Kretchmar has described by reuniting this research with one aspect of its cultural context. In this way religious discourses are able to respond to Tom Krattenmaker’s (2009) call and offer thoughtful and constructive engagement with the issues of modern sport.

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ⁱ As compared to other disciplines.

ⁱⁱ It should be noted that though this is the dominant paradigm in the literature, it is somewhat contested. For example, David Sansone (1988) contends that while early sport activity should be conceived of as ritual, the ritual nature of those activities need not necessarily be read as cultic or religious in nature.

ⁱⁱⁱ While not an exhaustive list, these include: Lincoln Harvey's (2014) *A Brief Theology of Sport*, Robert Ellis's (2014) *The Games People Play*, Marcia Mount Shoop's (2014) *Touchdowns for Jesus*, Watson & Parker's (2014) *Sport and the Christian Religion*, Greg Linville's (2014) *Christmaship*, Annie Blazer's (2015) *Playing for God*, and Rebecca Alpert's (2015) *Religion and Sports*.

^{iv} This paper will largely be based on generally Judeo-Christian perspectives, as one example of religious discourse on sports. Thus references to the discipline of theology of sport in this paper should generally be understood as specifically referencing the Christian tradition. This is not to exclude or otherwise marginalize the perspectives of other religious traditions or to suggest that the religion and sport discipline only consists of work on Christianity and sports. As will be suggested towards the end of this paper, the discipline would benefit greatly from further exploration of a wide variety of religious lenses.

^v It should be noted that the purpose of this paper is not to pose theology of sport as if it were a new discipline; rather, it is to acknowledge the long history of theological reflection on sport as well as recognize the recent more formal efforts that are "professionalizing" the discipline.

^{vi} It should be noted that there is a disciplinary difference between religious studies and theological studies. In fact, McCutcheon (2014) suggests that theological studies are one of the objects of religious studies. Recognizing this as a legitimate distinction, but also allowing that the possibility for theology to speak constructively is a legitimate enterprise, this article attempts to make the case that theologies of sport have a legitimate place in the interdisciplinary field of sport studies inasmuch as it helps to culturally situate the study of sport. Additionally, while this article briefly sketches some history of Christian theological commentary on sport, the purpose is not to "do" history, or to specifically understand the ways that theology and sport influenced each other and society. The purpose is to situate modern theological reflections on sport in a historical stream of work, to understand the context for modern theological of sport, and ultimately to show that these reflections can be considered a legitimate part of the interdisciplinary dialogue of sport studies.

^{vii} Specifically, these bans were made at the Council of Claremont (1130), the Second Lateran Council (1139), the Council of Rheims (1148), and the Third Lateran Council (1179). See Harvey (2014, pp. 42-43).

^{viii} The major exception being that those killed in tournaments were to be denied a Christian burial since the death was considered the result of murder or suicide (Harvey, 2014, p. 43).

^{ix} Puritan, for the sake of this broad overview, is defined as a tradition founded in Calvinism, which is itself a protestant stream of thought seen as synonymous with the thought of John Calvin and more formally articulated in the articles of the Synod of Dordt (1618-1619). See Overman (2011, p. 19).

^x For some this formation was notably a *malformation*.

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- ^{xi} Though the German biologist Karl Groos wrote *The Play of Man* in 1901, Huizinga's work gained much more traction in America.
- ^{xii} While I have highlighted the major literature, Watson & Parker provide a detailed and extensive literature review of relevant works (Watson & Parker, 2013, p. 13; Watson & Parker, 2014).
- ^{xiii} The Christian Society for Kinesiology and Leisure Studies was officially formed in 2002.
- ^{xiv} The *Journal of the Christian Society for Kinesiology and Leisure Studies* has been published intermittently since 2010; the *International Journal of Religion and Sport* was published by Mercer University Press in 2009, but seems to have ceased after two volumes; The *International Journal on Sports and Christianity* is being planned to launch in 2016.
- ^{xv} Mercer University Press publishes the Sports and Religion series; Routledge has published several titles broadly dealing with religious studies in its Routledge Research in Sport, Culture and Society series.
- ^{xvi} For an exhaustive list in each of these categories, see Watson & Parker (2014).
- ^{xvii} Michael Novak (philosophy, though much of his work has focused on philosophy of religion), Hoffman (Kinesiology), Higgs (English Literature), Matthisen (Sociology), Watson (Psychology), Parker (Sociology) though Price was a professor of religious studies and recent authors Marcia Mt. Shoop, Ellis, Harvey, and White all have backgrounds in religious or divinity studies.
- ^{xviii} Harvey is generally speaking about competitive sport.
- ^{xix} To be fair, this review was conducted in a book specifically written on Christianity and sport, and certainly does not reflect the full extent of literature on non-Christian religions and sport. Still, it is vastly outnumbered by Christian literature on the subject.