

WILDERNESS WOMEN: EMBODIMENT IN NATURE

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Virginia Woolf makes clear in her book *A Room of One's Own* that “[A] woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write....” This statement extends to all endeavors by women, including sport. The gap between men and women’s sports is not bridged by monetary compensation. The domination of women exists in conceptual ideals and how those are expressed through our roles in this world. I use Val Plumwood’s ecological feminist theory to expose the blatant masculinity imposed upon sport. I shall argue that sport is an arena of constant struggle over basic social conceptions of men and women. My endeavor is to implore traditionally masculine territory, and show sport as the domain of no single gender, but a field of simplicity and cooperation.

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CHAPTER I
PROBLEM OF DUALISM

“[A] woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction....”¹

Not only was Virginia Woolf correct in her statement of the necessity of money for women to write, but we may also apply this sentiment to the fair treatment of women in sports. Many people like to think that money does not run the world or the individuals whom inhabit it. Money does talk and unfortunately, it is the men who have dominated and continue to dominate the conversation. Women involved in sports have historically received less money, equipment, time, opportunity, and support. In order for women’s athletics to prosper and attain an equal footing with men’s, women must have their own money; it cannot reside in the hands of men.

It is obvious that men’s athletics receive more money and support than women’s do. One only has to turn on the television to watch a football, basketball, baseball, or soccer game. There are only a few female professional sports organizations. Those that do exist are clearly not as popular or noteworthy as the NFL or NBA. These teams not only receive huge sums of money from sponsors, but players are paid millions. Just as professional sports receive more money than small-unorganized women’s teams, college and high schools follow suit. The money is distributed unequally in favor of men’s sports, therefore putting women at a great disadvantage. Yet, simply acknowledging the fact that women receive unequal material treatment and pursuing legal means of equality address only a symptom of the disease plaguing this culture.

While I commend liberal feminism and share a similar political platform, I must admit their approach leaves me unsatisfied. My limited agreement with liberal feminism is the active pursuit of changing the system through such regulations as Title IX. However, simply attempting to alter the legal actuality of discrimination against women does not touch on the conceptual problem. An entertaining and insightful anecdote will help express how my eyes were opened to the much more serious problem. Throughout my career as an athlete I thought that if we women had the same opportunities, money, and equipment we would be equal. Yet, even after Title IX was initiated I came to realize the problem ran much deeper. Why didn't we have the same funding and why was our request met with such hostility? Because there was a deep seated disrespect and disgust toward women's sports by men. We were intruding on an area that men had dominated for so long, which was (allegedly) necessarily masculine because it required competition. My position was changed or directed to the root of the problem not the symptoms (unequal funding). On one sunny summer afternoon my sister, Kasey, and I lay on the cool outfield grass of our local softball field basking in the glory of our recent win. We began talking about discrimination of women's athletics and our anger guided us to look at the issue as a problem of values and respect (which men seemed to be lacking). The fruit of our discussion was the following short essay. Although I would love to take credit for it, the prose it is not mine, but Kasey's. Yet, I like to think I did have some influence since our conversation that afternoon inspired her essay entitled "Heart."

No, women will never be equal. We will never run as fast or jump as high or throw as hard as you. We will never have the same kind of fame, make as much money, or get as much respect. But you know, we still try. Every day we step onto the field or the

court knowing that even if we work twice as hard as you do we can only be your worst. And you laugh. But we still play. We play knowing that even if the score says we are ahead at the end of the game, we will still have lost. We play a game we can never win. And we play it everyday of our lives. We play knowing that we will only be good "for a girl." We play knowing that while we are pouring blood, sweat, and tears into our game, you are somewhere laughing. We play a losing game. A game where you make the rules and hire the referees. What we do takes more heart than you can ever comprehend, even in the last moment of a championship game. Why do you play? You play striving to be the best because you can be. Can you comprehend the notion that we can work twenty-four hours a day and still never be the best? Do you know how it feels to know that no matter how many wins you have at the end of a season, you will still never be winners? How would it feel to know that you can never win? Never. But how much heart does it take to keep playing? How much heart does it take to be beaten everyday and still be proud? You give credit to the unfortunate ones who aren't blessed with talent, but try. You hold your hand out to the handicapped child who will never win a race. You hold his hand and you cheer for him, and when he comes in his inevitable last, you pat him on the back and tell him "great job." And you look at him, and you respect him for trying. You speak up for him because you realize how much heart it takes to keep attempting to succeed at an all-impossible task. So why not us? We go through that battle everyday. We step on the field or the court knowing that we cannot win. But we still play. Isn't that worthy of a little respect? You mock our efforts in jokes and teasing. But what's so funny? What you are mocking is our determination. You are laughing because you know we will never win, but keep trying. You are mocking the very thing you respected the handicapped child for. It's pretty funny, huh? We may not be able to teach you how to jump or throw, but we can teach you heart. You may not respect us for our quickness or our strength, but you should respect us for our heart. Can you understand waking up every morning with something to prove? Can you understand going to bed every night knowing that you have lost? Can you understand playing a game where you can never win? You probably can't, and that's O.K. But you can understand that we do, and that we still play. And for that, you can look at us and you can say, "great job."

The domination of women by men lies not in the physical, but in the conceptual ideals of what it is to be human and its expression through our roles and participation in this world. As noted above, Woolf demands two components for the success and equality of women in writing; money and rooms of their own. In high school and collegiate athletics, Title IX has provided women with monetary compensation. While this component is by no means sufficiently met, it has received redress and is of less

significance today than the latter component: A room of one's own is more important.

What exactly does Woolf have in mind here?

Literally, one may take the phrase to mean privacy and possession. However, philosophical exploration demands more. "Room" functions metaphorically in Woolf's novel, *A Room of One's Own*, as well as in its adaptation here. Her novel, as analyzed by Joel Rich, is a cultural odyssey where we experience someone (namely a woman) moving past landmarks toward a settled place or a settled opinion.²

My goal is to explore territory that has traditionally been masculine and to present an alternative narrative. Thus, I too am setting out on a journey through the choppy waters of women and sport. While it is easy to be lured into the security of such definitive terms as good and bad, when dealing with oppression, this journey is far more complicated. Thus, "room" serves as a tool, to guide us into this "territory" known as sport.

I have chosen Australian philosopher Val Plumwood's critical ecological feminist theory to investigate and expose the blatant masculinity imposed upon sport, which is used to perpetuate the exclusion of women. Following this investigation, I argue that sport is an arena, perhaps historically created and participated in by men, but that it does not require solely masculine characteristics in which to participate, nor should women who possess such characteristics be considered any less female.

Before beginning my analysis of sport, a summary of Plumwood's argument drawn from her book *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* is useful. Plumwood launches into an ecofeminist philosophy by way of other classic scholars such as Rosemary

Radford Ruether and Carolyn Merchant. All assert that there have been historically, and today, crucial conceptual connections between women and nature. Understanding how these connections are constructed is necessary to understanding how each is oppressed and how we must rethink each category in order to create a new definition and understanding of humanity. Plumwood sees the oppression of women and nature as a result of being on the losing side of a dualism. She sees these dualisms as composing a playing board for the game of oppression. Or in her words, “an overarching dualistic schema representing at the level of concept formation the basic colonizing dynamic of western culture.”³ She cites a number of dualisms including, but not limited to the following:

reason/nature
male/female
mind/body
master/slave
self/other
reason/emotion

We have come to understand our world through dualisms in which there is a dominator and a dominated or in athletic terms a winner and a loser.

Historically, this way of understanding and conceiving the world has gone unchallenged. Plumwood emphatically rejects this meta-narrative on the grounds that it inadequately considers the values of all life forms and ways of life. Furthermore, she offers an alternative narrative that she believes functions better at the individual, social, and political levels. This critical alternative is intended not only to rethink the concept of women, but also the concept of human being, so as to include women in humanity. This far extends her predecessors work in fields such as liberal and radical feminism, who

neglect to challenge the overarching dualistic schema and instead work to adapt to it or reverse the roles so that women become the dominator. More specifically, radical feminism is concerned with sexuality. It argues that the fundamental causes of women's oppression are sexual. Due to women's reproductive role they are subordinated. Liberal feminism argues from a political platform. Women have the same rights as men; thus society must provide women with the same educational and occupational opportunities that men have. Plumwood, however, is quick to point out that this liberal feminism does not eliminate the problem, but manipulates it in the favor of women.

We must understand that Plumwood's attack is on dualism, not on distinctions or dichotomies. She sees distinctions and dichotomies as necessary to life. The crucial difference is that dualisms provide a means and justification for methodically categorizing and constructing the world through hierarchical relationships. As she eloquently puts it, "In dualistic construction, as in hierarchy, the qualities (actual or supposed), the culture, the values and the areas of life associated with the dualised other are systematically and pervasively constructed and depicted as inferior."⁴ The term dualistic as I use it here is a relation of separation and domination, which is deeply embedded in culture and rationalized as natural. The key to understanding dualism, according to Plumwood, and how they apply to sport requires identifying five characteristics: backgrounding, radical exclusion, incorporation, instrumentalism, and homogenization. These five form the logical structure of dualistic thinking. They are best understood as features of the relationship between the members of the contrasting pairs in the dualism.

The first of the five features Plumwood calls backgrounding or denial. It is a complex feature resulting from the master's (dominator's) struggle to reconcile his own self-aggrandized independence with a dependency on the other (dominated). This denial makes the other inessential, denying the other's contribution to the master's reality, and instilling a hierarchy of activities. This denial is evident from the fact that many activities performed by women do not fall near the top of the hierarchy, and hence are simply considered not worth noticing. These activities include housework, gardening, raising children, grocery shopping, etc. Yet, it is these very activities, which, considered frivolous and unworthy of attention, provide the conditions necessary for the activities in which the master participates.

Backgrounding allows for radical exclusion, the second feature in the relationship. The other is treated "not merely different but inferior, part of a lower, different order of being, differentiation from it demands not merely distinctions, but radical exclusion, not merely separation but hyperseparation."⁵ Radical exclusion is used to maintain a pristine identity completely distinct from the other. An example derived directly from sport of such an exclusion is in the area of strength and virility. The man considers himself excluded from women due to the obvious anatomical differences and biological features that result in the former's perception of superiority. He may say to himself, "I am nothing like the other because I am stronger and can lift more or throw harder or run faster." It is especially in respect to these biological differences that men feel they are naturally justified in their hyperseparation.

Incorporation, the third feature, is important because it reveals how the dualistically construed opposites affect the other. The inferior individual within the relationship is defined not in original terms, but only in respect to the superior. Furthermore, the other is always construed as negative or lacking a characteristic possessed by the master. Simone de Beauvoir writes that “humanity is male and man defines women not in herself but as relative to him; she is not regarded as an autonomous being...she is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her; she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute she is the Other.”⁶ One could logically symbolize the master as P and the other as $\sim P$. While both depend upon each other for meaning and identity, they lack equality. The master’s qualities are primary, wherein his power lies. It is clear from the logical example that the other does not stand alone, but is consumed by the master by way of opposition. The other is in fact defined in terms of the master. It is this point in particular that works its way most powerfully into Plumwood’s thesis. Plumwood believes that in the same way that the other, for our purposes women, is defined in terms of the man, human is also defined in masculine characteristics.

The fourth feature is instrumentalism (objectification). Instrumentalism and objectification are used synonymously because when women are viewed as object, sexual or otherwise, they become a means and are no longer seen as ends in themselves. They are objects to be utilized by another, instruments to be directed. The previous three characteristics have revealed a superior or higher to inferior or lower order. In accordance with this characteristic, the lower order is useful or instrumental in meeting the ends of

the superior order. “They are made part of a network of purposes which are defined in terms of or harnessed to the master’s purposes and needs.”⁷ In other words, women are simply resources and/or tools used by men. They are not seen to have any interests of their own, and are thereby easily objectified.

This objectification through instrumentalism festers into homogenization or stereotyping, the fifth feature. This process allows the dominator to disregard the differences among the dominated and to treat them all as though they conform to a single standard. Due to the master’s self-affirming centrality, the differences found among those inferiors are of little significance. They are colonized (all made to be the same and easily organized into groups) by the master into perfect groups at the mercy of their superior.

These five features, Plumwood believes, work together to enforce an imposed conceptual framework, which divides beings into two orders. Plumwood argues that men and women can be “conceptualized and treated in more integrated and unified ways.”⁸ Again I stress that she is not denying differences among men and women, but simply challenging the current arrangement of difference which grounds hierarchy.

Even with a verbal and written acknowledgement of the problematic dualism, daily effort is required in the battle, to overcome and dismantle these relationships and recreate a relationship and identity free of hierarchical conception of difference. Plumwood believes that we must all acknowledge our dependency upon one another for survival and identity in this world. Furthermore, our differences need not function as catalysts for separation and oppression, but could serve to foster curiosity, awe, and an appreciation of diversity.

This critical ecological feminism, although not directly related to sport, may be employed in order to shed light on the discrimination women have long since suffered. I apply Plumwood's theory to sport because I have a vested interest in my being a woman and an athlete. Nevertheless, my investigation is not limited solely to my personal interest. Sport has not been given the academic attention it deserves and is often dismissed as an extracurricular activity not centrally associated with social and culture values or patterns. To the contrary, I argue that organized sport is an arena of constant struggle over basic social conceptions of men and women and of ideological contests in terms of power. As Clarke and Clarke argue, sport "appears as a sphere of activity outside society and particularly as it appears to involve nature, physical skills and capacities, [sport] presents these ideological images *as if they were natural.*"⁹ Hence, sport is a powerful cultural arena for the perpetuation of the ideology of male superiority and domination.

Because the very definition of sport is written in masculine terms, sport is an opportunity to apply Plumwood's theory. I believe she would argue that her dualistic relational features are easily identified in sport and change is possible in sport despite past dismissals by other feminists. Sport has been successfully feminist free in comparison to many other societal arenas because it presents a problem. To compete in sport and fight for equal participation for women appears to promote dominant male values. More specifically, the values often associated with sport are competition, aggression, physical contact, strategy, and deception tend to be posited in opposition to compassion, reciprocity, timidity, compliance. This list of values is the terms that tend to

define sport. Furthermore, the former values are historically attached to men and the latter to women, thus creating ideal concepts that very real people must meet. Yet, as I argue below, an adoption of Plumwood's anti-dualisms makes these values androgynous. A key to understanding the naturalization of women in sport is to avoid past social and feminist mistakes of essentialism. I mean by "naturalization of women in sport" that they become comfortable with their own active involvement in a sport or athletic event. In order for women to be accepted, most importantly by themselves, they must not assume that what it is to be a woman is to have particular and essential characteristics. Moreover, women in sport are a social anomaly because sport is considered a desirable male domain. Despite sport's recognition as a superior male activity it cannot be ignored if women are to understand the process of their domination. Women's own domination often is the cause of many problems. The insane person is often locked inside himself or herself and with guidance and discussion he or she can escape. Thus, while I understand that other individuals often make women feel conceptually different or inferior often time, it is our own misconception and self-oppression that keeps us constrained. Thus, women need to recognize that they can escape this process. The absence of women being the traditional view of sport, I'd like to continue by presenting a definition of sport as a characteristically masculine activity.

According to Lois Bryson, sport is an institution in which male hegemony is constructed and reconstructed.¹⁰ Radical separation is first apparent in the physical realm of sport. Because sport is body-centered, strength, agility, power, endurance, fitness, etc. are all qualities that constitute an ideal player. Yet, traditionally these characteristics have

eluded women who instead were dubbed meek, mild, emotional, etc. It is the requirement of those male qualities in sports that work to exclude women. Some feminist critics argue that women in sport challenge the passivity inscribed on women's bodies. They are thought to transcend their own characteristics and enter the male zone.

Yet, I argue that qualities such as strength, power, endurance, etc. are not essential characteristics of men, but possessed by both sexes. Through social and cultural convention women have had little opportunity to demonstrate such androgynous qualities. Unfortunately, simply entering the domain of the man and demonstrating similar qualities does not give women equal standing. Such a position is implausible within a dualistic framework because we are categorically defined as inferior and only exist in relation to men. Thus, in athletics a woman's sexual identity is given precedent over her sports identity in reaction to her intrusion. This precedence is done through sexual innuendoes in sports commentary and among the fans and players themselves. Such a language of discourse as sexually indirect suggestion is an examples of instrumentalism and objectification. Men cannot let the other come into direct contact with their identity; therefore, to mentally justify women's forced entrance into the field of sport they trivialize it. Women continue to be considered sexual objects; although their bodies may excel in sports, they are still primarily objects of pleasure for men.

Examples of such reactions are apparent in the uniforms of several women's sports. For example, women's volleyball uniforms, bitterly called "butt-huggers" by women are nothing more than a thin, short piece of lycra that has only one direction to go, up! I can recall my high school volleyball team's amazingly large crowd of football

players despite our losing seasoning. The men were not there to offer support and admire good performances; they simply enjoyed the view. Gymnastics, tennis, and bodybuilding are similar with regard to the ornamentation of the female body. Granted some men's athletics objectify the body as well. Thus, the objectification is not limited to a gender discrimination, but a problem of how society views the purpose and function of sport.

If it is not sexual objectification, then men expend misdirected energy by focusing on the bizarre nature of women and sport. The oldest evidence of sport dates back to Greek civilization with little to no female participation. Such a tradition has dominated most societies. Thus, because of the long time exclusion of women from sport when they enter the arena it is unexpected. It raises a curious eyebrow much as a palm tree would in the forests of Oregon. A tone of superiority, humor, or irony is found in men's voices and comments with respect to women. As Dr. Johnson's old phrase says, "It's like a dog standing on its hind legs. It is not well done, rather one is surprised to see it attempted at all."¹¹ This comment again draws attention to the radical separation of the other. Our society fundamentally believes that men and women must be continuously differentiated. Sport helps to outline and define the male identity. It is associated with popularity and friends. Everyone knows the stereotype that the captain of the football team is likely the most popular person in school. The societal understanding of team sports, such as football, rugby, and soccer portray men as gregarious, expressive, and often seen living it up amidst a crowd of fans in the local pub after a match. It is not the sport itself, but the participants that reinforce this image. Athletic achievement strengthens the male identity.

It is taken for granted that success in athletic endeavors is not only success at being masculine, but success in life.

Professional sports make this concept a reality for a small number of men. However, only very small portions of male athletes make it to the professional level. For professional athletes many necessities faced by the rest of us become obsolete and are not a means to success. For example, intellectual achievement is sacrificed for improvement on the court or field. However, the tables turn when women enter the picture. A woman in sport is thought of as alone. There is no popular image of backslapping and high fives. Instead a female athlete conjures up feelings of distrust because she is a stranger and disliked because of her marginal location. Furthermore, the more outstanding her performance the more she is marked as a deviant. Instead of confirming her identity, success threatens her with a foreign male identity. She lives a life of severe contradiction. She is trapped in the identity given her by the master and if she tries to adopt his identity out of supposed equality she finds that it doesn't fit. To add to her confusion and frustration, not only does she adopt a distorted male identity, but she also no longer meets the demands of the master's definition of a woman. Thus, to succeed as an athlete is to fail as a woman because she has in symbolic ways become a man. But she does not enjoy the anticipated benefits of such a position. In academic terms this is the cause of the feelings expressed in the essay "Heart."

Furthermore, there are two more processes through which sports contribute to the maintenance of hegemonic masculinity. The first is society's definition of who can participate in sport. Traditionally, men and children are among the only members of

sporting activities. When women do enter, men are still in control in terms of organization, coaches, managers, administrators, and referees, who are usually always men. Although this misconception exists throughout the entire society, the media propagates it further.

Second, women's sport is virtually ignored or minimally covered. The media is concerned almost solely with men's sport. You might find a women's fastpitch softball game televised on ESPN2 at three o'clock Saturday morning. But men get primetime network slots. Nevertheless, when women do compete against men in some sports, the latter's performance is equal to or even superior to that of men. For example, endurance sports, such as swimming, have proven women champions. Finally, down goes the wall that men have built and continuously fortified and hid behind, physical superiority. For example, in *Challenging the Men*, impressive records of women swimmers are recognized: "Two of the fastest times in Lake Windemere are held by women, eight of the ten fastest English Channel swims in either direction and the non-stop record each way are held by women; and the each way and both way records for Catalina Channel Swims are held by women."¹² Therefore, it matters not if women win or lose in sport; they go unrecognized. The final process of maintaining the hegemonic masculinity is the trivialization of sports for women. This ranges from prohibiting women to coach men to the motherly appearance. For example, a newspaper article featured a photo of Rosemary Longstaff, training for a marathon behind a stroller and the caption read "Marathon mum is pushing off to London."¹³

With such animosity directed toward women, it is a wonder that we keep trying. But our move into sport is a need for equality and control of our own bodies. More importantly it is a need for self-definition, which challenges the ideological basis of male domination. I applaud women's perseverance despite men's resistance. A resistance that is driven by the desire to maintain sport as a socializing agency, the maintenance of hierarchical ranking of sex roles, a preservation of the male realm that allows for expressiveness and intimacy (qualities that are typically absent from what is generally viewed as appropriate behavior for men).¹⁴

The solution to this problem requires a conceptual revolution. Men and women must both realize that although they possess both similar and different qualities, none are essential to their gender identity. Women may be competitive and passive. Likewise men can be strong and cry. While I do not attempt to describe how a human should be defined without masculine or feminine overtones, I do wish to offer six points, taken from Susan Birrell and Diana M. Richter's article "Is a Diamond Forever," that we can employ to make sport the domain of both sexes equally. First, winning is over emphasized at the expense of individual and team enjoyment. The primacy of winning is voiced in feminist literature and I too conclude this is the wrong emphasis when one conceives of sport. One should refuse to allow winning the privilege of ultimate worth. The joy of playing is often sacrificed for the win. With such an importance placed on winning the division between play and life becomes less structured (this will be explained at length in chapter two). One should desire to play a highly skilled game, which continues to incorporate hard play and fun play. Second, with connection to this overemphasis, the hierarchical nature of

sports needs to undergo modification in reference to players and coaches. Male coaches often use the scare tactic as a motivator. Loosely veiled threats by coaches clearly demonstrate the power struggle. The third point, elitism based on skill, deserves careful deliberation. While I do not feel that categorizing players, male or female, into skill groups is wrong, I do find the grossly exaggerated attention to the best of the best tiresome. Sport is not about simply winning or holding a record. Skills such as teamwork, self-discipline, inspiration, comradery, and many more present themselves in sport. By focusing solely on the elite in skill these other qualities are ignored or disregarded to the detriment of society. Furthermore, the concern with skill does not allow for health and reciprocal relationship in the event of an "off day." At some point in one's athletic experience one will perform poorly. This is not a tragedy given that we are human and prone to physical and mental mistakes. Thus, one must rely on one's team to carry them through this rough time rather than condemn the act as negative and unacceptable.

Fourth, exclusivity represented by sexism and elitism in sport follow. Each of these can divide friends and teammates into cliques that perpetuate the greater problem. Social exclusion works to further isolate women or men in the field of sport. It allows the individual and the group to create one identity for a person when there are truly many more variables at work. Fifth, is the disparagement of an opponent that only serves to alienate players and teams from one another. While a good natured rivalry often adds to the excitement and momentum of a game, it, like anything else, is taken to the extreme. A game of sport is not war, but you'd be hard pressed to know that in today's society. The opponent who truly is a comrade and whose presence is necessary to ensure any sort of

game or competition is mutated into the enemy. Sixth, the ethic of endangerment places the outcome of the game above the players' safety. This ethic is a derivative of the “winning is everything” and “win at all costs” drive. Sport doesn't have to be the violent cut-throat business it has become. It can be an activity for activity's sake. It is a field of simplicity where right and wrong is easily identified based on rules and etiquette. It can be the ideal expression of unfettered social relations and a start to this new way of conceptualizing the world without dualisms. Of course, it requires daily practice and a habit of deliberately denying and ignoring the current dualism in favor of a non-hierarchical relation of difference.

CHAPTER II

LANGUAGE OF SPORT

The previous chapter has outlined the problems women face in sport, which is a result of dualism. In the next chapter I work to dismantle the aforementioned dualism via women's participation in wilderness sport. In order to understand wilderness sport however, it is important to understand the components of sport I outline in this chapter. I believe one possible avenue is to focus on the intimate connection of sport and self. However, before such topics can be addressed one must have an understanding of sport as situated in philosophy. This chapter introduces four key terms common to the philosophy of sport, *play*, *game*, *sport*, and *athletics*. Through a new interpretation of each of these concepts and their interaction, I suggest that women in particular, but men as well, can recreate the room into a space rich with complexity and multi-variant achievement.

Sport situated in philosophy

Excellence is a value pursued, but not always found in every human endeavor. Yet, when encountered, excellence gives way to awe and excitement. Excellence keeps one coming back for more, a challenge that delights its captive audience. Paul Weiss writes of excellence, "Illustrating perfection, it gives us a measure for whatever else we do."¹⁵ In fact, both men and women appreciate the concern for excellence. Excellence exists in many fields, great character, a stature for the art of living, great leaders and statesmen, teachers of mankind, wise sages, and athletes.¹⁶ However, it is evident that

the excellence seen in the public sector of only a few individuals is not what fuels the desire for such behavior. Few will attain public excellence, but a private excellence results from "a mastery of the body or of the things in the world."¹⁷ Thus, sport is introduced as a means to bodily excellence.

Sport, as conceptualized and practiced by the layperson or professional entails the body. Because this thesis is a collection of philosophical reflections on the subject, one may question if sport indeed has any philosophical import. Philosophers are only recently beginning to give sport the academic attention it deserves. Weiss recognizes that sport has traditionally been slighted along with other areas (now gaining credibility) such as sex, work, and play. The nature and desire of humans to achieve pleasure have occupied the bulk of philosophical musings.¹⁸ For example, political philosophy and ethical theories focus on the nature of humans as well as their desire to achieve those entities, positions, or otherwise which grant them pleasure. Pleasure includes the idea of excellence and the desire for it, along with the understanding that people everywhere are people with similar natures and appetites.¹⁹ However, such thoughts have not led philosophy down the road to sport.

Despite philosophy's snubbing of an arena that truly is one of the "most universal occupations of men," it is not without some ancient attention.²⁰ The Greeks provide us with some explanation for the neglect of sport. Certainly the Greek people enjoyed athletics, but their delight was limited to spectatorship, not extensive thought of the nature of or reason for sport. According to Weiss, it was Plato and his fellow philosophers who set the precedent for casting aside sport in favor of other issues. Since

Plato and the Greeks assumed a normative position in Western thought, few if any philosophers have picked sport up throughout the years, that is, until recently. However, I believe sport provides an excellent realm for understanding the self because the participation in and reflection of sport are not limited to an elite group of people as much of philosophy tends to be. It is sport that catches the eye of the young and old, men and women, wise and foolish, educated and uneducated.²¹ Furthermore, P. S. Frederickson observes: "There is no society known to man which does not have games of the sort in which individuals set up purely artificial obstacles and get satisfaction from overcoming them."²² Sport may indeed shed light on a common driving human need enabling one to understand the self as expressed through the pursuit of excellence. My aim here is to make sport of philosophical interest as it relates to human beings' basic desires.

Importance of sport to society

Sport is comprised of two parts, agon and competition. These can be argued as aspects of human existence and experience as well, according to Joseph C. Mihalich. "Agon characterizes our hopes and enlivens our dreams, and defines the human spirit in the quest for satisfaction and the achievement of excellence."²³ Competition, like agon, is found in all aspects of life. The relevancy of sport in theory and practice is today, as in the past, a clear influence on our lives.

In fact, Robert L. Simon, a sports philosopher, supplies the statistical information that "96.3 percent of American population plays or watches or reads articles about sports with some frequency or identifies with particular teams or players."²⁴ With such a large audience following sports, it is certainly a reflection of some commonality between

humans. What really is of value in sports to this audience? Is it just the sport or the fanfare, money, violence, and excitement? Simon compares today's audience with ancient Greeks, Romans, and Native Americans. Sports were valued greatly in all these societies, through participation in sports, and the related activity of play, the individual gained characteristics of human society.²⁵ Yet, what is commonly unknown about the Greeks is that they were concerned only with winning.²⁶ It was the British who brought in the idea of a need for *how* the game was played.²⁷ They believed that what we gain from losing makes us better winners. Sport is also an institutionalized game with a history, a body of rules, winners and losers, and outcomes based on physical prowess.²⁸ They are viewed as leisure pursuits that reflect and reinforce social values and normative boundaries. Sport is a way of instilling conformity, teaching social rules and respect for rules, teamwork, cooperation, perseverance, sportsmanship, and fair play.

Sport is made possible by a suspension of several informal norms such as: age, gender, behavior, and appearance. In terms of age, it is thought that adults shouldn't spend all their time playing games, but instead find a job and support their family maturely. Yet, for professional athletes, playing a game is their career. Gender behavior is also suspended because in the context of sport males may show emotion and have physical contact. Their behavior is also different, because they can now do things they could not in other areas of their lives. For example, snuff chewing, spitting, swearing, screaming, and "trash talking" are normally considered rude, but accepted within sport. The appearances of the fans by painting their faces and wearing team colors or tattoos represents some suspension of norms as well. It is by way of this suspension that

conditions are met, allowing one to know the self. No longer are they burdened by traditional external norms. This is the play side of Sartre's play/serious separation in "Play and Sport."²⁹

In essence, sport partitions off a part of the world that one can control. Rules are created arbitrarily by the participants based on a long history or of spontaneous creation, and these rules are followed only as long as desired. The serious aspect of life disappears within the realm of sport. Sartre argues that when rules are created, one has a sense of freedom because within this context one can change those rules or opt not to participate. Opposed to play is seriousness. Sartre describes seriousness as placing meaning in the world. This seriousness then allows one to sacrifice parts of one's life or self. The locus of inquiry is no longer on the self. Fundamentally, play involves and revolves around the self. Play asks how one comports oneself. Furthermore, play is foundationally the desire to be. Within the context or framework of play, the field or playground does something. The participant constructs it. The structure changes. Sartre uses the example of snow. While hiking up the mountain covered in snow, one struggles through the white cold substance. The ground breaks under one's weight. However, on the way down the mountain the structure of the snow is essentially changed. Now, it supports one's weight and in fact proves to be a surface slippery and ready to push you up to meet the blue sky above. Thus, environment plays a key role in play and the interaction of the player.

Language of sport: play, game, sport, and athletics

The problem women face in sport is largely a result of the conceptual ideal of sport as well as its derivatives. In order for women to overcome the oppression they face,

from male counterpart as well as a woman's self-imposition stemming from socialization, a new concept of sport must take hold. I suggest this new concept should be sought through a reconstruction of how sport is characteristically and semantically defined. James Keating believes that society has a problem with the language of sport as well as its definitional characteristics. The language is obscure and ambiguous. The words, *play*, *game*, *sport*, and *athletics* are all used interchangeably by much of the population, when in fact he believes there is a great difference between them. His main concern is that “sport” is a synonym for athletics. Consider the example of *Sports Illustrated*. They endorsed an activity that called for a single month moratorium on sport. They were to do have nothing to do with sports at all. Why? So the employees could get a chance to get caught up on their golf, football, softball, jogging, fishing, etc. Yet, these are all sporting activities.

Play

Philosophers of sport disagree on the definition, purpose, and role of *play*, *game*, *sport*, and *athletics*. However, the relationship between these four words that do represent activities is necessary in understanding how the self emerges and is understood. Prominent philosophers in the field of sport such as Kretchmar, Weiss, Slusher, and Vanderzwaag believe each of these activities is distinct from the other. Play tends to receive the least amount of attention because it functions rather simplistically. While Slusher believes play is the raw material of sport he doesn't offer isolated characteristics for such a material. Kretchmar, on the other hand, identifies the chief characteristics of play. He argues that play is unimportant in terms of the effects or result following the

doing of play. What is important is one's love of doing, the possibility of participating in the experience in the spirit of play.³⁰ Play is only made possible by one, prerationality and two, free choice. Prerationality is the absence of calculations, thus entailing the correlative aspect of spontaneity.³¹ In this sense play is for the lover who willingly gives himself or herself to his or her playground, equipment, and playmate. However, Kretchmar points out this often results in losing track of time, missing dinner, and engaging in silly activity all for the sake of the experience. Play can be rather addictive in this regard because it does carry an intoxicating momentum. Play is also a freely chosen activity with the burden of duty, fear, courage, or self-sacrifice as motivations. A person is invited to do (play) by the world that they find interesting. Doing so of course, may result in good or bad consequences; yet, these aren't premeditated nor do they factor into the intention of play.

Weiss develops a similar definition of play; however, he is much more focused on the social aspect. Clearly, play is the primary occupation of children. One doesn't have to look further than a school playground to find examples of play. Whether it is rope jumping, tag, leapfrog, or mud puddle splashing, the spirit of camaraderie is present. Weiss argues that play is "nature's way of turning barbarians into socially acceptable beings."³² Play becomes a socializing agent that maximizes participation in group activities, but also gives way to maturity. Weiss points out that children play with each other and in their absence they will play with adults, pets, and even imaginary friends. Thus, play appears necessary to a child's development. However, while play may be an active agent in allowing one to reach maturity, it then becomes an awkward and often

times laborious task. This characterization quite obviously contradicts the original characteristics described by Kretchmar. Adults do not engage in play as readily as children and often require work in doing so.

Vanderzwaag adds one vital component to the definition of play. Drawing from J. C. Friedrich von Schiller's work, he argues that play is valuable for man's potential in life.³³ Initially, he concludes play is valuable because it is often contrasted with work. Both are necessary for the activity we call life. The latter provides us with subsistence, shelter, and creature comforts. The former allows us to escape the world of work, which has the baggage of stress, seriousness, and finality. Yet, play is a world of our creation that we can enter and leave at any time; it enables one to keep one's sanity in a matter of speaking. However, I do not agree with von Schiller's contrast and like Vanderzwaag I believe play and work should be viewed in a continuum rather than at odds. If we place work at one end and play at the other, we are able to slide through this continuum much like the weights on a scale. This conception better characterizes one's experience of play and work because often the two are intermingled. Many people find their work quite enjoyable and might very well equate it with playing.

Roger Caillois rounds out the definition of play with his focus again on the freedom of the individual. Play is free because it depends solely on the individual to begin and to terminate the activity.³⁴ Thus, it is necessary that play is freely accepted and carried out by the individual only as long as he or she desires it. One engages in play by way of phenomenological methods. In order to play one must bracket activities of daily life and enter a more controlled world. Thus, control becomes an issue and play exists

when the individual is in charge by way of reinterpreting what objects are and what they do.³⁵ Control allows one to create a tighter world for oneself where one can relax because it is self-structured. The individual is not subjected to the loosely structured and necessarily uncontrollable world at large. Thus, Caillois is implementing phenomenology's technique of bracketing. What exactly is controlled in play? According to Caillois, portions of time, space, and causality are demarcated with subordinate areas and activities left open to spontaneity and free interpretation, which are controlled. This is an extension of Kretchmar's definition of play. Most importantly play allows one to recognize boundaries in particular, where one stops and the world begins. It is this characteristic that differs significantly from games and sport according to Weiss.³⁶

Game

The word *game* means, "to leap joyously."³⁷ How is this word different from play, one may ask? Because it is an activity the key is "leaping;" a game is a challenge of the body. Game incorporates many characteristics of play, most importantly the voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles. Games range in difficulty level, but a problem always exists. Contrary to its traditional connotation, the problem functions as a positive aspect of games. It presents a challenge to the participant. Kretchmar argues that the presence of "inefficient means" also comprises all games.³⁸ For example, the game of golf requires that the little white ball be placed in the hole. The most efficient means of achieving this goal is to walk to the flag, ball in hand, and to place it in the hole. However, there is very little challenge in this method. Yet, the presence of an inefficient means is not a sufficient basis for concluding that something is a game, according to

Kretchmar.³⁹ Morality and ethical theories can fall under this category and surely they are not games. Thus, a second component is necessary.

It is the voluntary acceptance of limited means. The underlying assumption here is that it is the pursuit that is important, not simply winning. It requires taking longer routes to have the experience of trying to reach the goal and overcome the challenge. The third and final component is the adoption of a serious attitude. This attitude should not be confused with Sartre's concept of seriousness. Kretchmar is arguing that one's attitude and approach to the game is that of a serious desire to succeed. Thus, games are only meaningful when taken seriously in the sense of interest and commitment.⁴⁰ In short, games involve problem solving and according to Kretchmar may be experienced as play or not.

Weiss takes a similar, but slightly different approach to game. He argues that strategy, tactics, and reflections define it. It is, however, different from sport and athletics because the actual competing athlete acts without reflection of the problem.⁴¹ The athlete doesn't consider the consequences of his action outside the game. For example, a baseball player running home intending to put his or her shoulder into the catcher in an attempt to dislodge the ball from the catcher's mitt doesn't reflect on the fact this is intentional assault. The aim is simply not to be tagged out. Furthermore, games require conformity to rules or the locus of ideal play. Yet, Weiss strays from Kretchmar and other philosophers of sport when he claims games are not bound off or bracketed from ordinary life. On the other hand, a game is a very serious endeavor requiring continuation. It must run its course and remain going despite tiredness and the lure of other activities, submission to

rules, or physical exertion. While Weiss and Kretchmar disagree sharply on the seriousness aspect, I believe each has a valid point, and are compatible in wilderness sport. However, before any conclusions are drawn, two more concepts need exploration: sport and athletics.

Sport and Athletics

The last two categories needing explanation and investigations are sport and athletics. Keating wants to clarify the difference between sport and athletics because “sport” is too loosely applied to human behavior. He argues that sport is a diversion for one's amusement. “‘Sport,’ we are told, is an abbreviation of the Middle English word *desport* or *disport*, themselves a derivative of the Old French verb *desporter*, which literally means to carry away from work.”⁴² Work here is best understood as the serious aspect of Sartre's description. Webster indicates that it is a diversion or recreation and past time. Athletics, on the other hand, is a competitive game in which the prize or victory is important. Keating believes that athletes are prizefighters by nature. Athletics is a contest in which the playful spirit is absent and the prime purpose of the participants is victory in the contest. This is not the case in sport. Sport has a playful spirit; one tries to win, but if he or she doesn't, it is fine as long as the game itself is enjoyable.

These two categories aren't different in terms of their mechanics or rules, only in preparation and intention. Keating believes that sport is a diversion. Athletics is a competitive activity, which ends in victory or defeat and is characterized by the spirit of dedication, sacrifice, and intensity. Sportsmanship plays an important role in society, but Keating believes that an attempt to make sportsmanship an all-embracing moral

category is impossible when comparing sport and athletics. In 1926 a national Sportsmanship Brotherhood was organized to spread the beliefs of sportsmanship in all aspect of life. Its code consists of eight rules: keep the rule, keep faith with your comrades, keep yourself fit, keep your temper, keep your play free from brutality, keep pride under controlling victory, keep stout in defeat, keep a sound soul and a clean mind in a healthy body. Each of these can also be emphasized in society in exclusion of sport, but as we see they can also be absent from both society and sport. Keating has a different idea of the essence of genuine sportsmanship. He argues it is not merely an aggregate of moral qualities comprising a code of specialized behavior, but also an attitude, posture, and manner of interpreting what would otherwise be only a legal code. Many qualities that have characterized the sportsman in the past include: “Truthfulness, courage, spartan, endurance, self-control, self-respect, consideration one for another’s opinions and right, courtesy, fairness, magnanimity, a high sense of honor, co-operation, generosity.”⁴³ Yet, Keating believes that we should not be concerned with those virtues, which might be found in the sportsman nor in the virtues that often accompany the sportsman, but the concern is with those moral habits that are essential, and characterize the participant as a sportsman. He asserts that there are a few key qualities and other peripheral ones. He reaches this conclusion on the principle that the nature of the activity determines the conduct and attitudes proper to it. Therefore, there should be a different code of conduct for sport than athletics because they are by nature different activities

In sport, the primary purpose is not to win, but to have fun. Generosity and magnanimity are also essential as well as the establishment and maintenance of a social

bond. The sportsman adopts a cavalier attitude. He or she is self-sacrificing, and not on a search of legal justice. Nor is he or she trying to evade the rules; he or she acts only from unquestionable moral right. Sport is a co-operative endeavor to maximize pleasure of joy from the activity itself. Therefore, the qualities of the sportsman will be geared to this end. Athletics and its code of conduct are a big leap from sport. Co-operation is no longer the goal. The objective of an athlete is exclusive possession. Two people or teams can't share the same victory, and as a result competition and its problems are evident.

Sportsman behavior to an athlete places certain limitations on the rigor of competition. Yet, in real-life, competition is condoned much as in the struggles of economics, politics, and international relations, Keating believes. Therefore, he holds that a code that tries to mitigate the force of competitive confluence is also desirable in athletics. Although, the athlete is really a prizefighter, he or she also seeks to demonstrate his or her excellence in a contest that is governed by rules, which acknowledge human worth and dignity.

Looking back at sport, since the sportsman's primary object is enjoyment of the game, he or she puts great emphasis on the importance of winning. It is easy for him or her to be modest in victory or gracious in defeat and play fair all the time. Yet, the paradox of sportsmanship when applied to athletics is that it asks the athlete, who is locked in a deadly serious and an emotionally charged situation to act outwardly as if he or she were engaged in some pleasant diversion. Athletes train and sacrifice for weeks and months and years and after he or she has dreamed of victory and exhausted him or herself physically, emotionally, and mentally, it is not fair to ask him or her to act fairly in the contest, modest in victory, and admirable in defeat. Yet, this is the demand that

sportsmanship makes on the athlete. For this reason, Keating doesn't think equality is important; nor should it constrain athletics. "Any suggestion that fair play obliges him [or her] to maintain equality in the contest ignores the very nature of athletics."⁴⁴ He would agree that modest in victory and composure in defeat testify an admirable and very self-controlled athlete, but should not be required by society or seen as morally necessary.

Another issue regarding sport and athletics is the idea of winning and the "attainment of excellence." How do we determine what attainment of excellence is? Is it through victory in accordance with the rules? Father Hesburgh argues that the excellence is in the performance and spirit and will to win, not the actual outcome. There is no necessary connection between excellence and victory. Pope Pius XII holds this view as well. He thinks there can be excellence in competitive engagement without victory. Grantland Rice and Baron Pierre de Coubertin also have similar beliefs. De Coubertin says, "The main issue in life is not the victory but the fight; the essential thing is not to have won, but to have fought well."⁴⁵ Yet, Keating disagrees and uses the views of Adolph Rupp and Forest Evashevshi to help describe his view. Evashevshi argues that the idea of how one plays the game is inferior to the outcome. Thus, winning or losing is the primary concern. He likens it to surgery, saying that it isn't if the patient lives or dies, but it is how the surgeon makes the incision. This idea is applied mostly to athletics in Keating's view, since sport does not focus on winning or losing, but pure enjoyment of the game. Keating would agree that excellence within athletics is based on victory because this is the goal of the athlete and he or she is not satisfied unless he or she feels the exhilaration of victory and know all his or her work and effort has paid off. Some

argue that there is value in saying, "I did my best and that's all I can do."⁴⁶ Yet, Keating believes this is a source of either self-satisfaction or consolation. He wonders how one can be sure he or she really did his or her best. He or she would have to know and accept his or her limits before the contest even began. Keating believes a true athlete sets no limits on himself or herself and must never admit to his or her limitations; instead he or she must be painfully convinced of them. In this regard the idea of doing your best is seen as a consolation and something said to make losers feel better because there is great agony in defeat.

Keating's argument is based on the idea that life is categorized or organized into different realms, each requiring different modes of comportment and we must understand this and organize our moral behavior accordingly. The behavior is dictated by the end goal and there is no characteristic of virtue that must be necessarily carried throughout every situation, thus Keating argues there is a distinction between sport and athletics. It would appear that perhaps he sees self-interest or self-preservation as justified and a good thing in economy, politics, and especially athletics. Yet, in sport there are other factors and the participants are under certain pretenses of enjoyment. The purpose of the activity, sport, is to enjoy oneself. In athletics the players are under a different set of pretenses and to form a unified and all-encompassing code of conduct is unjustified and sacrifices the ends of both activities for the means, sportsmanship.

Philosophers of sport want to recognize difference in particular between sport and athletics, but this demarcation of sport and athletics is incorrect and instead is a progression. While each of these has different characteristics, they are layers to be

analyzed much in the same way Lawrence Kohlberg and Carol Gilligan's model of moral reasoning has different stages. Kohlberg and Gilligan argue that people learn moral reasoning, and this process is understood in three stages. The preconventional stage of moral reasoning is primarily egoistic and a matter of satisfying one's own needs. One then progresses to the conventional stage in which the individual is concerned with pleasing others and respecting social rules.⁴⁷ Finally, one should progress into the final stage of moral reasoning, postconventional.⁴⁸ This stage is that of principled reasoning. Thus, just as moral reasoning builds off each previous stage so do the four concepts of play, game, sport, and athletic. Play is the raw material of games, which make up a sport, which can be an athletic event. Furthermore, competition and the urge to reach an outcome (mostly) desirable do not taint the act itself. Competition exists at all levels. It is a matter of degree that changes and it is how that change affects the individual that may or may not become problematic.

My attempt at rethinking the idea of the language of sport is to provide a new realm or space that women can find comfortable. The old idea of sport was a linear situation given only two polar opposites as its goal and result, winning and losing. Furthermore, these polar opposites were grounded in competition. However, upon a critical examination of *play*, *game*, *sport*, and *athletics* I believe that sport may be viewed more dynamically and that success at such an activity is not measured simply by victory. Women no doubt are considered the other in sport by men and themselves. In this respect, oppression is also imposed, requiring an alternative response. There are certainly many ways to deal with oppression. In other words, things that the other may do in

response to imperial power. One could sell out and join the ranks of the oppressor in an attempt to no longer remain the other, thus becoming an apologist for the status quo. One may go into hiding and put forth a false face, while preserving the self to some extent. A violent revolt is yet another response. However, the response I am working toward with a new concept of sport is to create another world. In essence the other takes up a new residence in a different and non-oppressive, non-imperialist world, in a different story. This creation is an active stepping aside from the prevailing world to begin building an alternative that will preserve the world, cure alienation, further enlivening relationship with others of all backgrounds.⁴⁹ This response requires nonviolence, an active acknowledgement of the other in its own right, and the need for the continuous creation of the world. I believe such a means of dealing with oppression functions well in sport by recreating the world in which we choose to live. Yet, this process is not complete unless a new conception of the self emerges with this New World. To answer this question I again turn to the philosophy of sport and the idea of embodiment.

CHAPTER III

EMBODIMENT

In this age of palm pilots, video-phones, and the internet, all invented in order to save us time, the question that presupposes these material objects is: For what are we saving time? Undoubtedly, the answers to this question are unlimited: softball, reading, painting, and enjoying a cocktail with friends. However, each shares one common denominator, me. I make time for *myself*. You make time for *yourself*. Despite the root of our agreement, we have spent little time (no pun intended) understanding the self, although we freely use the word as though we had a clear understand of its referent. Take, for example, the word *selfish*. Today this word is used to describe one who is meanspirited. Yet, a study of the derivation of this word reveals much more and opens the door to Woolf's room. "Ish" generally means "an approximation of," such as "brownish" or "softish." Due to the complexity of self as a concept, previous generations may have coined the term self "ish," thereby giving them leeway.⁵⁰ Given the fact that self is unclear, self-understanding becomes very tricky indeed. Kretchmar attempts to approach this issue by way of a historical analysis of bodies and persons supplemented by a contemporary doctrine of holism. Before the examination of dualism and holism please do the following exercise designed by Dr. John M. Charles, which will designate your current position within the self-study spectrum.

Exercise: Place yourself on the spectrum between each of the paired statements below by circling the number that identifies your philosophic position:

1. You are body, mind, soul 1 2 3 4 5 You cannot be divided into discrete parts.
2. Education is for the life of the mind 1 2 3 4 5 Education is for the whole being.

3. Physical education is for a sound mind in a healthy body 1 2 3 4 5 Physical education is for well being.
4. You have a body 1 2 3 4 5 You are a body.
5. Basketball free throw shooting is largely mental 1 2 3 4 5 is a concentrated effort.

Analysis: To the extent that language is descriptive, you have displayed the degree of dualism with which you regard your self. If your score is low [5-10], you tend to view your body and mind as separate and distinct entities. A high score [20-25] signifies that you see your self as a unified whole.⁵¹

The normal results of this exercise range from 10-20, the middle ground. However, an individual's score is not the primary focus of this exercise; rather it is the assumption upon which it is built. Dualism is at the low end of the number spectrum and holism is at the high end of the number spectrum. In this chapter, I look at these two modes of thinking about persons, dualistically and holistically. How do we look at bodies? There is often variation from person to person. But why is this question important? Does it matter how we look at bodies, another's or our own? Certainly it matters, because it affects us as people, and, for our purposes, athletes. Our culture in particular makes it difficult to deal with our bodies in a natural way without any concerns. We run the gamut of either too much credit (as illustrated on so many magazine covers with reference to weight control) or too little credit (as illustrated when physical education is first to be cut from public schools in times of financial difficulty). These questions entail the recognition of still more; are minds superior to bodies? What is the difference if minds and bodies are separate and independent parts of a person or if minds are more valuable than bodies?⁵² In order to answer these, and other, questions we must first address what a person is. Once we've clearly defined a person we can then judge how exercise and sport can help people.

This is a question not uncommon in the area of philosophy; in fact, contemporary philosophers have developed a field with this very question in mind, philosophy of the mind. However, I would like to look at a person in a more specific arena, that of sport. Sport incorporates the often forgotten self in the realms of philosophy, the body. It is generally accepted that the individual self is an "I." Someone with a unique history who lives in the present, and projects himself or herself into the future. A person acts, but is also acted upon; he or she is subject to physical laws.⁵³ Finally, a person is a self-conscious, intelligent being aware of his or her own existence and capable of understanding ideas and relationship between ideas. What about personhood? Kretchmar defines personhood as "the state or condition of living and experiencing these qualities."⁵⁴ Thus, to achieve personhood is to have gained an identity, have a personal history, generate ideas, and be aware of one's existence.⁵⁵ What then are bodies, to which we show such ambivalence? Again Kretchmar provides a definition accepted in this field; bodies "are flesh, bones, blood vessels, hands, and feet, the cells in our brains, and so on."⁵⁶ Bodies are the sites of all sense perception; hearing, tasting, feeling, seeing, smelling, which plays a significant role in the phenomenologists' understanding of self.

Because bodies are indeed a material, they are subject to the same constraints of material substances, namely that they must be located somewhere and must also always exist at a certain time. In short, bodies are spatially and temporally constrained. However, this constraint does not limit them from moving or being stationary. In fact, it is the condition of these constraints that describe embodiment. "Embodiment describes one fundamental condition of personhood, namely, that humans are always located

somewhere and sometime and that human consciousness is never free from the influences of body constrains like chemicals and the number of brain cells in one's head."⁵⁷ It is this idea of embodiment on which I would like to focus my attention.

The concept of embodiment requires a person or personhood to incorporate the body more intimately into the self than traditionally has been the case. One of the earliest and most notable exclusion of the body from the self comes from Plato. Of course, Plato is no stranger to the idea of dualism, which is present in both his metaphysics and epistemology. However, it is the self that concerns this paper. Plato believed in an eternal soul, which was trapped in the visible world by way of this vessel we call the body. It was the goal of each individual to step out of the cave and reach the intelligible world of the Forms. Descartes popularized the dualism between mind and body. However, he left many unanswered questions in his wake with which modern and postmodern philosophy still struggle.

The central obstacle standing between our current view of self and Kretchmar's idea of embodiment is the mind and body. The view of self is the product of one's view of the relation between body and mind. This relation is what the previous exercise measures. However, if you found yourself in the low numbers (5-10), you have good reason. While some of our earliest ancestors were disinterested in a distinction between mind and body, their views were later supplanted. It was the Greeks who reconceived the mind as an intangible complement to the temporal body.⁵⁸ Concurrently, they established a hierarchy among the two: that the mind is superior to the body. The focus in the Middle Ages on religion compounded the distinction by equating the mind with the soul, which

was immortal, and mindlessness with the body, which was mortal. Of course, this distinction promoted salvation through spiritual cultivation, thereby neglecting the body, according to Charles.⁵⁹ The body regained a bit of credibility during the Renaissance period. It was humanism that made the body respectable and an aspect worthy of cultivation. However, the seventeenth Century's philosophers obliterated any progress the body had made. The infamous man behind the dualism was Rene Descartes and his dictum "I think, therefore, I am." Descartes' dualism has permeated Western philosophy and culture. Furthermore, four images of body-person separation, rendered by Descartes, are prevalent in the field of physical education, according to Kretchmar. The philosophical school of dualism gave birth to object dualism, value dualism, behavior dualism, and language dualism.

Object Dualism

The foundation of each one of the four is object dualism. It fundamentally asserts a la Descartes that a human being is composed of two entities: mind and body. Kretchmar argues that this separation results in the deification of the mind. The object dualism is prevalent in the field of athletics despite a trend by physical educators and philosophers of sport to support a holistic attitude. You may have found yourself engaging in such a separation in simple conversation. Some examples include: "How is the old 'bod' feeling today?" "I know how to swing the bat, I just can't make my body do it," and "I'm going to lose my mind." Not only does our language demonstrate the dualism; it suggests why we find this concept initially attractive. The assumed metaphor is that bodies are machines (again in the Cartesian view). We try to control our bodies and make them do what we

want. When they are "broken," we go to the doctor to "fix" them. Hence, conventional Western medicine has prospered using this metaphor.

On account of the firm grasp object dualism has on Western thought, careful consideration of the criticism is necessary. Kretchmar argues that mind and body are abstractions. They are unsuccessful in describing the whole-embodied person in meaningful ways. Evidence to support this criticism stems from the inadequacies of the machine metaphor. First, it can never fully describe a person, only a more and more complex machine.⁶⁰ Second, a mind (and the activity of thinking) is never found apart from a body or vice versa (except perhaps in death). Third, the question arises as to the existence and usefulness of a pure mind and pure body with regard to living human beings. Kretchmar concludes that all human thoughts have traces of body (where you were born, your chemical make-up, your experiences [bioregionalism]).⁶¹ Likewise, one's physical nature has traces of mind to the extent that our autonomic function and reflexes are coordinated and end-directed.⁶² A second and most essential criticism of object dualism is how two radically distinct entities (mind and body) affect one another. This point deserves a considerable amount of investigation because movement is critical.

Descartes' Meditations

In the *Meditations* Rene Descartes' he attempt to prove the existence of self, God, material things, and the distinction between mind and body. Each of these arguments hinges on the previous one in a very geometrical or scientific format. I argue that it is only with careful analysis of their contingency on one another that Descartes' dilemma regarding the mind and the body may be understood. The question that concerns the critic

of Descartes is how the soul⁶³ moves the body. It is brought up through correspondence with Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia. She questions Descartes on the distinction between mind and body and how two entities, such as these form a union, which enables movement. He cannot successfully respond to her question because he gets caught on two horns, those being the first and second premise of Princess Elisabeth's argument. The first premise is that the body has extension; the second is that the soul does not have extension. Therefore, his view of the mind and body cannot be fully accepted because it fails to answer the important question of movement.

Princess Elisabeth requests an explanation for how the soul of a human can instigate the body to produce voluntary action. This question comes with prearranged boundaries, set by herself and Descartes. The first premise consists of her understanding the assumption of movement regardless of soul. She says, "every determination of movement happens from an impulsion of the thing moved, according to the manner in which it is pushed by that which moves it."⁶⁴ In short, if X is a mover, then X has extension. This claim is contingent on her idea that movement requires contact and contact requires extension. Descartes develops and defends the second premise, although Princess Elisabeth originally agrees. She writes that "you entirely exclude extension from your notion of the soul, and contact seems to me incompatible with an immaterial thing."⁶⁵ This remark can be translated into the second premise stating that the soul is not extended. This is also confirmed in meditation six. Descartes says, "but nevertheless, on the one hand I have a clear and distinct idea of myself, in so far as I am simply a thinking, non-extended thing; and on the other hand I have a distinct idea of body."⁶⁶ These two

premises prompt the conclusion of the modus tollens structured argument, which is as follows: the soul is not a mover. Yet, neither Princess Elisabeth nor Descartes believe this conclusion is true. In order to conclude that the soul is in fact a mover, one of the premises must be proven false. It is this quest that Descartes fails to accomplish, thereby making his mind and body argument wrong and/or incomplete.

First, one must attempt to dislodge Descartes from one horn of the dilemma. The first horn represents the first premise. If X is a mover, then X has extension. Descartes believes the concept behind this premise is wrong. He thinks Princess Elisabeth is confused in her understanding of how a body moves a body and how a soul moves a body. If he can successfully explain the difference and further explain how and why extension is unnecessary for movement, he can validate the conclusion that the soul is a mover. He attempts to do so by explaining how qualities affect an object. He believes that the force for movement does not exist within the qualities of an object. Instead we use these qualities in order to conceive within our mind movement. Yet, “in order to conceive them, we have sometimes used the notions that are in us for knowing body, and sometimes those that are for knowing the soul, according as what we attributed to them has been material or immaterial.”⁶⁷ Descartes uses weight as an example of a quality of many objects. Yet, he does not believe weight itself denotes the actual substance of that particular object. It is a tool that we accept to understand how bodies move. “For example, in supposing weight a real quality, of which we possess no other knowledge save that it has the force of moving the body in which it exists toward the center of the earth, we have no difficulty conceiving how it moves this body.”⁶⁸ Although he argues

that there is a difference between the movement of body to body and body to soul, he gives no account of how the soul moves the body. It remains a mysterious union with no clear distinction or boundaries. Due to the ambiguous nature of his answer, Descartes fails to clear himself of the first premise. Princess Elisabeth herself agrees when she says, “I too find that the senses show me that the soul moves the body; but they fail to teach me the manner in which she does it.”⁶⁹

The second horn Descartes attempts to overcome is the second premise. The soul has no extension. Since he has not changed the first premise, it is here that he must accept the extension of the soul in order to conclude that the soul is a mover. Such an acceptance is exactly what Princess Elisabeth would like because she is not willing to accept the notion of a mysterious union of movement between the soul and body, since she says, “although extension is not necessary to thought, yet not being contradictory to it, it will be able to belong to some other function of the soul less essential to her.”⁷⁰ Yet, Descartes cannot accept this change in the second premise because of the nature of his methodology and foundation. He uses a scientific method, which reduces the problem down to the most basic notion of which he can be certain. He then proceeds to build further arguments on this basis in a similar fashion to a card house. If you remove the foundation card, the entire house collapses.

The acceptance of a modified second premise negates his original and founding belief. In order to better understand, one needs to work backward to his original belief through three logical steps. First, he says there is a conceptual distinction between the soul and the body. This distinction is evident in his description of each. The soul, also

referred to as the mind, is made up of the intellect, the imagination, the understanding, and the will. The body has sense perceptions that relay what is out there to our internal being, the soul. With an explanation of the difference and content of the soul and body, one can take the next step in this deconstruction of Descartes argument. After making a conceptual distinction, Descartes needs to prove that there is an actual distinction. He believes that God has the power to make this conceptual distinction an actuality. Descartes says, "I know that everything which I clearly and distinctly understand is capable of being created by God so as to correspond exactly with my understanding of it."⁷¹ This belief in itself is not enough to prove there is a distinction, but Descartes does establish an actual distinction in the third step, which is really his first foundation. The distinction comes in meditation two, where he proves he exists because he thinks. He calls everything into doubt as described by the geometrical method in an attempt to strip everything down to a raw foundation. This foundation is that "this proposition, *I am, I exist*, is necessarily true whenever it is put forward by me or conceived in my mind."⁷² His proof of his existence is certain and actual, but is based on the mind and its immaterial quality. His certainty of existence is in no way attached or founded on the body.

Because of Descartes highly organized and layered argument structure, he cannot simply change premise two into an extended soul. It would compromise all previous beliefs and his argument would crumble as would a card house whose founding card is pulled out from beneath it. Since Descartes is unsuccessful in this second attempt to dislodge himself from the horns of Princess Elisabeth's argument, his entire mind/body

argument is cast into doubt. If he cannot answer such an important and practical question as how the soul moves the body, perhaps his entire view is wrong, or at least severely flawed.

In order to avoid object dualism, one must keep three things in mind. First, the body should not be referred to as a possession that you own or bring along. We should be aware of the language used as it affects one's conception of body and person: You are your body. Second, we should avoid using the word *it* as it makes your body impersonal and an object out in the world as opposed to being you. Third, we should avoid words such as physical and mental that perpetuates the dualism.

Value Dualism

The second image of body-person separation is value dualism. Kretchmar argues that its fundamental assertion is that the mind, thinking, and mental activities are superior to the body, moving, and physical activities. Again, the result is the exaltation of intellectual education. Value dualism draws on the primary assumption of the first image, object dualism, in which mind and body are distinct entities. However, value dualism takes the next step and ranks these two entities by importance. It was Plato who most clearly exemplifies value dualism in the *Phaedo*.⁷³ A hierarchy is evident in most aspects of Plato's work rooted in the intelligible world and the visible world. The range of dualisms cover soul over body, thought over emotion, and knowledge over sensuous pleasure.⁷⁴ However, critics argue that there is no separate world of permanent ideal forms. This conclusion is supported by the sport example of a softball swing. While we

may think of an ideal swing, it is difficult to know the picture in each person's head. Because our thoughts are completely private, how then do we reconcile the unfalsifiability of the ideal swing? Furthermore, Plato's ideal forms are not necessary in order to explain common experience in sport, which is usually based on rules. Plato and his followers suggest the difference in value is in part due to the accuracy of our faculties. Thus, the body is continuously in error, while the mind enjoys complete flawlessness. Kretchmar suggests this picture is not at all the case. It is not true that our sense perception is highly fallible and mental activity is immune to error. His evidence stems from Martin Buber's work with love and hate. They are thought to be opposites, but actually indifference is closer to love's diametric.⁷⁵ Moreover, why does one believe thinking has access to truth? Humans are still biological creatures consequently language and physiology among others contaminate contemplation (an activity of thinking). Thus, value dualism proves less fortified by critics such as Kretchmar, and its entrenchment in Western philosophy and culture demands expulsion.

Behavior Dualism

Behavior dualism focuses on the body's involvement in doing, not thinking, and is the third image. It fundamentally asserts that thinking must first precede all actions.⁷⁶ This view results in the glorification of thinking over doing. Behavior dualism is clearly an outgrowth of both object and value dualism. This image was created when the following question was posed: "How is skillful human behavior to be explained?" It was thought that when hitting a softball two things are happening, not one. These two things may be referred to as theory and practice or thinking and doing. Kretchmar correctly

claims this distinction between theory and practice is the logical consequence of viewing the body as a machine. There must be a game plan or blueprint before the body begins to act. Critics of behavior dualism, such as Gilbert Ryle, claim thinking and doing are a false dichotomy for two reasons.⁷⁷ First, thinking is an activity that may be done well or poorly. Thus, thinking is an acquired skill. Second, if thinking is a skill, what then proceeds it or what directs it? Thus, human behavior runs counter to the process of behavior dualism. Performers of athletics activities have no experience of two separate things occurring. Kretchmar argues that there is no such experience because "we receive invitations intuitively from the sense perceptual world, and accept or reject them."⁷⁸ Furthermore, one's skillful performance exists when one forgets the body rather than remembering and directing it.

Language Dualism

The fourth and final image is language dualism, according to which the body is a processor of nonverbal symbols. Kretchmar points out the fundamental assertion of this view are that verbal symbols are different from and superior to other kinds of symbols. Of course, this view results in the deification of words and verbal language, notably in our society. Our concern is focused on verbal symbols, the importance of which supersedes other conventions for expression and communication. One criticism of this view is that language, both verbal and nonverbal, rests on the evolutionary advances of human beings over lower forms of animal life. Evidence of such a conclusion is that verbalization is the key to difference between human beings and nonhuman animals.

"Our formalization of the world and way of stepping away from it requires stand-ins for experience, which resulted, in language, but this doesn't demonstrate that simply having language forces us into a privileged position."⁷⁹ Unarguably cultural visibility and the popularity of verbal language have in part made it superior. Particularly in the Western world we have been trained to express ourselves verbally. However, language dualism tends not to fit our cultural beliefs about art. Art is often deemed as the highest and most impressive accomplishment of human existence, and yet it is a nonverbal expression.

Holism Doctrine

The four images of body-person do not function in a meaningful way for the purpose of understanding the self. It is only when bodies are united with persons in a holistic fashion that this understanding can be accomplished. The philosophy of sport as a field has developed a doctrine of holism in response to the unsuccessful dualistic framework of mind/body. It consists of three familiar principles as criticisms of the dualism. First, we are physical and biological creatures. Persons are united with and influenced by every thought that one has.⁸⁰ Second, there is human thought in every aspect of human existence. The body composition, health, and movement influence it. Third, one must believe that the whole person is greater than the sum of his or her parts. Despite the criticism of mind/body dualism and the propagation of these new holistic ideas the doctrine wasn't readily accepted. The concept of an integrated person who reflects intelligence from one's chemistry to their movement, and demonstrating their embodiment in their attitude and values was rejected.

The doctrine of holism was rethought by Kretchmar and fellow sport philosophers introduced. Two figures help explain their view. Figure 1 (page 50) is the vertical image of persons that has traditionally been the view of a person, strongly demarcating the mind and body. It is this model that needs to be modified into a more holistic approach. There is only two halves of a person and the arrows in the figure symbolize the two-way relationship that exists between mind and body in this vertical model.⁸¹ While the arrows demonstrate that the mind affects the body and the body affects the mind, the dotted line is still problematic because it conceptually creates a dualism. Furthermore, the location of mind and body, higher and lower respectively, works to reaffirm the hierarchical relationship between the two.

In order to improve this vision, more work needs to be done to remove the gulf between the mind and the body. The goal of this work is to change the way we think about our bodies in terms of medicine, welfare, religion, etc. To attain this new vision and better picture of persons Kretchmar suggests five holistic principles. The first is to recognize that physical influences are always at work in shaping all that we are and do. For instance, we act in a particular time and space under certain chemical and physical conditions. Second, we must also recognize that the influences of consciousness are always at work. We are driven by our ideas our perceptions, and our attitudes, which is reflected in our language (verbal and nonverbal) and our physical activities. Third, there is no independence of body and mind from each other, with regard to principles one and two. Physical states and ideas are homogenized into personhood. Fourth, there exist different levels of behavioral intelligence that range in magnitude from solving complex

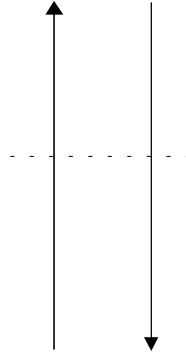
equation to simple arithmetic. Furthermore, this example is equal to the different levels in behavior ranging from a creative move in basketball to simply lining up for a one-foot punt. This principle entails the fifth and final principle, which is that different activities are required for each of the different levels. For example, the activity of kicking a ball and thinking about kicking a ball are different, but they may be on the same level of behavioral intelligence granted that the conceived kick is accurately represented in the actual kicking.

With these five principles a new horizontal interpretation of a person may be conceived. Figure 2 represents this model (page 50). At the top and bottom are not mind and body, but two poles of human behavior. The top is sedentary activity, which is that of reflection and intuition. It is done with little movement and reliance on sensory perception. The bottom is motor activity that are those things requiring more physical activity and relies heavily on sense perception. To the left and right each are categorized into superior and inferior degrees. Returning to our past example of a complex equation and simple arithmetic. The former would fall in the upper right quadrant of the model because complex equations require a higher insight or superior mathematical abilities. While the latter would fall in the upper left quadrant because it is a simple problem. The same degree delineation is done with the lower half the model for motor activity. In all the horizontal image of person is far superior to the vertical because it takes into account the intimate connection between all components of a person and their interaction.

Given the argument for holism and a new idea of how to perceive oneself, women can more easily function in their newly created world (chapter two). My analysis has

involved a narrative approach no doubt related to Woolf's influence. However, the question remains why wilderness sports are an easy entrance into our room rather than football. Turning to Woolf, she argues in *A Room of One's Own* that women create fiction. The verb *to create* may very well be applied to women and nature. To be engaging in such an activity of sport, nature is their room and they are able to create themselves. Not only can they physically transform their bodies and create lean, strong physiques, but they also shape and create their own identity. Again, as I state in chapter one, this narrative is an odyssey for women toward a settled place where they no longer feel as though they are the deviants in sport. It is the experience of wilderness that is the catalyst or paintbrush by which women can create their world. I believe this experience is found in sport, both in civilization and in wilderness. It is this distinction I want to pursue.

Mind/Thinking
(Superior)



Body/Doing
(Inferior)

Figure 1. Vertical Image of Person.

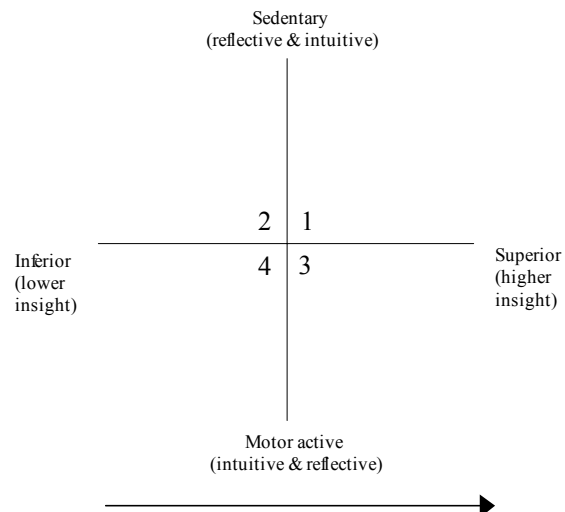


Figure 2. New Horizontal Image of Person.

“When we get out of the glass bottles of our egos, and when we escape like squirrels turning in the cages of our personality and get into the forests again, we shall shiver with cold and fright but things will happen to us so that we don't know ourselves. Cool, unlying life will rush in, and passions will make our bodies taut with power, we shall stamp our feet with new power and old things will fall down, we shall laugh, and institutions will curl up like burnt paper.”

D.H. Lawrence

I can recall an experience of wildness I had about seven years ago. I was living in New Zealand at the time and the day after Christmas my family and I went out on a boat. After anchoring in a secluded bay, I continued to enjoy the ocean experience with a snorkeling expedition. It must be understood that I have an irrational and paralyzing fear of sharks and the sea in general. Thus, to even put my toes in the water required a lot of effort on my part. However, after much coaxing I got in the clear water in an attempt to overcome my fear and see the underwater world that intrigued and frightened me so. After twenty minutes of hyperventilating, the water, colors, fish, and environment got the better of me and I began to see what was in front of me instead of imagining sharks in my mind. I flowed in this watery world completely submerged. As Irene Klaver speaks of presence and disappearance in "Silent Wolves: The Howl of the Implicit," I too can relate. Tami disappeared, the girl given a name, from a middle-class family, who plays sports, who speaks English, and something else became present; it was a something else, not a someone else. I not only transcended myself, but humanity as well. I was so bound up in the sensory perception that was constantly bombarding me I didn't and couldn't locate a "me" or an "I." I followed the fish and the colors of coral. I felt the water change temperature the deeper I swam. I noticed the fish turn and dart from me as I paddled in their direction. Yet, if I floated there making no effort in one direction or another; they remained close and observable. My presence was accepted with silent stillness, but not without caution. However, their presence was accepted and desired gleefully. I can't

remember breathing during my time under water. It was as if this experience of wildness had quenched my biological needs. It had been sufficient to make me live. I was unaware of myself and living in these few moments, but I was completely and utterly aware of the life that surrounded me. How can this be? I'm not certain there was a difference; there were no boundaries, and suddenly I was the life around me and there was only wildness. The distinction I had until this point believed of my corporeal body was dissolved. I was free to be wild without feeling wild. It certainly was a magical event that has rarely occurred since.

This personal experience of wildness I hope introduces you to the heart and purpose of this paper. I have been consumed with the process of experiences of wildness and wilderness. Wilderness is generally thought of as nature, the forest, lakes, mountains, etc. Yet, wildness is much more abstract and can be found not only in wilderness, but also in civilization. I believe the distinction is most clearly made in Klaver's piece that discusses wilderness and wildness as two separate, but related entities and/or ideas. "The conceptualization of wilderness goes hand in hand with a reduced capacity for living *with* the wild, this otherness that is not controlled by human culture."⁸² It is obvious throughout the article that her preference is toward wildness, which should be cultivated. However, through her examples I can't help but paint the picture that wildness exists or is accessible only through wilderness. I don't believe she would agree with this statement and that her intent for this paper was not the previous statement; however, I think her examples belie her beliefs. While this experience isn't a sport exactly, it has many characteristics of it. Recall Kretchmar's discussion of an inefficient means and a problem in play and games. The fish with which I swam played hide and seek with me. If I wanted to succeed at my task, I had to remain still. I had to obey the rules of nature.

My attention was drawn to this topic after having just thought about what

constitutes a wild experience. Certainly wild experiences do not exist only when one is deep in the woods. So, my question is what makes an experience in untamed nature (wilderness) different than walking through downtown Fort Worth in the middle of the night alone, with respect to wildness. Both involve a certain degree of risk. One is risk from animals and natural forces and the other being a risk from our fellow human beings. Thus, is the knowledge taken away from both experiences equally important and useful in our discussion of wildness?

The experience of wildness in wilderness is romanticized and viewed as a "growing experience," a vision quest of sorts, while a walk through a bad neighborhood is considered stupid. Why the distinction? Is there something in wilderness that contains wildness? I too fall into the trap of viewing the former experience as "better" if we can label it as such. Perhaps experiences of wildness are easier to come by in wilderness versus civilization because civilization is already structured. I think that structure and organization play a part in our experiences of wildness. Things begin to fall apart in wilderness; no longer are we enclosed in our glass bottles (neither physically nor mentally); we leave ourselves open to the physical elements, but also to the power of chaos. Suddenly life rushes in at a pace and force that we cannot control nor can we label it. Perhaps like an autistic child, wilderness leaves us helpless. Moreover, I am inclined to say experiences of wildness in wilderness are "better" because we are at a more foreign risk. While our cultural risk (walking in Ft. Worth) presents a dangerous situation, it is perhaps more predictable than that of our natural risk. We enjoy a certain connection with humans, whether we know them or not, thus being approached by one is not as alien as being approached by a mountain lion. Thus, the exotic nature of the experience may play some role in the degree of wildness. While we may see and proclaim ourselves part of nature, such an identity is a bit uncomfortable and perhaps even suffocating when we

introduce ourselves into nature for extended periods of time. I'm not sure exactly what it is, but something exists in the experience Klaver wrote about which contains wildness that does not reside as deeply in those more cultural experiences of wildness. Does wild experience have to involve any risk at all? Or is it simply the availing of one's self to a wild experience that is risky? I ask this question because to encounter wildness you have to let go to some extent. Letting go and being out of control either physically or mentally is a risk in itself. Maybe this risk is where wildness originates?

In continuing my search for what an experience of wildness is with respect to risk and wilderness, I'm drawn to personal accounts of nature experiences or experiences of wildness in wilderness as opposed to civilization. The reoccurring theme is that of personal connection and embodiment or more vaguely the self. Personal accounts are the structured and civilized reflection of those moments of wildness. Phrases such as "in the High Sierra, was the essence of Elizabeth," "a hunger she couldn't satisfy," "she could discover what it was she so badly needed," conjure up ideas of a soul/self lost in the mind and/or body and are only willing to be revealed under very particular conditions. It reminds me of the different roles we play in this world. I may greet the world with a very different face when I'm at a conference and the "real Tami" is hidden because the conditions aren't appropriate. However, in the comfort and security of my home and family I can "be myself." Perhaps the self/soul suffers from multiple roles or timidity as well and only presents itself in comfortable secure surroundings. These surrounds may in fact be wildness in the context and/or location of wilderness. Yet, one does not immediately feel comfortable under these conditions, thus keeping the problem continuously present, as is the case in a *game* according to Weiss. However, the answer may not lie down the road of self-awareness, but of unawareness. Such an unawareness does not entail that you don't recognize your own actions or how other's view you, but

that you may not be capable of locating a self in these moment of wildness. As my opening personal account illustrates I, "Tami," was no longer present. My physical body remained but my mental state permeated the wilderness. Instead of drawing in all my observations, labeling them, organizing them, and continuing to structure and construct "the world," I was part of the world and could no longer engage in these thought experiments. Such a disappearance is what one finds in the realms of sport. The thinking is not separate from the action, but simultaneous. Structuring is only possible if you step out of the system, if you submerge yourself no longer are you in a position to draw boundary lines. As Klaver describes in her article, one has disappeared and yet remains present.

As I stated before, it is the risk factor that contributes to the feelings that inspire the previous phrases in personal accounts. Risk is constantly present in sport. One is putting himself or herself at risk when attempting to solve a problem. These risks are multiple and varied, ranging from the risk of failure to the risk of injury. Can something be risky and comfortable at the same time? This question leads to another important question. Do those people who engage in wilderness experiences regularly experience the element of risk? Would they consider their experience to be one of wildness? In searching for the answers to these questions, perhaps I've sought the wrong location, in terms of the purely natural experiences I've unknowingly fallen into Plumwood's dualism of nature and culture, by trying to rid one of the other all together to achieve some clarity. Yet, it is not that simple. Perhaps it isn't something inherent in nature or wilderness that makes for "better" experiences of wildness, but it is merely the conditions it offers the majority of people. Thus, this notion of risk is a good place to start. What risks are taken when in wilderness? Unlike risks in relationships the risks involved is almost always bodily. The body is at risk to the elements as well as whatever wild animals may be

lurking in the bushes. In fact, when you look at extreme sports or simply individuals that spend great lengths in wilderness they keep "upping the ante" so to speak. They take bigger and better risks to satisfy that hunger or have an experience of wildness. Could it be then, that the concept of embodiment as it is used in the philosophy of sport plays an important role in determining the function of risk in experiences of wildness? I am not denying the mind's influence and importance, but my focus for the moment is on the body. Attending once more to the personal accounts of wilderness, one finds them flooded with sense-data descriptions of their environments and what transpires between those and themselves. The senses are heightened and aware of much more than typically is the case. These impressions are exceedingly forceful. They strike the mind with such veracity (a la Hume) as to in some instances actually will or enable the body to exceed its ordinary limitations. Furthermore, pain and pleasure dissolve into one sensation in extreme moments. Or perhaps one is even beyond these sentient experiences. This collapse of sensory experience certainly speaks to the body's commitment to the experience.

Embodiment, in the philosophy of sport, is a fundamental condition of personhood. A human being is always located somewhere and human consciousness is never free of bodily constraints. The direction I want to take is embedded in stories of wildness, personal accounts of wilderness sports ranging from hiking, climbing, and tracking. I cannot seem to let go of this particular line in a story of wilderness, "We have stolen something from her."⁸³ The "her" is a bear that had been captured to be tagged and subjected to blood tests for scientific purposes for the future protection of the bear. The narrator makes this statement as the bear is being released back into the wild and her home. In attempting to determine what the narrator means by something being stolen from the bear and by "we" (human beings) being those culpable I remember Aristotle. If

he was correct and we are a rational animal, but still an animal, can we venture to guess that something was stolen from us? I want by this question to push the issue of experiences of wildness in wilderness. If indeed we are part of nature and wilderness, then it is safe to say that our arrival into a world of computers, cell phones, fast food restaurants, and cable television is at least in part an effect of losing that which keeps us more intimately connected to wilderness.

But back to our immediate project, the bear. What was stolen from the bear in Simpson's story? The bear was tracked, tranquilized, tested, and ornamented with tags and a radio collar. Nothing tangible or physical was taken, but perhaps the way the bear understood the world was taken away. Her perception is now altered. Perhaps her confidence and security is depleted? Perhaps she knows now she is at risk? Can the risk factor she faces be equated to that which I've spoken of previously in terms of a human's experience of wildness? Or was nothing taken at all? What makes our capturing her different from her capturing prey and devouring it? Intentionality? Yet, even if we accept this explanation that our (human being's) intentions play a role we are still left with the problem of recognition. The bear's recognition of our intentions and how they differ from her own intention toward her prey must be recognized. Can we assume that the bear is capable of such a perception? Or are we to question intentionality more at the gut/emotive level? Can intentions be understood by animals because they are motivated by emotions which supposedly many animals can sense more so than humans?

Was it freedom that was stolen, even just briefly? Was it wildness? Was it the bear's illusion? Or was it our own illusion? I believe the statement, "We have stolen something from her," is not a reflection of a loss by the bear, but a loss on the part of the narrator and humans in general. She, the narrator, has lost her own illusion of how bears and nature work. She uses labels thing "stolen" or "lost" because the experience does not

fit into her organized world. One enjoys creating illusions of how this world should be and to some extent we can control it (such as in civilization). However, nature robs us of our illusions. It robs us of a romantic vision of bears and wolves. We lose control and lines are crossed and bodies and egos are bruised sometimes beyond repair. It is in these instances that wildness reveals itself. It is not jewel covered and crowned in gold. It is raw and thorny, and bloody, and muddy and beautiful. We tend to revolt against it at first, refusing to accept the roots of our own bodies and hearts. We use words to comfort ourselves, but they are not sufficient. Again I argue that the narrator of this bear story lost her own illusions. The narrator for the first time saw a bear up close in a situation of dominance. She had little fear because the bear was sedated and she saw the bear through different eyes. What had been a mystery and blurred by romantic literature and tall tales now was evident before her and the mysterious appeal was gone. Perhaps her understanding of the bear was transformed into something cold and hard and she is attributing her own loss to the bear. Humans can be mistaken in what they “see” or “perceive” to be true.

I do believe that some element of risk is necessary for an experience of wildness, which I have hinted at earlier in this paper. Yet, I must make clear to myself that this concept of risk in experiences of wildness. It has been argued that one can distinguish a difference in risk between the body and the mind/soul/heart. Yet, I think difference between emotional risk and physical risk is a result of the dualistic framework. In our daily interaction with friends, peers, colleagues, and family, we see that they guard their emotional self more than their physical self. For centuries poems have been written about lost love. The pain of the heart is described in terms of physical injuries, but only analogously, it doesn't capture the true feelings. Furthermore, the pain endured upon heartache comes in a different order than that from physical risk in the wilderness I think.

Consider what happens when your significant other tells you that your relationship is over. No physical pain precedes the words. Yet, after the words are spoken, a sinking of the heart, a quickness and shortage of breath, soon follows. The words and emotions felt are the catalyst for the physical changes. Yet, in the wilderness physical changes such as scratches, cuts, and bruises often are the catalysts for a change in emotions or a change of heart. It seems the order of the two is opposite. While semantically we may demarcate two selves, it is obvious they interact and effect one another.

What does this example say about the difference in risk? The body plays a very important role in experiences of wildness. I think this role works to support my use of embodiment, tying it into the philosophy of sport. These ideas of embodiment and risk also support spending time in nature, locating oneself physically in their environment because stimulation of the body is stimulation of the self. The pursuit of this line of thinking works to support my idea that in wilderness sports women find something, which they may not otherwise find. This finding may be a result of their traditional roles as meek people, whose physical bodies are constantly protected, which in turn excludes them from many experiences of wildness. Yet, breaking out of the historic mold of what it is to be feminine places them in a new environment, one in which physical risks are now a reality and lend themselves to new mental and emotional changes as well. For example, Susan Griffin plays off the physical attributes and processes of the female body in an attempt to demonstrate man's domination over her. The sexual organs of the woman are not seen as virtuous. They are something to be hidden not only from men, but from ourselves as well. They are considered dirty or impure. Today's culture illustrates the desire for women to be pure clearly with its pushing of consumer products for feminine hygiene. Douches and cleansing pads are necessary to keep women feeling fresh and pure. Never mind the fact that douches are medically proven to destroy the natural

bacteria in the vagina necessary for a healthy body. Many women who use douches regularly suffer yeast infections (or more complicated problems) as the body attempts to replenish the bacteria.

Griffin points out that the value of the female body, according to men, is dependent on the context (or a means to an end) not for the body itself.⁸⁴ For example, the female body is viewed positively in the role in reproduction. There is some recognition of the goodness of the female body to conceive and carry a child. Yet, this appreciation on man's part is not without limitation. Although he sees the body as a producer, he still wants to control the condition of the birth. Griffin uses the analogy of the cow and calf relationship before, during, and after birth to demonstrate man's interference with a process he has no first hand knowledge of (nor could he ever). The man separates the woman from her womb with a sheet and when the baby is born it is whisked away to be cleaned (because the fluids and placenta inside the woman and on the baby are dirty and must immediately be washed away). Even before the event of birth when girls are coming of age and menstruation commence, it is somehow separate from society, family, and the woman. This aspect of the female body and process is considered unfavorable. It is viewed as unclean and something to be ashamed of. It is something that happened *to* the girl, therefore, she must have done something to deserve it.

Women do not see menstruation as a part of who they are, what makes them unique. Granted it is a nuisance from time to time with the pain, but our bodies literally change during this time. Many argue it is moodiness and confusion, but perhaps it is a pull in the direction of wildness and nature. We possess this remarkable ability to conceive a living organism. Our tie to the soil and all that is fecund is literally felt during those seven days of each month. For a moment, we lose ourselves in the flow of our body and are not tied down by civilization, but attempt to return to nature and the wildness,

which lies dormant deep inside us.

To conclude this thesis in the same fashion it was started, I would like to write about a wilderness experience that I had during our expedition weekend to the Wichita Mountains. I wanted to focus on what we've spoken about before, the element of risk in wilderness. I had assumed that risk was a key component in having an experience of wilderness. However, there were times over the weekend, just sitting on the rocks at the top of Elk Mountain that I had an experience of wilderness with no element of risk. Furthermore, I have been assuming up until now that an experience in wilderness with risk or perhaps now without risk would be a positive experience and force people to reflect on the beauty and mystery of nature. My hope was to create a basis for an emotively charged environmental ethic. However, this weekend on our "shortcut" trip over Elk Mountain I discovered I may have been wrong.

I sat on a warm flat boulder overlooking the river and juniper trees below and reflected on how far I could see and what was just beyond the horizon. I was excited about our little adventure, but secure in the fact that the car was just down the road and our campsite wasn't far from that and in fact Lawton was only a five-minute drive away. I began wondering what thoughts must have been running through the heads of the first pioneers to come through this country. What did they think of it? Was it beautiful to them, or was it dry and rough with little concern for them? Did they look off into the horizon and instead of wanting to explore it. Did they want it to end? I can't help but wonder if they said to themselves, "When will we reach the end?" Perhaps their experiences were nothing like mine despite it being the same land.

So, how is it then that what I want to do won't turn on me and create contempt and disgust toward the environment based on a negative experience of wilderness? I don't have an answer for this question and it seems to be a rather large one that needs attention

if I am to pursue this line of thinking. It is being "open" to the experience of wildness or wilderness, but then does this presuppose some affection and interest in nature before one heads out into the wilderness? I've given it some thought, and to answer my own question, I think a presupposition of nature is not causally connected to an experience of wildness. Experiences of wildness include both positive and negative attributes. Hiking on a trail and slipping on a rock only to fall into an ice cold creek is not all together unpleasant because it still creates an environment that you can't control. Should only "good" things happened in wilderness you've not understood fully what it is to step out of your boundaries. As a friend of mine says, "The adventure doesn't begin until things go wrong."⁸⁵ I suppose this remark is true' not until things go the opposite of your plans do you fully understand the power that lies in nature and life. Not until you understand this power can it engulf you as is explicit in the following D. H. Lawrence quote. "Cool, unlying life will rush in, and passions will make our bodies taut with power, we shall stamp our feet with new power and old things will fall down, we shall laugh, and institutions will curl up like burnt paper."

Reflections on thesis

Upon reflection of my philosophical musings, ranging from ecofeminism to the philosophy of sport, uncertainty and discontent settle into the pit of my stomach. I have introduced this thesis with the problem of dualism responsible for the discrimination women have suffered in the realm of sport and continued to frame chapters two and three dualistically. In chapter two, my summary and account of the semantic influence of *play*, *game*, *sport*, and *athletics* on the modes of internal and external behavior suggest compartmentalizing each activity as separate unto itself. I argue that such partitions work to isolate women. Furthermore, my discussion in chapter three of persons related to either Cartesian dualism or embodiment continues my attack on the dualistic framework.

However, I believe I have simplified the problem of conceptual discrimination of women in sport with my focus solely on dualism. The problem is much more complex. Upon reading several more narrative accounts of wilderness adventures from women I found it difficult to simply divide up their thoughts, actions, and attitudes into background and foreground. Like an impressionist painting by Claude Monet or Vincent van Gogh the lines appear clearly formed by each stroke from a distance. However, the closer one steps to the painting soon he or she discovers the forms are no more than quick, short, and imprecise dabs of paint. In fact one soon wants to step away from the painting and retain the distance of clarity. However, in reality the boundaries are blurred and the difficult lies in teasing them apart. I feel I am just now stepping up to the painting of women in sport and while my thesis thus far has provided me with a working knowledge of the subject, my work is by no means complete. In the future, I intend to confront the canvas, the paint, and the brush strokes that have fashioned this portrait.

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- ¹ Virginia Woolf, A Room of One's Own (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1929), 4.
- ² Joel Rich "About a Room of One's Own," Lecture given at University of Chicago, February 1992, [cited 10 February 2000], available from <http://www.cygnets.com/woolf/lecture/jrchap2.html>; Internet.
- ³ Val Plumwood, e-mail to Tom Birch and forward to author, 1 March 1999.
- ⁴ Val Plumwood, Feminism and the Mastery of Nature (London: Routledge, 1993), 47.
- ⁵ Plumwood, 48.
- ⁶ Plumwood, 52.
- ⁷ Plumwood, 53.
- ⁸ Plumwood, 55.
- ⁹ Michael A. Messner, "Sports and male Domination: The Female Athlete as Contested Ideological Terrain," in Women, Sport, and Culture, ed. Susan Birrell & Cheryl L. Cole (Iowa: Human Kinetics, 1994), 68.
- ¹⁰ Lois Bryson, "Sport and Maintenance of Masculine Hegemony," in Women, Sport, and Culture, ed. Susan Birrell & Cheryl L. Cole (Iowa: Human Kinetics, 1994), 54.
- ¹¹ Paul Willis, "Women in Sport in Ideology," in Women, Sport, and Culture, ed. Susan Birrell & Cheryl L. Cole (Iowa: Human Kinetics, 1994), 35.
- ¹² Lois Bryson, "Sport and Maintenance of Masculine Hegemony," in Women, Sport, and Culture, ed. Susan Birrell & Cheryl L. Cole (Iowa: Human Kinetics, 1994), 54.
- ¹³ Bryson, 58.
- ¹⁴ Nancy Theberge, "Toward a Feminist Alternative to Sport as a Male Preserve," in Women, Sport, and Culture, ed. Susan Birrell & Cheryl L. Cole (Iowa: Human Kinetics, 1994), 183.
- ¹⁵ Paul Weiss, Sport: A Philosophical Inquiry (London: Southern Illinois University Press, 1969) 3.
- ¹⁶ Weiss 3.
- ¹⁷ Weiss 3. I would like to make clear that while the word "mastery" is used in this sentence it will not contradict my efforts to dismantle the dualism and my emphasis of Plumwood's nonhierarchical worldview. The context and meaning will be explained later in this paper.
- ¹⁸ Weiss 4.
- ¹⁹ Weiss 4.
- ²⁰ Weiss 4.
- ²¹ Weiss 9.
- ²² P.S. Frederickson, "Sports and the Cultures of Man," Science and Medicine of Exercise and Sports, ed. Warren Russel Johnson (New York, 1960), 634.
- ²³ Joseph C. Mihalich, Sports and Athletics: Philosophy in Action (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 1982), 174.
- ²⁴ Robert L. Simon, Fair Play: Sports, Values, and Society (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), 2.
- ²⁵ Simon, 2.
- ²⁶ Mihalich, 137.
- ²⁷ Mihalich, 137.
- ²⁸ Nancy Heitzeg, Deviance: Rulemakers and Rulebreakers (New York: Thomson Learning, 1996), 366.
- ²⁹ Jean-Paul Sartre, "Play and Sport," in Sport and the Body: A Philosophical Symposium, ed. Ellen W. Gerber & William J. Morgan (Philadelphia: Lea & Febiger, 1979), 84.
- ³⁰ R. Scott Kretchmar, Practical Philosophy of Sport (Iowa: Human Kinetics, 1994), 210.
- ³¹ Kretchmar, 210.
- ³² Weiss, 24.
- ³³ Harold J. Vanderzwaag, Toward A Philosophy of Sport (London: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1972), 52.
- ³⁴ Weiss, 134
- ³⁵ Weiss, 135.
- ³⁶ Weiss, 135.
- ³⁷ Weiss, 145.
- ³⁸ Kretchmar, 209.
- ³⁹ Kretchmar, 209.

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- ⁴⁰ Kretchmar, 210.
- ⁴¹ Weiss, 88.
- ⁴² James Keating, "Winning in Sport and Athletics," The Physical Educator 28 (1971): 204.
- ⁴³ James Keating, "Sportsmanship as a Moral Category," Ethics LXXV (1964-65): 29.
- ⁴⁴ Keating, 29.
- ⁴⁵ James Keating, "The Urgent Need for Definition and Distribution," The Physical Educator 28 (1971): 41.
- ⁴⁶ James Keating, "The Urgent Need for Definition and Distribution," The Physical Educator 28 (1971): 42.
- ⁴⁷ Judith A. Boss, Analyzing Moral Issues (London: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1999), 13.
- ⁴⁸ Boss, 13.
- ⁴⁹ Tom Birch, conversation with author, 13 March 1999.
- ⁵⁰ John M. Charles, "Applied Philosophy of Sport: An Interactive Approach to Personal Growth," Lecture at College of William and Mary, [cited 22 February 2000], available from <http://www.swem.wm.edu/Class/Kin495km/char9.html>; Internet.
- ⁵¹ Charles.
- ⁵² Kretchmar, 33.
- ⁵³ Kretchmar, 33.
- ⁵⁴ Kretchmar, 33.
- ⁵⁵ Kretchmar, 33.
- ⁵⁶ Kretchmar, 33.
- ⁵⁷ Kretchmar, 33.
- ⁵⁸ Charles.
- ⁵⁹ Charles.
- ⁶⁰ Kretchmar, 38.
- ⁶¹ Kretchmar, 38.
- ⁶² Kretchmar, 38.
- ⁶³ Soul is used analogous to mind in Descartes writing.
- ⁶⁴ Margaret Atherton, ed., Women Philosophers of the Early Modern Period (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1994), 11.
- ⁶⁵ Atherton, 11.
- ⁶⁶ Rene Descartes, Modern Philosophy, ed. Forrest E. Baird & Walter Kaufmann (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1997), 52.
- ⁶⁷ Atherton, 14.
- ⁶⁸ Atherton, 14.
- ⁶⁹ Atherton, 21.
- ⁷⁰ Atherton, 21.
- ⁷¹ Baird, 52.
- ⁷² Baird, 29.
- ⁷³ Plato, "Separation of Body and Soul," Sport and The Body: A Philosophical Symposium, ed. Ellen W> Gerber & William J. Morgan (Philadelphia: Lea & Febiger, 1979), 148.
- ⁷⁴ Kretchmar, 42.
- ⁷⁵ Kretchmar, 45.
- ⁷⁶ Kretchmar, 49.
- ⁷⁷ Gilbert Ryle, The concept of mind (Boston: Barnes & Nobles, 1949).
- ⁷⁸ Kretchmar, 51.
- ⁷⁹ Kretchmar, 59.
- ⁸⁰ Kretchmar, 69.
- ⁸¹ Kretchmar, 73.
- ⁸² Irene Klaver, "Silent Wolves: The Howl of the Implicit," Wild Ideas, ed. David Rothenberg (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 120.
- ⁸³ Sherry Simpson "Where Bears Walk," Another Wilderness, ed. Susan Fox Rogers (Canada: Seal Press, 1997), 17.

⁸⁴ Susan Griffin, Woman and Nature (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1978), 67.

⁸⁵ Jeff Mabe, conversation with author, 20 August 1999.

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