



National Library
of Canada

Acquisitions and
Bibliographic Services Branch

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0N4

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Direction des acquisitions et
des services bibliographiques

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa (Ontario)
K1A 0N4

Your file - Votre référence

Our file - Notre référence

NOTICE

The quality of this microform is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Reproduction in full or in part of this microform is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30, and subsequent amendments.

AVIS

La qualité de cette microforme dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

La reproduction, même partielle, de cette microforme est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30, et ses amendements subséquents.

Canada

**THE CONCEPT OF COMPETITION WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORT**

Brian Norris

**A Thesis
in
the Department
of Education**

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts
at Concordia University
Montreal, Canada**

August, 1994

© Brian Norris



National Library
of Canada

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Acquisitions and
Bibliographic Services Branch

Direction des acquisitions et
des services bibliographiques

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0N4

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa (Ontario)
K1A 0N4

Your file *Votre référence*

Our file *Notre référence*

THE AUTHOR HAS GRANTED AN IRREVOCABLE NON-EXCLUSIVE LICENCE ALLOWING THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF CANADA TO REPRODUCE, LOAN, DISTRIBUTE OR SELL COPIES OF HIS/HER THESIS BY ANY MEANS AND IN ANY FORM OR FORMAT, MAKING THIS THESIS AVAILABLE TO INTERESTED PERSONS.

L'AUTEUR A ACCORDE UNE LICENCE IRREVOCABLE ET NON EXCLUSIVE PERMETTANT A LA BIBLIOTHEQUE NATIONALE DU CANADA DE REPRODUIRE, PRETER, DISTRIBUER OU VENDRE DES COPIES DE SA THESE DE QUELQUE MANIERE ET SOUS QUELQUE FORME QUE CE SOIT POUR METTRE DES EXEMPLAIRES DE CETTE THESE A LA DISPOSITION DES PERSONNE INTERESSEES.

THE AUTHOR RETAINS OWNERSHIP OF THE COPYRIGHT IN HIS/HER THESIS. NEITHER THE THESIS NOR SUBSTANTIAL EXTRACTS FROM IT MAY BE PRINTED OR OTHERWISE REPRODUCED WITHOUT HIS/HER PERMISSION.

L'AUTEUR CONSERVE LA PROPRIETE DU DROIT D'AUTEUR QUI PROTEGE SA THESE. NI LA THESE NI DES EXTRAITS SUBSTANTIELS DE CELLE-CI NE DOIVENT ETRE IMPRIMES OU AUTREMENT REPRODUITS SANS SON AUTORISATION.

ISBN 0-315-97652-7

Canada

ABSTRACT

The Concept Of Competition With Special Reference To Physical Education And Sport

Brian Norris

Whilst there are those who consider improved competitiveness as necessary for national prosperity, others see this as a threat to civilized life. Thus, opinions sharply divide as to whether or not competition achieves educational objectives. In an attempt to clarify this controversial issue, we have looked at philosophical arguments, and especially recent work on the philosophy of physical education, sports and games. In Chapter One we give a brief account of the problem, especially as it relates to physical education. Chapter Two examines the nature of competition; the case for and against competition, especially in relation to the pursuit of excellence; and attempts to reconcile the two positions. Chapter Three considers Scott's and Kew's account of three major ethical positions in relation to competition, namely, the Lombardian ethic, the counter culture ethic, and the traditional (or radical) ethic. Finally, in Chapter Four we draw the following conclusions: 1) Competitive games should not be a compulsory component of the physical education curriculum. 2) Provision should be made for different interests, abilities and talents (including differences between boys and girls), those of potential athletes as well as majority needs. 3) In the spirit of the traditional ethic, physical education and sport can be a form of moral education.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There is much more to writing a thesis than one first imagines. The work required to accomplish the task is demanding, and at times seems to be overwhelming. Without the support of some very special people in my life who have either provided inspiration or offered me their encouragements along the way, a completed thesis would not have been possible. Therefore, I would like to express my gratitude to the following people:

To my Dad and Mom, my sister Sandra, my pretty neice Amber Dawn, and my lovely daughter Angela Marie; also, to my Aunt Ray, Uncle Bill, and Aunt Gladys.

To my very special friend Lucie Jeanneau, and her wonderful family.

To my fellow classmate Manish Ranjan Rao, and to Shapor who applied their technical expertise to format this thesis.

To Professor Aloni and Professor Fidler(Educational Studies) of Concordia University, and Dr. Graham Neil (Physical Education) of McGill University.

To Mr. Neville Carter, Sr.

To Mr. Lindsay Finney.

Finally, to my fellow athletes Bill Robert and Bob Kay.

DEDICATION

Over the course of our lives we often meet many different people. But rarely, it seems, do we chance to meet someone who is an absolute pleasure to know: a person who possesses the virtues of sincerity and generosity and who truly enjoys helping others reach their goal.

For the past three years, it has been an honour and a privilege for me to study for such a person. He is a professor who is, not only an eminent scholar but, one of the finest of gentlemen as well.

Accordingly, I dedicate this thesis to you **Dr. Harold Entwistle**. My deepest gratitude, to you sir, for everything!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. THE NATURE OF COMPETITION	7
Preamble	7
The Case for Competition	10
Competition and the Pursuit of Excellence	16
The Case Against Competition	21
The Correlative Values of Competition and Co-operation	35
Competition and Friendship	40
3. DIFFERENT ETHICAL ORIENTATIONS TOWARD COMPETITIVE GAMES	45
The Lombardian Competitive Ethic	46
The Counter Cultural Competitive Ethic	50
The Traditional Competitive Ethic	57
4. CONCLUSION	72
EPILOGUE	79
BIBLIOGRAPHY	80

1. INTRODUCTION

Opinions divide over the merits and detriments of competition. At one extreme it is regarded as repugnant and much is said about the alternative virtues of cooperation. Furthermore, there are those who regard competition as completely destructive, a threat even to the continued existence of civilisation itself. At the other extreme, competition is seen as absolutely crucial to human progress: of utmost importance not just in schooling but in life generally.

This range of attitudes towards competition has led to discussion and disagreement about whether competition is an example of what Gallie has called 'an essentially contested concept' (See, e.g., Arnold, Fielding, Meakin). These are concepts about which people disagree and for which there is no standard, correct or generally accepted use (Gallie, Ch.8). Gallie argues that some concepts are essentially contested, not merely in the sense that they are controversial, but rather in the sense that discussion and debate cannot ever resolve such controversy. Debate about essentially contested concepts can never produce definitions or meanings which can be universally agreed. They are essentially contested in the sense that it is in the logic of such concepts that different meanings inevitably attach to different usages and,

especially, to different value assumptions amongst those who use them. It is certainly true that radically different attitudes and beliefs about the likely outcomes of competition do stem from holding different values with reference to what constitutes the good life for both individuals and societies.

In Chapter Two we note some of the contrasting attitudes and beliefs about competition, with reference to life in general and, especially, to education. Currently, these differences are also frequently discussed with reference to the physical education curriculum. For example, according to the Quebec Ministry of Education, there are eight themes for the pupils to study in situations which involve performing different movements under particular conditions in physical education, two of which involve competition. These themes are: Body mobility, physical exertion, locomotion, object manipulation, cooperation, competition, cooperation and competition, and expression (Ministere de L'Education, 1984, 31). As a physical educator, one is familiar with claims that competition in physical education and sports is a way towards achieving desirable educational objectives. It is commonly believed that sports and competitive games can provide the pupil with opportunities to develop and enhance valuable skills, to make new friends, to exercise moral conduct, to experience the unique enjoyment and exhilaration that a competitive activity can offer, and so on.

Yet, in spite of these claimed benefits, from experience it seems equally true that competition in sports and games has the potential to produce an environment in which all sorts of serious difficulties emerge. For example, such undesirable acts as intimidation, aggression, retaliation, fighting, intent to injure, bad language and cheating can occur at some time or other in competitive games. The teacher of physical education faces a dilemma when confronted by differing responses from students with reference to competitive games and sports. On the one hand, many pupils, knowing that these abuses exist within the context of games, would rather avoid such negative situations by not competing at all. Even if certain competitive games are compulsory in school, such unwilling students undertake the task only with total lack of interest. When this happens, on the other hand, other students who expect nothing less than one hundred per cent effort from everyone, will object with harsh, outright criticism. These overly-competitive types usually belong to an inter-city team which promotes the "play-to-win-at-all-costs" ethic. They attempt to persuade others in class to adopt the same attitude towards games played in the instructional program in school as well. It follows that the non-aggressive and highly-aggressive types do not respect each other but, in fact, only feel resentment. In sum, for many pupils and the teacher, competitive games-playing can be either enjoyable and rewarding, or it can be unpleasant.

The aims of education are frequently stated in terms of the development of a person who aspires to social integration, effective community relationships, equality, sharing, love, and so on (Ministere de L'Education du Quebec: 1979, p.26). Clearly, the notions of cooperation and friendship are central to such aims. Yet, students, parents, politicians and industrialists are apt to argue that we live in a competitive, achievement-oriented society, such that education is seen largely in individualistic, aggressive, competitive terms. Moreover, it is often assumed that cooperation and competition are utterly dichotomous and exclusive, i.e., that competition must inevitably be inconsistent with cooperation.

This thesis is a conceptual study, not an empirical one. It examines the logic of the concepts of competition and, implicitly, of cooperation. The research has consisted largely of examination and analysis of literature devoted to either advocacy or criticism of competition (mainly philosophical, especially recent work on the philosophy of sport and educational texts advocating one position or the other), or which seek some accommodation or synthesis between the two.

Initially, it was our intention to focus equally upon the concepts of both competition and co-operation, perhaps

with the intention of finding a synthesis or accommodation between the two. However, the literature devoted separately to each of these concepts seemed so extensive that it would have been beyond the scope of a Master's thesis to do justice to both of these concepts. So a decision was made to focus our attention upon competition, since the controversy surrounding this is most challenging to the teacher of games and sports. However, the alternative claims of co-operation are often implicit in discussions of competition. Often, criticism of the destructive effects of competition is, by implication, an advocacy of the virtues of co-operation. Thus, at several points our discussion inevitably looks at the possibilities of co-operation in competitive sports and games.

In Chapter Two we look first at the case in favour of competition, including the claim that it is necessary for the achievement of excellence. Next we look at the case against competition, followed by discussion of suggestions that competition and co-operation are not dichotomous concepts and that the attempt should be made to bring them together; we look especially at the notion that 'agonistic' competition is a source of friendship.

In Chapter Three, we focus our attention on competition in games and sports through discussion of a seminal paper by Scott (elaborated and updated by Kew)

outlining three different ethical positions underpinning the playing of competitive games: the Lombardian, the counter cultural and the radical, which we prefer to call the traditional ethic. The values and limitations of each of these positions are discussed.

Finally, in Chapter Four, we draw some conclusions from our discussion, especially with reference to the following: the place in the curriculum of compulsory games and sports; the claims (in the name of equality) of potential elite athletes as against those of students of 'limited' ability who are interested only in the recreational playing of competitive games; the claim of the counter culturalists that school athletics should be co-educational; the belief that competitive games in schools are a rich source of moral education and a consideration of the necessary conditions for this to occur.

2. THE NATURE OF COMPETITION

Preamble

In this chapter we shall look at what competition is, followed by a consideration of differing views about its values. For though there are differences of opinion about whether competition satisfies all of Gallie's criteria for essential contestedness, there is no doubt that the value of competition is contested in terms of its moral and social consequences: i.e., in terms of its value in promoting satisfactory personal development and the cohesiveness of societies.

With reference to games and sports especially, there are both strong and weak conceptions of what competition is. The stronger notion is in the Oxford Dictionary's definition: competition is "the action of endeavouring to gain what another endeavours to gain at the same time". In this sense, competition is an economic concept, deriving from conditions of scarcity. We only compete for things which are in limited supply: antique objects at auctions, student places in prestigious educational institutions, a major defence contract, the Stanley Cup, or the hand in marriage of a particular member of the opposite sex. Victory, winning, in any of these things (as well as in even the most modest

competitive game) is a scarce commodity. Only one auction bidder, one tenderer, one professional hockey team, one suitor can win the desired object, as only one squash or tennis player can claim victory. It is this strong, economic sense of competition which raises most controversy and which, indeed, leads some critics to denounce competing as an entirely unacceptable, even immoral, human activity. (See e.g., Fielding, Bailey)

A somewhat weaker sense of competition emphasizes the participatory, rather than the adversarial component of competition. Not all participation in competitive sport seems predicated on the desire for victory, winning, gaining the prize which only one of the adversaries can claim. Especially in the casual, 'unorganised' game playing which people do for leisure in the park, victory is often of little consequence. Not infrequently, people play tennis, for example, without bothering to score: it is the sheer pleasure which comes from playing a good stroke, an excellent serve, etc. which is the main point of participating in the game. Mass marathons are the example *par excellence* of tens of thousands participating in a competition which only a dozen or so have any chance of winning. With reference to athletic competitive sports in the school curriculum, as in life outside the school, it is important to make the distinction between playing primarily to win (as, for example, in the education and the competitive

participation of the professional athlete) and participating in competitive games for relaxation and pleasure.

Bearing this distinction between weak and strong senses of competition in mind, there are, broadly speaking, two viewpoints on competition, the positive and the negative: "The positive view holds that competition is a pre-condition of personal development and social progress and that it provides a framework from which benefits and burdens can be distributed fairly and freely" (Arnold, 242). Historically, for example, this last was a major justification for establishing competitive examinations as selection procedures for public offices and educational institutions. Competitive examinations in the Civil Service, for example, were introduced against nepotism and in pursuit of the equalitarian goal that anyone with ability should be admitted without reference to social class or wealth.

It is also argued that "such desirable qualities as initiative, resource and independence" (Ibid.) can be fostered by competition. "The negative view, on the other hand, maintains that competitive situations threaten co-operative ventures and help undermine personal and social relationships and form an invidious distinction between winners and losers. A competitive environment, it is argued, is often the source of such undesirable qualities as envy, despair, callousness,

arrogance, pride and selfishness" (Ibid.).

It will be seen that competition is at the center of an ideological value-laden debate. Depending upon which of the two stands is taken, competition is seen to be either justified or reprehensible.

The Case for Competition

Perhaps the most pervasive and cogent argument in favour of competition is that it is inevitable: it is in the nature of human beings to be competitive. The human nature argument says that particular characteristics are inborn rather than learned, part of "nature" rather than "nurture". Thus, one ideology contends that human beings are fundamentally competitive, while another claims we, by nature, are cooperative.

Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection persuaded men that competition between different forms of life was the cause of evolutionary progress. Eventually, the concept of the competitive struggle for survival was widely applied to human social relationships. Known as "Social Darwinism", this holds that the same principles apply in the evolution and development of social as of biological life. Hence, "a nation's fitness to survive may

be measured by prowess in war; and the growth of a large business is merely an index of its superior fitness to evolve. Thus, modern man's conception of life is: each for himself and, if necessary, against his fellows" (Montagu, 19-20).

This Darwinian approach to competition finds expression in an educational context from Wilson who submits the view that competition is not only inevitable, but necessary as well. He claims that triumph and disaster, success and failure, winning and losing are inalienable features of any human life; that the avoidance of competition is logically impossible, and amounts to a denial of both standards of excellence in education and of inevitable human passions and aggression. The best way to deal with competition, Wilson believes, is not to deny the facts and over-protect our pupils in a cooperative environment, or to take competition to be some sort of end in itself, "as if we believed in the survival of the fittest as a moral principle, and regarded the goods of this world only in the light of prizes rather than as satisfactions of human needs" (30). Rather, he suggests, we should say to our pupils something like this:

Perhaps regrettably but certainly inevitably, it will always be necessary to compete. We have to defend our territory, earn a living, fend off our enemies, survive in a hard world. Some form of internal competition amongst ourselves may sharpen our abilities to do these necessary

things. So you must learn to spend some time doing these things (Ibid).

Dearden is also one of those who argues that competitiveness is "natural". He suggests that the young display it without ever being taught, as we see in sibling rivalry; that such basic human endeavours as getting parental approval and attention and, later, getting sexual attention, automatically elicit a tendency to compete with any others who are seen as wanting the same attentions (129-130). In addition, Dearden contends that if we suggest competing to children, they are naturally eager to do so, competing more vigorously the younger they are. But, competitiveness, he asserts, exists as a natural tendency to be curbed and controlled: "The argument is that because competitiveness is natural, it is to serve as a means to learning, and it acquires value instrumentally from the value of what has to be learned" (op.cit., 130).

However, to this argument about the natural inevitability of competition, Dearden adds the argument from cultural inevitability by reference to the fact that competition is evident in our educational arrangements at many points. There is competition for class positions and grammar school places, for prizes and entrance to universities, to be first, best, top, fastest and so on. He reasons that since competition plainly does occur in life, it must be capable of

having some place in education. He believes there are two main ways in which it can have a place: as well as being a way to gain access to restricted educational funds or institutions, it can also serve as a motivational device to help "kick start" those students who do not always want to be educated, either at all or in some particular respect (op.cit., 125).

Dearden maintains that because children do not always want to be educated, teachers are thus faced with a motivational problem. He thinks this is one main way in which competition can be of use in education. He suggests to teachers that:

We can so arrange things that educational achievements are...linked with some other artificial achievements for which children can readily be induced to compete (Ibid.).

The hope is, he continues, that by competing for rewards, points, or privileges and so on, some knowledge, abilities and attitudes may also be gained. The justification would be that "whereas children do not by nature seek to be educated it will be said, fortunately they are naturally competitive" (Ibid.).

Prvulovich also argues for the inevitability of competition given the pervasive and permanent background presence in all "school" activities and subjects. He believes that friendly and healthy rivalry in school work can do a

great deal of good, and sensible teachers make use of it as a motivational device. He believes teachers rightly use competition to encourage children in particular activities or achievements. He adds:

They also know that at least some pupils are unable to work hard unless there is a challenge, often expressed through such rivalry, a kind of emulation, that makes healthy competition such an attractive and inspiring experience. Not a fight to the death but friendly, co-operative, considerate competition. This kind of rivalry surely cannot be considered undesirable and educators are right to make use of it, so long as they use it with care, sympathy and understanding (78).

Prvulovich maintains that:

Without this omnipresence of an element of competitiveness, school work would be rather contrived and artificial, not to say, unnatural, a state of affairs that would be far less desirable than a competitive situation, with all the supposed ills that accompany it (op. cit., 81).

Adding the argument that the competitive attitude seems to be natural and innate Prvulovich draws on Dunlop's view that:

The amount or degree of competitiveness varies widely from person to person. Certainly it can be more or less inhibited or encouraged socially, but there is little doubt that the degree of eagerness to compete, to give oneself unreservedly to the competitive situation, is to some extent the product of heredity (op.cit., 83).

Furthermore, Prvulovich adds that schools and other educational institutions are also competitive by nature and as such they mirror an important feature of their respective societies. Schools compete with each other and so do teachers. No teacher would be pleased to have the most unruly class, to produce the least impressive work, to give the least interesting lesson and so on. The fact that these are professional people makes it incumbent upon them to try and improve on their previous performance, to hold their ground against their colleagues and, if possible, to excel over them (op.cit., 83-84). (One wonders if this kind of competitiveness is the real motivation of teachers. If one was merely the best teacher amongst a bad bunch one would be far from a properly motivated teacher. At best, teachers respond to the challenge of doing the best job they can in a classroom, partly as a condition of their own well-being and comfort, but also in order to provide the best possible education for their students). However, Prvulovich's point is that even though we may not like competition, there is no way out of the competitive predicament.

We should also note, however, to the contrary, that some motivational theorists find that we do best, not when extrinsic motivators such as money or grades are involved, but when we work at tasks we enjoy; activities which we find rewarding in themselves. Kohn argues that while extrinsic

motivation may affect performance, performance is dependent upon learning, which in turn, is primarily dependent upon intrinsic motivation (59). He claims that "competition is an extrinsic motivator and that extrinsic motivators are ineffective and corrosive to intrinsic ones" (Ibid.). Thus, when one competes, intrinsic motivation tends to decrease. Kohn refers to Holt, who believed that we destroy the love of learning in children by having them work for rewards, and making them feel that they are better than someone else (op.cit., 61). To the extent that an extrinsic motivator can have a positive effect, Kohn argues that one of the most powerful motivators is not money or victory, but a sense of accountability to other people: "This is what cooperation does: The knowledge that others are depending on you. The only stake others have in your competitive performance is a desire to see you fail" (Ibid.).

Competition and the Pursuit of Excellence

As we shall see when discussing the so-called 'traditional ethic' of competition, especially with reference to athletics in schools, there is sometimes an appeal to the virtues of competition as a motivator, not only of school learning as such, but also as a stimulus towards excellence. There is a long-standing conception of competition as giving ones's best effort in a morally desirable way. In relation to

education this is thought to ensure superior classroom performance in school work and the achievement of learning.

In an attempt to show why competition is necessary to achieve excellence, Flew looks at the concept of competition to appreciate with what competition is, and is not, compatible. He claims, first of all, that competition essentially involves comparisons---with another person or persons. Thus, bettering or worsening one's own previous performance is not competition. Flew's second conceptual point, is that competition essentially involves a striving by every competitor in some way to do better than the rest of the competition. If they do not, they are not really competing. Since competition is essentially concerned with comparisons rather than with self-improvement, that is, those who compete may strive to exceed others rather than to better oneself, competition is seen in a negative way. But, competition, he argues, though conceptually concerned only with comparisons, is often the practically necessary condition for promoting the better self (270-271).

Flew contends that to achieve excellence in any sphere is to become a member of an elite. As such, you are no longer equal to those who have not yet achieved excellence in that relevant sphere. So, if we are going to have excellence, we are going to have (logical) classes of persons who, with

respect to that sort of excellence though not necessarily in any other respects, constitute elites. The point is, that although elitism and elitists are mostly denounced as discriminatory, Flew argues they are in some ways admired for enabling some standards of excellence to be maintained. To appreciate this truth, Flew distinguishes between two incompatible ideals of equality; two claims, that is, about ways in which people "ought" to be equal. In practice, these ideals are often confounded together (op.cit., 268). These ideals are: 1) Equality of opportunity, and 2) Equality of outcome.

1) **Equality of opportunity:** As traditionally understood, this is an ideal referring to the establishment and conduct of competitions, i.e., "fair and equal competition for scarce opportunities" (Ibid.). Competitors have the same equal chance of success with no "unfair advantage", e.g., same equipment, distance, time, space, etc., although some may have an indirect "advantage" in the form of natural talent, coaching or training superiority, and so on. Some studies have mistaken this indirect advantage to show that competition must have been unfair; therefore, competitors did not have the same equal chance of success. But, Flew argues, there is nothing unfair because the best man wins (op.cit., 269).

2) **Equality of outcome:** This is the egalitarian ideal

that we should all end up with the same result; through cooperation, we succeed equally. Flew claims this second ideal has been overtaking and replacing the first in its appeal to opinion formers; and it is, therefore, important to recognize that the two are not merely different but incompatible. He argues that the older ideal of equality of opportunity necessarily must give rise to that kind of inequality which it is the object of the newer ideal to suppress (Ibid., 269-270).

Thus, Flew is saying, presumably, that to always do the same thing as others do, in a spirit of cooperation, and be also content to achieve the very same results along with everyone else, is to be merely satisfied with mediocrity, to disregard one's personal identity, and to miss the opportunity to be the best that one can be. On the other hand, to compare or contrast oneself with others, and strive in a spirit of fair competition to win, is often the only way to better oneself and in doing so, achieve a form of excellence.

Flew complains that some commentators are describing, and abusing, as elitist, any kind of discrimination and selection for quality. He claims this is to repudiate all standards of excellence in every field of human achievement. And that repudiation is, surely, not an educational but an anti-educational idea (op.cit., 273).

Flew contends that "fair and open competition, though uncongenial to reluctant and sluggish competitors, is one sure, if not the only or the surest, way of maintaining and/or raising standards in, or of or for, whatever it may be that the competition is a competition to achieve or to produce" (op.cit., 270-271). Yet, he adds, competition is in some circles a pretty bad word, in part, no doubt, because of its tight associations with the ideas of excellence and of elites. Nowadays, educational talk centers around the values of cooperation and community and the removal of competition from schools. Flew argues, however, that it has been shown that competition between pupils is one of the most effective incentives to higher levels of learning achievement. In addition, he thinks our future adults who have been taught to abhor competition will not be properly equipped to participate in the world of trade and industry (op.cit., 273).

In support of Flew's kind of argument, Prvulovich reports that research done in a competitive structure demonstrates that "provided the level of competitive antagonism is not too high, performance appears to be improved in the classroom" (82). Moreover, he adds, competition encourages new ventures and whets the appetite for more knowledge and deeper self-fulfilment.

In drawing our attention to the assumption that

educational excellence seems inseparable from elitism, Flew is pointing to a distinction which is important when discussing the place of competition in the athletics curriculum: the distinction between games played at the highest professional levels and the playing of games largely for relaxation and enjoyment by the vast majority of players whose skills are modest. The charge of elitism is most often directed at institutional and curricular arrangements which favour the intellectually gifted who are being prepared for preferment at the highest levels of government, industry and commerce, or academia. But, especially in Pareto's seminal sociological definition of an elite, professional sports are no less elitist than these other more distinctively intellectual activities.

The Case against Competition

We have just looked at the case for competition in terms of two kinds of inevitability, natural and cultural inevitability. The first holds that competition between persons is inevitable because the urge to compete is hereditary; it is in our genes; it is irrevocable human nature to compete. The second inevitability is cultural: whatever our human nature may or may not dispose us to do, we also live in a culture - the culture of capitalism - of which an essential driving force is the ethic of free enterprise which

holds that economic survival and, especially, progress are only possible if human beings compete to promote efficiency and excellence.

The case against competition begins by exposing the fallacy - the so-called Naturalistic Fallacy - in the argument from natural inevitability. That is, just because something exists there is no warrant for concluding that it ought to exist or, if it's existence is inevitable, that we as individuals or societies ought to accept the unfortunate consequences of its existence. (See Bailey for a criticism of several naturalistic arguments for the inevitability of competition). Thomas Hobbes was an early advocate of the view that human nature is essentially a destructive force from a social point of view. In the state of nature he believed life is "poore, nasty, brutish and shorte". In other words, it is the competitive life - which as we have seen some thinkers believe is essential to biological and social evolution - that is destructive of individuals and societies. The remedy, according to Hobbes, is for human beings to make a social contract, agreeing to accept the legal and physical constraints which are necessary to the survival of all.

Most of the criticism of competition which follows is merely an elaboration of this basic point of Hobbes that survival and progress depends upon inhibiting our basic,

'natural', inevitable dispositions, through at least the minimum of co-operation needed to create law and order in society. Much criticism of competition and competitiveness is usually also an implicit endorsement of the superior virtues of co-operation. (See, for example, Abrami, [et al.], Orlick, & Peters) The following critique of competition is taken largely from Kohn supported by other writers of similar views.

We have just suggested that even if competitiveness could be proven to be an inevitable and unalterable fact of human nature, this would not in itself justify our arguing, fallaciously, that it ought to be encouraged, especially in schools. However, there are also those who argue that even at the level of fact there is evidence contrary to the inevitability arguments: that all people in all places are not naturally competitive. In the case of primitive cultures, for example, it has been discovered that, by virtue of a life-and-death struggle with nature, co-operation, not competition, was essential. Some of these non-competitive cultures still exist today in contrast to our own competitiveness. Anthropologists such as Margaret Mead and others have described in detail several such cultures in different parts of the world. These studies suggest that competition is a matter of social structure rather than human nature. Kohn writes: "Competition may be an integral part of certain institutions in contemporary Western society, such as capitalism, but it is

clearly not an unavoidable consequence of life itself" (38).

It is impossible to substantiate empirically whether or not it is "human nature" to be competitive. Theories favour both views. Kohn claims that competition is not inevitable, and is not an unavoidable fact of life: we do not "have" to be competitive. With reference to competition in the animal world, he refers to "natural selection" theory which states that the better adapted a species is to its environment--and, specifically, to changes in the environment--the greater the probability of its survival. To adapt is to be able to reproduce and to reproduce is to survive (op.cit., 20). However, it is argued that natural selection has been misinterpreted to mean only competition. Whereas in fact, "success defined as leaving offspring can...be attained by a large variety of strategies--including mutualism and symbiosis--that we could call cooperative"(op.cit., 21). Kohn's point is that there is nothing about evolution that "requires" competition; on the contrary, it discourages it. Survival generally demands that individuals work with rather than against each other. Thus, "if natural selection is the engine of evolution--the central theme of "nature", as it were--animals should be found cooperating with each other in great numbers. And they are" (Ibid.). Kohn cites compelling evidence of cooperation among animals from Petr Kropotkin, WC Allee, Marvin Bates and Ashley Montagu. In human terms, most authorities now disagree with

Darwin's theory of evolution as the survival of the fittest by competition. Instead, they believe "the highest value lies not in strength and brutality, but in intelligence, a moral sense, and social cooperation" (Orlick, 6). Kohn concludes there is no evidence that competition is an unavoidable feature of human life. Any example of people behaving non-competitively should be enough to refute the human nature argument. The practice of cooperation is a serious possibility, a realistic alternative in our lives (op.cit., 43).

Writing in an educational context, the philosopher Bertrand Russell was a vociferous advocate of co-operation in contrast to competition. In contrast to Flew, Russell felt that "equality of opportunity" is a serious threat to mental health. Education, he argued, should be open to all who can profit by it, if they can demonstrate intellect. He noted that competitive examinations are, indeed, used to determine which candidates gain access to higher education, but "the belief in this method does not consider that competition for young girls and boys involves severe strain intellectually and emotionally as well" (99). He believed, instead, that students could be chosen for their intelligence and industry rather than actual proficiency.

Russell alleged that one defect of competition in

education is what he called "over-education " especially with the best pupils. What he meant is overstrain, unnecessary pressure or stress on youth, and although it may provide a broader knowledge and more learning, it decreases the love of knowledge and eventually brings on boredom and cynicism. In particular, he argued that overstrain is damaging to imagination, intellect, and physical health (op.cit., 96). He claimed that competitive-minded educators can kill the imagination in young people because the imagination is inconvenient to the teacher. It is undisciplined, and competition requires discipline. In the case of children's drawings, for example, children, he felt, must not be given instruction on how to draw or they will become increasingly scientific and their drawing will cease to show any imagination: "Correctness," he suggests, "should not be substituted for artistic excellence. This is difficult for the teacher, since artistic excellence is a matter of opinion and individual taste" (Ibid.).

Intellectual training also leads to a discouragement of interest if it is conducted in a competitive setting. In this setting, Russell argued, "most of the class learn from a fear of punishment, some from a competitive desire for success, and few from love of knowledge" (op.cit., 97).

Another defect from competition on intellectual

training is that it encourages compliance, and the belief that definite answers are known on questions which, instead, are legitimate matters for debate. However, Russell suggested that knowledge is not merely "either"- "or", i.e., one-sided. For example, the story of Christopher Columbus can be told just as faithfully in two opposite ways. Thus, teachers ought to encourage intelligent disagreement on the part of their pupils: "Too much education consists in the instilling of unfounded dogmas in place of the spirit of inquiry. This results from a curriculum devised on a competitive ideal which demands too much apparent knowledge, with a consequent need of haste and undue definiteness" (op.cit., 98-99).

The problem of over-education, then, is first of all, important, because for the clever person it means loss of spontaneity, self-confidence, health and usefulness to the community. In the second place, it is difficult, because the existing mass of knowledge is growing and it becomes harder to know all that is relevant, both practically and scientifically. Yet, we have to be careful not to promote the idea to "avoid too much learning," since our social structure depends upon trained and well-informed intelligence (op.cit., 102).

Russell suggested that by means of preventing over-work, removing the stress, and utilizing a non-

competitive teaching style, it is possible to cause the majority of pupils to love knowledge. When this motive can be invoked, attention becomes willing and unstrained, with the result that fatigue is greatly diminished and memory greatly improved. Moreover, the acquisition of knowledge comes to be felt as a pleasure, with the consequence that it is likely to be continued after the formal period of education is ended (op.cit., 98). Not memorization and learning facts by heart, but reading books is the proper sort of instruction, he asserted. Furthermore, the pupil's research should not be judged by the orthodoxy or conclusion arrived at, but by the extent of knowledge and the reasonableness of the argument. This method teaches the power of forming sound judgments and encourages initiative and makes acquiring knowledge interesting and eliminates fatigue from boredom which promotes health (op.cit., 103).

But, Russell argued, this is not possible while the tyranny of examinations and competition persists. He concluded that competition is not only bad as an educational fact, but also as an ideal to be held before the young:

What the world needs now is not competition but organization and cooperation; all belief in the utility of competition has become an anachronism. And even if competition were useful, it is not in itself admirable, since the emotions with which it is connected are the emotions of hostility and ruthlessness. The conception of society as an organic whole is very

difficult for those whose minds have been steeped in competitive ideas. Ethically, therefore, it is undesirable to teach the young to be competitive (op.cit., 103-104).

Earlier we noted Flew's attempt to show that comparison helps achieve excellence. In contrast, Kohn rejects the argument concerning the phenomenon of social comparison: The view that our identities are a function of the social world; that others define who we are; and that social comparison tells us whether what we do is any good or not. In this argument, comparison implies competition. It is agreed that comparison goes on all the time but, Kohn argues, this is not the only way to check how we are doing: "One's abilities can be evaluated not only against another person but also against one's own past performance, or some idealized performance level" (41). He adds that, even if one's first sense of mastery or self-esteem is the result of comparing oneself with others, this may be only temporary: "Having learned about valued characteristics, an adult with a healthy self-concept does not need to compare himself or herself with others" (op.cit., 42). Thus, Kohn claims that comparison does not necessitate competition, and comparisons do not have to include value judgments. He offers the following example: "If you and I run together for recreation, your greater speed or endurance may help to improve my own without my ever trying to beat you" (op.cit., 43).

Speaking more generally, Kohn claims that competition does not result in maximum production, excellence or success. He argues that success and competition are not the same thing: "One can reach goals without ever competing. Competing simply means that one works towards a goal in such a way to prevent others from reaching their goals. This is one approach to getting something done, but not the only one" (op.cit., 47). Kohn reports that evidence from studies indicates that competition is "almost never" more productive than either cooperation or independent effort. Superior performance not only does not "require" competition, it usually seems to require its absence (Ibid.). Morton Deutsch, and David and Roger Johnson have found that the superiority of cooperation held for all subject areas and for all age groups (Ibid.). From these studies it was concluded that: Cooperation is more effective when the group is smaller and when the task is more complex; for tasks where success depends on working together, a system of equal rewards gives the best results, while a competitive winner-take-all system gives the poorest. Also, competition inhibits the "quality" of performance. In a competitive race to beat others, Kohn argues, work is not done with the proper care. Work done in cooperation, on the other hand, allows for normal conditions to exist and produces a higher quality product (op.cit., 48-50).

Finally, it is claimed that children do not learn

better when education is transformed into competitive struggle. Kohn argues that turning a lesson into a competitive game is seductive to the teacher because it attracts and holds students' attentions: "But the real appeal is that it makes teaching easier, not more effective; it circumvents pedagogical problems rather than solves them" (Ibid.). Furthermore, claims Kohn, children like games, but this does not mean it teaches them well. Moreover, "the fact that a game is being substituted for the usual lesson could account for the student's interest" (Ibid.). In sum, Kohn claims that many teachers think competition holds attention better, but studies show that children prefer cooperation once they have experienced it (Ibid.).

The superiority of a co-operative over a competitive ethic has been advocated throughout the past century by educational philosophers from John Dewey to R.S. Peters. Peters argues that the social purposes of education must be seen in terms of encouraging the development of respect for persons or fraternity (Peters, Ch. 8). Arguably, competitiveness is inevitably destructive of this respect which can only be developed in schools through some kind of social pedagogy. Dewey, especially, was an advocate of this kind of social education which required the school to function as an embryonic community based on the co-operative learning required by the project method. Indeed, he asserted that the

function of education is primarily social. He believed it is the fact that we live in societies which is the bedrock on which education should be built. From this assumption, Dewey insisted that the school ought to foster the cooperative, rather than the competitive instincts in children; to promote fraternity rather than individualism; mutual assistance, not selfishness, and so on (Entwistle, 1992, 37). Cooperation in the classroom means more than putting people into groups. It suggests, rather, group participation in a project where the result is the product of common effort, the goal is shared, and each member's success is linked with every other's. Practically, this means that ideas and materials will be shared, labour sometimes divided, and everyone will be rewarded for successful completion of the task (Kohn, 150-151).

Others have appealed to existentialism. On this view, it is necessary to consider the importance of human relationship to our lives in order to understand the effects of competition. Kohn cites Buber's view that the fulfilment of human life was relationship. Buber advocates treating another person not as an "it", but as a "Thou"; not as a means, but as an end, so that "each becomes aware of the other and is thus related to him in such a way that he does not regard and use him as his object, but as his partner in a living event" (op.cit., 137). In this view, one finds that

your needs and feelings are similar to mine. We share a common humanity, however, we are not the same. I must encounter you as an other. The point is to see your situation from "your" perspective. As Kohn puts it:

When I regard you as a subject and recognize your otherness, there is the making of human relationship at its fullest. All of us can strive to receive others this way, and in so doing we prepare the ground for genuine dialogue, a reciprocal sharing by which both participants are enriched (op.cit., 138).

On the other hand, Kohn argues, competition involves a kind of "perverse inter-dependence" in which one of us has to fail so that the other can succeed. So, I see you as some one I am trying to beat. As rivals, you are an "it" to me, an object, and some thing I use to accomplish my own purposes: "This dynamic is found in virtually all exploitative relationships. But competition takes objectification a step further since I not only use you, but try to defeat you" (Ibid.).

Inhibiting the growth of respect for persons and fraternity is one thing; but some critics take the argument further and claim that competitiveness promotes aggression and hostility. Kohn argues that competition does not drain off one's innate reservoir of aggression. In fact, he reports, "studies show that we learn to be aggressive, and that

athletic competition actually encourages aggression" (op.cit., 144-145). In sport especially, aggression is not limited only to participants. Fan violence is frequent, in various degrees, from the actions of high school students towards visiting teams, to hundreds of deaths in soccer stadium riots (op.cit., 148).

Kohn argues there is good evidence of a "causal" link between competition and aggression. Many theorists suggest that competition generates a high level of arousal, meaning that we may not immediately become aggressive as a result, but we are inclined to respond in this way if we are then "frustrated" by something: "Not just losers become aggressive, but winners as well. Win or lose, competition is considered a frustrating experience because of the threat of defeat and the unpredictability of the outcome" (Ibid.).

Western society encourages aggression, especially in boys, who are taught that winning is important, and that aggression is often a means to that end. But a contrast can be seen in Japan, where children are discouraged from quarrelling by learning that yielding is more honourable than being assertive. The child who gives in, who contains assertive drives in order to promote group harmony is viewed as more mature and is rewarded. Thus, the unyielding child, while emerging the apparent victor, also bears a sense of loss

since his or her behaviour goes unrewarded. Thus, Japanese mothers tell their children, "To lose is to win" (Alcock, Carment + Sadara, 357).

Kohn believes that cooperation has a powerful, positive effect on relationship, and that many studies confirm this conclusion. In general, they showed that cooperation promoted greater interpersonal attraction, especially in the form of encouragement, both given and received; sensitivity; other-orientation; communication; and, trust (149-150). In addition, research on cross-ethnic contact was conducted to find out if one considers someone else from a different background a partner or a rival. Results indicated that it depends on the structure under which we deal with one another. As was expected, competition dug ditches, while cooperation built bridges (op.cit. 151-152).

The Correlative Values of Competition and Co-operation

Although much of the discussion of competition and co-operation is carried on uncompromisingly, there are those who, like Eggerman, conclude that competition is a mixed good. No doubt, it does have its risks: "Competition does make some persons suspicious, contemptuous, deceitful and insecure. But this kind of competitor is too often portrayed as typical, and is, instead, far more the exception than the rule at the level

of sport where people still rival for the sake of rivalry" (51).

The case against competition is not always made philosophically or scientifically by attempting to demonstrate, scientifically, that competitiveness is part of human nature or, philosophically, by appealing to the Naturalistic Fallacy. Much criticism of competition accepts its inevitability or legitimacy but derives from fear of its excesses or abuses. It is a common belief that problems with competition occur if it becomes excessive or the importance of winning is over-emphasized. In games and sports, competitive abuses are usually thought of as breaking the rules or cheating, or violating the spirit of the game in order to win. The ways of dealing with competitive abuses vary from stronger forms of individual punishment, to just a general promotion of sportsmanship. Underlying these approaches is the assumption that competitive abuse is a contamination of true competition. It assumes that competition is not to blame; the idea is that if we get rid of the troublemakers, and if we don't get carried away trying to win, then there is nothing wrong with competition (Kohn, 159-161). But Kohn argues that the root cause of abuses in competition is the competitive structure itself. He writes: "A structural imperative to beat others invites the use of any means available" (op.cit., 161). Thus, he argues, competition doesn't need fixing, it needs to be

eliminated altogether.

The notion that the fault with competition lies mainly in excesses and abuses is a reminder that presenting the problem as exclusive choice between opposites ignores the reality of the texture of human life in which co-operation and competition interpenetrate. The obvious example of this from the world of games and sports is in so-called competitive team games. In hockey, soccer, baseball, basketball, etc., two sides compete with the objective of winning. But that competitive objective is most likely to be achieved when the members of the team co-operate, rather than compete selfishly with other members of the team to promote their own egos or enhance their own statistics.

Moreover, there are those who argue, against Kohn's claims that in competition, one person's success depends on another person's failure, that it is not always true that A's succeeding must involve B's failing. And, even when this is the case, it does not follow that the situation is anti-humanistic (if one assumes this word to mean something like "at odds with the development of one's desirable human potential" (Eggerman, 49). In competition, Eggerman believes losing should not necessarily be seen as failing. If one has performed at a reasonable standard or better even though they didn't win, it can't be considered failure. In some cases,

loss (when seen as failure) may lead to a deterioration of the personality in some important way, "but it is flagrantly wrong to imply that it must do so" (op.cit., 50). Eggerman reports that psychological studies indicate that competitive persons are apt to be tough minded, self-sufficient, emotionally detached and cheerfully optimistic with an absence of severe mood swings. He writes: "Failures simply do not lead in a consistent way to deleterious effects upon the psyche of the competitor, for he or she realizes that competition will provide him or her with another day and a second chance" (Ibid.).

Secondly, in response to Kohn's suggestion that competitors are never really satisfied even when they win because this is only a temporary situation (there are always others who are, or soon will be, better), Eggerman argues that this also ignores the matter of reasonable expectations. The awareness that others may become better is surely not a source of dissatisfaction, since no one can reasonably expect to remain the best forever. Competitors are unsatisfied only if they are unrealistic in their expectations. But competitors, in spite of brief periods of unreasonable expectations, usually have realistic impressions of what they are capable of: "Thus, the view that the competitor is 'perpetually' insecure or unsatisfied is generally quite fictional" (Ibid.).

Eggerman claims that competition's assets out-weigh its liabilities. He believes that most persons who engage in competition benefit from the experience and, further, that if consideration were given to the true (intrinsic) nature of competition, almost everyone who tried it would benefit: "Enlightened competitors--those who assess what they want from competition and how best to achieve it--have reasonable expectations about their performances and do not expect to win every time out" (op.cit., 51). They will see that cheating is antithetical to their goals and invalidates their reward. On reflection, they also see that playing while injured or drugged is a risk to the goals of long-term development. And, finally, they regard worthy rivals with gratitude and respect, rather than contempt, for they realize that it is only by pushing themselves to the limit that they discover what those limits are (Ibid.).

The corruption of genuine competition, Eggerman contends, usually occurs at the professional or major college sports level, when persons perform for a paycheck or scholarship. Then, cheating, intimidation, and so on may make sense--but only then. Conversely, enlightened competitors perform for intrinsic pride and achievement without the desire to cheat or hold opponents in contempt (Ibid.).

Competition and Friendship

The attempt to find an accommodation between competition and co-operation is also seen in the suggestion that competition may lead to friendship. We noted above that uncompromising opponents of competition are apt to point to its alleged destructive effects upon personal relationships. But others argue that whilst competitive play can result in alienation, it can also be an experience in which our relation to our opponent can be that mode of positive encounter which deepens into a form of friendship. It is important to discuss this possible link between competition and friendship, since the possibility of this happening is central to the traditional ethic of games and sports which we consider below.

Hyland contends that the stance of play, the orientation we take toward other people when we play, can be related to the characterization of human being as "erotic" in the Socratic sense of the word as "knowing we are incomplete beings, and in striving to overcome this condition (and become whole) with the help of other people" (235). From this standpoint, he thinks competitive play can be seen as natural to being human, as one of the most fundamental ways in which we come to be as human (Ibid.). In addition, Hyland argues that philosophy is also a manifestation of our erotic nature. He points out that the appropriate Socratic philosophic stance

is one of knowing I lack wisdom, and striving for it by questioning and discourse. This questioning itself exhibits the stance of play: "This is why philosophy in the Platonic dialogues is sometimes associated with the highest forms of play" (op.cit., 236).

These remarks relate to the possible reconciliation of competition and friendship. First of all, Hyland points to the fact that the original meaning of the word competition is "com-petitio" which means "to question together, to strive together" (Ibid.). He contends that this notion of togetherness suggests a cooperation which implies friendship, in a mutual striving together, so each participant achieves a higher level of excellence than could have been achieved alone (Ibid.). Thus:

In competing with others, our chances for fulfilment are seen as occurring within a framework of positive involvement with, a cooperation or a friendship with others...Far from being opposed, competition and friendship are seen to be founded together in our natures as erotic (op.cit., 237).

This is to claim that competition, as a mutual striving in so far as it most adequately fulfils its possibilities, does so as a mode of friendship. In other words, the highest version of competition is as friendship. In contrast, any other manifestations of competition which breaks down and devolves into opposition and alienation are

lower versions and to be judged defective. Hence, we ought to strive at all times to let our competitive play be a mode of friendship. This notion of competition as striving or questioning together is consistent with what we have suggested is the weaker, participatory rather than adversarial, sense of competition noted above.

Nevertheless, we know that alienation does occur regularly in competition. It is part of the "risk" we take when we play competitively. The risk-taking element in competition has different themes: the risk of physical injury, the psychological risk of possible losing and its effect on our self-esteem, and the risk that what begins as a friendly encounter will end in alienation, an inevitable consequence of competition, according to Aristotle, that those who "dispute with each other for... priority,... do not remain friends" (Ross, 1211a). Why do we willingly take these risks? Hyland believes it is because of our eros: "We are dissatisfied with our incompleteness, and this lack spurs us on to be more than we are. Risk-taking allows us to engage in questioning ourselves to become what we can become. This individualizes us and offers occasions in which we find out who we are in the midst of becoming who we are" (Hyland, 238).

Critics of competition are usually sceptical of the view that striving competitively together induces friendship

rather than alienation. They often focus on the alleged dehumanizing affects of competition, especially its destructiveness with respect to harmonious social relationships. Echoing Aristotle, Kohn argues that competition forces us to work against each other, which poisons our relationships: "Competition is like a disease, it spreads from the workplace to the home, the community, the school; even marriage partners compete" (132). Kohn believes that companionship, friendship or love, do not have a chance to take root when we compete. Instead, competitors remain on guard, stay in reserve and sacrifice friendships for victories. Hence, such characteristics as kindness, sympathy and unselfishness are absent among successful athletes. In fact, studies show that most successful athletes indicate low interest in receiving support and concern from others, low need to take care of others, and low need for affiliation (op.cit., 61-62).

Kohn argues that knowing competition damages self-esteem, we can predict that relationships will suffer. In other words, "it is difficult for me to feel good about others when I don't feel good about myself" (op.cit., 135). Competition by its very nature damages relationships. Its nature means that competitors' interests are inherently opposed: "So, I will regard others as stumbling blocks on my path. It is then a small step to adopting an adversarial

position all the time, and one eventually treats everyone as inconvenient to one's own goals" (op.cit., 136).

* * * * *

In this chapter we have looked at the case for and against competition as well as the attempts to reconcile the two and, indeed, at the argument that competition can be a basis for the development of friendship between competing individuals. The arguments for and against these positions seem equally cogent such that it is difficult to accept unequivocally either position, for or against competition and, implicitly, for or against co-operation. Those who favour one position rather than another do so because of attachment to different values and differing conceptions of what constitutes the good life. Hence, in the next chapter, we turn to an examination of competition in sport and games with reference to three different ethical positions which have been identified in the philosophy of sport.

3. DIFFERENT ETHICAL ORIENTATIONS TOWARDS COMPETITIVE GAMES

We have discussed the nature of competition, as well as some of the arguments deployed for and against competition, both generally and with specific reference to sports and competitive games in schools. We noted that arguments against competition are, implicitly, often in favour of co-operation. In the last chapter we have also noted the claims of competition and of co-operation in relation to the pursuit of excellence. However, excellence has to be understood in relation to different values and objectives. Especially in physical education, the emphasis upon excellence sometimes refers to the performance of physical skills, sometimes to winning, sometimes to character development (as an aspect of moral education), whilst at other times the reference is to the total development of the person. We shall now examine these things in relation to the three ethical positions enunciated by Scott and developed by Kew, before drawing some implications for the place (if any) of competitive sports and games in the curriculum and the approaches to teaching these.

Both Scott and Kew have contributed to the debate about the place of competition, by distinguishing three different ethical positions with reference to the value of competition in games and sports: the radical ethic which we

prefer to characterise as traditional; the Lombardian ethic (named after the American football coach, Vince Lombardy); and the counter cultural ethic.

The Lombardian Competitive Ethic

We shall look at the implications of this first since, on the surface, it seems to have no positive implication for the curriculum. The Lombardian ethic holds that the only value in playing a game is to win. Vince Lombardy is reputed to have answered, when asked whether winning was everything to him, "winning isn't everything, it's the only thing". If "the only value in playing is to win", then the end justifies the means. Notions to do with the enjoyment of playing, self improvement and fulfilment, adherence to a collection of virtues are redundant. The activity of playing the game is entirely subordinate to the achievement of objectives lying outside the game itself (Kew, 106).

This notion that the point of participating in competitive games is to win, and only to win, all other objectives being irrelevant, is a position which is generally dismissed by moralists and liberal educationists. Other people, having mainly economic or nationalist ends in view may see Lombardian competition as the only realistic ethic but, in

the literature of education especially, it would be difficult to find any advocacy at all of the notion that the only point of competing is to win at all costs.

The strength of the Lombardian ethic is that it lacks the ambiguity which attaches to the notion of winning in the other two positions. Discussion of this position tends to draw on the notion of the logic of the game. The logically necessary and sufficient conditions for playing competitive games are that "all movements within a game must be directed towards the attempt to win and any movement not so motivated is inappropriate and counter productive" (Ibid.). How do you teach a competitive game, how do you coach skills, tactics and strategies, except from the premise that doing it in these ways is superior because it is the best way to score points, prevent your opponents from scoring and, hence, to win? As Bailey puts it: "In face of both logic and the prevailing ethos, any attempt to teach any culturally significant game as though winning doesn't matter, or to delegate winning to an inferior position, is doomed to failure from the start" (43-44). Thus, it is logically absurd to teach games as though some other objective than winning is paramount.

Appealing to the logic of the game is one thing, but some critics of the Lombardian ethic argue that although the Lombardian ethic has this logical impeccability, games

(especially at the professional level) are increasingly played in contexts where the rewards of winning are such that all other considerations (sportsmanship, respect for rules and officials, team spirit) are not merely subservient to winning but also become of increasingly little account. As a consequence, some games lose their necessary quality of 'unreality' or 'non-seriousness', their playful nature, and become intensely serious and real. They become dominated by the work ethic. On this view, there is no merit in the traditional view that winning is subservient to the way the game is played, the virtues which are displayed or acquired being as important as the result (Kew, 106).

This sense that commercialism and nationalism have become the primary reasons for wanting to win (affecting competitive games as played even by primary age children) leads some critics to conclude that the teaching of competitive sports has no place (certainly no compulsory place) in schools. (e.g., Fielding, Bailey). Fielding bases his position on the view that there is no morally acceptable way of winning, since competition is always immoral (140). Thus, any 'educative' spin-off from Lombardian competition could only be the immoral one of encouragement to win at any price. On this view, cheating, intimidation of referees and umpires as well as opponents are quite legitimate means towards the end of victory.

Other critics of the Lombardian ethic are less drastic in their criticism. Their criticism is not that it is always immoral to compete but, rather, that the 'winning at all cost' ethic has several unfortunate consequences. Winning at all cost, or at any price, implies that cheating, deception, undetected foul play, abuse of the rules and of referees, or 'ungentlemanly' conduct are all acceptable avenues to victory, providing that one can get away with them. As Kohn puts it: "A structural imperative to beat others invites the use of any means available" (161).

Otherwise, critics who accept that competition is a mixed blessing, who accept its values whilst seeing also its negative potential, are apt to focus upon the excesses of this extreme Lombardian fixation upon winning. It is argued that the spirit of camaraderie or fraternity which, traditionalists claim, can be the outcome of competitive sport, not only between members of the same side but also between all participants of the game, is threatened. Dehumanisation, loss of respect for persons, is the casualty when winning is raised to the prime objective of competitive participation. Moreover, it is sometimes argued that, apart from the very gifted athlete who has no difficulty in winning, the self esteem of most participants is destroyed where the prime emphasis is on winning (Kew, 107). For these, the majority, some other justification is required if participation in

competitive sports is to have any educational value.

Counter Cultural Competitive Values

The counter culture ethic is a fairly new value orientation as applied to games and sports and was articulated initially in reaction against the excesses of the Lombardian ethic's overemphasis on winning in competitive games. In the literature of games and sports, this position has been stressed by those who see no merit whatsoever in the Lombardian ethic: "The counter culture ethic takes every value of the Lombardian ethic and puts forth the exact opposite value as its position. Cooperation replaces competition, an emphasis on process replaces an emphasis on product, sport as a coeducational activity replaces a concern for excellence, and an opportunity for spontaneity and self-expression replaces authoritarianism" (Scott, 74). In the counter culture ethic the individual player's experiences and the meanings and feelings which he or she obtains from playing are the central focus and provide the chief motive for participating in the activity. Quite apart from the Lombardians' appearing to encourage immoral sporting practices (cheating, etc.), its fundamental weakness is taken to be its utilitarianism; its fixation upon extrinsic ends or outcomes which serve to diminish the intrinsic values of the game

itself. So the counter cultural ethic is essentially anti-utilitarian. In its simplest form, this ethic emphasises the importance of the game itself, the playing of games for pure fun and enjoyment, irrespective of the result: It is "a love of moving and exercising skill along with other people" (Kew, 107). The game is essentially a social event in which proponents encourage mixed sport and there is a loosening of competitive structures. In sum, "The process of playing is everything; the end result unimportant" (op.cit., 108).

In practical terms, these counter cultural values have found their way into statements of curriculum objectives for physical education. For example, the Secondary School Curriculum Guide for Quebec identifies Physical Education as "the study of movement" (Ministere de L'Education, 1984, 30), and suggests that "movement is performed in different contexts -- the individual in relation to himself, his physical environment, or his social environment" (Ibid.). This movement is performed for specific purposes: "to improve movement potential (relation to self), to master challenges of the environment, (relation to physical environment) or to express oneself and communicate with others (relation to social environment)" (Ibid.).

The 'fun of the game' justification for participation in competitive activities has been stressed by a number of

educationists. Macdonald, athletics director at Concordia University in Montreal, believes that competition for children should be for fun, learning skills and improving one's physical fitness. She argues that "self-esteem is fundamental to emotional well being, and sports programs should be designed to build it. Without a good self-image, athletes have difficulty in handling success or failure. Too much formal competition, where winning is emphasised, she adds, is not in the best interests of children. The emphasis should be on having fun, developing fundamental skills and getting in shape" (The Gazette, [Montreal] Sept. 12, 1993). She also maintains that instead of focusing on the results of games, adults should compliment children for improvements and skill development. All children should have the same chance to experience success, based on self improvement.

This is essentially the counter cultural position which is also implicit in Bruner's advocacy of games in education. He suggests that "athletics is the activity *par excellence* where the young need no prodding to gain pleasure from an increase in skill" (118-119). Just avoid imposing adult standards on children, he cautions. Indirect competition (against time, distance or amount) rather than direct competition (against opponents) can be an alternative challenge. Bruner gives an example of track and field where kids compete against themselves and try to beat their previous

excitement and enormous effort on the part of the students" (Ibid., 119).

Wilson also contends that competition is a means in life not an end. He suggests that we not take competition too seriously, but rather enjoy it. For "the triumphs of winning and the disasters of losing are important, but not of ultimate value" (31). He advises us that the best way to understand and benefit from competition is for us to enjoy triumphs and lament disasters, but not with the 'whole' of ourselves: however important it may be to win, we must remember that winning is not what life is about.

Wilson's reference to the 'whole' self is a reminder that, at a more complex level, other advocates of the counter cultural ethic push their advocacy to an almost mystical level. Some draw upon the existentialist notions of 'authenticity', 'self', 'being' and 'becoming'. Authentic participation in sport is denied by Lombardian utilitarianism. By contrast, sports and games which are based on the counter cultural values "can be an ideal vehicle for the realisation of the self; the athlete can come face to face with ultimate realities, actualize potentialities, and ultimately 'be'. The athlete's 'being' is determined by his quality of authentic involvement in competitive games, and this authenticity is only realized when the success of the game is not directly

related to the concrete goal" (Kew, 108).

Other counter cultural theorists have appealed to phenomenology, insisting on transcending the body-mind distinction and, following Heidegger, emphasising the body as the primary self: "The body is not an instrument of the mind nor a vehicle of directed sensation, it is you: you are the body. Your body is your mode of 'being-in-the-world'" (op.cit., 109). Yet others have had recourse to Eastern philosophy, especially to the contemplative and meditational techniques of Zen Buddhism. One advocate of this approach to competitive sport has called it "a western yoga" (op.cit., 110).

However, beyond this mystical rhetoric the question poses itself: how, in practice, can competitive sports be infused with the values of the counter culture? The response is that the key to authentic involvement in the competitive sporting activity lies in its divorce from any extrinsic end or product. The instrumental values of economic gain or national aggrandizement, which so often fuel the Lombardian approach, have no place in an authentic involvement in sport which is concerned with "man-in-the-situation, with the immediacy of experience, with the here and now, with the process rather than the product" (op.cit., 111).

No doubt, much of this is appealing to liberal and progressive educationists. However, the counter cultural ethic is not without its critics. Lombardian criticism of this position is to be expected, but that is not the only source of criticism. Scott, who appears to have first formulated the tripartite ethical model, believes that the counter culture ethic is both a-historical and sociologically naive, as well as educationally futile. With reference to the latter he writes:

To tell a competitive athlete, who is training three or four hours a day, day in day out, year after year, not to be concerned with victory is liberal snobbery. At best, it is the remark of someone who simply does not understand the agonistic struggle which is an integral part of the competitive sport experience. It is just as wrong to say winning isn't anything as it is to say winning is the only thing (74).

More recently Bailey has underlined this criticism from a logical point of view. He believes that it is neither easy nor logically appropriate to teach that winning is unimportant. Winning is the point of competitive games. Other contingent consequences, such as fun or excellence, are not the point of competitive games because (i) these can be achieved through physical activities not involving competition; and (ii) they are only the point in competitive games if they can be shown to relate to the pursuit of victory

(43). Teaching competitive games, then, is only teaching students to win; and because winning is culturally significant, "to delegate winning to any kind of an inferior position is doomed to failure from the start" (Ibid., 43-44).

From an historical and sociological point of view, Scott goes on to compare the reaction (against Lombardianism) of the counter culturists to that of the ugly witch who smashed the mirror which reflected her own ugliness. To attempt to remove the motivation towards winning from competitive sport involves a similar failure to see that it is Lombardian values (not the pursuit of victory itself which is the *raison d'etre* of competition) that are the primary source of the corruption of sport. According to Scott, sport is merely a mirror which reflects the underlying values of a society: "If the dominant values of a society are alienating and destructive, then any institutionalized activity within that society will reflect those values regardless of how well intended and intrinsically valuable the essential form of that activity may be" (74-75). Writing in an American context, Scott concludes that "all the strengths as well as all the abuses and excesses of American society are reflected in American sport" (Ibid., 74). Hence, the mistake of the counter cultural, anti-Lombardians was to see "the dehumanising nature of sport in American society and conclude that something was wrong with sport itself. The mistake was

not to distinguish between the essence of sport and its institutional manifestation" (op.cit., 75).

The Traditional Competitive Ethic

Scott's remedy for resolving the extreme dichotomy between Lombardian and counter cultural values in sport is to advocate a Hegelian synthesis of the two in order to produce what he calls the radical ethic, but which we prefer to call the traditional ethic. From the Lombardian ethic he takes the position that the pursuit of excellence is an important dimension of competitive participation in sport: "the radical ethic holds there is nothing wrong or dehumanising about a person wanting to take pride in the accomplishment of his work, whether it be in athletics or any other human endeavour" (Ibid.). From the counter cultural ethic he accepts the notion that process is of primary importance, such that the way in which excellence is achieved is as important as the outcome. Thus, "the radical ethic posits no quarrel with the Lombardian quest for excellence. It only specifies that the means by which excellence is achieved is as important as excellence itself" (Ibid.).

More specifically, Scott lists four characteristics of the radical ethic. First (to employ the current

terminology) the radical ethic is sexually inclusive. Whereas Lombardianism views sports as "a masculinity rite from which women are excluded", (op. cit., 73) the radical position encourages co-educational sport with women being provided "with the same economic and institutional support that men receive" (op.cit., 76). We shall discuss this claim later in our conclusion. Secondly, the radical ethic also accommodates the Lombardian notion that peak physical and psychological fitness is essential to full enjoyment of the athletic experience. Thirdly, it looks to concerned cooperation between teammates rather than to authoritarian intimidation or ritual conformity (wearing blue blazers and crew cuts) as the basis of team spirit and discipline. Finally, it is in how one views one's opponents which, Scott believes, is the most fundamental aspect of the radical ethic: "In a very real sense, the opponent is a brother who is presenting you with a challenge. You cannot experience the agonistic struggle of sport without the cooperation of your brother -- your opponent" (Ibid.). An aspect of this cooperation is also the eagerness to share one's knowledge with other athletes. We have noted above the attempt to reconcile competition with co-operation by showing that 'com-petitio' implies a striving together by adversaries which can result in friendship. Obviously this is in stark contrast to Vince Lombardy's insistence that the only way to relate to an opponent is with hostility: "you have to have that fire in you to play this

game, and there is nothing that stokes the fire like hate" (op.cit., 72).

Kew picks up and develops Scott's formulation of the radical ethic, but he gives no indication why this should be called 'radical' and, indeed, in suggesting that Scott's radical values are essentially those developed in 19th century English public schools, he leads us to prefer the word 'traditional' to characterise the third of these ethical positions with reference to competitive sports. Scott himself concedes that, from several viewpoints, "the radical ethic seems neither truly radical nor significantly revolutionary" (op.cit., 77). Indeed, he allows that his radical ethic is no more than what his mother would call "good, old-fashioned common sense"; and, having much in common with the Christian ethic, it is almost two thousand years old. But, Scott claims, Christ was also a revolutionary -- when he lived and certainly by comparison with the values of twentieth century America. Indeed, his basic reason for calling this age-old ethic 'revolutionary' is that in an America so thoroughly imbued with the Lombardian ethic, notions of cooperation, affection, and friendship between opposing athletes is revolutionary: "Anyone who would take practical steps to implement the radical ethic in today's American athletic world would quickly discover how many people perceive such ideas as both wildly radical and dangerously revolutionary"

(op.cit.77). Scott suggests few of the 'practical steps' he refers to for implementing the radical ethic. Thus, one reason for preferring to call it 'traditional', thus evoking its historical roots, is that we then have a model for the kinds of values and practices which are required by Scott's formulation. (See, for example, Malim's discussion on 'Athletics' in Britain near the turn of the century)

The traditional ethic (as elaborated by Kew) represents the idea of games playing as developed in the English 'public schools' of the mid nineteenth century, when competitive games were seen as a major form of social and moral reinforcement: "Qualities such as self-discipline, team spirit, courage, endurance, a sense of 'fair play' were to be fostered by playing those games which culminated in the idea of 'muscular Christianity'" (Kew, 104). Perhaps the best known statement of this traditional ethic is that of Baron de Coubertin, considered the founder of the Olympic Games in modern times, who was deeply influenced by the pedagogical doctrines of Thomas Arnold, Headmaster of Rugby School. For de Coubertin, sport was not only regarded as an aspect of physical culture, based upon the spirit of chivalry, but also as a form of aesthetic education (Arnold, 238). In fact, he saw a "definite connection between the legendary feats of the Olympic victors of ancient Greece and the sporting prowess of the modern Anglo-Saxons" (Henry, 27). He was convinced that

if modern world athletes could join together inspired by the high ideals of the ancient Greeks, "a great good would come of it" (op.cit., 28). In more precise terms, de Coubertin stated that:

Above all things it is important to preserve the noble and chivalrous qualities in athletics that have characterized it in the past, in order that it may continue effectively to play the part in modern education that the ancient Greeks attributed to it (op.cit., 31).

De Coubertin's statement of basic principles for the Olympic Games grasps the essence of the traditional ethic:

The important thing in the Olympic games is not to win, but to take part, the important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle, the essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well. To spread these precepts is to build up a stronger and more valiant and above all more scrupulous and more generous humanity (op.cit., Illustration 1).

Within the traditional ethic, then, the emphasis is not primarily on winning, since the worth or value attached to winning depends upon the manner in which the victory is achieved: "The winning of the game, therefore, is subservient to the playing of the game. To have a good game and to play well is the foremost aim" (Kew, 104). Furthermore, all players must have a respect for the rules in order to play a good game. Co-operation with others is also essential in order to function effectively within the competitive

framework. Hence, qualities such as consideration for others, teamwork and abiding by the rules are essential both for playing well and competing efficiently. It is the alleged exercise and development of these personal and social virtues within competitive games which leads to claims that games are an important instrument of social and moral education (Ibid.). Kew underlines the fact that it is possible to play well and have a good game, without winning, just as it is possible to have a bad game and win. However, paradoxically, although winning is subservient to the manner in which the game is played, it is also a prerequisite for the game to be played well that there should be a desire to win: the traditional ethic "recognises that playing well and winning are complementary and mutually conditioning aims" (Ibid.). This echoes Scott's Hegelian notion that "there is a vital interplay between competition and cooperation in healthy sport activity" (75). (This is a point that is developed in more detail by Kolnai).

This traditional (or radical) Hegelian attempt to get the best of both of the other two ethical positions is not without its critics.

First, there is the sociological criticism. Although it is true that it is Kew (from an English context), not the American Scott, who links what they call the radical ethic to

the theory and practice of the historical English Public School, one wonders how less unreal and naive this third ethic is, than similar advocacy of the counter culture ethic is claimed to be by Scott. Kew echoes Scott's conclusion that attitudes to particular institutions (including sport) only reflect the values of society itself. He notes that so far as his (and Scott's) so-called radical ethic does manifest the ethos of the English Public School, this is "now denigrated, the more recent thought being that such concomitant values as games-playing are little more than a reflection of evolving societal values" (Kew, 104). There is a fatalistic determinism reflected in his conclusion (following Scott's) that "the dominant values of society are both reflected and reinforced by various institutional activities, including the competitive games and sport of that society" (Ibid.). However, the pessimistic inevitability of that conclusion can, perhaps, be tempered by reference to the current (1994) World Cup Soccer Finals. FIFA, soccer's ruling body, set out deliberately to remove from the World Cup those cynical attitudes and practices which are a reflection of the worst aspects of Lombardianism as they show themselves in soccer: cheating, disrespect for officials, hatred of opponents, chauvinistic nationalist partisanship, etc. There is widespread agreement that not only has the game been played according to high standards of sportsmanship, with many of the abuses being eradicated and virtually no display of

hooliganism amongst supporters, but also that a standard of excellence has been achieved in performance that is probably unprecedented in the history of this competition. If FIFA can act effectively in this way, against the prevailing Lombardian ethos, then it is perhaps not too much to expect that the administrators of school athletics and 'Little Leagues' can work to promote similar changes in attitudes.

Something of the pessimism in the notion that the way in which sports and games are played is merely a reflection of the prevailing societal values is also tempered by Kew's reference to Maslow. Kew notes that physical educationists themselves have taken to emphasising the intrinsic values of games, as well as sometimes abandoning competitive school games altogether in favour of non-competitive activities like climbing, canoeing, running, etc. He quotes Maslow to suggest that this re-orientation may be the outcome of social change. Maslow claimed that "the developed nations of the West have now become 'post-industrial' societies with both the capability and opportunity to focus on the changing needs of the individual in terms of ego and self-fulfilment, rather than, as was the case in the past, on what is considered 'useful' for society" (op.cit., 105).

A second criticism of the traditional ethic refers to

its implicit utilitarianism in the claims which have been made for it as instrumental to moral education. As we saw, the counter cultural ethic is anti-instrumental and insists upon separating competitive sport from any extrinsic end or objective. But according to the traditional view, games are part of "the rest of life". This means that the goal of playing well and of living well is the same: both call on moral and social qualities. But, counter cultural critics argue, the tendency to emphasize the continuity between games and the rest of life puts the accent on extrinsic values -- those which are allegedly acquired as a result of having played the game. But, it is argued, the recognition of the 'separateness' of games from the rest of life is a necessary condition for authentic involvement in them. In games, when authentically engaged in, we are presented with another domain having its own process and laws. Kew refers to Coutts, who suggests that the one basic reason why people engage in sports is the sense of freedom they find there. Sport, in general, is freely chosen and freely engaged in; the rules are freely accepted, one is free from the differing constraints of the everyday world and, most important, one is free to be oneself -- to actualize ones's potential (op.cit., 108).

A third and related criticism of the traditional ethic comes from those who reject its claim that competitive games can be an instrument of moral education. An

uncompromising critic of competition like Kohn takes the contrary view that participation in competitive sports lowers moral behaviour. He cites empirical evidence that participants become more committed to winning at any cost and less committed to the values of fairness and justice: "A structural imperative to beat others invites the use of any means available" (59-60). Bailey also points out that according to Callois's classification of games, the point of agon (competitive games) is winning; the rules are for functional purposes connected with the desire to win and to have victory beyond dispute; the rules of games are not moral rules; other qualities such as team loyalty and team discipline are also functionally related to winning and not in themselves moral qualities. Bailey's argument is that we should not make competitive games a compulsory part of children's general education. He claims competitive games are not educative and do not generate a moral and character-building spin-off; and that this is evident from the lack of morals in professional sports today (40-41).

Bailey further claims that even if competitive games are taught with a de-emphasis on winning and an emphasis on moral development, it does not follow that games are good agencies of moral education. He argues that games do not initiate people into morality; if in the playing of games they display generally accepted moral virtues, it is because these

are a part of their general conduct of life:

The rules of morality get their special overriding nature largely by virtue of their universal application. Similarly the moral respect due to persons is not limited to a team, side, or even nation, but is properly extended to all human beings. As against this the rules and cooperative endeavours of competitive games are limited and circumscribed within the self-containing boundaries of the game. If there is anything moral or immoral about the action of a games player it must be because in some way the action is related to moral life outside the game, and to the rules, principles of a moral kind that bear on life in general. Because of this I want to argue here that games cannot initiate people into morality, but that games can only be played morally (as they should be) if morality is brought by the players to the game from having been learned in a wider context of a non-games kind (op.cit., 46).

Thus, for Bailey, games do not teach moral rules but functional rules of the game. Keeping to the functional rules of the game does not guarantee that one is playing morally, if the rules are unsuited to one's moral beliefs. There are two important points he wants educators to consider. Firstly, playing competitive games will not provide moral learning. Instead, moral understanding already learned will provide the proper moral context for the playing of competitive games. Secondly, games of a competitive kind should not be compulsory. If one is compelled against their will to join in a competitive game, they have not promised to play to win, nor made an obligation to morally follow the rules, because

promises and obligations are logically connected with voluntariness (op.cit., 47).

Bailey's assertion that moral education is not a function of the playing of games has been contested at two levels. First, it has been suggested that the normative context of competitive games is provided not only by the functional rules of particular sports, but also by central moral concepts like fairness, justice, equality, honesty, respect for persons, etc. (See, e.g., Meakin; Dunlop) However, secondly, some of those who accept Bailey's point that morality is contingent to games playing, have made the point that moral development may be assisted through drawing participants' attention to the relevance of moral values when playing games. It may be true that behaving morally within a game is only 'applying' moral principles which also apply to other life activities and which may have been learned elsewhere. But these moral principles must be learned somewhere, concretely, in the practice of life activities. Why, some critics seem to be suggesting, should competitive games and sports not provide one practical context for the development of moral character? Wright, for example, argues that Physical Education can contribute to a child's moral development if we are prepared to justify it on non-intrinsic grounds, because games and sports are not necessarily moral enterprises, any moral lessons which are learned from engaging

in them being contingent, not a necessary consequence of playing (100-101). Similarly, Dunlop agrees that those moral values (justice and fairness, etc.) to which we can appeal in games are also important for life in general, and may have been learned elsewhere. But games and sports can be taught and practised so as to extend or deepen moral values which have already been learned (157). Influential theories of moral education, such as those of Piaget and Kohlberg, stress the developmental nature of moral learning.

Bailey, an advocate of liberal education, is taking the liberal educationist's position that education has to do with the development of fundamental knowledge and understanding: if such knowledge and understanding is appropriate to other life activities beyond the educational experience, it is because of the transformation of the person which leads him or her (in the words of R.S.Peters) to travel through life with a different point of view. But such a transformation of moral understanding is not a 'Damascus road' experience, so much as a slow process of learning within practical contexts. As Entwistle has put it: "We prepare students for life in both its contemporary and longer term perspectives by encouraging a disciplined consideration of moral principles, using whatever personal and social problems currently confront the young as concrete data to exemplify the perennial problems of personal discipline and social

conscience which confront human beings irrespective of time and place" (Entwistle, 1970, 138). There is no reason why the concrete examples should not occur in competitive games.

What Bailey's criticism ignores is the empirical question of how we actually do learn these moral principles which have 'universal application'. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to examine the empirical literature on the development of moral knowledge and understanding. But it is useful to recall that in his seminal work, *The Moral Judgment of the Child*, Piaget did elucidate the stages of moral development by reference to the activities and discussions of small boys playing the competitive game of marbles (Chapter one). What both Piaget's and Kohlberg's developmental theories do suggest is that it is through talking about moral dilemmas including (explicitly for Piaget, implicitly for Kohlberg) those which arise in the playing of games that moral growth occurs. (See, for example, Figley) Meakin, who takes the position that participation in competitive games can be an instrument of moral education, also concludes that "much can be achieved...by engaging pupils in discussion, preferably informal, about the value-issues involved in competitive sport" (65). However, especially in contesting the undesirable consequences of the Lombardian ethic, he also takes it as axiomatic that teachers of physical education should "adopt a strategy of commending cases of morally praiseworthy conduct,

whether these occur in school or at senior levels, and of roundly condemning the more glaring cases of morally undesirable behaviour in sport" (Ibid.). For moral education through competitive sport to have a chance, physical education teachers need to be role models through both talk and action.

In this chapter we have attempted to further our understanding of the nature of competition, especially with reference to three different ethical positions on competition in sports and games. In the conclusion which follows, we shall discuss which, if any, of these is the more appropriate basis for the physical education curriculum; or, indeed, the extent to which each of these ethical positions has something to contribute to different educational purposes and the differing needs and interests of students.

4. CONCLUSIONS

As we stated in our introduction, this thesis was written in order to examine the apparently contradictory views that, on the one hand, in a highly competitive world schools ought to prepare students to be more competitive; and, on the other hand, the claim that it is our obsession with competition that threatens to destroy us. Our own particular interest was in the effect of increasing competitiveness in games and sports which, some claim, threatens to corrupt sport, even at the primary school and 'Little League' levels.

In examining the case for and against competition (implicitly also arguments for and against co-operation) we found cogent arguments on both sides of this controversy, but we conclude that it is not necessary to come down uncompromisingly on one side or other. In Gallie's sense, we believe that competition is an essentially contested concept, one of the reasons for this being that different people have differing value commitments, such that whether one believes that competition is a good thing, or not, will depend to some extent upon one's own life objectives and the values which inform one's daily activities. (See Fraleigh for discussion of value priorities in sports) We also noted that a good deal of the reservations which people have about competition,

especially in sport, have to do with excesses which are not integral to the playing of particular competitive games in themselves. The positive outcomes which are claimed for competition are: (i) competitive games are obviously entertaining and pleasurable to large numbers of people, whether as participants or spectators; (ii) standards of excellence can be achieved without resort to 'gamesmanship', cheating, cynicism and other Lombardian excesses.

We also noted a weak sense of competition which applies to the playing of competitive games for purely recreational purposes. To be sure, any informal group of people in the park at night who divide themselves into two sides in order to play baseball or soccer or football will play to win, for it is a corruption of any of these games to play in order to lose. But it is the exercising of appropriate skills and the sociability which counts, not the result. No doubt, recreational sport of this kind is played at differing levels of intensity; in terms of the counter-cultural ethic, participants may seek only its simpler emphasis on fun and recreation, but they may also be in search of its more complex values to do with self knowledge or spiritual enrichment. However, it seems clear that a great many people obtain a great deal of harmless pleasure from playing competitive games, without any negative effects upon themselves or other people. Hence, to the extent that schools

ought to enrich people's recreational experiences, there is no reason why such sports should not be part of the curriculum.

Nevertheless, there are those whose talents and commitment are such, that they may wish to engage in sports in a highly competitive manner, perhaps hoping to become professional athletes or to take part as amateurs at the highest levels of the various games. For these, at least some of the elements of Lombardianism -- its insistence upon excellence, for example -- should perhaps characterise the schools' athletics program. The point is that people play competitive games for all kinds of reasons and at all levels of competence: they have differing interests, needs and talents, and in the curriculum, in physical education as in any other curricular area, provision should be made for these differences.

This raises the question of how far competitive games should be a compulsory component of the curriculum. Sometimes an element of compulsion is advocated on the grounds that without it a person cannot know what a subject or activity involves and, therefore, a student cannot make an informed choice about whether he or she might have interests or talents in that area. However, White has suggested that games are one example of those life activities about which one can learn what they entail merely by watching, without having actual

practical experience of them. (See Chapter three) As a physical educator, one concludes that physical education should be compulsory as a necessary element of the full and rounded development of the person. But, having said that, one believes that schools should provide as wide as possible a range of options, to permit students to choose a physical activity which most nearly reflects their talents, interests and strengths. Otherwise, compulsion with reference to games is likely to frustrate both those with exceptional potential and those who merely wish to develop a modest level of competence necessary to enjoy games at a recreational level. In fact, in the Canadian province of Quebec, the compulsory instructional program serves to initiate everyone into the elements of the different activities, whilst the extra-curricular, intra-mural and inter-scholastic programs cater for those with greater skills and expectations. Perhaps this is as it should be, unless there are sufficient numbers and facilities in the school to cater for the different levels by streaming at the instructional level. At best, as Kohn suggests, if we are obliged to participate in competition, we can direct our attention away from the results of an activity by not keeping score; giving no prizes for winning; and instead, emphasizing fellowship (184).

This notion of different programmes for different levels of competence and talent raises questions with

reference to mixed or co-educational programs in schools. Some advocates of the counter cultural ethic have concluded that to de-emphasize winning in competitive games is to open them up to mixed teams. However, such a mixture of the sexes is open to the same objections as mixing participants of the same sex having differing levels of competence and talent: far from furthering equality of opportunity, it restricts it. Experience suggests that most women are unable to compete in sports at the same level as men. Scott, who advocated his radical (what we called 'traditional') ethic as giving more opportunity to women, nevertheless quoted Simone de Beauvoir to the effect that "the difference between the female athlete and the male athlete is similar to the difference between the heavyweight boxer and the lightweight boxer. The athletic experience is no less rich for the lightweight boxer than for the heavyweight, even though the heavyweight probably could beat the lightweight" (76). Some feminists have begun to query the conventional wisdom that co-education is preferable to single sex schooling. One of these, Jane Roland Martin, uses the example of learning to play tennis in order to make the point that women and girls have different learning strategies which argues for their being taught separately (19-20). We conclude that it may be possible to play competitive games in mixed groups in the instructional program. However, even the modified Lombardian ethic would seem inapplicable to mixed games, the counter cultural ethic being more

appropriate. But, unless there are administrative or other practical reasons preventing this, whether boys or girls engage in mixed athletics should be a matter of personal choice.

Finally, our examination of the literature revealed a difference of opinion about the claims of advocates of the traditional ethic that competitive games can be a rich source of moral education. Again, there was cogent argument on both sides. Bailey's point is taken that whether one displays certain moral qualities in the playing of games will depend on whether one displays these same qualities in the larger business of life. But we also believe that one learns moral values by encountering them and, especially, talking about them in many different practical contexts. One of these contexts is surely the learning of competitive games where values such as fairness, justice, truth and respect for persons arise as often as they do in other life activities. For some students, those good at and committed to the playing of games, these values may even be brought home to them especially vividly in the context of an activity they particularly enjoy.

Thus, we conclude that whether students participate in games for modified, enlightened Lombardian reasons -- e.g., the uncompromising pursuit of excellence -- or for the more

relaxed counter cultural values, these should be taught with reference to the traditional values of sportsmanship. There are signs (as we noted with reference to the successful initiatives of FIFA in the 1994 World Cup) that the top administrative authorities in the various major sports are concerned to eradicate the worst manifestations of Lombardianism. These initiatives should surely be an example in the hands of physical educators, as well as an encouragement to counter in schools those societal trends which are corrupting and thought by some to be inevitable.

EPILOGUE

There's a breathless hush in the Close tonight --
Ten to make and the match to win --
A bumping pitch and a blinding light,
An hour to play and the last man in.
And it's not for the sake of a ribboned coat,
Or the selfish hope of a season's fame,
But his Captain's hand on his shoulder smote --
'Play up! play up! and play the game!'

The sand of the desert is sodden red, --
Red with the wreck of a square that broke; --
The Gatling's jammed and the Colonel dead,
And the regiment blind with dust and smoke.
The river of death has brimmed his banks,
And England's far, and Honour a name,
But the voice of a schoolboy rallies the ranks:
'Play up! play up! and play the game!'

This is the word that year by year,
While in her place the School is set,
Every one of her sons must hear,
And none that hears it dare forget.
This they all with a joyful mind
Bear through life like a torch in flame,
And falling fling to the host behind --
'Play up! play up! and play the game!'

SIR HENRY NEWBOLT: *Vitai Lampada*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abrami, Philip C., [et al.], Using Cooperative Learning, Centre for the Study of Classroom Processes, Education Department, Concordia University, Montreal: 1993.
- Alcock, J.E., Carment, D.W., & Sadava, S.W. A Textbook of Social Psychology, Prentice-Hall Canada Inc., Scarborough, Ont. : 1991.
- Arnold, Peter J. 'Sport as a Valued Human Practice: a basis for the consideration of some moral issues in sport.' Journal of Philosophy of Education, Vol. 26, No. 2, 1992.
- Bailey, D. 'Games, Winning and Education.' Cambridge Journal of Education, Vol. 5, No. 1, 1975.
- Bruner, Jerome. Toward a Theory of Instruction, Belknap, Cambridge, Mass. : 1966.
- Dearden, R.F. 'Competition in Education.' Proceedings of the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain, Vol. 6, no. 1, 1972.
- Dunlop, Francis. 'Bailey on Games, Winning and Education.' Cambridge Journal of Education, 5, 3, 1975.
- Eggerman, Richard W. 'Competition as a Mixed Good.' The Humanist, July\August: 1982.
- Entwistle, Harold. Child-centered Education, Methuen & Co., London: 1970.
- _____ Philosophers on Education, Mimeographed, Concordia University, Montreal: 1992.

- Fielding, Michael. 'Against Competition.' Proceedings of the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain, Vol. 10, 1976.
- Figley, Grace E. 'Moral Education Through Physical Education.' Quest, 36: 1984.
- Flew, Anthony. 'Competition and Cooperation, Equality and Elites.' Journal of Philosophy of Education, Vol. 17, no. 2, 1983.
- Fraleigh, Warren. 'The Sports Contest and Value Priorities.' Journal of Philosophy of Sport, XIII, 1986.
- Gallie, W. B. Philosophy and the Historical Understanding, Schocken Books, New York: 1964.
- Henry, Bill. An Approved History of the Olympic Games, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York: 1948.
- Hyland, Drew. 'Competition and Friendship.' in W. J. Morgan and K.V. Meier (eds.) Philosophic Inquiry in Sport, Kinetics Publishers, Inc. Champaign, Ill. : 1988.
- Kew, F.C. 'Values in Competitive Games.' Quest, 29, Winter: 1978.
- Kohlberg, L. 'The Cognitive-developmental Approach to Moral Development.' Phi Delta Kappan, 56, 1975.
- Kohn, Alfie. No Contest: The case against competition, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston: 1986.
- Kolnai, Aurel. 'Games and Aims.' Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, London: 1965-66.

- Macdonald, Kathy. 'Healthy body, healthy image.' The Gazette, D7, (Montreal): Sept. 12, 1993.
- Malim, F.B. 'Athletics.' in Cambridge Essays on Education, A.C. Benson (ed.), Books for Libraries Press, Inc., Freeport, New York: 1917.
- Martin, Jane Roland. Reclaiming a Conversation, Yale University Press, New Haven: 1985.
- Meakin, Derek C. 'The Moral status of Competition: an issue of concern for physical educators.' Journal of Philosophy of Education, Vol. 20, No.1, 1986.
- Ministere de L'Education, (Gouvernement du Quebec) Secondary School Curriculum--Physical Education: 1984.
- _____ The Schools of Quebec--Policy Statement and Plan of Action: 1979.
- Montagu, Ashley. On Being Human, Hawthorn Books Inc., New York: 1966.
- Orlick, Terry. Winning Through Cooperation, Acropolis Books Ltd., Washington, D.C.: 1978.
- Peters, R.S. Ethics and Education, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London: 1966.
- Piaget, Jean. The Moral Judgment of the Child, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London: 1932.
- Prvulovich, Zika Rad. 'In Defense of Competition.' Journal of Philosophy of Education, Vol. 16, No. 1, 1982.
- Ross, W.D. (ed.) 'Magna Moralia.' 2-11 1211a 14-15, in The Works of Aristotle Translated into English, Vol. IX, Oxford University Press, London: 1958.

- Russell, Bertrand. Education and the Social Order, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London: 1932.
- Scott, Jack. 'Sport and the Radical Ethic.' Quest, 19, Winter, 1973.
- White, John. Towards a Compulsory Curriculum, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London: 1973.
- Wilson, John. 'Competition.' Journal of Moral Education, Vol. 18, No. 1, 1989.
- Wright, Leslie. 'Physical Education and Moral Development.' Journal of Philosophy of Education, Vol. 21, No. 1, 1987.