

This is an Open Access document downloaded from ORCA, Cardiff University's institutional repository: <https://orca.cardiff.ac.uk/id/eprint/101059/>

This is the author's version of a work that was submitted to / accepted for publication.

Citation for final published version:

Edgar, Andrew Robert 2017. The philosophy of sport in interesting times. *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy* 11 (2) , pp. 153-154. 10.1080/17511321.2017.1309734

Publishers page: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17511321.2017.1309734>

Please note:

Changes made as a result of publishing processes such as copy-editing, formatting and page numbers may not be reflected in this version. For the definitive version of this publication, please refer to the published source. You are advised to consult the publisher's version if you wish to cite this paper.

This version is being made available in accordance with publisher policies. See <http://orca.cf.ac.uk/policies.html> for usage policies. Copyright and moral rights for publications made available in ORCA are retained by the copyright holders.



Editorial

As the incoming editor of *Sports, Ethics & Philosophy*, I feel a certain expectation to announce a grand and possibly revolutionary plan for the journal. Revolutions are unpredictable things, and the journal has thrived under Mike McNamee's careful guidance. I therefore feel, even more strongly, that my task, in the short term at least, is not to do any damage. 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it' is an adage all too easily neglected.

The field of the philosophy of sport is growing, not least in confidence. Philosophers of sport are widening their philosophical vocabularies, embracing diverse and exotic strands of Continental and non-Western thinking alongside the rigour of Analytic philosophy. The philosophy of sport is also rising to new challenges. If I have any overarching goal as the new editor, then it is to foster this growing breath, rigour and courage of the field.

There can be no complacency. The world that *Sports, Ethics & Philosophy* occupies is changing, sometimes rapidly and sometimes unpredictably and alarmingly. We live, as I am hardly the first to note, in interesting times. Changes in culture, in technology and in politics will be felt within sport, and may challenge its very nature, almost certainly adding to the multiple forms that sport already takes, but also changing not merely the way it is played, but also the way it is watched and financed. For example, the shifts in the political culture of Europe and the United States, as well as globally, will present sport with profound moral challenges. The question of sport's relationship to the 'right sort of populism' (to borrow Dutch politician Mark Rutte's handy phrase) is suddenly pressing. The philosophy of sport has offered rigorous analyses of sport's relationship to justice and fairness, but as liberalism comes under question, not merely must our accepted approaches to the political philosophy of sport be defended and expanded, but new approaches, perhaps borrowed from Continental Philosophy, must be explored. The philosophy of sport may need to engage more urgently with related disciplines, such as political science, sociology and economics.

If the political, and indeed economic and cultural, contexts of sport are in flux, so too is the relationship between sport and technology. This is not news. The use and misuse of technology, most markedly in the form of pharmaceutical enhancements, has concerned the philosophy of sport perhaps since its inception. Worries, more broadly, about post-human technologies have also occupied us, and will continue to do so. The digital revolution is in the process of creating new e-sports, and we have already begun to address this new phenomenon. We can look forward to a special issue of *Sports, Ethics & Philosophy* dedicated to the philosophical and ethical implications of the application of neuroscience. The athlete, not least at the subject of sports science, is an increasingly complex and even alien being, in danger of becoming estranged from spectators and fans.

In the next decade the very meaning of sport might be challenged by all these social and cultural factors. Yet one hopes that sport will still have its roots in play, and the philosophy of sport should never forget its kinship with the philosophy of play. Paradoxically, as the times may seem to grow more ominous and disturbing, they are also times that, globally, liberate more of us, both adults and children, to play. The right to play, enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, remains as important as ever.

As an academic journal, *Sports, Ethics & Philosophy* faces a future that is also changing, not least with respect to digital technology. Innovative ways must be found to integrate the journal with social media. This is indeed a challenge for all academics, and especially for those, like me, of a

certain age, who have not grown up with social media. But this new digital landscape offers exciting new possibilities. It was never enough for academia only to talk to academia, especially in a discipline that confronts the non-academic world as openly as does ours. I of course believe that philosophers of sport have much to say that can make a difference to sport, and we must speak directly and clearly to sport's various organising and governing bodies, to participants and indeed to fans and spectators. The new digital age offers exciting platforms through which to disseminate our ideas and hopefully to offer a benign influence on the sporting world.

Philosophy rarely solves problems. That is not, I think, its primary purpose. It clarifies the nature of the problem, and provides conceptual tools to think it through, and those tools are potentially of great benefit to those for whom the problem has practical urgency. The rigorous analyses that *Sports, Ethics & Philosophy* has published over its first ten years, alongside the application of these analyses to the practical problems of sport, has been of enormous importance. Philosophers of sport have wielded their conceptual tools impressively. While the philosophy of sport will have new challenges ahead, precisely because sport itself will face new challenges, I have no doubt that the contributors and readers of *Sports, Ethics & Philosophy* will respond confidently and insightfully to those challenges, as they always have. It is a great privilege to be permitted to take up the reins for *Sports, Ethics & Philosophy* from Mike McNamee, albeit a slightly daunting privilege. So, onward with volume 11.