

Sport as Spectacle: Early Athletes as Popular Cultural Icons

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INTRODUCTION

On May 27, 1823, some 60,000 spectators gathered to watch a showdown between two thoroughbreds—one from the North and the other from the South—with an astronomical \$20,000 purse in the offing. The great event between nine-year-old American Eclipse and four-year-old Sir Henry not only enticed race fans from all over the young nation, but served as a model for future sport spectacles.

Few fans could have imagined that they were partaking in an event that “was the combination of energies that would later serve as the foundation of the modern sports experience: the power of regional pride, the thrill of shared passions, the ability to see a contest as an allegory. And the intense desire to win.”¹ Even those not present to watch the three heats—including Sir Henry’s owner, Colonel William R. Johnson, who had become ill the night before from eating bad lobster—would have been hard pressed to tell from the newspaper coverage that anything monumental had transpired. The *New York Evening Post* printed the results in that day’s edition and a “truncated description”² in a second edition of that day’s paper.

However, as John Eisenberg argues in *The Great Match Race*, what transpired when American Eclipse won the second and third four-mile heats on America’s first railed, dirt track over Sir Henry was more than the winning of a large sum of money for his owner, Cornelius W. Van Ranst, more than the North claiming victory over the South, and even more than the greatest horse race ever run in the still fledgling country. What ensued was a sport spectacle the likes of which would not be seen again for years to come, an archetype of sport as the conveyor of a nation’s hopes and aspirations, social values, and status relationships. Replete with compelling story lines related to the jockeys, the owners, and the horses

themselves, the match race between American Eclipse and Sir Henry satisfied the requisites of good drama—to move the events from the random and meaningless to actions that connected people with ideas, emotions, and meanings that they could recognize and respond to.³ It would be years before a communications network could disseminate and frame sporting events for popular consumption in a timely fashion.

The American Eclipse–Sir Henry match race anticipated later spectacles. However, for much of the nineteenth century, sport was anything but spectacle. The concept of sport as spectacle must include a number of aspects: institutionalized public performances of physical exertion and skill, rules or guidelines, management and supervision, competition, incentives, being ritualized and non-mundane, taking place before an assembled audience, and having the suspense of undetermined outcomes.⁴ Sport spectacles are manifestations of a social relation between people and events, in that sports and athletes embody a nation's identities and aspirations. As cultural performances, sport spectacles are distinct systems of meaning through which cultural norms are formulated, communicated, and reformulated.⁵ The great match race of 1823 was an anomaly because it lacked the requisite technology to communicate its importance and reformulate its meaning on a national and international scale. In this chapter I argue that the modern sport spectacle crystallized from a convergence of factors, including the industrialized processing of goods and services, the evolution of a consumer society, and the development of an information network of mass media, specifically the development of film (e.g., sport film actualities and newsreel highlights), all of which promoted sport as a modern entertainment business and a prominent social practice.

FROM SPECTACULAR SPORT TO SPORTING SPECTACLES

The relationship between sport and its dissemination and reformulation through mass media emerged as a continuation and transformation of magic lantern traditions that had originated in the seventeenth century and gradually took shape along with the invention, development, and deployment of nineteenth-century communication technologies such as the telegraph, telephone, and motion picture camera. Models for early moving pictures can be traced back to wall paintings and illustrated books, both of which employed a series of images to tell a story. The dissemination of sports via electronic media was arguably also an extension of a visual entertainment tradition (e.g., circus, burlesque, variety theater, etc.) that “emphasized display and spectacle rather than story-telling.”⁶ The conjunction of these

developments would ultimately produce the first mediated sport spectacle, the Corbett-Fitzsimmons heavyweight championship fight in 1897.

Attempts to capture and project motion were conducted in the laboratories of Muybridge, Edison, and Marey in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. In February 1888, Eadweard Muybridge met Thomas A. Edison in the latter's West Orange, New Jersey, laboratory to discuss combining Edison's phonograph with his zoopraxiscope to project a series of painted images onto a screen, a process that Edison ultimately deemed impractical and inconvenient. However, when Edison met Étienne-Jules Marey at the 1889 Paris Exposition he formulated the ideas for a machine that "passed a tape-like band of film past a camera lens, halting and then exposing a single frame of film for a brief fraction of a second, after which the strip was again moved forward, until the next frame of film was halted in front of the lens and likewise halted."⁷ After several experiments with cylinders, Edison and his camera specialist, William Kennedy Laurie Dickson, enlisted William Heise for the project, largely because Heise had expertise in moving tape-like strips of paper through a machine. In the spring of 1891 their experimentation produced a horizontal-feed kinetograph camera and kinoscope viewer, which used three-quarter-inch-wide film. Of the seven films known to have been made with this camera, the last captured two men boxing.

The progression from the kinoscope peep show to motion picture camera projection owed as much to conditions related to audience comfort as to technological innovation. Woodville Latham testified that almost as soon as the Edison Kinetoscope Company began showing fight films in the enlarged kinoscopes at their parlor on Nassau Street in Manhattan, his sons Otway and Gray Latham heard viewers express a desire to see the films projected on a screen.⁸ Such a projection enabled several possibilities. For one, the audience saw a larger, if not life-sized, representation of the subject matter, more clearly and more conveniently. Second, rather than experiencing the film individually, viewers seeing a film projected upon a screen shared the experience with others. Third, projection offered the possibility of exhibiting an entire sporting event instead of a staged exhibition, necessitated by the kinoscope's limited capacity. Projection also benefited the exhibitor in that parlors needed only one projector, reducing the wear and tear on both film and projector. Showing a film to many viewers at one time reduced costs and increased revenues, expanding the exhibitor's range for distribution because more parlors across a wider territory could be opened with far fewer projectors. Moreover, film ultimately succeeded in displacing the theater as a popular medium of

naturalistic theatrical fare, exploiting the theater's established economic base while adding to the public's desire for sporting images, which lithography and photography had engendered. Not surprisingly, then, by 1897 almost 15 percent of all commercial films had a sporting title.⁹

THE CORBETT-FITZSIMMONS FIGHT FILM

When Bob Fitzsimmons knocked out Jim Corbett in Carson City, Nevada on March 17, 1897, winning the heavyweight championship of the world, three hand-cranked cameras loaded with thousands of feet of film were situated at ringside in a specially designed wooden house to capture the entire spectacle. The fight was financed and promoted by Dan Stuart, a Dallas entrepreneur and sporting man, and filming of the event was produced by the Enoch Rector-Samuel Tilden Jr. partnership, which had successfully staged a boxing exhibition called "Corbett and Courtney before the Kinetograph" for the Kinetoscope Exhibition Company, but was now operating under the aegis of the newly formed Veriscope Company. By the time an agreement for the fight, including film rights, was signed, the commercial potential for fight films had increased dramatically as a result of the development in projection by the Eidoloscope, Phantoscope, and Vitascope cameras. Boxing became the first sport to realize considerable profits from motion-picture reproductions, complementing the profits reaped from the purse, paid admissions, betting, and theatrical exploitation of prizefighters' celebrity status.

While the 11,000 feet of film stock with a wide-screen format shot by Rector's specially built cameras on March 17, 1897, was being developed for exhibition, a variety of religious and reform groups lobbied Congress to enact legislation that would ban not only prizefighting but also images and reports of fights. Fearing that such a broadly written bill would result in censorship of newspapers and magazines, Congress took no action on the proposed legislation. Even though a number of state legislatures also considered banning fight films, few enacted laws prohibiting their exhibition. Several factors contributed to the defeat of such legislation, including boxing's popularity, the absence of any clear conception of what constituted cinema, and the Veriscope Company's effective publicity and promotional campaign.¹⁰

Exhibition of the film *Corbett-Fitzsimmons Fight* was noteworthy on several counts. Before the film was made available to the public, Stuart screened the film for the New York press, generating considerable publicity about the film's content rather than the technology. Each of the fighters

made claims about what the camera showed. In this regard, the company's name, Veriscope, literally meaning truth-viewer, proved useful in benefiting from the controversies stemming from the fight's outcome. A *New York World* article noted that the camera proved to be "a triumph of science over the poor, imperfect instrument, the human eye, and proves the veriscope camera is far superior."¹¹ The possibility that the camera could prove whether or not Fitzsimmons had been down for a ten-count in the sixth round and whether or not Corbett had been fouled in the decisive fourteenth round added to the film's attraction. This illustrates one of the main tenets of the spectacle, as delineated by Guy DeBord: "Since the spectacle's job is to use various specialized mediations in order to show us a world that can no longer be directly grasped, it naturally elevates the sense of sight to the special preeminence once occupied by touch."¹²

Corbett-Fitzsimmons Fight debuted on May 22, 1897, at the Academy of Music in New York City. The two-hour film was soon offered as a stand-alone feature in many theaters in major urban centers. As a representation of an actual event, the film was both legally and socially acceptable viewing material for an audience that cut across cultural and economic lines. In Chicago, where the film enjoyed an initial run of nine weeks, admission ranged from 25 cents for a gallery seat to \$1.00 for the orchestra.¹³ The theater seat served as a replacement for the ringside seat, creating an alternate way of consuming this sport. Over time, the film was exhibited in various other places of amusement—fairgrounds, resorts, amusement parks, storefronts, and midways—almost anywhere a screen could be hung and electricity provided. Despite newspaper reports that detailed the flickering and vibrations that proved trying to the eyes, prompting efforts to improve both prints of the film and the projecting machines, the *Corbett-Fitzsimmons Fight* film remained a premiere attraction thanks to effective publicity and distribution, topicality, and mode of exhibition.

One of the noteworthy aspects of the film's exhibition was its use of an expert who stood onstage and provided running commentary. These experts varied from location to location, and undoubtedly their commentary also varied in content and quality. Nonetheless, their descriptions of the fight's key moments, especially its controversies, fueled the audience's experience and drew considerable reactions, as evidenced in various newspaper reports. First, the narrator connected the fight film exhibition to the tradition of the illustrated lecture and thereby helped to assuage the concerns of those for whom boxing was anathema by suggesting the more refined mode of presentation used in illustrated lectures on the lyceum circuit.¹⁴ Also, the spoken commentary rendered musical accompaniment

unnecessary and doubtless inspired spectator yelling, cheering, and generally playing the counterpart of the actual ringside spectators. In the use of an expert to provide commentary, sports announcing was born.

Corbett-Fitzsimmons Fight grossed approximately \$750,000, with profits exceeding \$120,000 after the fighters received their percentages, making it the first motion picture blockbuster. More important, the fight film proved that a mass audience would pay to see a representation of an actual event and that a privileged commentator could be used to guide viewers to the correct interpretation and feeling state, a function performed by today's expert analysts, who communicate insider information through intonation, interpretation, and assertion.

BACKLASH AND BANS

During what became known as the Nickelodeon era (1905–1915), the motion picture industry changed from a loosely structured entertainment syndicate to a big business model based on mass production by a limited number of vertically integrated companies. These studios ultimately changed both their product, concentrating on feature-length fictional films, rather than sport actualities, and viewing spaces, replacing storefront nickelodeons and peep show parlors with ornate theaters that showed only entertainment films. By 1911 the film industry had entered into the second phase of news film development with the release of the first American-produced weekly newsreel by the French-owned Pathé Weekly. Thanks to their regular release, the newsreels became a vehicle for news transmission that audiences, already in the millions, came to expect. As already established by newspapers, news sustains itself through form and habit.¹⁵ Sporting events became a mainstay of the newsreels precisely because they were scheduled throughout the calendar year.

In the first decade and a half of the twentieth century, sports also experienced considerable growth as a source of popular entertainment. This growth was fueled in part by the continued proliferation of sporting magazines, the development and expansion of sports sections in newspapers, and the distribution of newsreel sports segments. The symbiotic relationship between these industries generated tremendous enthusiasm by producing a constant flow of publicity through co-promotional activities. This joint venture to film and exhibit sporting actualities had to contend with reformists, who continued to rail against the barbarity of prizefighting, still struggling to shed its reputation as a brutal, savage blood sport with no socially redeeming value.

Ultimately, the spark needed to incite the move toward censorship and the banning of fight films was provided when Jack Johnson became the heavyweight champion by defeating Tommy Burns in 1908 and then summarily disposed of one Great White Hope after another until he defeated former champion Jim Jeffries on July 4, 1910. As long as there had been a white heavyweight champion and the racial hierarchy was maintained, the exhibition of fight films was tolerated, even celebrated, especially when the feature showcased popular champions like Corbett and Jeffries. Because John L. Sullivan and his successors had maintained the color line, no black heavyweight was afforded the opportunity to upset hegemonic white masculinity. Although the sporting elite did not allow a black heavyweight champion, film played an important role in creating a space where black athletes demonstrated their talents. The camera captured these performances without cultural preconceptions. Johnson, however, not only upended the hierarchy, but his dominating ring presence and his flouting of social conventions, carrying on relationships with white prostitutes and marrying two white women (Etta Duryea in 1909 and Lucille Cameron in 1912), led to his being cast as a threatening menace to the established order.

Promoter George Lewis "Tex" Rickard lured Jeffries out of retirement, thanks in part to the largest purse for a championship fight, \$101,000, with the fighters splitting two-thirds of the movie rights and each receiving a signing bonus of \$10,000. The fight, originally scheduled for July 4, 1910, in San Francisco, was moved to Reno, Nevada, when in mid-June California governor James N. Gillett withdrew his support, bowing to pressure from civic and church leaders. According to a *New York Times* article on December 5, 1909, details of the "moving picture clause" occupied a considerable portion of the negotiations, and the clause was finally "stricken out of the articles and incorporated into a separate agreement."¹⁶ That separate agreement included the formation of a stock company, the J. & J. Co., to handle the fight's pictures. The MPPC ultimately bought up both boxers' shares of the net film profits, paying Johnson \$50,000 for his third and Jeffries \$66,000, as well as buying Rickard's share for \$33,000. The *Times* article reported that profits would exceed \$300,000.

Production values of the film *Johnson-Jeffries Fight* were not particularly noteworthy, because despite a veritable cadre of cameras outfitted with special lenses being used by member companies Vitagraph, Essanay, and Selig, the film utilized most of the conventions of earlier fight films. Cameras were stationed on a platform 30 feet west of the ring and shot the action from that distance. One difference from earlier fight productions

was the allocation of a panning camera to follow Jeffries, “framing the white boxer as protagonist and privileging white spectatorship.”¹⁷ Jeffries, however, was unable to match the ring skills of the younger, more agile Johnson, who not only controlled the action, as he had in other fights, but was also seen talking to his opponent, as well as to Corbett and Sullivan, both of whom served as handlers in the Jeffries corner. Another significant aspect that the cameras captured was that during the climactic sequence in the fifteenth round after Jeffries had been knocked down three times, Jeffries’s handlers entered the ring (Corbett included), preempting the final knockout ten-count. This caused referee Tex Rickard to declare Johnson the winner and new champion rather than allowing Jeffries to be knocked out as he surely would have been.

The first attempt to ban fight films, as well as telegraphed descriptions of fights, had been introduced in the U.S. Congress as early as May 1910. Although that effort failed, another bill was introduced by Representative Thetus Sims (D-Tenn.) early in 1912. Southern Democrats pushed through the legislation, which was modeled on existing federal control of obscene publications (e.g., birth control, abortion literature). With the Sims Act of 1912, passed on July 31, 1912, Congress used its constitutional power to regulate commerce by forbidding interstate transport of fight films. Because motion pictures were considered commerce, they came under the purview of the federal government. Federal intervention served a dual purpose of raising concerns about the moral effect of boxing and the impact of Johnson’s ascendancy to heavyweight champion. That the Sims Act was motivated by racial ideology was evidenced by the demagoguery deployed in the debate. On July 19, two weeks after the fight, Representative Seaborn A. Roddenbery (D-Ga.) delivered a speech in which he called Johnson “an African biped beast” and that failure to take action against that “black-skinned, thick-lipped, bull-necked, brutal-hearted African”¹⁸ would lead to another civil war. With its racial overtones, the Sims Act was another manifestation of the racial divide that had been established with the barring of blacks from professional baseball by the end of the 1888 season.

A GOLDEN AGE OF SPECTACLES

In the decades between the two world wars, newsreels, radio, and newspaper sports sections helped to establish athletes as the heroes and heroines of a burgeoning consumer culture. World War I had made the American public “picture-minded,” because photographs from the front “told much

more than the censors would permit to go over the cables."¹⁹ The deadly accuracy and vivid realism of the newsreels garnered the confidence of the audience in a way that was far more dynamic than print could achieve. Athletes became recognizable commodities within a national sporting identity, an identity based on a strict separation between whites and non-whites that reinforced the unequal distribution of power. While newsreel sports segments reinforced existing attitudes about culture, class, gender, and race, they rarely attempted to change those attitudes.²⁰

Sports highlights featuring the sports stars of the 1920s—Dempsey, Ruth, Grange, Tilden, Jones, Ederle, and Man o' War—became a staple of the newsreels, because sporting contests were regularly scheduled events that offered easy-to-digest entertainment featuring sports stars who had become increasingly important after World War I. While sports reporters like Grantland Rice, Damon Runyon, Ring Lardner, Westbrook Pegler, and Paul Gallico were instrumental in elevating the status of sports stars in the 1920s, the newsreels intensified the public's desire for those stars by bringing them from the printed page to a larger-than-life stature that only the movie screen could display. As Paul Gallico notes, the times were right "with money to burn and money to squander, plus the worst of all war hangovers, the lust and craving for stimulation and excitement to replace and resolve the terrible nervous pitch at which people had lived from 1914 to 1919."²¹ Some 130,000 people paid almost \$2 million to watch Gene Tunney defeat champion Jack Dempsey in 1926, and a year later 145,000 people paid more than \$2.5 million to see the rematch. A day after playing his final football game for the University of Illinois, Red Grange signed a contract with the Chicago Bears and earned more than \$40,000 in only three games, then signed a \$300,000 movie contract with Arrow Picture Corporation.²²

In addition, by 1920 the public's interest in film entertainment was firmly established, evidenced by the fact that in the United States the number of cinemas grew from 9,000 in 1908 to 20,000 in 1920.²³ This growth would not have been possible without a very large number of people having acquired the habit of attending the cinema. Film's ability to affect an audience en masse had both positive and negative implications for the development of the newsreels as journalism. On the one hand, newsreels exerted considerable influence in assimilating a large immigrant population to cultural norms; on the other hand, newsreels were confined by the limitations of the motion picture camera being employed, within the context of a news organization trying to capture its news on the fly, often rendering that coverage superficial and entertaining.

Despite these limitations, watching newsreel coverage of sports joined attending sporting events, as well as reading about athletic contests in the print press and listening to games on the radio, in creating a common popular culture centered around sports.²⁴ One component of that popular culture was being in the public eye, which now meant being seen. As Benjamir Rader notes, "While few Americans were able to see Grange perform in the flesh, millions saw him in the newsreel of thousands of theaters. The image of Grange, speeded up by the flickering screen, was almost eerie, as it darted, slashed, cut away from the would-be tacklers and crossed the goal line one, two, three or even five times within a few seconds."²⁵ Having raised his home run record to .59 in 1921, Babe Ruth and his larger-than-life persona were lionized by the newsreels to the extent that "Ruthian" became synonymous with individual success, heroism, and style.²⁶

Having a vested interest in promoting and presenting sports in a positive light, newsreel coverage of sports, like that of newspapers, was built around ballyhoo, hero worship, and an idealized notion of the importance of sports. Myth-making in the service of maintaining an audience meant that newsreel editors manufactured empathy between fans and their heroes. The newsreels created a world inhabited by heroes who reassured everyday Americans that extraordinary accomplishments of magnetic personalities provided meaning for a nation of faceless masses.²⁷ In this way, the newsreels were instrumental not only in extending the popularity of sports stars as cultural celebrities, but also in creating and diffusing overarching narratives that established sports as an important national cultural tradition. The entire information network and consumer society all found profit in exploiting the public's desire for sporting spectacles and its willingness to uncritically accept the great athletes as heroes.²⁸

THE MYTH MAKERS

Finally, it is important to consider the role played by newsreel producers and sports journalists in fostering an appreciation for sport spectacles and the heroes on whom the bright light of fame shone. Within the visual culture of the 1920s and 1930s, the need to generate increasingly affective representations spurred technological innovations. With the introduction of sound in 1927, drama could be heightened by splicing in crowds cheering, bands playing, and the thud of the ball being struck—often recorded separately. As Mike Huggins notes, "The visual pleasures of the sporting spectacle were enhanced by slow motion photography and occasional repetition of interesting shots. . . . Newsreel-recorded games became in part

calculated media events, manufactured on the cutting-room floor."²⁹ In short, sport's appeal was, and continues to be, its excitement, and how producers generate that excitement in production codes and practices helps us to unpack both the emotional and narrative qualities of a sporting spectacle.

Newsreels maintained the positioning of sports as a specialized field within journalism while attempting to legitimate their own status as sports journalists. Like their counterparts in the press boxes, newsreel cameramen and editors developed their own particular codes and practices that distinguished them from other journalists. As such, they can be seen as members of an "interpretive community"³⁰ who not only shaped their professional identity, but also defined appropriate practices. Meaning derived from knowledge about these shared practices helped members of the newsreel community to validate themselves, especially in comparison to the status that sportswriters had achieved by the 1920s.

Arguably, that decade served as an important time in establishing newsreel sports segments as a specialized unit within the larger community of sports journalists. The means that they used to create that distinctiveness was sports highlights, which offered a completely new way of appreciating sports and sports stars. Not surprisingly, even the venerated Grantland Rice, the decade's leading sportswriter, adopted the medium, supervising the production of *Sportlight Films*, which offered monthly, 10-minute newsreels featuring athletes.³¹ Newsreel sports highlights were effectively employed to capture the exploits of star athletes, fixing them as recognizable markers of excellence and lending them an aura of universality that became imprinted upon a collective memory.

If the 1920s producers of newsreel sports content provided a sense of identity and community in their coverage of sports, they also established a hierarchy of power. Within this frame of reference, the press box and the sports pages were the privileged domain of white male sportswriters, whose primary role was to foster an appreciation for the stars by building "a sport fandom of dubious value."³² Newsreel editors followed this practice. Raymond Fielding argues that the primary goal of the newsreels was to present attractions that featured celebrities in an uncontroversial formula to appease theater owners. Sports events were almost always filmed jointly by no fewer than two or three of the competing companies, so that the footage almost always emphasized the spectacle. Fielding posits, "Newsreel editors and managers defended their selection of content on the basis of popular interest and entertainment value. It was argued that military subjects . . . furnished the same sort of exciting movement and pictorial display as that other popular category, sports."³³

Holding on to this quasi-journalistic distinctiveness was one way that newsreel sports editors maintained their identity, which arguably facilitated looking back at the past with a nostalgic glow, as Rice did in his 1954 autobiography: "Looking back and reflecting on that golden, crazy age—from 1919 to 1930—I'm convinced, more than ever, that no decade in history has produced the like of Ruth, Dempsey, Jones, Hitchcock, Man O' War, Weissmuller and Bill Tilden."³⁴ Rice's emphasis on particular star athletes is enveloped in an aura of universality that affixes itself to collective memory, fashioning the athletes into generalizable markers of excellence.

CONCLUSION: TRIUMPH OF THE SPECTACLE

Occupying a central position in popular culture, newsreel presentations of sports and athletes operate within a frame permeated with symbolism and metaphor. Newsreel highlights continued the trend established in the print media of mythologizing sports heroes for the general public. Through their highly edited, action-oriented format, newsreel highlights shaped audience responses in a way that was more interesting, engaging, personal, and powerful than the stories that appeared in newspapers and magazines. With their ability to generate more interest in idolization of the athletes, newsreel highlights depicted sports celebrities as larger-than-life figures performing in the service of their nation. As Douglas Kellner notes, "Celebrity too is manufactured and managed in the world of the media spectacle. . . . To become a celebrity requires recognition as a star player in the field of media spectacle, be it sports, entertainment, business or politics."³⁵

Newsreels used formulaic highlights to transform narratives about sporting events into palatable segments with easily identifiable heroes and villains, framing their presentations within a discourse that furthered a popular national culture. By focusing on the transcendent nature of competition and elevating sports stars to the status of national heroes, newsreels helped to maintain the status quo while sidestepping any journalistic responsibilities in covering issues related to gender, race, and ethnicity. In doing so, the newsreels perpetuated sport's place in reproducing social inequality. Depictions of women and minorities were largely patriarchal. Only the most attractive female athletes were considered for inclusion; black athletes had to be nonthreatening. These athletes were expected to manifest and uphold the dominant culture's values and morals at all times. If they attempted to challenge those roles, they were marginalized

or rendered invisible. Not surprisingly, newsreels maintained the idea that politics should be kept out of sports.

Newsreel highlights celebrated and entertained, never digging very deeply beneath the surface, generating interest with an emphasis on affect. By anchoring the audience's response in recognizable stars, experiences, and pleasures, newsreel sports highlights maintained an entertainment ethos in which stars were presented as cultural icons, guiding the audience to the correct feeling state. By adding meaning, an appealing sport celebrity encouraged fans to generalize their appreciation from the athlete to an endorsed product or brand. Sports stars appeared in the newsreels because they evoked an emotional response from their audiences and because the newsreels and sports organizations benefited from these peoples' visibility. In eliciting crowd responses, the newsreel had a power "which it did not bequeath to its successor, television."³⁶

NOTES

1. John Eisenberg, *The Great Match Race* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006), xi.
2. Ibid., 173.
3. John Bloom, *There You Have It* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2010), 3.
4. Donald G. Kyle, *Sport and Spectacle in the Ancient World* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 11.
5. Ibid., 17.
6. Tom Gunning, "The Cinema of Attractions: Early Film, Its Spectator and the Avant Garde," *Wide Angle* 8:3-4 (Fall 1986): 64.
7. Charles Musser, *Edison Motion Pictures, 1890-1900: An Annotated Filmography* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997), 69.
8. See footnote 3 in Gordon Hendricks, *The Kinetoscope: America's First Commercially Successful Motion Picture Exhibitor* (New York: Theodore Gaus's Sons, 1966), 99.
9. Mike Huggins, "The Sporting Gaze: Towards a Visual Turn in Sports History—Documenting Art and Sport," *Journal of Sport History* 35:2 (Summer 2008): 318.
10. See Daniel G. Streible, *A History of the Prizefight Film, 1894-1915* (PhD diss., University of Texas 1994), 94-98.
11. Charles Musser, *The Emergence of Cinema: The American Screen to 1907* (New York: Scribner's, 1990), 198.
12. Guy DeBord, *The Society of the Spectacle* (Paris: n.p., 1967), no. 18. Translated by Ken Knabb.
13. Quoted in Musser, *The Emergence of Cinema*, 198.
14. Streible, *A History of the Prizefight Film*, 122.

15. Luke McKernan, "Witnessing the Past," in *Researcher's Guide to British Newsreels*, Volume 3, ed. J. Ballentyne (London: BUFVC, 1993).
16. "Rickard Explains 'Secret' Session," *New York Times*, December 5, 1909, S1.
17. Streible, *A History of the Prizefight Film*, 351.
18. *Congressional Record*, July 19, 1912, 9305.
19. Silas Bent, *Ballyhoo: The Voice of the Press* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1927), 164.
20. See Ray Gamache, *A History of Sports Highlights: Replayed Plays from Edison to ESPN* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland Publishers, 2010), 67–81.
21. Paul Gallico, *Farewell to Sport* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1938), 97.
22. Frederick Lewis Allen, *Only Yesterday* (New York: Harper, 1957), 209.
23. Nicholas Pronay, "The Newsreel: The Illusion of Actuality," in *The Historian and Film*, ed. P. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 98.
24. See Mark Dyreson, "Aggressive America: Media Nationalism and the 'War' over Olympic Pictures in Sports 'Golden Age,'" *International Journal of the History of Sport* 22:6 (November 2005): 974.
25. Benjamin G. Rader, "Compensatory Sport Heroes: Ruth, Grange and Dempsey," *Journal of Popular Culture* 16:4 (Spring 1983): 15.
26. Quoted in David L. Andrews and Steven J. Jackson, "Introduction: Sport Celebrities, Public Culture, and Private Experience," in *Sports Stars: The Cultural Politics of Sporting Celebrities*, ed. David L. Andrews and Steven J. Jackson (London: Routledge, 2001), 6.
27. Mark Inabinett, *Grantland Rice and His Heroes: The Sportswriter as Myth-maker in the 1920s* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1994), 16.
28. Allen, *Only Yesterday*, 207.
29. Mike Huggins, "Projecting the Visual: British Newsreels, Soccer and Popular Culture 1918–1939," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 24:1 (January 2007): 87.
30. Barbie Zelizer, "Journalists as Interpretive Communities," in *Social Meanings of News*, ed. Daniel Berkowitz (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1997), 406.
31. Inabinett, *Grantland Rice and His Heroes*, 7.
32. Bent, *Ballyhoo*, 32.
33. Raymond Fielding, *The American Newsreel: A Complete History, 1911–1967*, 2nd ed. (Jefferson, NC: McFarland Publishers, 2006), 168.
34. Grantland Rice, *The Tumult and the Shouting: My Life in Sport* (New York: A. S. Barnes, 1954), 137.
35. Douglas Kellner, "Media Culture and the Triumph of the Spectacle," in *The Spectacle of the Real*, ed. Geoff Kind (Portland, OR: Intellect Books, 2005), 27.
36. Pronay, "The Newsreel," 99.

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33. For more information on the Pro Football Hall of Fame and Brown's accomplishments, see <http://www.profootballhof.com/default.aspx>.
34. See <http://www.profootballhof.com/default.aspx>.
35. Sugar, *Sports 100*, 7.
36. Freeman, *Jim Brown*, 20.
37. *Jim Brown: All-American*.
38. Ibid.
39. Rushin, "Long, Hard Run."
40. Sugar, *Sports 100*, 6.
41. King, "Jim Brown."
42. Ibid.
43. *Jim Brown: All-American*.

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