The 33rd Annual Conference of the Sport Literature Association

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Proceedings edited by Matthew S. Tettleton, University of Colorado Boulder

Wednesday, June 22, 2016

PANEL I: Operas and Strange Cases
Chair: Fred Mason (University of New Brunswick)

Tim Morris (University of Texas at Arlington)
"Everest as Opera"

Everest is a one-act opera first performed in 2014. Composed by Joby Talbot with a libretto by Gene Scheer, its subject is the famous 1996 climbing season on Mount Everest, which took the lives of several participants, including the noted climber and guide Rob Hall.

A challenge in trying to study the opera Everest is that there is no textual material of the opera itself to consult. It ran for four performances in Dallas and no recording is available; neither the score nor the libretto has been published. The existence of the "text" is limited to the memories of the couple of thousand singers, players, crew, and spectators who were present at its premiere run.

Everest also poses problems in the way it narrates the 1996 disaster. Eschewing political, social, gender, economic, or environmental critiques of the '96 events, it confines its attention to three climbers (Hall, Doug Hansen, and Beck Weathers) and to Jan Arnold, Rob Hall's wife. The climbers are stripped down to men against the elements, fighting cold, high altitude, and in Weathers' case their inner demons. Self-sacrifice and self-exploration are the highest values, and unproblematic heterosexual love between Hall and Arnold (who sing a duet via cellphone as Hall is dying and Arnold about to give birth) is the source of the opera's pathos.

Dramatically old-fashioned as it is musically postmodern, *Everest* marks an uneasy moment in the understanding of extreme adventure sports as manifestations of white male heroism.

Dennis Gildea (Springfield College)
"*Casablanca* at 75: The View from San Remo Drive"

The iconic World War II film *Casablanca* is nearing the seventy-fifth anniversary of its premier showing. The screenplay, based on an unpublished play titled Everybody

Goes to Rick's, was written by twin brothers Julius and Philip Epstein. Philip, who died at a relatively young age, is the father of novelist Leslie Epstein and the grandfather of Theo Epstein. The Epstein brothers went to Penn State on boxing scholarships, and Julius won a national collegiate bantamweight championship in 1929. This essay studies the importance sports – especially boxing and baseball – have had on the writing careers of Julius and Leslie Epstein. In particular, this essay is a close textual analysis of sporting allusions in Leslie Epstein's autobiographical novel San Remo Drive (2003), which, in fact, ends with a reference to Julius's funeral in 2000. At numerous points in the novel, sports function as objective correlatives to difficult emotional episodes experienced by the first-person narrator. San Remo Drive makes it abundantly clear that sports played a key role in the extended Epstein family.

Mark Baumgartner (East Tennessee State University)
"Arrested Mechanics: The Strange Case of Rogelio Moret in Andre Dubus' 'After the Game'"

The proposed conference presentation will focus on a baseball story by influential short fiction writer, Andre Dubus, entitled "After the Game." "After the Game" is the sequel to "The Pitcher," which I presented on at SLA 2015 in Johnson City ("Grace on the Diamond: Baseball and Dislocation in the Short Fiction of Andre Dubus"). These two stories, written several years apart, visit the career of pitcher Billy Wells at two very different points in his life. "The Pitcher" looks at Wells' early success as a top prospect with a Creole League team in Lafayette, LA as juxtaposed with his failing marriage. "After the Game" picks up his career twelve years later in 1962 when Wells is a starting pitcher for the Boston Red Sox. The plot of the story details a surreal postgame incident in which a Dominican ball player (Joaquin Quintana) appears to suddenly freeze in the locker room, and stands motionless for several long minutes until he is carried out by medical technicians. Dubus' choice of these two seemingly unrelated events in Wells' career subtly highlights several key themes found throughout his fiction: adultery, race relations, failures of communication, and, most notably, conflicting ideas of grace in life, sports and art. The proposed paper will look specifically at the character of Joaquin Quintana, and explore biographic similarities to former Boston Red Sox pitcher Rogelio Moret. Andre Dubus (not to be confused with his son, writer Andre Dubus III) is much beloved as one of the finest story writers of his generation, and has often been compared to Anton Chekhov. His work has appeared in several renowned collections, as well as The New Yorker and Playboy. Although baseball writing represents a relatively small part of his career, scattered across a few stories and nonfiction essays, I feel Dubus' work represents a significant contribution to the genre.

PANEL II: Shootin' Hoops
Chair: Angie Abdou (Athabasca University)

Matthew S. Tettleton (University of Colorado Boulder)
"Basketball in the Works of Sherman Alexie"

Sport Literature scholars have noted Sherman Alexie's interest in basketball and its recurrent narrative and thematic impact on many of Alexie's important works. However, studies of sport in Alexie largely fail to approach the subject through Indigenous theory and research methods. As a result, these studies provide good close readings of some of Alexie's basketball scenes but little in the way of the tribally specific and place-based epistemologies with which Alexie interacts.

This paper joins a discussion of basketball throughout Alexie's oeuvre that examines Alexie's complex relationship to the so-called assimilation trap—the conceptual gridlock resulting from the settler colonial perspective's insistence that Indigenous peoples remain in the past. I look for what Anishanaabe scholar and writer Gerald Vizenor calls "survivance." I focus on Alexie's young adult novel *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* and the earlier works echoed therein—specifically, I see basketball interacting with survivance and the assimilation trap throughout some of Alexie's lesser-known poems.

Finally, reading two particular Alexie poems, I turn to the tribal Spokane knowledge that Alexie shows being passed down generationally through basketball. In "Physical Education," basketball renders time as cyclical, the night before turning into the day of, just as the generation of the father becomes the memories of the son. Closing with a reading of a virtually unknown 18-word poem, I argue that basketball's most important significance across Alexie's magnificent literary career is this transgenerational survivance. Basketball becomes the physical expression of a tribal identity, transcending the space of the court, passing through generations, reaching into the depths of the soul, an embodied knowledge of what it means to say Spokane Indian.

Rick Parr and Dennis Gildea (Springfield College)
"The Early Days of Basketball in Fact and Fiction"

The last decade of the nineteenth century saw sports coverage in daily newspapers expand and begin to flourish, and the same sort of growth could be seen in sports fiction, especially juvenile sports fiction. In the pulp publishing world, baseball and football stories were abundant. Fewer dealing with the new and true American sport, basketball, were published despite the fact that participation in the sport expanded rapidly after its beginning in 1891 at the International YMCA Training School in Springfield. (So rapidly, in fact, that within thirteen years what began as a homework assignment intended to calm unruly young men who felt cooped up in a gym was a trial sport in the 1904 Olympics.)

This essay examines the early spread of basketball, its coverage in newspapers, and offers an analysis of possibly the first piece of basketball fiction, "Frank Merriwell's

Five, or Old Friends at Yale." Burt L. Standish's (Gilbert Patten) story appeared in *Tip Top Weekly* in April 1900, less tan ten years after James Naismith's first basketball game. Among other things, basketball's appearance in the popular Merriwell series indicates the proliferation of the game among schools and colleges, and the story may well have served as an alluring introduction to basketball to at least some of the many readers of *Tip Top Weekly*.

Kyle Belanger (Springfield College)
"In Heels and Hijab: Basketball, Gender, and Religion in the 21st Century"

Bilqis Abdul-Qaadir is one of the most important figures in 21st century athletics. You've likely never heard her name. Standing just 5-foot-5, she raced past WNBA/UConn basketball legend Rebecca Lobo's Massachusetts all-time career scoring record then went on to star at a pair of NCAA Division I programs. She has been invited to the White House on multiple occasions, earned a Masters Degree from Indiana State University and is currently an athletic director at a charter school in Memphis, Tennessee.

Bilqis Abdul-Qaadir is also a proud Muslim woman who wears hijab, covering her head, arms and legs during games. It is this distinction that has placed her in the sometimes-difficult position of being an athlete-activist. It is also this distinction that has prevented her from pursuing her goal of playing professional basketball for FIBA, due to the blurry lines between clothing restrictions and desire to remain religiously neutral.

This paper explores the literature of Abdul-Qaadir's career, using national/regional/local news coverage, as well as primary interviews, to tell the story of her ascent from the Birthplace of Basketball to the White House. It will also delve into the darkest recesses of written language—the comment sections of blog postings—to explore the ways in which internet journalism can adjust a narrative without the conscience of an editor.

PANEL III: Fictionalizations and Reimaginings
Chair: Scott Peterson (Wright State University)

William Bishop (Baker University)
"'The Adventures of Babe Ruth': The Fictionalization of the Great Bambino in Popular Culture, 1920-1935"

Much has been made of the tampering with the historical truth of the life of the legendary Babe Ruth, of the sanitizing or omission of his rowdier exploits from newspaper articles, and the exaggeration of his many already Herculean feats in these same journalistic records. However, along with this softening of rough edges and amplification of achievements—both ostensibly intended to deceive the American public for their own good—during the Ruth's career there also existed a cultural tendency to fictionalize his life in a way quite transparent to public

knowledge. This willful eagerness to boldly make up stories about the background and exploits of the Babe became prominent almost the moment his move off the pitching mound fully enabled his home-run-hitting potential, which happened to coincide with his move to nation's media capital, New York City.

A transparently fictionalized version of Ruth appears in texts such as the 1920 silent film *Headin' Home*, journalist Heywood Broun's 1923 novel, *The Sun Field*, and *The Adventures of Babe Ruth*, a 1934 radio serial intended for adolescent boys. In each of these three diverse texts, Babe Ruth is utilized as a liminal figure of sorts, straddling the boundary between our own reality and the fictional worlds we imagine. The ability of the Ruth persona to cross this line between reality and fiction exemplifies the way in which the ballplayer was used as a cultural symbol that could give utterance to Americans' ideas about who they were and who they longed to be.

Jamie Dopp (University of Victoria)
"Reimagining the Home Game in Richard Wagamese's *Indian Horse*"

One of the key elements of the hockey myth is the idea that hockey can offer a pathway—a shortcut, even—to belonging in Canadian society. Hockey in Canadian popular culture is often represented as a means to bond with the northern geography of the country, the characteristic national identity that has been shaped by this geography, and the community that has developed from both. Hockey in Canada, then, seems to promise a way to feel at home.

But what happens when the game is played by a First Nations player? When the player is First Nations, how does the idea of hockey as a pathway to belonging—as a way to claim a sense of home--change?

Richard Wagamese takes up these questions in *Indian Horse*, which tells the story of Saul Indian Horse, an Objiway boy apprehended by Canadian authorities and sent to residential school, who discovers in hockey a kind of "salvation" from the horrors around him. In the hockey sections of *Indian Horse*, Wagamese deftly plays with common tropes from sports literature, especially those having to do with the disadvantaged boy who uses athletic prowess to triumph against the odds, as well as the specifically Canadian tropes about hockey as a shortcut to acceptance in Canadian society. Saul, the novel emphasizes, is a player with preternatural "vision" on the ice. As the story unfolds, however, Saul's hockey "vision" turns out to be profoundly ironic. For one thing, it is revealed ultimately to be a form of blindness about his own life. Only when Saul loses his hockey "vision," with its false promise of belonging and home, is he able to become a seer in a more true sense—and to start himself on the path to restoring his own sense of personal wholeness and community.

Dick McGehee (University of Texas at Austin)
"Fear of Flying, Gravity Defied: Gymnastics Dreams and Nightmares"

Although the sport of gymnastics has a universal presence and prominence as a competitive activity from local levels to national NCAA and USA Gymnastics championships, World Games, Olympic Games, and even professional competition, its presence in fictional literature, with the exception of juvenile literature (mainly for girls), is extremely rare. Most of the juvenile fiction is written from the standpoint of the training and competition activities of young gymnasts (mainly girls) and their dreams of winning medals. There is also a large number of autobiographies and biographies of famous Olympic gymnasts, again aimed principally at aspiring youngsters. There are instructional books with information on gymnastics techniques and coaching methods, and two books for adults (by Joan Ryan and, and more recently, Jennifer Sey) point out physical and emotional problems and abuses in gymnastics training and coaching regimens. The scarcity of adult fiction related to gymnastics may be due largely to the dominance of children and teenagers in the sport. Four examples of the few pieces for adults include poems by Barbara Crooker and Kristin Berkey-Abbott and stories by Megan Cass and Karl Taro Greenfield. None of the four examples places gymnastics in a glamorous light, and the Crooker poem and Greenfield story are downright depressing, based as they are on the kinds of stressful environments pointed out in the Joan Ryan and Jennifer Sey exposés.

Thursday, June 23, 2016

PANEL IV: Creative Nonfiction
Chair: Matt Tettleton (University of Colorado Boulder)

Donald Morrow (Western University)
"The Boston, Tarzan, and the CITGO Sign"

The Boston Marathon is a special sporting event held annually either on Patriot's Day or on the third Monday of April every year since 1897. This essay explores the experience of running the Boston, its nuances, its allure, its meanings, the feelings engendered, its history – all from an inside-the-skin perspective of a runner's mind and body. My intent in writing it and reading it is to express one person's experiences within the event and about the event.

Angie Abdou (Athabasca University)

"*HAVE FUN! TRY HARD*! Reflections of a Hockey Mom"

In *Sixty*, Ian Brown allegedly presents readers with a diary of his sixtieth year. However, discerning readers will recognize this diary-claim as an illusion. Not only are the chapters too well-crafted to be mere diary entries, but each page is packed with valuable information gleaned from rigorous research into the neuroscience of aging. Nonetheless, the book's likeness to a diary and its confessional tone lend the material an intimacy and even a sense of voyeurism, both of which make for a

compelling and enjoyable read. I would like to use the same device to shape my own book, a memoir that chronicles a year in the life of a hockey mom.

As someone raised in Moose Jaw during the Theo Fleury years – someone whose brother even played for Graham James – I have a unique perspective on the sport, one that you might think would prohibit me from allowing my own son to play hockey. But my son loves hockey. Or he thinks he loves it. Either way, I can't in good conscience stop him. I can, though, share my own – sometimes humorous, sometimes troubling – stories and suggest that we all think more deeply about the way we parent young athletes.

As I journal about our mother-son experiences during one Atom hockey season, I will also layer in relevant research – on the role of sport in childhood development, on the likelihood of players making the NHL, on the long-term effects of concussions, on the documented misconduct of parents, and on the ways the game has changed for children over the last two generations. I expect the book will begin at the start of my son's second year in Atom and end at the conclusion of that season (with him deciding whether or not to carry onto Pee Wee).

At SLA 2016, I would like to present a short creative nonfiction essay, which will be my first attempt at this material and eventually, I hope, part of the book's introductory chapter.

PANEL V: War and Revolution

Chair: Kyle Belanger (Springfield College)

Bruce Pratt (University of Maine)

"Rule 34 and the Language and Implements of Sports and War"

When coached, I avoided using the language of war, because no game, even hockey, famously described by Al Purdy as a combination of ballet and murder, shares war's stated purpose. In sport we compete against opponents not enemies, and while we strive to best them, we don't seek to kill them.

The language of war tactics is imbedded in sports rhetoric, especially in Football.

Is the blitz the child of blitzkrieg, and the jet-sweep an imitation of the swinging gate executed by Chamberlain at Gettysburg? Does man-to-man coverage imitate hand-to-hand combat? We hail athletes as warriors and field generals who sacrifice their bodies, and lament when our teams lose a battle of attrition.

There are scores of other examples.

We can intuit the origin of the events in Track and Field. Did the sprints originate when Fonk said, "Ug, bet I beat you to that tree."

And when Fonk won, did Ug say, “This time we run down to the lake and back,” and create distance racing?

The origin of the long jump, pole vault, high jump, and hurdles are just as obvious.

Throwing events are likely rooted in combat. The javelin both a hunting tool and weapon is the most obvious. Are the discus and hammer throw non-explosive precursors to hand grenades. Was the shot put born in the practice of heaving stones on those scaling the palace walls?

What about the Roman plumbata? How did that weapon enter the world of recreational sports only to be banned in the US?

Invoking Tim Morris’s Rule 34, let us look at Muscular Christianity, the Languages of War and Sports and Lawn Darts.

Cory Willard (University of Nebraska-Lincoln)
“The Anarchist Fly Box”

It’s no secret that anarchy is considered the second-class socialism often shunned by academics in favour of the more commonplace Marxist scholarship we are all familiar with. Anarchism, however, has an equally old and perhaps more functional philosophical tradition. Such a belief that is against any form of hierarchical oppression is predicated on ideas of equality, liberty, and cooperation. However, unlike Marxism, anarchists believe that power and production should remain in the hands of the people loosely organized in smaller groups, rather than in a centralized system of control. In this sense it is interesting to explore how anarchism relates to capitalism, neoliberalism, bioregionalism, and how fly fishing may be implicated in such philosophical and political discussions.

Perhaps the most significant current issue where anarchist philosophy and fly fishing intersect is in the attempts of state governments in the west to seize federal public lands. Ultimately, if the fly fishing pastime is to continue, public lands must be protected. Attempts to limit access must be met with resistance. If it cannot at this time be achieved that all lands be managed in small scale local communities for the common good, then it is essential that sportsmen of all stripes ensure the continued unfettered access to federal public lands. They must not fall victim to the continuous onslaught from corporate America.

PANEL VI: Women in Sport
Chair: Joyce Duncan (East Tennessee State University)

Samantha White (Rutgers University Camden): Winner of the 2016 Lyle Olsen Graduate Student Essay Prize

"Negotiating Female Athletic Identity in Educational Spaces Through the Works of R.R. Knudson"

The intersection of young adult literature and sport literature often leaves girls and young women at the margins. However, a historical interrogation of past literary texts illuminates an important legacy of the role of young fictional female athletes. Through an analysis of work by R.R. Knudson, who emerged as the leading writer of girls' sport fiction in the 1970s, this paper traces the literary construction of the contested femininity of female athletes within educational institutions. By drawing from Progressive Era sport fiction and Title IX legislation, Knudson addresses issues around gender and athletics, in order to reframe the landscape of sport as a potentially inclusive cultural and social space, as well as establish a place for girls and women within sport literature.

Jana Kasparova (Masaryk University in Brno)
"A Woman's Body, an Athlete's Heart: A Comparative Reading of Althea Gibson's and Wilma Rudolph's Memoirs"

Readers have a chance to learn something through both unforgettable deeds as well as the blunders of other people. The only thing they need to do is reach for the right book. Supposedly, memoirs and biographies, often saturated with the deepest feelings and private experiences, are the best choice. Thus, a special place is occupied by the memoirs and biographies written by well-known athletes – the role models for whole generations. Keen on reading about women's experience in sports and being inspired by women sports pioneers, I will focus on such role models in African American sports in the paper. The memoirs of two legendary African American female athletes will be explored; namely those of Althea Gibson - I Always Wanted to Be Somebody, published in 1958, and that of Wilma Rudolph – Wilma, published in 1977. Their experience was often different from that of their male counterparts. Several decades ago, they faced dual oppression due to both their gender and race. How did they cope with such a situation? What was it like to be an athlete and a woman in the USA of the 1950s? The answers to these questions will be given in the paper.

Shelly Sanders (Abilene Christian University)
"'As Certain as the Sky': Appreciating the Fox, Fascination(s) and Style of Cheryl Strayed's *Wild*"

In her memoir, Strayed articulates the problems and possibilities of setting out alone to hike the Pacific Crest Trail, totally unprepared, after losing her mother and her marriage, in order to see if the trek made anything better. In her enigmatic words, "The wanting was a wilderness and I had to find my way out of the woods" (27). This "finding [her] way" also connects to something less definable, something she struggles to identify both with the athletic challenge she undertakes and with the writing experience and reflection. For Strayed, "being found" seems to take place through both activities, since the writing allows her to lyrically connect her

embodied challenge with her eventual transformation. The writing refines conceptions of narrative engagement with these questions by demonstrating the complexity of athleticism and embodied experience in the written text. In this memoir, the interplay of lyrical descriptions of physical empowerment, paired with both physical and natural beauty, seems to be the catalyst for Strayed's epiphanies. Embodiment is central not only to her hiking and grieving experience, but also to her written narrative; throughout the book, she emphasizes how the contrasting moods of joy and suffering created distinct embodied experiences.

In this presentation, I consider the stylistic moves Strayed makes in her popular memoir, *Wild*, in connection with embodiment and fascination in writing nonfiction, then reflect on how other nonfiction writers might use style to imbue their prose with fascination and aesthetic experience.

PANEL VII: Sport and Culture

Chair: Don Johnson (East Tennessee State University)

Susan J. Bandy (The Ohio State University)
"The 'Cultural Turn' and the Sport Historians' Embrace of Sport Literature"

As scholars were influenced by a "cultural turn" in the humanities and social sciences in the 1980s, they began to use a vast array of new theories in these fields of knowledge with particular attention to language, symbols, and systems of representation. This "cultural turn" had a considerable influence on research in sports studies as historians and sociologists began to examine the cultural dimensions of sport with the viewpoint that sport is a reflection or mirror of culture, a product of social processes, and, more recently, that sport has a powerful effect upon culture. Sports historians, in particular, began to consider the cultural, historical, political, social, and symbolic, significance of sport. Those historians who have been influenced by postmodernism, the new historicism, and the mediated nature of modern sport began to consider creative texts, (novels most predominantly) and film in the writing of sport history. They initially tended to appropriate literature as yet another source for the writing of sport history, equating it with other sources such as archival material, however, more recently sport historians have begun to reconsider the relationship between sport history and sport literature as they have been influenced by the need for more interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary perspectives. In the paper, an overview of the discussion of the use of creative texts among sport historians, including the challenges of such work and noteworthy scholarship, is provided. It is concluded that history, literature, and sport converge in their relationship to time in an attempt to capture the ephemeral and transitory.

Duncan Jamieson (Ashland University)
"Forgotten Sports"
Eric Solomon once accused me of dramatically expanding the scope of the Sport Literature Association, but I was afraid of asking him if he meant the sport or the

literature aspect. Either way, with the intent of making Eric proud, does anyone have any familiarity with fox tossing? How about octopus wrestling? Does anyone know the name of the monkey fighting champion of 19th century London? If the answers to the above are in the negative, I suspect that at least some of those in attendance will have heard of, and perhaps even participated in, phone-booth stuffing. Certainly the baseball aficionados will be somewhat familiar with stoolball, while those addicted to M.A.S.H. will know that Corporal Max Klinger tried flagpole sitting as one of his dodges to earn a Section Eight and a ticket back to Toledo, Ohio.

While riding back to London from a conference on sport history in Swansea, Wales, the man across the aisle was reading Edward Brooke-Hitching's *Fox Tossing, Octopus Wrestling and other Forgotten Sports*. Brooke-Hitching is an English award winning documentary film director who has collected and describes nearly one hundred "sports." This is a look at the author and his sports collection.

Phil Wedge (University of Kansas)
"Questioning the Value of Athletics: Anne Lamott's Rosie Ferguson Novels"

Anne Lamott's trilogy of novels chronicles the childhood of Rosie Ferguson, from losing her father and dealing with her alcoholic mother at a young age (*Rosie*), to becoming a top-ranked junior tennis player in adolescence (*Crooked Little Heart*), to finally struggling with her own addictive lifestyle in her late teens (*Imperfect Birds*). Centering on the sports themes in *Crooked Little Heart*, this essay will examine how Rosie and her partner, Simone Duvall, despite having a number-one ranking in doubles for Northern California, struggle to keep their lives trouble-free on and off the tennis court; in addition, from the broader perspective of Lamott's trilogy as a whole, this essay will also examine what Lamott suggests about the overall value of sport in Rosie Ferguson's life.

Field Trip: New Brunswick Sports Hall of Fame
SLA Poetry Night

Friday, June 24, 2016

PANEL VIII: Special Session- Dick Crepeau's Sport Literature Association Lifetime Achievement Award
Chair: Tim Morris (University of Texas Arlington)

Susan Bandy (The Ohio State University)
Don Johnson (East Tennessee State University)
Special guest- Patricia Crepeau

PANEL IX: Football vs. Soccer
Chair: Dennis Gildea (Springfield College)

Julian Meldon D'Arcy (University of Iceland)

"The Other Fighting Irish: Football in the Fiction of James T. Farrell"

Despite being renowned as an aficionado of baseball, the truth is, however, that football plays a much more dominant role in the fiction of James T. Farrell. Sandlot, high-school, or college football feature as a vital theme in no less than eight short stories and eight books in one trilogy and two quintets of novels based on young Irish-American men in Chicago: Studs Lonigan (1932-35), Danny O'Neill (1936-53), and Eddie Ryan (1963-69). Farrell himself was a former high-school football star with aspirations for glory on the college gridiron, but a knee injury put paid to all his hopes. Farrell recreates these dreams in all his young heroes, only for them also to fail to make it at college level, with differing responses: sentimental regrets (Lonigan), anger and bitterness (O'Neill), philosophical indifference (Ryan). More interestingly, Farrell's heroes chronologically reflect not only the growing criticism and cynicism toward the college game in the mid-twentieth century, but also Farrell's increasing frustration and disillusionment with the politics of his time, as he moves from one socialist party to another before ultimately switching to the Civil Rights movement. Farrell's football fiction thus reflects a fascinating parallel with his own life and career as well of the history of college football, and presents a clear and pertinent example of how the literary presentation of sport can help capture, signify, and interpret the personal and social mores of a society and an era.

Richard McGehee (University of Texas at Austin)
"Soccer Corruption and Comedy in Brazilian Theater"

In spite of its importance in Brazil, soccer has not figured prominently in Brazilian theater. Exceptions include Oduvaldo Vianna Filho's *Chapetuba Futebol Clube* (1959) and Nelson Rodrigues' *A Falecida* (1953). The action of *Chapetuba* comes from within a soccer club itself, consists mainly of conversations among members of this second-division team, and reveals conflict and corruption in Brazilian soccer at several levels. Rodrigues' "tragic comedy" sees soccer from a fan's point of view. A married couple, Tuninho and Zulmira, provide most of the action and speech. Other cast members include their relatives and friends and the employees of a funeral parlor. Zulmira is sick and convinced she's going to die. Tuninho is devoted to her (and to Vasco da Gama). Tuninho is preoccupied with Vasco's next game but finally notices Zulmira's terrible state of health. She gives him an address where he can obtain the large amount of money needed for the grand funeral she has already arranged. She dies (unfortunately conflicting with the date of the upcoming game). Tuninho goes for the money, saying he's Zulmira's cousin. The intended source of the money is a wealthy man who recounts his sexual adventures with Zulmira and offers to contribute a small amount of money for her funeral. Tuninho reveals himself to be Zulmira's widower and threatens the man with bad publicity if he doesn't pay the entire amount. The man pays up, Tuninho purchases the cheapest funeral available, and goes to the stadium to bet the rest of the money on Vasco.

Saturday, June 25, 2016
PANEL X: Sport and Pop Culture

Chair: Cory Willard (University of Nebraska-Lincoln)

Joel Sronce (Independent Scholar)
"Sport as Freedom and Metaphor in *Calvin and Hobbes*"

For me, *Calvin and Hobbes*—essential, authoritative and indispensable—has always carried an influence of scriptural proportions. Its humor, its sentiment, and its evocation of childhood—the halcyon summers, the puzzling pains and lasting glories—endure for readers throughout their years by way of imaginative freedom. In Calvin's (and author Bill Watterson's) desire to explore a world without its restrictions, Hobbes is found. As readers enter the strip's world, they too must approach the text without constraint, welcoming its whimsical invitation.

This paper focuses on the parallel path that sport takes throughout the strip, as it represents the desire for and the quality of a lack of constraint. I explore sport's role in Calvin's (and Watterson's) quest to deconstruct the rules, to challenge and engender meaning. Moreover, much as Calvin's wagon and sled (themselves things of action and leisure, as well as vehicles for physical comedy) often act as visual metaphors for the content of a particular strip, sport also becomes a visual metaphor for Watterson's expression of Calvin, Hobbes, and the world beyond.

Thomas Bauer (University of Limoges)
"When an Energy Drink Exalts a Table Tennis Hero: Brand Placement and Overuse in the Manga *Ping Pong Dash!!* by Honda Shingo"

"My Max! It is a hundred times ... a thousand times better than usual!!" So says Tendô Haruku, hero of Honda Shingo's manga *Ping Pong Dash!!*, to sing the praises of his favorite Japanese drink: Georcia Max Coffee. This energy drink with its parodied brand name, since 'c' replaces the original 'g', is so extensively used, quoted and consumed by the hero that it raises questions for the critical reader. And for good reason. The omnipresence of the drink throughout fifteen volumes of the series published between 2005 and 2009, and its multiple forms (as part of the scenery, chapter title, close-up, dialogue, sporting vocabulary, etc.) suggest that the mangaka maintains a careful balance between marketing and narrative. Why does the author do this? Does he place the brand in his dialogues and drawings to comply with a commercial contract, to legitimize the story or to create a singular literary or pictorial style? By defining the sports-themed manga field and deconstructing the artistic work of Shingo Honda, this paper aims to show how the placement of Georcia Max Coffee becomes a "positive constraint" for the author, that is to say a pretext and source of inspiration for overcoming artistic boundaries and building an original sports hero.

Fred Mason (University of New Brunswick)
"*Zombies, Run!*: Interactive Digital Narrative and Virtual Sports and Fitness"

Zombies, Run! is ostensibly a fitness app that allows runners to track distance and pace over the course of a speed workout. However, it exists somewhere in the space between an app, a book on tape, a video game, and a hypercommercialized media product. The story of Zombies, Run! is set in the UK, post-zombie apocalypse. The main location, Abel Township, sends runners out to gather supplies, investigate the cause of the zombie outbreak, and conduct missions against various enemy groups. Runners using the app run in the real world, but play as Abel's Runner 5, with the narrative unfolding based on distance or time run. The app also encourages random "zombie chases" during missions, where the runner has to speed up 20% faster for a period in order to avoid getting caught in-game, thus engaging in a real-world fartlek workout. Within the narrative, post-apocalyptic sporting activities have appeared, and two "virtual races" have been conducted (with add-on charges), where runners race 5 or 10 kilometres over a race-specific story, with results posted to a global leaderboard. This paper considers Zombies, Run! as a form of interactive digital narrative, where the user's activities impact the storyline to varying degrees, and the story verges into reality. Based on the author's experience of playing through three seasons (154 missions, plus extended "Radio Mode" background narrative and 2 virtual races), it looks at how the app fits within the commercial media landscape and the wider sphere of the apocalyptic and zombie genres, as well as how the interactive elements connect with gameplay, immersion, and embodied movement.

PANEL XI: Fiction

Chair: Bruce Pratt (University of Maine)

Scott Peterson (Wright State University)
"'Performing Ella': Historical Novel Excerpt"

"Performing Ella" reads between the lines of Ella Black's 1890 *Sporting Life* reports, working with the few facts we have about her life. As a female sports journalist, Black broke a number of social rules to report on baseball. The novel imagines what her experience might have been like if she had dared to ignore a few more late nineteenth rules about women and baseball.

Scott Palmieri (Johnson & Wales University)
"Concession Stand"

"Young men tell sad stories quickly, but the few details that Delaney learned the day before, about the death of Barton's father, were enough to make him agree to be here- to sneak back into Geneva Stadium- home of their summer college team, the Geneva Knights- after the game, when everyone else had left."

"Concession Stand" is one of a series of stories about the Geneva Knights, an upstate New York baseball team of college players in 1996. In their last summer of baseball, a group of Knights survive boredom, bad jobs, and a record breaking winless streak.

This story narrates the last summer meal of four teammates. As they dine on stolen beer and hot dogs before their final road trip, their thoughts swirl from the death of a father to graduation day. They laugh about their hapless manager, their miserly owner, and their unexpected turnaround that was about to lead them to the last place they wanted to go- the playoffs.

Don Johnson (East Tennessee State University)
from *Blue Winged Olive*

Don Johnson read from his newly published novel, *Blue Winged Olive*, a narrative involving fly-fishing, meth-making and mayhem in the Tennessee hills.

Jon Billman (Northern Michigan University)
"Sixty is the New Twenty Five: Ned Overend and the Science of Aging Like a Badass"

Cyclist Ned Overend was a World Champion mountain biker in the '80s and '90s. His was a household name in the burgeoning sport of mountain biking. When drugs pervaded the sport in the mid-nineties, Overend got fed up and 'retired' from the World Cup circuit. But he was far from becoming sedentary. Overend went on to become a champion biathlete and bicycle hill climbing specialist. Now, with the advent and rising popularity of winter fat-biking, Overend is again a champion—at the age of 60! This isn't masters-class proficiency—Ned is racing the open field. My piece profiles "Deadly Nedly" and looks at the physiology behind racing at an elite level while aging. I interview exercise physiology experts Joe Friel (author of Fast After Fifty) and Scott Drum (co-founder of the High Altitude Endurance Institute). Ned is an inspiration to a growing number of aging endurance athletes; his message is a simple one of, Don't stop training, but don't cheat recovery time. His philosophy subscribes to more high-intensity intervals and fewer countless "junk miles." Last fall I traveled to Durango, Colorado, where Ned lives and trains, and learned what it takes to be a National Champion at age 60. The piece also goes into some detail about the rising popularity of the new sport of fat-biking on snow. The piece was published in the January/February issue of Outside magazine.

SLA 2016 Banquet
Keynote Speaker: Mark Anthony Jarman
Closing Remarks: Fred Mason