

Visual Turn in Sports History (J Hist Sport)

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The Visual Turn in Sports History - A Special Issue of the
International Journal for the History of Sport

Call for Papers:

Mike Huggins (University of Cumbria) and Mike O'Mahony (University of Bristol) are jointly editing a future special issue of the International Journal of the History of Sport dedicated to representations of sport in visual media, including: painting; sculpture; photography; cinema; and mass culture. The aim of the issue is to present an inter-disciplinary analysis of images of sport that takes accounts of recent developments, methodological concerns and hitherto overlooked sources within the disciplines of sports history, social history, art history, film history and visual culture studies.

Sport has always been marked by a wealth of imagery and visual symbolism. Its visual forms are value-laden interpretations of the sporting world that vary from period to period and from place to place. Yet, back in the 1980s historians still noted 'the invisibility of the visual', and of a widespread reluctance to explore 'the deeper levels of experience which images probe', and of 'the condescension towards images'. Conversely, in disciplines that focus predominantly on the visual, sport has frequently been regarded as of secondary interest. Studies dedicated to the visual representation of the sports theme, for example, have been relatively few and far between and regarded as on the periphery of visual culture studies.

This special issue, planned for 2010, seeks to integrate an analysis of the sporting theme within a broad range of visual culture activities and to highlight the value of such images as primary documents that cast further light on a broad range of socio-political and socio-cultural practices. A number of recent publications have striven to highlight the importance of visual culture to an understanding of sports history (Aaron Baker, *Contesting Identities: Sports in American Film*, 2006; Mike O'Mahony, *Sport in the USSR: Physical Culture - Visual Culture*, 2006). This issue aims to expand upon this growing field of enquiry by drawing together a collection of essays each looking at different aspects of the visual within the representation of sport and its histories. Proposals are welcomed from

scholars working in a number of fields including sports history, social history, film history, design history and any aspect of visual culture studies, so long as they would be of interest to readers of IJHS, which is a high-ranking journal with a global readership, and which variously shed light on methodology, theoretical underpinning and relevant sources. Subjects might include, but are by no means restricted to:

- Representing Horse Racing in the 18th/19th century
- Documenting Motion: Sport and Physical Animation in the Photographic Experiments of Eadward Muybridge and Etienne-Jules Marey
- Representing Children's Games: Sport and Discipline in Victorian and Edwardian Britain
- Boxing and Early American Manhood: The Paintings of Thomas Eakins and George Bellows
- Sport, visibility and the First World War
- Sport and the Cult of Collecting: Sport and Cigarette Cards
- Advertising Sports Events: The Sports Poster
- Sport and Representations of the Modern Woman
- Sporting Portraits
- The Sporting Uebermensch: National Socialist Visual Culture and the Sporting Body
- Celluloid Sport: Sport on Screen
- Images of Conflict: The George Best Murals in Northern Ireland
- Sites of Memory: Monuments to Sporting Heroes
- Body-Building and Sexuality: In Search of the Body Perfect?

An associated conference is planned for 2009. Please send proposals of c.300-400 words to (Mike.Huggins@Cumbria.ac.uk or Mike.OMahony@bristol.ac.uk) by 30 June 2008 (first call).

Reference:

CFP: Visual Turn in Sports History (J Hist Sport). In: ArtHist.net, May 16, 2008 (accessed Jul 5, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/30478>>.