

The logo features a stylized soccer ball in red and white, with the text "US YOUTH SOCCER." inside a hexagonal panel on the left side.

US YOUTH SOCCER WORKSHOP LOS ANGELES • 2017

Is Teaching Character through Soccer Possible?

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Official Art Print
JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT
Diamond 100

Sports build character?

Sports do not build character. They reveal it.

-- Heywood Hale Broun (or John Wooden?)



A continuum of character?



Michael Bradley auctioning off jersey/armband to benefit Orlando victims

June 21, 2016 6:28PM EDT

Character Dilemmas...

- If a team needs a time out or a break, is it proper for a coach to instruct a player to fake an injury?
- Is it ok for a soccer goalie to deliberately violate the rules by moving forward three steps off the line when trying to save a penalty kick if the referee does not notice?
- Your star player is concussed in a state championship game. Would you rather lose as he/she sits out or win because he/she keeps playing?
- What percentage of youth players would lie about having a concussion to not have to sit out?
- What percentage of youth players would take a drug that would assure them of a spot on a national team if they were guaranteed to not be caught?
- What percentage of youth players would take a drug that guaranteed winning a World Cup, but would also kill them within five years?
- When athletes, particularly at the youth level, cheat to win or take dangerous risks (eg, playing through injuries) which is the more important root cause?
 - A lack of individual character
 - Problems with the social context of youth sports (including coaches, parents, etc.)

What is 'character' anyways?



 wisdom	 courage	 humanity	 transcendence	 justice	 moderation
--	---	--	--	---	--

- //creativity
- //curiosity
- //judgement
- //love of learning
- //perspective

- //bravery
- //persistence
- //honesty
- //zest

- //love
- //kindness
- //social intelligence

- //appreciation of beauty
- //gratitude
- //hope
- //humour
- //spirituality

- //teamwork
- //fairness
- //leadership

- //forgiveness
- //modesty
- //prudence
- //self-control

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What is 'character' anyways?

Social Character?

Moral Character?



What if ‘character’ is taken to mean “life skills” (which in other areas of social science are often referred to ‘non-cognitive skills’)?

ZEST

Actively participates
Shows enthusiasm
Invigorates others

GRIT

Finishes whatever he or she begins
Tries very hard even after experiencing failure
Works independently with focus

SELF-CONTROL – SCHOOL WORK

Comes to class prepared
Pays attention and resists distractions
Remembers and follows directions
Gets to work right away rather than procrastinating

SELF-CONTROL – INTERPERSONAL

Remains calm even when criticized or otherwise provoked
Allows others to speak without interruption
Is polite to adults and peers
Keeps temper in check

OPTIMISM

Gets over frustrations and setbacks quickly
Believes that effort will improve his or her future

GRATITUDE

Recognizes and shows appreciation for others
Recognizes and shows appreciation for his/her opportunities

SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE

Able to find solutions during conflicts with others
Demonstrates respect for feelings of others
Knows when and how to include others

CURIOSITY

Is eager to explore new things
Asks and answers questions to deepen understanding
Actively listens to others

18 T. Forneris et al.

Table 4. Means and standard deviations for discrepancy between expectations and perceived experiences.

	Administrators		Coaches		Parents		Athletes	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Life skills								
Pressure	-0.11	0.69	-0.31	0.61	-0.37	0.62	-0.11	0.64
Organization	-0.57	0.59	-0.51	0.58	-0.63	0.60	-0.22	0.52
Communication	-0.62	0.62	-0.57	0.52	-0.71	0.64	-0.22	0.56
Self-control	-0.81	0.57	-0.72	0.53	-0.65	0.56	-0.55	0.58
Concentration	-0.78	0.54	-0.50	0.57	-0.49	0.56	-0.18	0.48
Goal setting	-0.57	0.61	-0.61	0.57	-0.58	0.53	-0.31	0.44
Values								
Compassion	-0.74	0.62	-0.58	0.63	-0.50	0.60	-0.27	0.55
Fairness	-0.88	0.64	-0.77	0.68	-0.48	0.59	-0.30	0.50
Sportspersonship	-0.60	0.60	-0.60	0.64	-0.64	0.50	-0.25	0.44
Integrity	-0.78	0.55	-0.77	0.57	-0.58	0.50	-0.22	0.45
Perseverance	-0.62	0.60	-0.60	0.51	-0.32	0.52	-0.11	0.38
Self-sacrifice	-0.71	0.70	-0.46	0.59	-0.58	0.57	-0.20	0.45
Loyalty	-0.71	0.58	-0.57	0.65	-0.42	0.58	-0.16	0.48
Teamwork	-0.49	0.55	-0.49	0.48	-0.49	0.58	-0.01	0.32
Honesty	-0.77	0.57	-0.63	0.45	-0.49	0.60	-0.26	0.61
Responsibility	-0.71	0.64	-0.51	0.53	-0.72	0.55	-0.17	0.42
Respect	-0.72	0.64	-0.62	0.47	-0.68	0.49	-0.27	0.53

What happens if 'character' is measured as moral reasoning?

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The Center for ETHICS * (Ethical Theory and Honor In Competition and Sport)

The challenge... to think beyond the norm,

The goal... to gain clear thinking,

The purpose... to become better people.



This picture is being used with the compliments of [Alison Meyer Photography](#).



Trends in Moral Reasoning and Social Reasoning: Implications for Future Leaders in Sport

Amukela M. Gwebu, University of Idaho
Sharon Kay Stoll, Ph.D., University of Idaho
Jennifer Beller, Ph.D. Washington State University

What is moral reasoning?

Moral Reasoning, as defined, is a systematic process of evaluating personal values and developing a consistent and impartial set of moral principles to live by (Lumpkin, Stoll, & Beller, 1995). Moral reasoning is imperative to accomplish a philosophic process based on the laws and customs of philosophic reasoning. Moral reasoning is not ideology, or theology, or some mystical practice of making people become good. Rather moral reasoning is based on the assumption that as reasoning individuals, each of us can, through self-examination, cognitive dissonance, and a specific methodology, grow cognitively about our moral decision making process. Moral reasoning does not promise behavioral change, but it does promise individual soul searching and reflection on personal beliefs, values, and principles. Without this process, dissonance is impossible and cognitive moral growth will not increase.

Moral Reasoning in Athlete Populations a 20 Year Review

We have been studying moral reasoning and moral education intervention programs in athletic populations for 20 years. Below find what we know about the process of moral reasoning and moral development.

1. Athlete populations score significantly lower on moral reasoning inventories than do non-athlete populations.
2. Male revenue producing sport athletes score significantly lower than non-revenue producing sport athletes do.
3. Females score significantly higher than males, either revenue producing or non-revenue producing.
4. Female scores are dropping and we predict they will converge with the men's scores if no intervention takes place.
5. Longitudinal studies of discrete competitive populations drop over a four-year period whether high school or college.
6. Moral reasoning scores of non-intervened athletic populations are decreasing at significant rates.
7. The longer one is in athletics, the more affected is one's moral reasoning.
8. Intervention programs can have a positive effect on moral reasoning.
9. Effective intervention programs have a long-term effect on moral reasoning.
10. Moral reasoning is one facet of a highly complex process of moral development.

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pursuing victory with honor

Our CHARACTER COUNTS! sports program gives coaches and parents the tools to build athletes' character — and create true champions.

Center Highlights

1/29/2013



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Josephson Institute's Rich Jarc discusses Armstrong and Te'o stories

"The good news is that the majority of high school athletes trust and admire their coaches and are learning positive life skills and good values from them. They are less cynical about ethical issues and less likely to steal than their classmates.

"The bad news," Josephson added, "is that many coaches -- particularly in the high profile sports of boys' basketball, baseball and football -- are teaching kids how to cheat and cut corners. Both boys and girls are more likely to cheat in school and far too many are willing to cheat in sports and engage in other dishonest, deceptive and dangerous practices without regard for the rules or traditional notions of fair play and sportsmanship. There is reason to worry that the sports fields of America are becoming the training grounds for the next generation of corporate and political villains and thieves."

GET INVOLVED:



Based on the responses of 5,275 high school athletes to a written survey administered in 2005 and 2006. ..

Cheating in school?

“High school students involved in sports cheat in school at a higher rate than their nonsport classmates. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of the boys and girls participating in sports cheated on an exam in the past year in comparison to 60% of the total high school population (based on a 2006 Josephson Institute survey of 35,000 students).”

Theft?

“Athletes are less likely than non-sports students to engage in theft – still, more than one in four male athletes (27%) admitted stealing from a store in the past 12 months compared with 32% of boys not involved in sports.”

Gender differences?

“On virtually every question girl athletes expressed a deeper commitment to honesty and fair play and were much less likely to endorse cheating or other questionable practices in the pursuit of victory.”

	YES	NO
If a team needs a time out or a break, is it proper for a coach to instruct a player to fake an injury?		
Is it ok for a soccer goalie to deliberately violate the rules by moving forward three steps off the line when trying to save a penalty kick if the referee does not notice?		

	YES	NO
If a team needs a time out or a break, is it proper for a coach to instruct a player to fake an injury?	37% (of boys) 20% (of girls)	
Is it ok for a soccer goalie to deliberately violate the rules by moving forward three steps off the line when trying to save a penalty kick if the referee does not notice?	28% (of boys) 14% (of girls)	

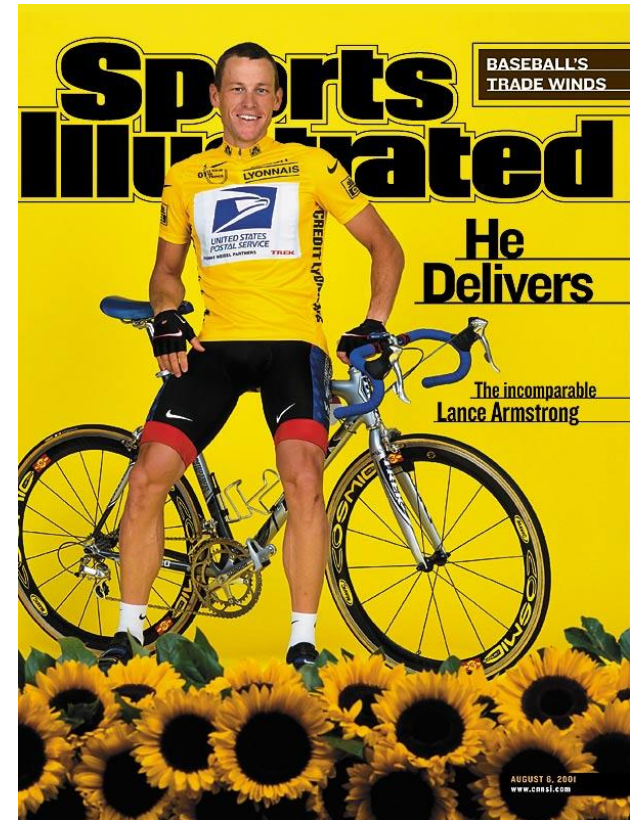
Why might competitive athletes be *less moral on average?*

“Game reasoning” (?)

“The sport ethic” (?)

Lance Armstrong Says He Cheated, Lied, Bullied During Career

By Eben Novy-Williams | Jan 18, 2013 12:47 PM PT | [24 Comments](#) [Email](#) [Print](#)

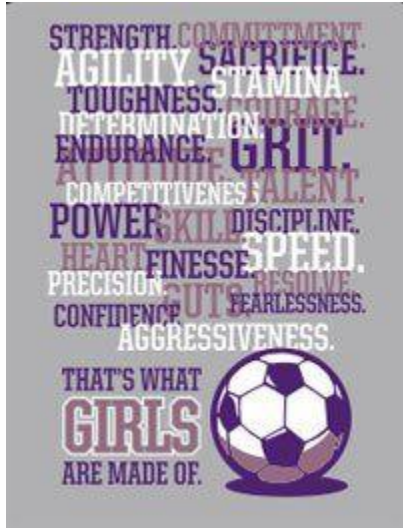


Armstrong for years verbally attacked anyone who questioned the validity of his achievements because of a “win at all costs mentality.”

“It serves me well on the bike, it served me well during the disease, but the level that it went to, for whatever reason, is a flaw,” he said. “That defiance, that attitude, that arrogance, you cannot deny it.”

“The Sport Ethic” (Social Character?)

You have to make sacrifices for *The Game*



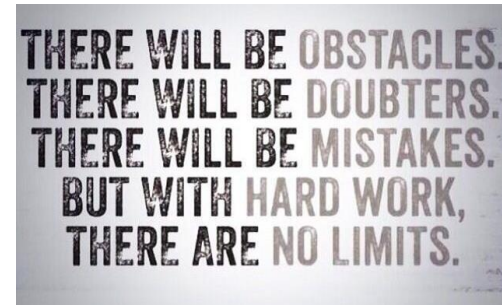
Swifter, higher, stronger
do not give in to pressure, pain, or fear



Do not give in to pressure, pain, or fear

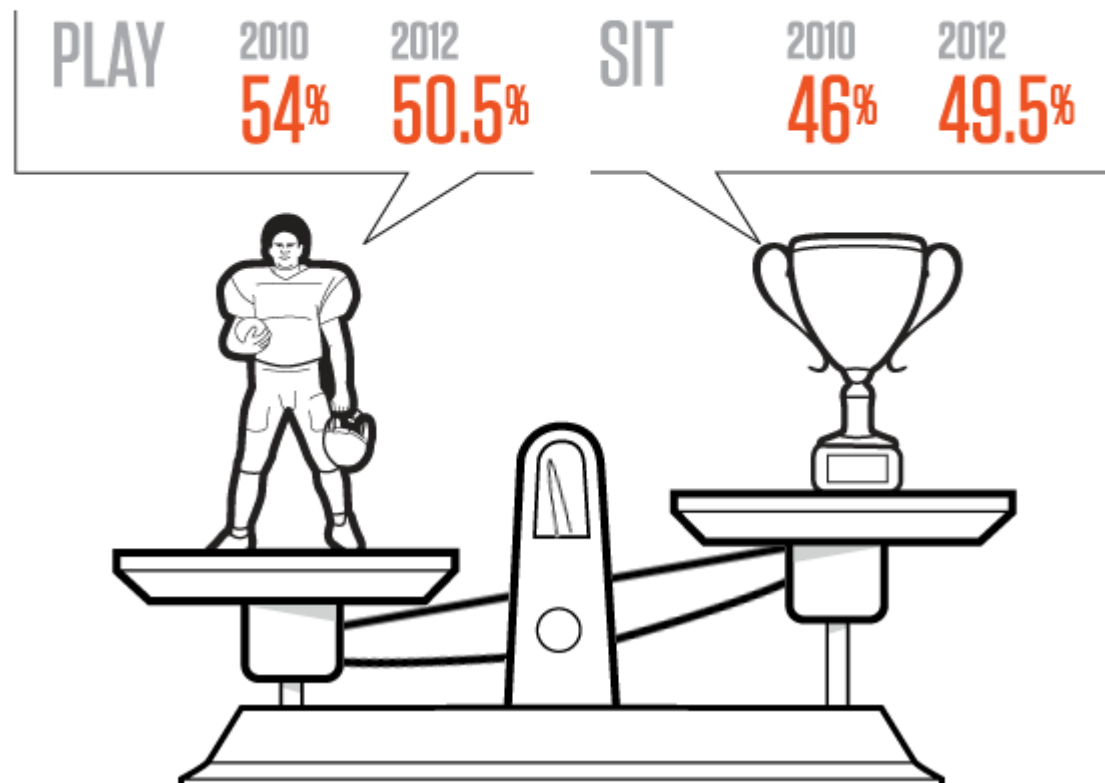


Accept no limits in the pursuit of possibilities.

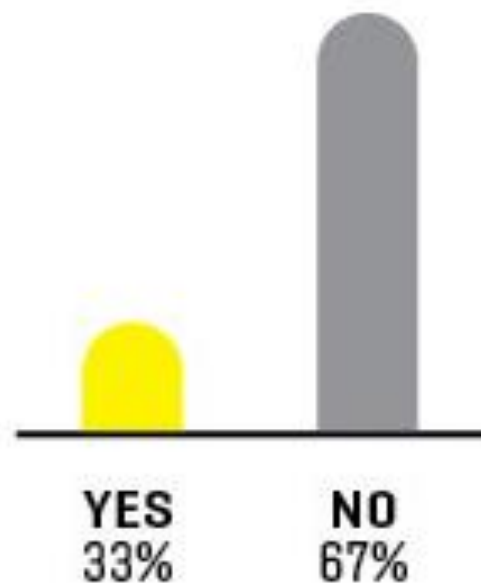


YOUR STAR PLAYER IS CONCUSSED IN THE STATE TITLE GAME. WOULD YOU RATHER LOSE AS HE SITS OUT OR WIN BECAUSE HE KEEPS PLAYING?

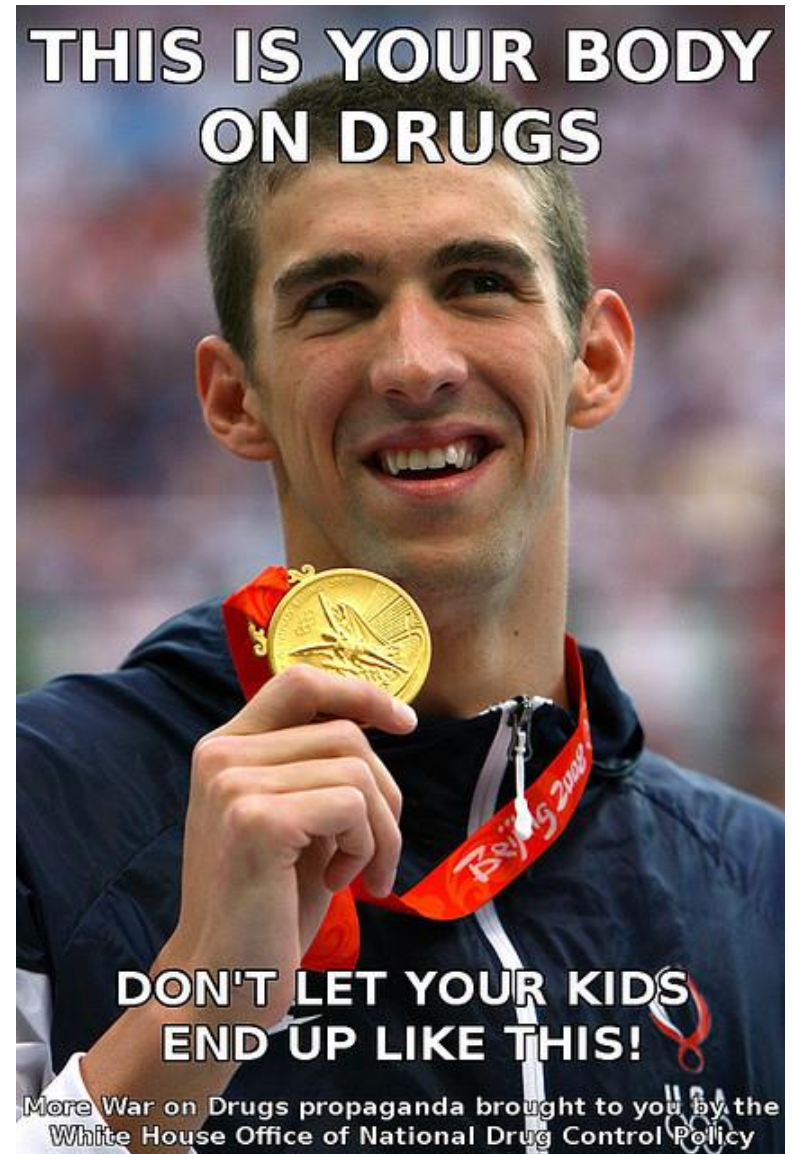
The percentage of players who'd want their teammate to sit out increased from 45.9% to 49.5%. That still left a majority who'd want their colleague to go for it. Says an ESPN 150 defender: "When the adrenaline is pumping and it's Friday night, the selfishness comes out. I'd want him to come back."



SINCE YOU'VE BEEN AT YOUR SCHOOL, HAVE YOU EVER LIED ABOUT A CONCUSSION?



“Would you take a drug that guaranteed you a gold medal, but would also kill you within five years?”

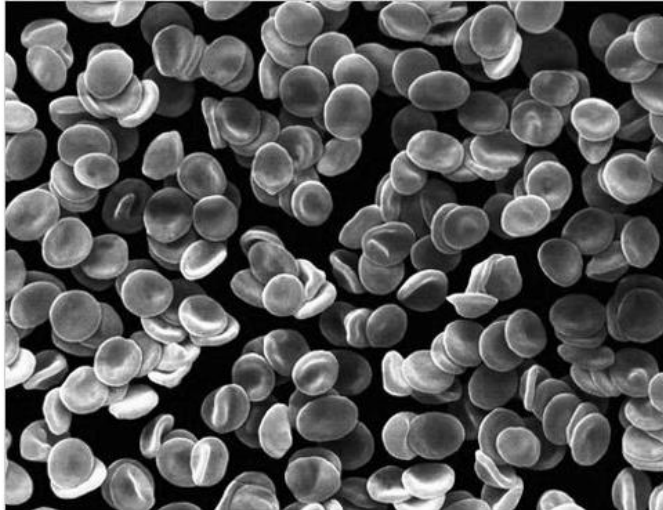




January 20, 2010, 12:01 AM

Phys Ed: Will Olympic Athletes Dope if They Know It Might Kill Them?

By GRETCHEN REYNOLDS



Red blood cells.

Fred Hessler/Getty Images

In November, a study appeared in [The New England Journal of Medicine](#) that should give pause to many athletic dopers and those who love them. The study examined the effects of Darbepoetin Alfa, one of a class of drugs commonly known as Epo that is used to stimulate the body's production of red blood cells. In the experiment, more than 4,000 patients with diabetes, kidney disease and anemia were given either Epo or a placebo. The researchers were testing the impact of the drug when it was used as approved, at moderate doses in sick people. What they found, to their surprise, was that slightly more of the patients taking Epo suffered heart attacks than those in the placebo group, that nearly twice as many suffered a stroke and that the Epo group's self-reported quality of life, their subjective sense of fatigue and illness, was barely better than with placebo.



Phys Ed

"Going in, we had really expected" that Epo "would make people feel better and improve their outcomes," says the study's lead author Dr. Marc Pfeffer, a professor at Harvard University Medical School and senior physician at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. "We certainly had to reject that hypothesis."

1997 survey of elite US athletes asked whether they would take an illegal drug that guaranteed an Olympic gold medal.

195 of 198 athletes would take illegal drug if assured of not being caught

50% would take illegal drug even if side effects were lethal in 5 years

(compared to ~0.8% of the general population)



“Positive Deviance” or “Sport Deviance”

“much deviance among athletes involves excessive **overconformity** to the norms and values embodied in sport itself. When athletes use the ‘sport ethic’ – which emphasizes sacrifice for The Game, seeking distinction, taking risks, and challenging limits-as an exclusive guide for their behavior, sport and sport participation become especially vulnerable to corruption. Although the sport ethic emphasizes positive norms, the ethic itself becomes the vehicle for transforming behaviors that conform to these positive norms into deviant behaviors that are prohibited and negatively sanctioned within society and within sport organizations themselves.” (Hughes & Coakley, 1991)

*Character depends upon the ‘wisdom’, ‘courage’, and ‘moderation’ necessary to know when ‘the sport ethic’ does *not* apply

When athletes, particularly at the youth level, cheat to win or take dangerous risks (eg, playing through injuries) which is the more important root cause?

- A lack of individual character
- Problems with the social context of youth sports (including coaches, parents, etc.)

How much time do you spend with your teams and programs addressing character at the individual level vs. addressing the social context of your team / program (in ways that might be conducive to character)? Any good examples of what has worked?

THE DEHUMANIZING SEXISM OF THE HARVARD MEN'S SOCCER TEAM'S "SCOUTING REPORT"

By Phyllis Thompson November 8, 2016



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN POWELL / LIVERPOOL FC VIA GETTY

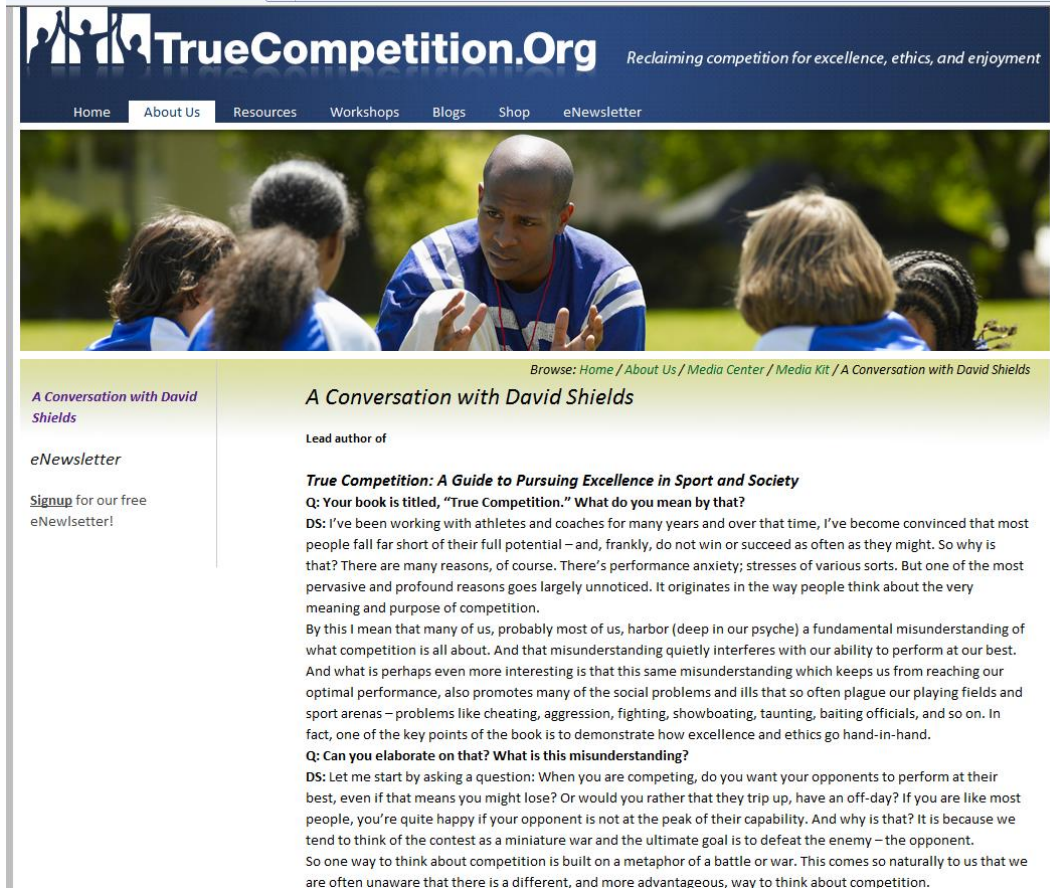
In 2012, members of the men's soccer team at Harvard University produced a detailed Google document that assessed the physical characteristics of the high-school seniors recently recruited to the women's team. The "scouting report," which the *Harvard Crimson* revealed in an article last month, was vulgar even by Trumpian measures, not only quantifying each woman's attractiveness with a numerical rating but assigning her a nickname and sexual position.

Building Character at the Individual Level?

For sports to build ‘social character’ (and ‘life skills’) that applies outside of sport settings:

- 1) Character and life skills should be an explicit point of emphasis within the sports context (not just an assumed side-benefit);
- 2) Character and life skills associated with sports settings should *transfer* in clear and intentional ways outside of sports settings (ie, in the workplace, home, school, etc.)

Building Character at the Community Level?



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A Conversation with David Shields

Lead author of

True Competition: A Guide to Pursuing Excellence in Sport and Society

Q: Your book is titled, "True Competition." What do you mean by that?

DS: I've been working with athletes and coaches for many years and over that time, I've become convinced that most people fall far short of their full potential – and, frankly, do not win or succeed as often as they might. So why is that? There are many reasons, of course. There's performance anxiety; stresses of various sorts. But one of the most pervasive and profound reasons goes largely unnoticed. It originates in the way people think about the very meaning and purpose of competition.

By this I mean that many of us, probably most of us, harbor (deep in our psyche) a fundamental misunderstanding of what competition is all about. And that misunderstanding quietly interferes with our ability to perform at our best. And what is perhaps even more interesting is that this same misunderstanding which keeps us from reaching our optimal performance, also promotes many of the social problems and ills that so often plague our playing fields and sport arenas – problems like cheating, aggression, fighting, showboating, taunting, baiting officials, and so on. In fact, one of the key points of the book is to demonstrate how excellence and ethics go hand-in-hand.

Q: Can you elaborate on that? What is this misunderstanding?

DS: Let me start by asking a question: When you are competing, do you want your opponents to perform at their best, even if that means you might lose? Or would you rather that they trip up, have an off-day? If you are like most people, you're quite happy if your opponent is not at the peak of their capability. And why is that? It is because we tend to think of the contest as a miniature war and the ultimate goal is to defeat the enemy – the opponent. So one way to think about competition is built on a metaphor of a battle or war. This comes so naturally to us that we are often unaware that there is a different, and more advantageous, way to think about competition.

A Conversation with David Shields

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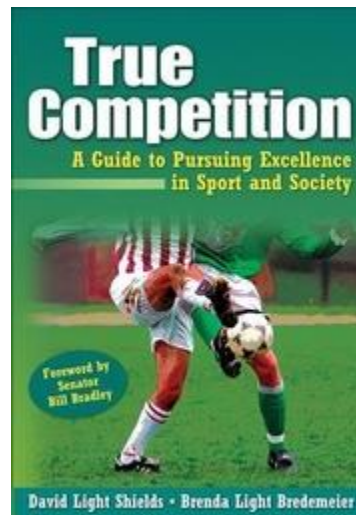
“At its core, sport is an odd blending of play and work, of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, of ‘it’s just a game’, and ‘life’s a game’. Under these conflicting tensions and pulls, it is not surprising that a moral leniency that is legitimated, in part, by the playful, nonserious nature of sport is stretched beyond its appropriate bounds. One can hide seriousness under the cloak of play. The egocentrism of the game provides an easy rationalization of all manner of egocentric moral distortion.”

-- David Shields

Building Character at the Community Level?

Make teams 'communities of character' by:

- 1) Building a sense of community through democratic leadership.
- 2) Developing a mastery-oriented environment focused on 'true competition'.
- [3] Create a team culture (from the top-down) and the bottom-up) where character is the priority.



Competition and Decompetition: A Summary

	Competition <i>Striving with</i>	Decompetition <i>Striving against</i>	See chapter
Basic metaphor	Partnership	Battle or war	2
Motivation	Love of the game Shared enjoyment	Use of the game Thrill (at opponents' expense)	4
Goals	Learning and mastery Pursuit of excellence	Domination and conquest Pursuit of superiority	5
View of opponent	Partner or enabler	Obstacle or enemy	6
Regulation	Rules are imperfect guides to fairness and welfare Officials are facilitators	Rules are partially tolerated restraints Officials are opponents	7
Playing and winning	Focus is on process (contesting)	Focus is on outcome (winning)	8
Ideal contest	Balanced opposition Tension, drama, story Play and seriousness in balance Positive emotions predominate	Dominated contest Certainty of outcome Seriousness overshadows play Negative emotions predominate	9

So, can soccer build character?

Maybe...

“Becoming a star athlete requires a profound and long—term self-absorption, a single-minded attention to the development of a few rather odd physical skills, and an overarching competitive outlook. These qualities may well make a great athlete, but they don’t *necessarily* make a great person.” (Eitzen, p. 79 quoting from Matthew Goodman)