A Contextual Approach to an Understanding of Competition: A Response to Keating's Philosophy of Athletics

William A. Sadler Jr.
Bloomfield College

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WILLIAM SADLER

Professor of Sociology
Bloomfield College (N.J.)
A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF COMPETITION:
A RESPONSE TO KEATING'S PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETICS*

by

William A. Sadler, Jr.

In Professor Keating's philosophy of competition and athletics I find a triple objective. First he sets out to provide a definition of competition which will enable him to distinguish athletics from activities which may be associated with them, such as sports and criminal activities. Secondly, on the basis of this definition, he attempts to construct a standard by which to mitigate the potential excess of competition in athletics. Thirdly, in a truly competitive spirit, he presents an argument so inherently provocative that response to it is demanded. I shall acknowledge the achievement of the third objective by calling the first two into question.

There are various levels at which people will want to criticize his argument. Many who spend a considerable part of their lives within the world of sports will argue against his notions on the basis of their own experience. Others will attack his argument on moral grounds; his ethics of competition will disturb the moral sensitivity of many people who are not willing to sacrifice so many primary values for the continuance of his kind of athletics. Philosophers will undoubtedly take him to task for the confusions and dogmatisms that issue from his merging of prescription with description in his definition. While sharing in the intentions of such criticisms, my own approach will operate on a different level. Nevertheless, I should confess at the outset that underlying the following relatively impartial contextual analysis, there are a number of beliefs which might give my response a bias. It will clear the air, and hopefully the argument, if I indicate one of my beliefs about competition.

I believe, though with some reservations, that commitment to a competitive viewpoint as reflected in Keating's philosophy is detrimental to growth towards full humanness.1 As it becomes part of one's habitual pattern of perception, competitiveness interferes with an individual's way of perceiving others as persons. It functions to obstruct a normal process of critical self-reflection and to produce insensitivity towards personal and social needs. For example, Keating justifies competition in society on the grounds that it is a manifestly efficient way of selecting a candidate for a prestigious medical school. "What alternative to the competitive principle would those who denigrate it offer?" he asks. In view of the drastic shortage of doctors and medical schools to train them, an obvious, immediate and serious answer would be to decrease the competitiveness by increasing the availability of medical training. One might expect from an ethical consideration of competition some critical awareness of the consequences it may have. Instead, Keating responds to a charge that competitive games tend to bring out the worst in children with the irrelevant remark that its author shows himself to be abysmally ignorant of athletics.

I should make clear that I am sympathetic to Professor Keating's stated aim

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A RESPONSE TO KEATING'S PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETICS

of establishing a norm by which to regulate and limit the degree of competition in athletics. However, I am dissatisfied with his approach and his norm; his code of sportsmanship does not go nearly far enough. Furthermore, his philosophical stance is disturbing; it appears to be an accommodation to the status quo. I believe that we still need to work to change our world for the better; to move towards this goal, we need to reconsider our views of competition within a context broader than that provided by the sports world. Keating does acknowledge that competition has played a dominant role in many aspects of American life, especially in economics. He fails to remark, however, that a salient feature in modern economic theory has involved serious reconsideration of the practical and moral validity of competition in national and international economies. The history of political legislation in twentieth century America involves lengthy chapters about regulation and restraint of competition. Recently, even leaders in the business world have expressed doubts about competition, and some are seeking alternatives to the competitive principle. Should not leaders in the sports world also examine competition critically? Outside of the world of business, there has been a considerable amount of negative thinking about competition, especially in view of its consequences for personal and social well-being. Keating’s ethics of competition are jejune, because he fails to consider the nature of competition in the context of our society. Sports and athletics do not take place in a vacuum. They are permeated by numerous social forces and interpreted in terms of dominant cultural norms.

Rather than remain on the level of belief and morality, which tends to heat up quickly, I suggest moving to a cooler level of methodology. Before prosecuting a contextual analysis, it would be well to expose a few underlying assumptions associated with competition. Keating makes a common American assumption about the naturalness, indeed inevitability, of competition. Americans tend to think that competing is “doing what comes naturally.” A little social history is helpful to counteract this unwarranted assumption. During the past century we have so ingested Darwinistic notions about natural selection and survival of the fittest, that we have taken them to be indubitable facts; actually, they were theories meant to account for an order of reality different from modern human life. Americans have been acting out these biological theories in their economic and social lives so that we have seen them as human facts supporting our assumptions about competition. However congruent competition is with our success-oriented life style, we cannot absolutize it as a universally dominant natural, social, and individual force. Biologists have even suggested that dynamics other than competition or aggression are more fundamental to life, such as the tendency towards stabilization and equilibrium. From this perspective, competition may be unnatural. Social sciences have given ample testimony that competition is not a significant factor in many other societies. In fact, in most societies competitiveness is incompatible with traditional social structures. From a scientific perspective, there are good reasons for being critical of this common American assumption.

There are also reasons for rejecting Lovejoy’s definition of competition, which Keating accepts as normative after adding a qualifying phrase. The final version
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reads: "Competition is an attempt, according to agreed-upon rules, to get or to keep any valuable thing, either to the exclusion of others or in greater measure than others." Both philosophers apparently see competition as an acquisitive stance; it is oriented towards obtaining some thing. As a contextual analysis will indicate, there are other stances within which competition can be viewed. The original meaning of the Latin verb *cometo* itself suggests an activity quite different from that prescribed by the above definition. This verb refers to acting together or seeking together; hence, it implies the notion of coming together to reach an agreement. An additional notion, one of contest, infiltrated the term as it was applied to athletic encounters. The original meaning of the Latin term for contest is also significant for our purposes. The verb *contendo* signifies to stretch, to strain or exert oneself. As implied in the Greek term *agon*, a contest is an encounter in which one stretches himself towards his physical and mental limits. A contestant is one who is engaged in an activity that calls forth the full exercise of his powers. By contending, he testifies to his aptitude and ability. Competition signifies an interpersonal contest in which participants testify to their competence as they interact. A quick etymological consideration is enough to indicate how different the classical frame of reference was from that proposed by Lovejoy and Keating.

It is possible to move reflection beyond these alternatives by considering other contexts. We can construct ideal types of cultures and then consider the kind of fit competition will have within them. For numerous reasons, this presentation will have to move on a high level of abstraction. However, these ideal types are not meant to be hypothetical; they have been constructed with specific social and cultural contexts in mind. While some aspects of this analysis will be similar to the work of other students of sport, there will be noticeable differences. I shall not, for example, attempt to assess to what extent competitive sports fit in with the American social system; nor shall I suggest some moral ideal which might be sought to guide and correct athletic behavior today. The method employed here is basically a cross-cultural comparison of types of societies in terms of their orientations towards dominant values. Unlike most monographs in this vein, however, the purpose of my article is not to present the findings of a study. Hopefully, this contextual approach will stimulate some empirical studies so that we can have a more comprehensive and realistic framework within which to understand, interpret, and assess competition not only in sports, but in all aspects of human life.

I propose that we consider four cultural constellations to be characterized by their conceptions of normative activity. These four types can be denoted as: *Being, Becoming, Doing, and Having*. There are other types of cultures which could be classified in terms of different dominant behavior patterns. For example, one can think of a Destroying type of culture, where the institutionalized life style is essentially predatory and destructive; but instances of such cultures are rare and not useful to this analysis. One can imagine other types oriented around different types of activity. There could be a Winning culture composed of multiple Vince Lombardis; there could even be Loving
cultures. However, these ideas are merely hypothetical and do not serve the purpose of this contextual approach. Each type of cultural constellation will be examined in terms of constants which serve to indicate some distinctive variations between them. The constants to be considered here are: views of time, space, normative activity, interpersonal and social relations, and life goals or aspired final states. Other constants would have to be considered to obtain a fuller understanding of the types themselves; however, these five will be sufficient for our immediate purposes.

The term being is here meant to denote a dominant value orientation that may be found in numerous societies throughout history, including both primitive and highly traditional ones. In the modern world, some Eastern societies and some subcultures in Western societies, such as our own Spanish-American and Indian groups, would fall into this category. Within this cultural constellation, time is perceived as either unimportant because it is segregated from eternity, or meaningful in terms of the past. Within the latter view, the "great time" was believed to have been long ago, not now, or yet to come. Today's time is valuable insofar as it recovers, recapitulates, or extends the power and meaning of "that" time. Those who lived long ago are not merely ancestors; they are conceived as heroes or gods. Their time was a golden or sacred era; in contrast, the present is perceived as a degenerate or at least a vapid era. The view of space is correlative to that of time; it similarly lacks a dynamic perspective. As man in time is seen to be heavily dependent upon the past, so he is conceived to be subordinate to nature. The forces of nature are seen to dominate the lived space of this world; consequently, the proper role for man is submission to them. In this perspective, man exists under nature. The people of a being culture tend to be fatalistic. Man is dominated by forces of the past and by his environment. There is no reason to attempt to change one's situation. Whatever will be, will be. Quite logically, the view of normative activity is characterized in terms of being. There is a receptive acceptance of things as they are, along with the view that man should not interfere with the present order. A motto for this life style might well read: "Let it be!" In social life, there is great emphasis placed upon lineal relationships, as seen in highly traditionalistic behavior that attempts to preserve the memory and the manners of the group line. Their religions also contain a ritualistic orientation towards the past and a strong emphasis upon yielding to dominant life forces and obedience to old customs. True piety means submission. In personal life, emphasis is placed upon finding peaceful accommodation with the cosmos. Consequently, there is little awareness of the self as an independent unit. Rather, the self is conceived as an expression of the group or an extension of some primal source. Conflict must be avoided so as to preserve continuity with one's family, the group, one's environment, and the universe. A major aspiration for self and reality is continuity, or even an uninterrupted flow of being.

It should be obvious that within this type of value orientation competition simply does not have a logical place. When we find evidence of competition, it may be regarded as a deviant form of activity; or, it could signify a source of tension and confusion. Such has been the case when baseball, for example, has
been institutionalized in a being type of culture. In some communities in the American Southwest these games have been experienced as a threat to the entire fabric of the traditional culture. In other instances, games from other cultures have been refashioned so that the competitiveness in them is greatly reduced. Within a being perspective, however, anyone who defines competition as a rightful attempt to get or keep any valuable thing to the exclusion of others in his community would be suitably dispatched and dispensed with. In the more mystical versions of this cultural type, anyone espousing this view of competition would be told that his way of seeking is ill-conceived. As T. S. Eliot put it:

“In order to possess what you do not possess
You must go by the way of dispossession.”

The religious language of being cultures is not in terms of grasping but of sacrifice. One is told to give up in order to receive, to lose in order to attain. Competition and value simply do not inhabit the same realm in the universe when viewed from this perspective.

A becoming culture evinces a different set of attitudes towards those constants we just examined in a being constellation. With regard to time, the present is seen to have the greatest reality. The vitality and significance of the past is seen to fade quickly away, while the future looms uncertainly on the horizon. Now is the moment about which to be concerned. Why put off until tomorrow what you can enjoy today? The view of space is correlative with the more optimistic temporality. Space provides an area for development of natural and human potentiality. Necessity and the forces of nature are respected; but in addition, there is an awareness of possibility and opportunity. Man’s proper relationship to nature is conceived in terms of cooperation rather than subjugation. Within this perspective, man lives with nature. Both time and space are more ambiguous than in a being perspective, for they open up to man, providing chances for achievement as well as failure. The cosmos allows for freedom and presents man with challenges for its expression. Normative human activity is here conceived as becoming. In Aristotle’s grand conception of this perspective, all of reality is moved by the dynamics of actualization of potentialities. Man is the highest and most complete expression of this fundamental principle. His personal life is to be measured in terms of self-development. Social life is also conceived in terms of becoming. Like individuals, cities have goals as well as virtues and vices. In both interpersonal and social dimensions, there is more concern for collateral relationships than lineal ones. Friendship becomes a virtue challenging filial devotion, and justice is seen to be the aim of social process. Cooperation is emphasized rather than submission and obedience. The goal of life is conceived as the fullest realization of human and natural powers. Individuals and cities should strive for the achievement of excellence.

Competition has definitely found a place within becoming cultures, though it has at the same time been recognized as productive of tension; and sometimes it has been seen to lead to disaster. Consequently, there has often been an emphasis upon limits within which competition must be kept. For example, the
well-known Delphic oracle commonly rendered "to know thyself" actually meant that one should know his limits and respect them. Within the becoming perspective of classical Athens, the worst sin was *hubris*, the arrogance of unrestrained anger that can so easily emerge in competitive situations. To transgress natural and moral limitations is the essence of *hubris*. Religion, philosophy, drama, the arts, rhetoric, and the laws collaborated in the classical tradition to keep competition within the framework of moderation and cooperation. There are examples of competition as defined by Keating to be found in classical culture, but they were held to be contemptible rather than normative. Plato went so far as to recommend child's play rather than agonistic activity as the way to lead a good life. Cicero scorned competitive athletic contests as beneath contempt. Even great military leaders singled out cooperation rather than competition as the most natural form of interaction. Marcus Aurelius, for example, wrote:

For we are made for cooperation, like feet, like hands, like eyelids, like the rows of the upper and lower teeth. To act against one another, then, is contrary to nature. 8

All of these representative men were competitive in some aspects of their lives. However, they apparently saw competition as a form of becoming. It was a mode of self-actualization and self-expression rather than one of acquisition. Insofar as competition is consonant with a becoming value orientation, it is viewed as an activity with another rather than as against him. The aim of competitive activity here is to interact so that participants actualize their fullest potentialities; it is not meant to deprive someone else of something valuable.

A third cultural constellation is oriented around the activity of doing. This type of culture is very activistic, practical, and productive. The United States, especially during its formative years, might be considered a paradigm of this type. Time in a doing culture is future oriented. While the present is important, its significance is seen in terms of its leading to greater opportunities. Americans have typically been future oriented and have viewed time as a ribbon stretching ahead to a brighter tomorrow. In a being culture, change is viewed as a threat; in a doing culture, the lack of change is threatening. For members of the latter cultural type, "time marches on" towards greater progress. The space of a doing culture is also seen in a distinctive way. Space is viewed impersonally as an area within which one might put his time to good use. Nature is neither an oppressive force nor a realm calling for a harmonious relationship. On the contrary, nature represents raw material that man should control for his own purposes. In this perspective, man is seen to be over nature. The proper stance towards space is one of mastery. In classical culture, natural limits were emphasized; in America one is told, "the sky's the limit." Athenians were aware of their limits and afraid to go too far; Americans have not known what their limits are and have been afraid of not reaching them. The normative activity within this type of orientation is neither being nor becoming but doing. Just being is viewed negatively; it is laziness as opposed to virtuous productivity. Congruent with time-space notions, truly valuable doing is thought of as getting results. In other
cultures, work was viewed as a curse; in this perspective, it is seen as man's highest calling. Hard work is inherently valuable, but even more so when it is productive and useful. This type of culture is production oriented and utilitarian. Its heroes are great producers. The view of self in this perspective is characteristically individualistic. Doing your own work is more important than preserving social and interpersonal relationships. Manners, customs, and even personal sensitivities can legitimately be ignored or suppressed if they stand in the way of getting the job done. Good human relationships are justified not so much as ends but as factors contributing to more efficient operation. Friendly relations are helpful to business. The final objective of this type of life style is success. A primary fear is of failing to "make it."

Competition has played a significant role in the evolution of doing cultures, especially in the United States. The struggle to achieve success has often been supported by the rhetoric of competition as a valuable form of activity. The world is seen as a great arena; wherever one finds himself, he should strive to win. Within this context, the meaning of competition undergoes a transformation. In a becoming orientation, one normally competes with another to develop human potential and to make it manifest. Competition is thus an intrinsic part of the actualization of self and the other person. It is governed by those goals. In a doing orientation, one competes to accomplish results which may be extrinsic to the actual competitive process. The aim of competition in this context is logically to excel; but the boundaries of competition here become confused by extraneous goals. Competitiveness then may be encouraged in the most unlikely areas, such as learning, working, and attracting friends. It is possible that all meaningful doing is eventually interpreted in competitive terms. Thus, competition is conceived as an interminable historical process. Heroes are those who compete constantly. A doer values those people who refuse to quit, who never say die, and who win.

The fourth constellation is clustered around the activity of having. While this type of orientation may be found among people who have undergone serious deprivation and are thus anxiously motivated to obtain and keep whatever they can, it is also discernable among people in highly successful, affluent societies. For example, this kind of life stance may be found in modern industrial states in which the orientation has shifted from production to consumption. The primary value orientation is in terms of what persons have, rather than what they do. In a doing culture, a man's work defines his status; in a having culture, a person's status is established more in terms of what he can demonstrate he has through manifest consumption. Within a having constellation, time is still future oriented, but the focus is upon an immediate future, and the tempo has increased. A producer will look to the far distant future and wait patiently for his work to come to fruition. A consumer is impatient to have his needs gratified. The temporality of a haver is characterized by a demand for immediate gratification. As a member of the instant generation, he is constantly on the alert for shortcuts to satisfaction. The spatiality of this orientation signifies a transformation of a doing perspective. Here man is also conceived as being over nature. In this instance, however, nature is not merely to
be tamed; it is to be “had.” A having stance not only dominates a given space, but utterly transforms it. Material eventually is seen as so much potential waste products. A haver’s attitude towards space is similar to the “disposal mentality” of the throw-away society portrayed by Toffler. Within a having orientation, space is conceived possessively; one is uneasy until he can own it, that is, get his hands on it. Normative human activity is thought to be acquisitive. Verbs such as get, hold, keep, hang on to, and have resonate the primary value orientation of this type of culture. The mode of social and interpersonal relationships in this orientation continues to be individualistic, but here, too, a shift is noticeable from a doing perspective. The measure of significant individual activity becomes less public and more internalized into a private standard of satisfaction. Valuable activity is assessed in terms of how one feels about what he has rather than how others judge the results of his efforts. There is a marked increase in infantile self-centeredness and relativism. It’s good if you like it. Living well is interpreted in terms of feeling good. As the individual becomes privatized, there is a corresponding growth of bureaucracy to take care of many responsibilities that doers used to assume. The final state desired within this perspective is a perpetual state of private, individual contentment.

Within a having orientation, competition has no inherent position. If it exists here, it will be extrinsically related to normative activity. That is, competition will be valued if it is seen as an efficient way to increase having, but it can as easily be dropped if other ways of attaining what is desired are believed to be superior. So, for example, vigorous exponents of free enterprise can quickly alter their view and support restrictive tariffs, which eliminate competition that threatens their profits. Within a having orientation, one competes against another in order to have something valuable in greater measure than he has. Corresponding to the aspiration towards contentment, there may be an attempt to regulate competition through technology and an increase in rules so as to keep tension and risk to a minimum. Although excitement will thereby be reduced, these procedures are justified in terms of the primary concerns about having a prize and a satisfied feeling at the end. The interest in competition in athletics here shifts from doing something to gaining satisfaction by watching others do it. Thus competition is perceived more as a satisfying form of entertainment, something to give thrills and pleasure to millions of spectators. A code of competition emerges that emphasizes the need for competitors to observe rules so as not to spoil a good show. Within this orientation, competitive activities, like everything else, become extremely vulnerable to commercialization. When the value of an activity is measured by what you can take away from it, its inherent worth is suppressed in favor of utilizing the activity to obtain money by satisfying customers. Even the competitor sees his activity as oriented towards more having, for wealth is the primary means towards greater consumption. Competitors and the competitive activity become commodities to be consumed within a life style that is oriented towards having more and more.

This typology of cultural contexts is useful in several ways. First, it suggests the cultural bias that has influenced Keating’s definition and his philosophy.
His conceptualization fits best in a context that is in a transitional stage between doing and having orientations. While he emphasizes that his philosophy is descriptive and functional, it should be recognized that it is so only within his specific context. There is no reason to accord it universality. His insistence that competition requires seeking to excell or surpass is essentially a prescriptive statement; it may be considered descriptive within a doing context. His notion that competition is an attempt to get or keep something to the exclusion of others best fits a having orientation. Such a view is appropriate for an acquisitive society but not other types. His rigid distinctions between athletics and play are further indications of his value orientation. Unless one chooses to absolutize Keating's goals, it is unnecessary to insist upon these distinctions. For example, one can indeed compete to beat somebody and obtain a prize. But within another orientation, the goal might be personal and social development. If that seems incredible, then one is simply not stepping outside the context of his cultural bias. To make a workable definition of a significant human activity, it is important to consider the full socio-cultural context within which it occurs rather than just an immediate manifest goal. The advantage of this typology of contexts is that it provides a broad, flexible framework within which to understand and assess the meaning of competition in a given situation.

Another advantage of this approach is that it provides an incentive for reassessing our understanding of other relevant activities, such as play. Keating's conceptualization of play patently exhibits a doing-having orientation. From that perspective, the play phenomenon is simply delightful; the essence of play is pleasure. That is a traditional interpretation of play from within the perspective of a Western work ethic. By reducing play to pleasure, the worker robs it of serious significance. However, careful study of play in various contexts has revealed that it is a much more complex and important activity than workers and athletes might suspect.\textsuperscript{10} In addition to being fun, play can constitute a very important form of learning. In a child's world, for example, where there is a dominant orientation towards growth, play represents a significant form of testing and discovery. In therapy and numerous ordinary situations, play can be a mode of attaining important personal and interpersonal insight. Within an esthetic context play can be a primary mode of developing creativity and enhancing productivity. In various situations, especially those associated with a becoming orientation, play can be a vital mode of self-expression in which one displays his true self. A serious question which needs to be faced is whether or not authentic play can tolerate competition. The inclination of many play theorists thus far seems to indicate a negative answer.

However, a positive assessment of competition with a play orientation has recently been provided by Scott Kretchmar.\textsuperscript{11} From within a phenomenological perspective that manifests strong inclinations towards a becoming orientation, Kretchmar sees play as emerging from existential fullness. While his view of work is suspiciously negative, he has a point. Within his view work proceeds from an encounter with necessity. You work because you have to; you do not need to play. Thus characterized, play is seen to have its own time; its temporality is constituted by a full present. The space of play is open, providing players with a
sense of adventure and challenge. It is an activity that is expressive of the self. It views relationships to others in terms of opposition. At this point in his argument, Kretchmar makes some very important distinctions relevant to the above question. One's opponent is not necessarily viewed as a threat to one's own attempts to acquire something valuable. On the contrary, an opponent primarily provides the challenge necessary to express oneself and to develop one's capacities to the fullest. Consequently, competitive play can be recognized as constituting an interdependence between opponents whose contest mutually testifies to their personal worth. From this perspective, a true sportsman is not a hard worker who is legalistically concerned about his attainment but a good player who cares about our experience of our game. If one views competition and play consistently within the same value orientation of becoming, then apparently both modes of activity may converge to form an intrinsic element of self and social development.

One general lesson to be learned from this approach is that words and deeds have different meanings according to the cultural contexts within which they occur. Only if we insist upon the superiority or necessity of one context over all the others should we become dogmatic in our interpretations of human action. Consequently, competition and sports, work and play will take on different meanings within diverse cultural contexts. Competition in a doing or having culture will perform a different function from that within a becoming culture. Similarly, competition in a warlike perspective will be directed towards surpassing another and acquiring valuable things exclusively. An opponent is thus viewed as an obstacle to be overcome. From within a self-actualization perspective, competition might be viewed as a form of encounter that occurs for mutual benefit. These are not the only alternatives, however. Another goal towards which competition might be oriented is the formation of friendships and community. Within a sharing orientation, people might compete in order to evoke a world of play in which bonds of reciprocity are established. In this context, one could compete with another not merely to do his best but to create a playful situation in which to interact freely, totally, and honestly with other persons. In most perspectives, it is difficult for opponents to be good friends; but in a sharing orientation, it would be possible for competitors to become the best of friends, because they would compete with, rather than against, each other.

The purpose of this article has been to suggest a contextual approach with which to understand and assess important forms of human action, such as competition, sports, and play. I have suggested that definitions and philosophies should be worked out not only in view of their own context but of alternatives. Furthermore, it has become apparent that different types of competition may be delineated by considering the framework of various ideal types of dominant value orientations within which competitive behavior takes place.

In view of the increasing aggravation of problems in the modern world, there is also a need for substantial moral considerations. Towards that end, types of value orientation other than those already delineated may be necessary. At least a fifth type of culture should be considered as a viable alternative towards which to work and play. This type can be denoted as a sharing culture in which the
dominant form of care is for the well being of the total context; as such, its care would be inclusive of the other types. If competition is to survive in this kind of culture, then I propose that it be understood in the following way within the specific context of sports. Here competition would be a form of social and/or interpersonal encounter in which participants interact in a contest wherein the goals are to test abilities, increase in competence, express freedom, and share in a common endeavor to create a more playful environment in which bonds of friendship and community are strengthened. Admittedly, this is an idealistic notion. But unless one opts for a materialistic view of history, he must recognize the importance of ideals as formative social forces influencing the shape of human destiny. It is just possible that if the institution of sports were reoriented towards a sharing value constellation, it might function to counter the trend towards greater having and foster the development of a more humane world. At least that is something for an ethics of competition and sports to take into consideration.

FOOTNOTES

1 Throughout this article I am referring to only one article by James W. Keating: "A Philosophy of Competition and the Nature of Athletics." Printed in the journal Philosophic Exchange, Summer. 1973. A more explicit expression of my belief about the nature of competition in contemporary American society may be found in: "Competition Out of Bounds: Sports in American Life." To be published in Quest and originally given in different form as an address at the AAHPER Convention in Houston. March. 1972.


4 In formulating this approach I have been greatly influenced by Clyde Kluckhohn and Talcott Parsons' works, which have stressed the importance of values in the understanding of social systems. cf. T. Parsons and E. A. Shils, eds. Toward a General Theory of Action, New York: Harper and Row, 1961. I have adapted much of the value orientation framework provided by Florence Kluckhohn and Fred Strrodbeck. Variations in Value Orientations. Evanston: Row, Peterson & Co. 1961. Also influential is the work of Edmund Hall, whose concept of culture provides numerous constants which can be significant in cross cultural comparisons. cf. his The Silent Language. Garden City: Doubleday & Co. 1959.


7 Mircea Eliade has provided a useful ideal portrait of a religious culture that approximates the concept being developed here. cf. his The Sacred and the Profane. New York: Harper and Row, 1961.


