

Breivik, G. (2015). Academic versus sporting knowledge: Robert L. Simon and the debate about sports on campus. *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport*, 43, 61-74.

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# Academic versus sporting knowledge. Robert L. Simon and the debate about sports on campus

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Key words: academic knowledge, sporting knowledge, education, intercollegiate athletics

Robert L. Simon is a sport philosopher with many interests. He is not only interested in advanced theoretical matters but in seemingly mundane affairs, such as the question about the role of sports on campus. The question may seem trivial, but it has implications not only for how we view sports and higher education, but also for how we value different forms of knowledge, relating to body as well as mind.

Simon has written about sports on campus in several publications. He discussed intercollegiate athletics in the article “Does Athletics Undermine Academics? Examining Some Issues” in 2008. But the topic was already present as a chapter in the first edition of the Fair Play book in 1991, and then in the second edition in 2004. My discussion in the following is based on the latest edition of the Fair Play book from 2015, where Simon has Cesar Torres and Peter Hager as co-authors. In this edition the chapter on sports on campus is revised and updated with new examples, but where the trust of the arguments and the core views are the same as in earlier versions of the chapter. It is still Simon’s voice we hear. I will therefore in the following refer to Simon’s views, but without forgetting the co-authors.

I will first present Simon’s views and then follow up with a short presentation of two other contributions to the same theme that have appeared in Journal of the Philosophy of Sport, namely Myles Brand: “The Role and Value of Intercollegiate Athletics” from 2006 and Randolph Feezell: “Branding the Role and Value of Intercollegiate Athletics” from 2015.<sup>1</sup> I will end with a discussion of some of the central problems that have been raised and how recent contributions to the discussion of knowledge can open new perspectives.

## Simon on campus sport

The chapter about sports on campus in the 2015 book is an encompassing discussion and evaluation of the role of sports in higher education. It takes up a variety of aspects relating to the academic and educational values of sports. It also discusses problems related to the commercialization of sports and the moral challenges raised by athletic scandals and misconduct. In typical Simon manner the chapter is a fair discussion, many-sided, broad, and taking in many different aspects and views. In general Simon tries to defend a place for sport and athletics on campus even if there are problems, especially at the highest levels, in the popular professional male sports.

For some people intercollegiate athletics represents a healthy segment of the American sporting scene. This is especially true at the level of the Ivy League. According to Simon many liberal arts colleges and institutions in Division III of the NCAA are good examples. Some academically as well as athletically strong institutions like Duke and Stanford “are still thought of as strong examples of what college sports at their best should be. (Simon et al.

2015, 158) On the other hand several scandals in intercollegiate athletics show the ethically dubious sides that harm the academic and educational functions of the university. For instance division 1 scholarships are linked to academic fraud and cheating in an effort to recruit the most talented high school athletic stars. There are many examples of misbehavior and sometimes criminal activity of academically marginal athletes in some big-time intercollegiate programs. Simon connects these problems to a strong concern for winning, along with the status and income that go with it. The question is whether, on this background, colleges and universities should give athletic scholarships at all?

Even more fundamental than the debate over scholarships is the question of whether intercollegiate sports belong on campus at all. Colleges are supposed to be educational institutions and not minor leagues for professional sports. The mission of the university seems to stand in contrast to a commitment to intercollegiate athletics. Athletic excellence and academic excellence seem to be opposites.

These contrasts lead to what Simon calls “the Incompatibility Thesis” which states that

“intercollegiate sports are incompatible with the academic functions of colleges and universities. The strong version of this thesis asserts that the incompatibility is between academic values and any serious form of intercollegiate athletics. A weaker version holds that the incompatibility lies only between academic values and elite Division I athletic programs, those that offer athletic scholarships and whose teams, particularly in high-profile sports, regularly compete for national rankings”. (Simon et al. 2015, 160).

Simon presents several arguments that have been used for the incompatibility thesis. He refers to European countries where in many cases students play on club teams that are not associated with the university at all. A view in line with this model could be “let sports be sports and let academic education be academic education.” In some sense sports are unnecessary. They do not contribute to the specialized professional training that is central at universities. But the same can be said of the liberal arts which also can be seen as “unnecessary”. But many would agree that they contribute to a wider education or *Bildung* of students by transferring the best from the historical tradition in arts, humanities and sciences to present day students. Can sports contribute to this wider mission? Can intercollegiate sports programs be more than a training ground for tomorrow’s professionals? Can these programs be “a center of scholarship, critical thought, and training for citizenship in the democratic state?” (Simon et al. 2015, 162) Is athletics compatible with academic education? And even stronger: Can sports enhance the academic mission of universities?

There seems to be good arguments in favor of the incompatibility thesis. Simon points to:

1. In high-level inter-collegiate athletics there is an enormous pressure to win, promote visibility, and earn money. This often generates cheating.
2. There is a contradiction between academic and athletic work. Time spent on the training field means time spent away from the studies.

3. Central values in athletics, like obedience to coaches, mindless training, focus on physical skills, stand in contrast to critical inquiry and questioning that are central in academic education.

But there are also arguments against the incompatibility thesis. Many high-profile programs at institutions like Duke, Stanford, and Notre Dame, have very few scandals, and present high graduation rates for athletes. And:

“Moreover, the vast majority of college athletes play with no desire to become professionals, and the majority of athletic programs compete at the Division II and Division III levels of the NCAA. So, proponents argue, in many cases athletic programs at colleges and universities not only do not undermine the academic mission of the university but sometimes may actually reinforce it” (Simon et al. 2015, 168).

Another way of arguing for the athletic programs is to point to the utility in a broad sense that they offer society. Many forms of intercollegiate athletics provide entertainment to the student body and the wider community. This wider array of services and utilities that universities may provide are important parts of the modern university’s relation to society. Here athletics is on a par with other campus programs like theater, music, performing arts like dance, radio and television.

But is this enough? A more ambitious view would claim “that intercollegiate athletics in the right circumstances can enhance or contribute to the academic mission of colleges and universities.”(Simon et al. 2015, 172). Simon here refers to Myles Brand who advocates a broader notion of the academic mission of the university, and claims that there are few, if any differences between the educational experiences of student-athletes compared with those studying the performing arts such as music, dance, and theater as well as the studio arts. I will come back to Brand and to Simon’s following up on Brand later in the article.

When Simon wants to find the most important values that athletics can contribute with to higher education he uses the idea of athletic competition as a mutual quest for excellence through challenge. In athletic tests like competitions, the athletes must use their bodies and minds, and learn “to analyze and overcome weakness, to work hard to improve, to understand their own strengths and weaknesses, and to react intelligently and skillfully to situations that arise in the contest”. (Simon et al. 2015, 175). Following the Socratic tradition Simon thinks that to learn to know oneself is an important part of education. Such knowledge can emerge from participation in sports. This means that academics and intercollegiate athletics here can be mutually reinforcing. This mutual reinforcement can occur in at least three ways. First, athletes can acquire skills on the field, like working hard and accepting criticism, that are relevant also in the classroom. Second, athletes’ exhibition of skills to spectators may illustrate the positive value of teamwork and a corresponding negative value of selfishness. Third, the values implicit in sport have parallels in academic performance, for instance intense practice or creativity.

In conclusion Simon argues against the Incompatibility Thesis and claims that athletics, properly structured, are compatible with academic values and may in fact enhance them. This

can happen in several ways: “Participation in competitive athletics can require intellectual honesty and a concern for truth, including accuracy about one’s own values and talents, in ways parallel to academic inquiry”. (Simon et al. 2015, 183). In addition athletics can contribute to the development of intelligent and committed democratic citizens. The development includes a learning of many sporting skills like teamwork skills, learning to cooperate with diverse people in a common enterprise, learning to appreciate achievement of oneself and opponents. And finally, competitive sport is a value-laden activity that can contribute to moral development: “If carried out properly, such sports involve fair play, respect for opponents, and understanding and appreciation of and even reverence for the traditions, practices, and values central to one’s sport”. (Simon et al. 2015, 184). Whether participation in athletics makes people more ethical or not, competitive sports can express and illustrate important ethical values.

Simon thus ends up with defending intercollegiate athletics and the positive possibilities that athletics can contribute with on campus. Other authors, like, Brand (2006), defended sports for somewhat different reasons, while Feezell (2015) and others, are more skeptical. I will first look at Brand’s views.

### Brand’s critique of the Standard View

Brand maintains that many faculty members, academic administrators and many external constituents have a negative view of intercollegiate athletics. He calls this “the Standard View”. According to this view college sports may have some beneficial developmental value for the students, but these sports have no educational value. Intercollegiate athletics can thus be eliminated from the campus without any loss to the academic mission of the university. (Brand 2006, 10). Some critics even go further and claim that college athletics detracts from the educational mission and is a negative force at the campus. This stronger view is not widely held by students, alumni, local community members and fans.

In contrast to sport music is in general looked upon as a positive contribution to the educational mission of the university. Brand thinks that so should sport be; “when the educational experience of student-athletes is compared with those studying the performing arts such as music, dance, and theater, as well as the studio arts, it is difficult to find substantive differences.” (Brand 2006, 10) He points to similarities in admission procedure and scholarships. This similarity is not reflected in academic credit. While music students receive academic credit for learning, practicing, and playing their instruments student-athletes do not receive academic credit for instruction by coaches, team practice or play. This seems unfair if sports deserve to be placed on a par with music in educational value.

Brand takes up the important distinction between *knowing how* and *knowing that* and points to similarities between music students and sport students:

“Music performance students are expected to gain knowledge “that” in some of their classes, such as music theory, but, by and large, performance students gain knowledge

“how.” That is, they learn how to do certain things, for example, how to play Bach’s Brandenburg concertos. Learning how to do something is to gain a skill or to exercise an acquired skill in specific circumstances” (Brand 2006, 8).

Similarly student-athletes, according to Brand, must acquire factual knowledge about rules, good nutrition and exercise. But also for student-athletes the most important learning is to come to know “how”, to learn skills and how to apply those skills in different situations. There is thus a clear similarity in the way music students and sports students learn.

Another way to argue for the educational value of athletics is to focus on student-athletes and the learning of cognitive skills. Through sport practice student-athletes gain skill in critical thinking and problem solving that can transfer to academic settings. But more important than showing the relevance of sporting skills for academic education it is to give legitimacy to physical skill-development in itself. The acquisition of sporting skills should be considered a legitimate part of university education. Brand thinks that the underlying reason why physical skill-development is undervalued is that “the American academy is prejudiced against the body.” (Brand 2006, 14) The focus on factual knowledge comes according to Brand from the German tradition that in the 19<sup>th</sup> century inspired the American universities.

But there is also an opposite distinctively American trend, according to Brand, that early, from the Morrill Act of 1862, tried to democratize higher education and valued the practical, for instance by establishing higher education in agriculture and engineering. In spite of this the cognitive approach dominates. “In it, emphasis on bodily skills is inappropriate; indeed, it subverts the true aim of the university. A focus on bodily skills leads to a vocational or purely professional view of education, and that, it is held, is antithetical to the mission of an institution of higher learning.” (Brand 2006, 14) According to such a view the central aim of the university is education in liberal arts. Therefore music and dance are accepted, even if they are not purely intellectual, but they are considered arts and are therefore closer to the mission of the university than the physical sports.

Instead of the Standard View Brand argues for what he calls “an Integrated View” according to which “the athletic programs are made part of the educational mission of the university. Although they are not part of the liberal-arts core, they play the same type of role as music and art and, perhaps, business and journalism” (Brand 2006, 16-17) The integrated view favors physical-skill development and advocates, like the Attic Greeks, that the mental as well as the physical should be part of a sound education.<sup>ii</sup> Brand argues that athletic participation is similar to music performance with respect to knowledge and skill as well as instructor qualifications. The consequence should then be that if academic credit is provided for music students, it should also be provided for student-athletes. The Integrated View thus implies that physical-skill development should be seen as an integrated part of higher education and that athletic participation should be treated on a par with musical performance.

Simon agrees with Brand on several points, for instance that intercollegiate athletics is not only about winning and earning money, but of enjoying progress in excellence. And winning is, by the way, not special to sport but is also a part of music with the growing number of music competitions. And sports are like music embedded in a long intellectual and cultural tradition. Sports have a tradition of rules, attitudes and values. And like music sport practice can encourage dedication, excellence, and perseverance.

But if physical-skill development is accepted as part of higher education, where do we draw the line? Simon also sees the problem of demarcation. If the universities' proper domain is extended which skills should be included? "If we include not only dance recitals and musical performances but also basketball and soccer games, what about skillful performance in activities ranging from poker to cooking or from gardening to playing Monopoly?" (Simon et al. 2015, 174) Where should we draw the line? And which place should the physical-skill activities hold in the university? Should they "be offered for academic credit, or should they be viewed as adjuncts that reinforce a more traditional academic education." (Simon et al. 2015, 174).

An inclusive view would imply that a wider variety of skills than what is normally recognized could be included in academic programs, either through credit or other forms of recognition. But there is a problem of where to draw the line? This problem pops up as a central one in Randolph Feezell's discussion of Brand's views.

### Feezell on sport versus arts on campus

In his article "Branding the Role and Value of Intercollegiate Athletics" from 2015 Randolph Feezell tries to counter Brand's arguments, and implicitly Simon's, for an Integrated view and instead provides a certain defense for the Standard view. Feezell makes a distinction between three central arguments for college sports: "The Education Argument insists that athletics does contribute to the educational mission of the university, since athletes learn valuable things like responsibility, teamwork, leadership, time management, and competitiveness when they participate in college sports." (Feezell 2015, 186) The second argument is "The Economic Argument" which "insists that athletic programs are important because they generate revenue that can be used to support the educational mission of the institution." (Feezell 2015, 186) And finally The Community-Building Argument "asserts that these programs contribute to a more unified campus ethos, cause members of the university community, including faculty, staff, students, and alumni, to identify more strongly with the institution, and enhance the self-image of the university community". (Feezell 2015, 186) These arguments may be further nuanced and they partly overlap. Feezell thinks that none of these arguments stand up to scrutiny and that the only viable argument is the Entertainment argument, a strictly consequentialist argument that focuses on the entertainment value for the college community and the wider audiences, from the local to the national.

Central in Feezell's arguments against Brand is his problematizing of the arguments for a common situation of student-athletes and student-musicians. Brand stressed three kinds of

common characteristics of athletes and musicians, which Feezell calls “common experiences” (institutional), “common learning” (knowing how as well as knowing that), and “common positive values” (striving for excellence, perseverance, respect for others, etc). But how do we pick out similarities and how do we know that they are important?

Leaning on Goodman’s work Feezell problematizes how we can pick out what is central rather than peripheral and what we can ignore. Especially interesting and relevant is Feezell’s attack on the knowledge or learning argument:

“If we stress that the educational value of the activities involves knowing how to do something well, that similarity is so general that it involves learning how to do any kind of activity well, or any kind of physical activity well. It doesn’t help one to evaluate the comparative educational value of participating in sports and playing music versus learning how to cook, to fix air conditioners or cars, to drive 18 heelers, or to weld.” (Feezell 2015, 196)

This means that any physical activity that can be done better or worse involves knowing. Why should we pick sport? And if we add references to values or character we are still left with many activities. Why does athletics deserve its special role on the campus?

Physical skills must be relevant in some sense to deserve educational status. Feezell argues that music skills or sport skills are irrelevant if one wants to apply for admission to the Culinary Institute of America, because of the explicit mission of the institution. Similarly if a college or university stresses the life of the mind, learning for its own sake, and deeper understanding of people, nature and society, then physical skills typical in sports will be of less value than competencies in the humanities, sciences, and the arts. If one looks at some examples of explicitly stated mission of colleges and universities, they do not include sporting skills of a physical kind. Sport seems simply to be irrelevant to the mission of the university, according to Feezell. But is that necessarily so? Could not sporting skills and sporting knowledge become important, if the mission of the university was expanded or changed? Feezell in fact admits that and states that “The Standard View need not deny the educational value of athletics, culinary arts, or air conditioning technology, a theme stressed by John Dewey in recognizing the value of practical skills.” (Feezell 2015, 198) There is a diversity of colleges and universities and they do a variety of things. In relation to certain colleges playing sports may have some educational value. But other types of skilled physical activities may also have educational value dependent upon the goals of the institution one is looking at.

At least in some cases there is, according to Feezell, a mismatch between intercollegiate athletics and academic education. When it comes to the value of big-time sports Feezell is quite clear:

“Big-time sports are entertainment enterprises and athletes are employees, not students. Give up the hypocrisy. Separate those universities that will be members of five or six super-conferences from the rest of colleges and universities. Pay the athletes, don’t call them students, and don’t say they receive ‘scholarships’. Give them the option of taking classes, but don’t require coursework” (Feezell 2015, 204-205).

For the rest of colleges and universities other solutions to the problem of integrating athletics and academics may exist. One option is, according to Feezell, to “reorganize the institutional structures of colleges and universities so they properly reflect the educational value of athletics. Let students major in athletics, with specializations in football and weight training.” (Feezell 2015, 205). For Feezell himself, however, the Standard View of athletics as extracurricular is reasonable. It is on this view we should base our thinking about the role and value of intercollegiate athletics. So we could either reorganize universities and sports so that their goals and missions match or give up the idea that sports have any educational value on campus, at least relative to the goals and missions of most leading present-day universities.

The debate about sport on campus raises several interesting questions about the nature of higher education, the nature of knowledge, the mission of colleges and universities, the relation between intellectual and physical activity, and last but not least the nature of sport. Based on the different views of Simon, Brand and Feezell, several points need clarification. Let me try to discuss some of the most important.

## Sports on campus – some key issues

### 1.

The discussion of sports on campus is an American discussion. It is interesting to observe it from a European viewpoint. Maybe that gives some distances to the many emotional and historical bindings that are connected with the issue for many Americans. In most European countries, like my home country Norway, we have, as mentioned by Simon, not the same place for sports on campus. We have student clubs but not high-profile professional clubs that are promoted and supported by the university leadership and by the general teacher and student body. In Norway young people, including most students, are members of local community-based clubs. The clubs are not part of the school system but part of the voluntary sector. The high-level sport clubs are professional clubs, like in other countries, commercially based and often sponsored by “a rich uncle”. It is therefore initially difficult for a European to see why big-time professional sports have anything to do on campus. I here feel some sympathy for the incompatibility thesis.

### 2.

On the other hand one can argue that colleges and universities come in many kinds and versions. They have different profiles and they put weight on quite different things like theoretical learning for learning's sake, liberal Bildung, professional training, critical thinking, training for citizenship, entertainment to the student body and the wider community, character training, innovation, and services to the community. Why not professional division 1 athletics? Here a purely utilitarian reasoning can provide some support for professional sport on campus. That is one line of reasoning Simon also invited to. Monetary benefit, prestige, status and popularity must then be weighed against fraud, scandals and other negative factors. But this does not fix a secure place for sports on campus. And it does not touch the crucial question, namely whether this type of sport contributes to the central mission of colleges and

universities. One could argue that it is of some relevance to educate some athletes that without athletic scholarships would not have got any higher education at all. As Simon mentioned some universities do much better than others in getting big-time sports work in a more than acceptable way. But from my point of view big-time professional sports are misplaced or irrelevant at universities. They are not centrally relevant to what I think are the primary missions of higher education.

3.

At the other end of the spectrum we find students that are involved in various forms of non-elite training and exercise. I think it is a natural goal for a university that it should provide training grounds and facilities for students, and maybe the local community. In an increasingly sedentary student population an active lifestyle is part of an investment in health and well-being. Sport for health and recreation should have a place on campus. But do they contribute centrally to the educational mission of the university? Not directly. But by being involved in various types of exercises, strength- and fitness training, walking, running, cycling, team sports, and so on, students learn skills (with or without instruction) that is part of an implicit or explicit learning process. It runs parallel to and is separate from what goes on in classes and in university teaching. But it is of relevance. Learning is taking place.

4.

The important question is, however, whether sports on campus can mean more. The discussion concerns whether sports could and should be a part of the educational mission of universities. It is already so to the extent that there are programs in physical education, sports sciences, kinesiology, and the like (they go under many names), at many universities.<sup>iii</sup> But a higher ambition would be to offer sport courses and sport programs for all students. What would then count as sports? And what about other types of physical-skill learning? We would need a solution to the demarcation problem. Feezell suggested that students after a reorganization of universities could “major in athletics, with specializations in football and weight training.”(Feezell 2015, 205) I think that is not precise enough. I think we need physical-skill activities that have a body of knowledge and a tradition. A qualification list could include a) a set of rules and an ethos, b) an institutional and historical tradition, c) weight on attitudes and values, and d) a body of learning and performance guidelines. Such activities, first of all sports, will typically also be linked to theoretical or scientific studies and to handbooks and practical examples in instruction and teaching. This would answer Simon’s question, pace Brand, “If we include not only dance recitals and musical performances but also basketball and soccer games, what about skillful performance in activities ranging from poker to cooking or from gardening to playing Monopoly? Must we become so inclusive that no exercise of skill can be excluded from the realm of the academic?” (Simon et al. 2015, 174). The answer would be “definitely not”! Physical skill- activities like basketball and athletics would be included, jogging and weight training would not, and cooking and gardening “no way”.

I think courses in a balanced variety of sports could be offered to all students. One would need admission guidelines, qualified instructors, and exams (theoretical as well as practical).

The courses should give credit points. With such a set up I think studies in sports could definitely be placed on a par with studies in music or art. The content in sport has not the same in-built metaphorical and emotional character as for instance art, but for the participants as well as the spectators the experience of sports is full of metaphorical content, symbolic meaning, emotional significance and value.

## 5.

A full recognition of sports and its place on the campus can only be secured if the human being is understood as a unity of body and mind. The task for a university should be to help educate and develop both body and mind. Inspiration for such a view comes, as mentioned by Brand, from the old Greek view. According to Heather Reid the Greek view implied an education of body and mind, because they are intertwined: “Most ancient Greeks conceived of the human being as a combination of *sōma* (body) and *psychē*, a word commonly translated as “soul” but also encompassing our modern ideas of life, mind, spirit, and emotion.” (Reid 2012, 27). In general philosophers in the Western tradition have been little interested in the body, and more so in the mind. The division of the human being in two different ontological entities, body versus mind, has from Plato over Descartes to modern conceptions put the mind in the driving seat. So also with education, where the education or *Bildung* of the body has received little attention.

Nevertheless there is another tradition that may put the body back in place, if it is interpreted in the right way. Philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, Spinoza, Marx, Hegel and Nietzsche thought that the highest good was connected with the development and perfection of skills and talents of various kinds, not only the mental. The many-sided development of body and mind is in some philosophers the central goal of human living. Nietzsche, for instance, insisted that a human’s greatness lies in his “range and multiplicity, in his wholeness in manifoldness.” (Hurka 1993,89). The idea of *Bildung* that was central in the tradition from Humboldt came, however, to focus on the education of mind more than the body and it is time to put this strait.

## 6.

With the body in place it is easier to see how the practical grasp of the world is important, even at universities. With philosophers like Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger, and also recent research in the neurosciences, we understand that much more of our lives are connected with the body, with movement and perceptual-motor capacities than we used to think. Heidegger showed that it is our practical dealing with the world where we uncover things as equipment that is the primary mode of understanding. The theoretical inspection is a derived mode. A study of sports should include practical and theoretical knowledge. Practical knowledge is complex and consists of both knowing how and knowing that and both have their places on campus.

Theoretical knowledge is not enough in professional education. Ryle stated: “A man knowing little or nothing of medical science could not be a good surgeon, but excellence at surgery is not the same thing as knowledge of medical science; nor is it the product of it.”(Ryle 1963, 48). The surgeon must have learned by theory and by practice. One may be good at practicing

but bad at theorizing and vice versa. Most professional education at universities consists of both the theory of practice and the practice itself. This should be so also in many courses of sport education at university level. The knowing how in everyday life, as well as sports and other activities, is often considered to be mere skills without any conceptual content. One simply executes what one aims at without thinking. Brand, for instance, stated as we saw earlier, that learning how to do something is to gain a skill or to exercise an acquired skill in specific circumstances. Philosophers like Hubert Dreyfus, thinks that at expert level we act mindlessly, almost like zombies. I disagree with this view and I think we use cognition and conceptual content more than we are aware of – especially in sports (Breivik 2013). I argue that knowing how is more than a mere skill, but consists of a cognitive grasp of what to do. It is not a knowing that either, but rather a direct ‘objectual’ understanding of how the world is and what one can do (Breivik 2014). The cognitive grasp that is involved in skillful execution is sometimes tacit, but far from always. When we execute a fine forehand volley in tennis it has a qualitative feel (*qualia*). (Nagel 1986). David Chalmers calls it *phenomenal consciousness* in contrast to *psychological consciousness*, which consists of the mental machinery that makes us perceive, decide, and act. As Chalmers says: “On the phenomenal concept, mind is characterized by what it feels; on the psychological concept, mind is characterized by what it does.”(Chalmers 1996, 11) Phenomenal consciousness is important in sports and it makes a causal difference in many cases, as argued by Birch: “These features make the experience of outdoor rock climbing unidentical to the indoor plastic climbing, even though the attention mechanisms and the mere movements might be identical. Phenomenal consciousness is not an epiphenomenon, . . . it is causally potent.” (Birch 2011, 79) Knowing how is thus more than mere skills; it has cognitive content, is imbued with consciousness, and represents a way of learning that deserves a place in university education.

### Some concluding remarks

Simon gave me an interesting point of departure with his balanced discussion of sports on campus and his soft defense of professional intercollegiate athletics. On the basis of his arguments I brought in Brand’s and Fezell’s arguments. I picked out some key points and presented some of my own views. The case is far from settled. I think we Europeans can learn something from the idea of making sports part of the school system, even at university level. I do not think that it is a good idea to copy the idea of professional entertainment sport from American universities. But I am strongly in favor of letting students on campus get the chance to know sports and to appreciate the advanced knowledge we humans acquire through our bodily movements in sports and other activities. The human bodily navigation in the world is immensely complex and interesting. It deserves to be taken seriously among students, in theory and in practice.

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<sup>i</sup> Brand refers to Simon's book from 1991, but only with a short remark and a citation. He does not discuss Simon's views and strangely he does not refer to the newly available second edition of the Fair Play book from 2004. Simon, on the other hand, refers to and discusses Brand's arguments in the fourth edition of the Fair Play book from 2015. Feezell in his 2015 article discusses Brand's views thoroughly. He also refers to Simon's article from 2008 and his discussion of the incompatibility thesis.

<sup>ii</sup> Brand refers to Plato's views: "Even someone as committed to the superiority of the mental as Plato held that physical accomplishment was necessary for successful citizenship. The central idea here is that of harmony. The harmony, the unity, of mind and body is crucial to a happy life" (7: Book II 376E, Book III 412B, Book VII 521C-541B) (Brand 2006, 17)

<sup>iii</sup> In Norway the biggest university – the University of Oslo – has no sports science program. Instead we have Norwegian School of Sport Sciences that is a specialized higher education and research school with doctoral

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programs and all the relevant sport subdisciplines. Bachelor programs include professional training for work in physical education, sport and health consulting, sport management, outdoor adventure, sports coaching.