

March 31, 1939

PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE LIGHT OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

By Samuel Haig Jameson
University of Oregon, Department of Sociology
Address to the Ninth Annual Convention of the
Northwest District, American Ass'n for Health, Physical Education, Recreation

I. Introduction

It is rather humorous for me to be invited to speak to this group. In the first place, according to a placard and slogan in McArthur Court basement, "Good athletes don't get hurt", I am a poor athlete. I have broken my arm playing handball, cracked my ribs in boxing, smashed my glasses on the tennis court, and recently, I have strained my tendons in volleyball. Heaven knows what golfing and deck tennis will do to me! In the second place, I know nothing directly about physical education. I have never sat at the feet of the twentieth century Gamaliels in physical education; that is to say, I have not had a single course in your fields. Nor can I boast of Spartan ancestry. In the third place, although some are forced to register in them, very few of the athletes pass my courses with satisfactory grades and some never forgive me the sin of flunking them. Thus I am a persona non grata in the sight of the physical education majors. Perhaps your program chairman invited me with malice aforethought. Possibly knowing that I do not hesitate to appear where I am invited, and realizing that someone on the program must be the goat, he picked me out in order to display my rank ignorance. Since amusement-mindedness is one of our dominant culture traits today, I hope you will have that desire satisfied this evening at my expense.

As a layman I have questioned the physical education majors during the past score of years of college teaching as to their anticipations in their chosen field. Both men and women students have exhibited much hope