CHAPTER 1

The Problem of Values in Contemporary Society

The first task of this study is to trace the development of values in contemporary society. This will encompass a sweep from the birthplace of Western Civilization in ancient Greece, through the Enlightenment, to the present day. This trail leads directly to the values exhibited in contemporary sport which I wish to question. It is necessary to follow these developments so we might better understand what it is we are up against in contemporary culture, and why it has developed that way.

In this work, the Enlightenment is taken as the principle cataclysmic event that set Western culture on its route to contemporary values. The Enlightenment represents the ascendancy of reason over revelation. While the Reformation could be said to have given warning of the coming power and significance of the individual in society, it was still essentially a religious movement, albeit a religious reflection of growing individualism and materialism. The Reformation was concerned with religious freedom, we might say, while the Enlightenment came to represent freedom from religion and all other absolute authorities.

Ancient Greece Idealized

Ever since the enormous and heroic efforts of the Enlightenment released man from the chains of his organic past, setting in motion his metamorphosis into the liberal individual we recognize today, there has been a yearning in certain academic circles for the great days of ancient Greece. The work of many writers and philosophers even to this day articulate a somewhat romantic desire to return to, or at least revive, the era of man's greatest flowering.

Michael Harrington depicts George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel as just such a scholar, and maintains that Hegel was trying to create a "modern society as organic as the Greece of his youthful imagination."[1] The desire to marry the ancient and organic with the modern and manufactured is a recurrent theme in many works. The belief that drives this desire is rooted in the notion that in ancient Greek society there was something that we lack, and are the lesser for it. MacIntyre suggests what we lack is the sense of the values, virtues, and purpose, or *telos*, that illuminated ancient Greek society.[2]

However, when the mythically idyllic existence in ancient Greece is examined it becomes apparent that the era so dotted upon is Hellenic only, and revolves solely around the city state of Athens. Furthermore, there was a price to pay for the harmonious and balanced development of man and the life of contemplating the Good, Beautiful, and Just, that was promoted there.[3] The price was slavery, and even death for non-citizens. Athenian democracy was extended to adult male citizens only. Individual freedom was not the major concern of this society; the primary function of the citizen was to serve the city. This society was organic and prescriptive with a high price to pay for tampering with established beliefs and practices. This form of impiety was the Athenian justification for executing Socrates and would have cost Aristotle as dearly if he had not chosen ". . . to save Athens from twice sinning against philosophy," and flee the city.

The idealized concept of ancient Athens sometimes clouds the true nature of her existence. Our contemporary concepts of democracy revolve around freedom and equality, whereas that of Athens was built on slavery and privilege. Even the citizens were servants of the city and existed under an aristocracy. The Greek Enlightenment is largely credited with bringing about the downfall of the ancient Greeks; is it true, too, of the Northern Europeans and their Enlightenment?[4]

The Enlightenment

When early Christianity developed its theological principles, and especially later in the Scholasticism of the Middle Ages, much was inherited and borrowed from Plato and Aristotle, notably in 'Aristotelianism' and the work of St. Thomas Aquinas. The universal truths that explained the world and man's place in it were enshrined in church law. This process underwrote the authority of virtually all ancient and medieval European society in the form of Scholasticism. Until the Enlightenment, Europe was a collection of organic, ascriptive

societies, torn by war, ruled by royalties who reigned by God's will, and where the church was the broker of truth and power.[5]

The developments of the Renaissance led to a flowering of humanistic thought in the sixteenth century, epitomized by the tolerance and intellectual modesty found in the work of Michel de Montaigne. From this stance of virtual perspectivism, final absolute truth is not seen as an attainable goal of human reflection and study. The resulting ambiguity and plurality of views and beliefs, and the contradicting demands that they make on the individual, were all seen as part of the price of being human with no access to God's view.

However, the humanism of the sixteenth century was overtaken by rationalism in the seventeenth century. Stephen Toulmin describes this change as the move from the practical to the theoretical in philosophical thought. The oral traditions were replaced by the increasingly available written texts: formal logic supplanted rhetoric, the particular, concrete, local and timely, all gave way to the universal, general, abstract, and timeless.[6]

Toulmin traces the cause of this remarkable swing to the unsettled and shifting nature of Western Europe at this time. The conflicts of the Reformation coincided with a sustained attack on traditional cosmology. There grew out of this a great felt need for the re-creation of stability and hierarchy, something humanistic tolerance was less equipped to deliver than rationalist certitude.[7]

Thus, Toulmin takes the desire of seventeenth century thinkers to hold their quaking world together and forge a new framework for their existence, as the birth of modernity in the sciences. Toulmin also takes the sixteenth century Renaissance humanists as signaling the start of modernity in the humanities. It was the desire for certitude and stability that led the rationalists to gain hegemony over the humanistic view. This vital change paved the way for the emergence of the contemporary world where results, timeless and universal, are valued over performance, temporal and particular.

One of the major consequences of the Enlightenment was the overthrow of the absolute power of the church with the right of the individual to determine his own values. This process did not happen quickly, but was the result of generations of painful and difficult choices. What started as liberation under the banner of reason and science ended in rampant individualism and arbitrary value claims.

The crucial thing is that each person now had the potential to interpret the world for themselves. The Enlightenment produced individual freedom from the chains of the traditional interpretations of the universals by authorities. The power of individual reason

became the liberating force of the age. One thinks readily of the precursor, in the Reformation of Martin Luther, freeing the Christian from papal infallibility and the reliance upon priests to interpret the Bible. Similarly the English, French, and American Revolutions were all fought in the name of individual freedom and liberty. Perhaps one of the most significant philosophical achievements was that of Rene Descartes. He created a method of inquiry open to use by all to free individuals from the pronouncements of others.

In response to Montaigne's claim that "unless some one thing is found of which we are completely certain, we can be certain about nothing," Descartes developed the *cogito*; the one thing of which he could be certain.[8]

Descartes' initial step was to doubt all that could not be demonstrated. This notion effectively demolished the ruined cloisters of scholasticism, as he rejected all existing knowledge. In the same way that old buildings are to be demolished before new ones are built, he cleared and leveled the intellectual landscape. Descartes doubted all except his own existence, which was proved to his satisfaction in the famous axiom, "I think, therefore I am." From this apparent solipsism Descartes devised a method for testing empirical information through the use of rational thought, a method by which a proposition could be affirmed as true if it passed tests of clarity and distinction. From this position Descartes sought to reconstruct the physical world, and in the process helped create scientific method as we know it today. In fact, the use of Descartes' method, with the individual as the central figure, led to the development of the contemporary western world.[9]

Rational thought and reason were the major tools of the Enlightenment, but they came to have narrow meanings and too broad an application. Simply put, rational came to mean the most efficient means to an end. Reason lost its root of reasonableness, fairness, and came to be synonymous with logic, and flowered poisonously as logical positivism.[10] Furthermore, the powerful conceptual weapon of reason was brought to bear frivolously, not just on agents of oppression, but on any part of society for which the individual did not care. Thus, all existing values and standards were brought into question and measured against the cold rod of reason, rationality, and efficiency.

It must be remembered that the Enlightenment did represent a legitimate liberation from oppressive and arbitrary authority. Contemporary western society was made possible by the struggles of the Enlightenment period, and as such we are all children of the Enlightenment. However, the problem created at this juncture was that the scientific method that grew out of the Enlightenment could not discover, detect, or create values. Mathematics, in the hands of

Newton, gave a degree of understanding to the universe but could not find God anywhere in it. The arbitrary rule of tyrants and false belief were quite rightly attacked and undermined, but pious men found themselves undermining the existence of God as well. Immanuel Kant suffered from this contradiction. He regarded the existence of God as paramount to man's political, social, and philosophical life. Yet his philosophical scholarship resulted in the systematic destruction of all traditional proofs of that existence.[11]

This was no malicious attempt to remove God. Kant was not happy with his position but it was not his by choice. The undermining of God appeared almost as a by-product of the process of the Enlightenment. Science successfully dealt with the world and its existence, with what "is", but no Enlightenment product could help with the realm of "ought", of values, now split from their traditional, irrational "proofs". No level of rational thought could convince that God is in his heaven, the soul immortal, and the will free. The consequence of this was shattering to Kant since he realized that those beliefs were the cornerstone of all moral values in the western world. Hegel also faced this issue, and posed the question of the Enlightenment's alternative to the displaced superstitions and prejudices. What was to replace all that had been destroyed?

Harrington claims that the alternative was the French Revolution. For Hegel the French Revolution, or "magnificent sunrise" as he called it, was to become excessively rational and destroy all the humane buffers between the individual and the state; an abstract society with no human mediation, but with radical individualism ripping community apart; a process that would lead to the terror itself. Hegel believed that with the overthrow of the absolute and universal truths, and the failing of political and social values, reason took refuge in private rights, and personal well-being became an end in itself.[12] The Enlightenment really had no alternatives. It was an escape "from", and not an escape "to".

Concepts of value now cut from the sacred and communal roots came to reside in personal reason, the basis for which was initially accepted as intuitive. However, subjective claims of this nature became discredited by the emerging power of sense data, objectified in scientific method. This new epistemological view, which John Locke championed, holds that all knowledge is empirical. At the end of this road lies logical positivism, which holds that "Truth" is attainable through scientific method.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau offered an opposing view, stressing the importance of feelings, art, and culture, and firing a resurgence in transcendentalism. However, both positivism and transcendentalism

hold that an objective reality, "Truth", exists. For logical positivism it is the true empirical understanding of the material world. For transcendentalism there is more to Truth than scientific method can show.

The quest for truth eclipsed the quest for the good. Truth, it was claimed, can be known through rational thought, while good is merely a statement of preference. Thus, all values become instrumental, which is no value at all, in a moral sense. Despite the efforts of such great philosophers as Kant and Hegel, the Enlightenment failed to produce a feasible rational basis for moral action, or for standards of goodness and virtue. What the Enlightenment had done, in short, was to remove the hope that something universal and absolute (God, for example) was underwriting existence. The notion that there is such a certainty and order in the world is what Nietzsche called "metaphysical comfort". It was the loss of such comfort that was the price of the individual's freedom gained in the Enlightenment.

The Being, Becoming, Doing, and Having Ideal Cultural Types

An illuminating view of the consequences of the Enlightenment for contemporary culture can be gained using William Sadler's distinctions between Being, Becoming, Doing, and Having ideal cultural types.[13] Sadler identifies these four cultural types from history; they are by no means exhaustive, but are the most useful to this study of western cultural development. While no given culture is completely identical to the ideal cultural types described here, it is helpful to use them as abstract terms to describe and compare cultural values of the past and present. They can also be used to help present an account of how results came to be valued over performance.

The Being culture is typified by a primitive, highly traditional, and organic existence. The great time is held to have been in the past, and the present is only important as an extension of the glorious past. People in Being cultures tend to be fatalistic, dominated by the forces of the past and of nature. They show no desire to change their lot, rather they accept what happens to them as inevitable. The lives and values of the past are lived out in the present, with an emphasis on ritual and custom. The individual finds his own value as an expression of the will of the group in playing his allotted role within the demands of nature. The religious motif in Being cultures is not one of revelation or understanding but sacrifice, giving up one thing in order to attain something else.

In the Becoming culture the present is of the greatest importance. The past is thought of as gone, and the future as uncertain. Necessity and the forces of nature are respected, but nature is also seen as presenting possibilities and opportunities. Nature is not seen as dominant, but as a partner in life as the future unfolds. "In Aristotle's grand conception of this perspective, all of reality is moved by the dynamics of actualizing potentials."[14] The individual seeks self-development through cooperation rather than submission and obedience. The goal of life is taken to be the fulfillment of human potential. In a Becoming type culture, both the individual and society should strive for excellence. However, there are internal limits on what and how to achieve. The Delphic Oracle's directive to "know thyself", in this context means, "know your limits". In ancient Athens the worst sin was to fall into a state of *hubris*, the condition marked by overbearing pride, boastfulness, and arrogance. In other words, overstepping your mark.[15] In such a cultural context, competition might serve a useful purpose, that of driving competitors to higher levels of excellence, but not as a basis for distributing scarce resources.

The third cultural type is the Doing, in which the future is seen as more important than the present. The present is important but mainly as the gateway to the future, which is thought of as a better place. Nature is neither oppressive nor a partner, but a wealth of raw materials to be exploited. In ancient Athens man's limits were emphasized, and they feared overstepping them. But in the Doing culture limits are unknown, and the fear is of never reaching them. Normative activity in the Doing culture is doing, producing, getting things done. Hard work is valued, and production is held to be more important than preserving social relations, manners, customs or a concern for others' feelings. All of these considerations can be legitimately set aside if they threaten maximized production. Within a Doing culture people fear "not making it", and the struggle for success leads to an institutionalization of competition, not only as a valuable activity, but also as a system of justice. Competition no longer functions as an aid to maximizing human potential, as a way to reach higher levels of excellence, but as a way of striving for dominance. Winning becomes a virtue in itself.

The fourth cultural type, the Having, is marked by a shift in normative behavior from production to consumption. In a Doing culture what one does defines one's status, but in a Having culture what one owns defines one's status. The doer, or producer looks to the future for rewards; he defers gratification. Whereas, the haver, or consumer, looks for instant gratification of short term needs. In the

Having culture, nature is perceived not just as something to be used in production, but as property to be owned, consumed or "had". While normative behavior is consumption, the method of acquisition of the commodity is of no importance. Possession as a form of conspicuous consumption is taken as an indication of personal worth. There is no moral worth needed to buy anything. At least a culture built on production demanded achievement, some ability, but the culture of consumption admires huge appetites and great indulgences and nothing more.

While still existing in their own right, the four ideal cultural types outlined here also map out the flow of cultural development in the western world, from ancient Greece to contemporary America. Homeric Greece was a Being culture which changed through the Greek Enlightenment into a Becoming culture. When Greece gave way to Roman domination, and Rome subsequently collapsed into barbarism, Europe was returned to a Being culture. This cultural epoch was ended when the European Enlightenment once again developed Becoming cultures. This time the process set in motion did not stop at Becoming, but developed in the modern west into Doing type cultures. In contemporary western society, notably in the United States, we see cultures of Having. The cultural types of Doing and Having can be taken as direct cultural responses to a modern world where the basis for moral action has been eroded by a process that started nearly four hundred years ago.

From Character to Personality

The Enlightenment essentially attacked the concept and existence of universal absolute truth. The moral vacuum that resulted led to an emphasis on internal and personal values. As a result, the concept of the individual self grew more and more important. The individual, now cut free from his ties and obligations to an organic society, was expected to show moral behavior for its own sake. The concept of character became the basis for moral life. In a post-Enlightenment world where traditional external and absolute values had been undermined, the emphasis was placed on the individual's internal strength to act correctly. However, as the nineteenth century gave way to the twentieth century, character gave way to personality as the dominant personal trait. This represents another example of substance becoming secondary to appearance, which is the root of results being valued over performance.

Warren Susman claims that character started to emerge as an important concept in nineteenth century western culture. He notes that, "By 1800 the concept of character had come to define that particular model type felt to be essential for the maintenance of social order. The term itself came to mean a group of traits believed to have social significance and moral quality . . . "[16]

There appeared at this time a plethora of literary efforts proporting to aid the individual in the pursuit of self-control and self-development, the twin conceptual values of character. Character was the guiding light in all moral and social life. In fact, character linked the moral to the social. Such traits as citizenship, duty, honor, integrity, honesty, and politeness were all facets of character. Ralph Waldo Emerson defined character as, "Moral order through the medium of individual nature."[17]

The function of character is clearly important in a cultural tradition where the previous basis for moral behavior had been destroyed. The concept of character puts the onus on the newly developed, newly pre-eminent self, to uphold standards in society on a moral basis emanating from the individual's strength of character. It is also clear that the values of a culture of character dovetailed neatly with the standards of a Doing culture, forming a most perfect union with the Protestant work ethic. Values such as thrift, hard work, and reliability fit well into a production-oriented society.[18]

Just as Sadler notes that normative behavior changes from production to consumption as Doing shades into Having as a cultural type, Susman identifies parallel changes in the very nature of how the self was viewed. During the eighteenth century, references started to appear in written works to personality as a separate entity from character. By the start of the twentieth century, personality development was the subject of as much literature as character had been in the preceding centuries.[19]

The difference between the terms, character, and personality, are dramatically illustrated by a comparison of the adjectives used to describe them. For example, personalities may be described as magnetic, dominant, fascinating, attractive, creative, and forceful. Character is more likely to be called honest, trustworthy, hardworking, and just. Character is either good or bad, while personality is famous or infamous.[20]

In the culture of personality the problem was no longer how to maintain a moral social order, which was the role of character, but one of how to distinguish oneself in a mass society. The culture of character at least demanded some connection of achievement with fame. The

culture of personality makes no such demand, just that of making oneself pleasing to others. Susman suggests that the task contained something of an internal paradox, the need was to distinguish oneself from, yet remain attractive to and please the mob.[21] This is a process represented quite graphically in the emergence of the cinema in the first quarter of the twentieth century; especially in the new techniques of using huge numbers of anonymous extras in massive crowd scenes, which contrasted with the equally new techniques of using very tight "close ups" of the faces of the lead players. This presented on the one hand a featureless mob, and on the other, the huge image of the disembodied face of the star.[22]

The Culture of Narcissism

The tension between the need to differentiate oneself from the mob and the need for its approval is one of the characteristics that Christopher Lasch attributes to the narcissistic personality that he sees as dominating contemporary culture.[23] Lasch describes our contemporary western culture as one of competitive individualism, ". . . which in its decadence has carried the logic of individualism to the extreme of a war of all against all, the pursuit of happiness to the dead end of a narcissistic pre-occupation with self."[24]

The twentieth century development of the culture of narcissism goes hand in hand with the emergence of the concept of celebrity, which replaced the last vestige of character, and replaced personality as the core of contemporary culture in the 1970s. The culture of narcissism represents an intensification of self-aggrandizement and the lack of demand for substance, which is replaced by the appearance of success.

In the culture of narcissism, individuals are not torn by guilt as much as perplexed by anxiety. They seek not to inflict their own certainties on others but to find some basis for certitude. The pervading atmosphere in this culture is therapeutic rather than religious. People do not seek salvation or enlightenment, but the temporal and temporary feelings of safety and normalcy.[25]

Lasch attacks the theraputic for seeking to free the individual, his needs and interests, from all subservience to those of others, some cause, or tradition outside of themselves.[26] In the therapeutic exercise, Lasch claims that meaning and love are viewed merely as the fulfill-ment of the patient's emotional needs. From these psychiatric and psychological practices grew the new consciousness movements of the

1960s and 1970s searching for self-awareness and self-fulfillment. The failure of personal relationships to provide satisfaction drives the individual deeper into themselves. The reasoning of the self-awareness movements leads individuals to "hold back" in relationships, and not make much commitment to love and friendship as these relationships have proved to be so unsatisfying. But it is just such a lack of sincerity and depth that made the relationships unsatisfying in the first place.[27]

Individuals in the narcissistic culture, as in the Having culture, seek to fill the void in their existence by mandatory consumption. Advertising assures us that our problems can be alleviated by the possession of certain products. Lasch suggests that consumption becomes an alternative to rebellion. Instead of social change there is fashion change, or we acquire some product to brighten our oppressed existence.[28]

One of the concomitant developments of the culture of narcissism is a loss of faith in the future and a devaluing of the past. Lasch attributed the former to the latter. The past is trivialized by associating it with ". . . outmoded styles of consumption, discarded fashions and attitudes."[29] Instead of using the past as a source of experience and knowledge, it is commodified and marketed as nostalgia. Any warm feelings towards the past or identification with it are dismissed as nostalgia as well. As a result of the rejection of the past, there arises an inability to shape and identify needs from personal experience of satisfactions in the past. To the contrary, experts identify the needs, and either supply the answers to these needs themselves, or serve the actual suppliers.[30] This circular process is, of course, the model for contemporary consumer society: create a need and then fulfill it, for a price.

Experts of all kinds, in all fields of knowledge, free individuals from burdens that interfere with their productivity, while at the same time making them consumers of the expert's services. Obstetricians take charge at birth, pediatricians supervise child care, teachers educate, bosses supervise work, supermarkets provide standardized food, television provides standardized beliefs, and so on. We surrender at every turn, in ever increasing situations with ever increasing ease, to a specialized, trained, expert who deals with our problems for us.

The culture of narcissism not only creates needs to be fulfilled but also celebrities to be admired and consumed. The mass media packages the image of the celebrity and creates an aura of glamour and excitement around them. The masses are encouraged to consume these products as fans, moviegoers and spectators. Image is the most

important aspect of the culture of narcissism. Achievement is secondary to the appearance of achievement. "Power lies in the eye of the beholder and as such has no objective reference at all."[31]

The development of the culture of celebrity contrasts with the earlier culture of character in the same way that the culture of personality contracts with that of character. But celebrity seems to be an even more facile value than personality. For while personality demands no worth, just the ability to engraciate oneself with others, celebrity merely requires that one is well-known.

In the eighteenth century version of the work ethic, virtue paid off in a clear conscience at the end of life. Achievement was seen as adding to the accumulated worth of the society. Even in the nineteenth century achievement was measured against abstract standards, not against the achievement of others. However, by the start of the twentieth century, achievement was not enough. One also had to out perform one's peers. "Young men were told that they had to sell themselves in order to succeed."[32] In the culture of narcissism, achievement has become an end in itself, not a means to an end beyond personal material gain. The appearance of success is the goal. Thus, in a society where appearance counts for more than substance, celebrity is more prized than fame. Fame depends on the acclaim of great performances. Celebrity is the reward for those who have attracted attention to themselves, and is perpetuated through the media network of gossip columns, talk shows, magazines, and tabloids devoted to celebrating the worthless. Lasch suggests that as a result of the media's prominent role in the construction of the reality of the culture of narcissism, the real world, outside of media production, seems unreal! "We live in a swirl of images and echoes that arrest experience and play it back in slow motion."[33] We come to distrust our own perception and wait for the media, particularly the camera, to provide validation. Reality is what the camera shows us, and the family photo album confirms our existence.[34]

The Monsters of Emotivism

It is against the background of celebrity worship and rootless values that Alasdair MacIntyre claims that an emotivist morality has grown up and allowed certain "characters" to rise to prominence in contemporary society.

Emotivism is the belief that all moral and ethical judgments are statements of preference, and no more than that. To say, "this is good," is to really say, "I think this is good, so should you." Subjective opinion

is presented as fact. But as such, no one assertion is any more valid than another. The Enlightenment had undermined the universal and absolute components of truth, leaving only relative and contingent truth. It has already been shown that the Enlightenment produced great interest in objective truth and achieved what today passes as objectivity in the form of scientific method. But we have also already seen that science is value-blind and cannot give moral guidance. Objective standards could not escape the language of efficiency and effectiveness in achieving ends. Rationality in this narrow sense had become the substitute for morality.

MacIntyre points out that in the pre-Enlightenment organic world, human life had a purpose, a telos. The telos of man was to fulfill his role in society, that role ascribed to him at birth or through position. This was the essence, or true nature of man; to play one's part effectively and faithfully. The loss of such a telos is one of the prices we have paid for the Enlightenment's freedom in the contemporary western world. MacIntyre further claims that the purpose of moral life has been lost in the process. Ethics was the means by which "man as he is", could become "man as he could be if he realized his telos." With the loss of the telos, modernity and contemporary western society is left with "man as he is," and a set of now incomprehensible terms referring to ethics. The language of pre-Enlightenment morality, values, and ethics is still with us today, but it has no reference point in post-Enlightenment life. Man was freed from the ancient authority of absolutes, state and church, but simultaneously he lost the concept of a telos as a member of that type of society.[35]

MacIntyre uses the model of the moral agent as being detached from any social particularity, and passing judgment from a purely abstract and subjective point of view. Under this conception anyone and everyone can be a moral agent, since it is in the self, and not in social roles or practices, that moral agency lies.

"The democratized self which has no necessary social content and no necessary social identity, can then be anything, can assume any role, or take any point of view, because it is and for itself nothing."[36] This anchorless, valueless, and purposeless being is the basis from which emotivism can run wild.

MacIntyre feels that contemporary society is emotivist *de facto* if not *de jure*. In a society with no human or humanizing purpose built on the destruction of absolute natural authority, relativistic authority grew in its place. The contemporary western world is geared to conspicuous consumption and the worship of celebrity, and emotivism represents the obvious moral doctrine to provide the means to that end. Being able to achieve your personal end becomes a virtue; being

able to achieve what you want, having the power to achieve what you want, becomes the justification for achieving what you want. Power is its own justification. There is no social framework to channel, control, and judge behavior. There is no appeal to a morality that could deny the legitimacy of your methods or goals because there are no standards that we do not create. The law is the brake on power, but the laws are created out of the emotivist society. Laws prohibit certain acts, and as a result all that is not actually illegal is permissible and cannot be condemned except by another's taste. The fact that laws come out of society means that the powerful within society have a huge input into the formulation of the law. As Phil Elliot says of a massive animal lineman in *North Dallas Forty,* "Joe Bob is here to remind us that the biggest and the meanest get to make all the rules." When his female companion says that she does not agree with that, Phil replies, "Agreement don't enter into it."[37]

In *After Virture,* MacIntyre identifies three "characters" that define the culture of the contemporary society. He uses the term "character" because it suggests dramatic and moral facets that are missing in "social role." He states that in the "character," ". . . role and personality are fused. Social type and psychological type are required to coincide. The character morally legitimates a mode of social existence."[38]

His concept of character leaves no room for conflict between the individual and the role, as is possible between the ordinary individual and his social role. A "character" could never suffer contradiction, like the policeman who steals, or the adulterous priest. This is because ". . . the requirements of the character are imposed from outside, from the way in which others regard and use the character to understand and evaluate themselves."[39] Thus, the "character" supplies a cultural and moral ideal to a significant segment of the society.

The "characters" that MacIntyre identifies as defining the contemporary emotivist society represent a culmination of the flow of history and philosophy that we have been following. He identifies them as "the rich aesthete," "the bureaucratic manager," and "the therapist." The rich aesthete lives a lifestyle of incredible material luxury, the model of consumption. He exists in contemporary society's concept of bliss. As the king of the Having culture, it does not matter how he rose to his status, only that he lives the way he does.

The bureaucratic manager is responsible for efficient organization and administration of production. He is the king in a production oriented society, but the nature of his techniques dehumanize people. MacIntyre claims management is for materials and those methods applied to people become manipulation.[40]

The therapist's role is to return people to health, to fix the broken units of production and consumption and quickly restore them to operation. The therapist uses an approach that objectifies the patient, the very expression "clinical efficiency" portrays an impersonal relationship when there are really few more personal relationships. He represents another form of manipulation, a rationalization of the humane into the mechanical.

In MacIntyre's conception of the contemporary emotivist society, the individual moral agent, with no basis for his agency, is victim of the power and desires of others. He is the means to their ends. Specifically, the individual suffers the manipulations of the bureaucratic manager, while being sustained by the therapist, to chase the dream of the lifestyle of the rich aesthete. In this society, good and bad, right and wrong, are at best expressions of taste, and at worst, comments on the efficacy of means to ends. The weak are the tools of the powerful because they have no reference points save for the "characters." We must work out our own salvation with diligence while the "characters," the purveyors of culture, race after their own interests running rough shod over all others.

When President Reagan addressed an audience of African-Americans in Atlanta on Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, it did not matter that Reagan had opposed every civil rights reform that the Reverend had advocated. Reagan's character, what he believed and stood for, did not matter. Reagan was the Presidential personality, he had power, and he had a shining image. When image is more important than substance, questions of right and wrong are no longer central issues. Power is its own justification. Appearance and style are more important than worth and intent.

This is the fine-tuned, high performance emotivist machine. Who better to persuade, someone who is good or someone who looks good? There is then no demand on the perceiver to make an intellectual response, no need to understand and weigh the issues, only to judge appearance and recognize power. In our contemporary culture it is more important to look good than to be good. In contemporary sport it often seems as if it is more important to look good on the scoreboard than to be a good athlete, or a good person.

Summary

This chapter has examined the roots of contemporary values, stemming as they do from the events of the Enlightenment. The evolution of pre-Enlightenment culture into contemporary culture

has also been followed from ancient Athens to present day western society.

After the Enlightenment, the individual became central to society. Freed by rational thought and the power of reason, ordinary men built a new world with the scientific method. Despite the success of scientific method at explaining the physical world, it became apparent that science could not fully guide man's existence. The feeling that there was more to being human than science could show gave rise to romantic and transcendental movements. Meanwhile, the true believers of science flowered as reductionists, logical positivists, and formalists.

The moral vacuum left by the failure of the Enlightenment to produce a rational basis for values led to the application of scientific method to human relationships. This became the basis for our de facto emotivism. In the absence of a substantiated moral framework, trying to be good for its own sake has given way to trying to look good for one's own sake.

What started in the Enlightenment as a desire to escape arbitrary control and judgment has developed into a quest for objectification. One of the consequences is that much of the sport world today looks for objective criteria because we no longer recognize what is good. The flow of thought and societal development since the Enlightenment has been a slow and gradual story of the promotion of the individual and the objectification of values. But because values cannot be objective, our contemporary world is a maelstrom of value judgments masquerading as facts. In such an environment the test of athletic excellence lies in the numbers on the scoreboard, with no need for the observer or participant to make a judgment.

The theme of this chapter has been to illustrate the origin of the values of contemporary western culture. The consequences of the evolution of contemporary culture for the development of contemporary sport are examined in the next chapter. The issue of the sports people who cannot differentiate high quality performance from winning, those heirs of the Enlightenment's rationalism, is examined in chapter 3. But both issues are directly based on the evolution of the post-Enlightenment culture described here.