

Women's Tennis at UIUC

Linda West

EVOKE

About the Ethnographer

I am the Accountant for the Department of Kinesiology and Community Health. I have been married to my high school sweetheart for 33 years and have a 30-year-old daughter, Heather and a 26-year-old son, Ray. Heather has two children, a daughter Camille who is almost 11 and a son Brady who is 7. Nothing brings greater joy to my life than spending time with my children and grandchildren.

I moved to Champaign in 2000, after my husband acquired a job with the University's Institute of Aviation as a flight instructor. My children and grandchildren remain in Springfield. After arriving at my job in KCH, I decided it was time to finish my bachelor's degree, particularly since I only needed 30 more credits to do so. A year after I finished my bachelor's through EIU, I decided I missed going to school and applied to Grad school here in the department.

I have taken classes at both the undergraduate and graduate level within the department and find the social-cultural classes particularly intriguing. Just the idea that something simple in everyday life has a basis in ancient Greece, or that an everyday item can take on a whole new life on the tennis court is fascinating to me.

I have taken several classes with Dr. Sydnor and find her area of study to be best suited to what I would like to accomplish in graduate school. I have worked with Dr. Sydnor through regular class work and independent study on a project pertaining to the tennis bracelet and would like to see it through to fruition with her guidance. To be able to find the definitive article about the subject and publish the findings would be an amazing end to my studies.

In this class I would like to look at women's tennis at the UIUC campus to see if I can find additional resources that I have previously missed that might contain information on the 1975 U.S. Open Tennis match in which Chris Evert lost her bracelet.

EXPLORE

Question

What questions is your inquiry contingent upon?

1 March 2007

Begin work to identify and refine a research topic by exploring resources online, in our libraries, and in the community (e.g., persons to be interviewed?). Keep records of your sources (cite in an established format). On iLab post an overview/summary of your explorations thus far, and identify and briefly discuss your possible research topic. Be prepared to discuss your iLab posting in class on March 1.

I am involved in an exercise group for older adults, in their March newsletter; they will be posting this notice for me:

I am looking for a female in the Champaign-Urbana area that played Women's Tennis at

the University of Illinois prior to 1975 that would be willing to share her story/memorabilia with me during the month of April for a class project I am working on. If you or someone you know is interested, please let me know.
Linda West (your fellow LFP member).

I have also talked to other staff here in the department, and have identified one former faculty member that I am familiar with that was also the Women's Tennis coach for part of her career at the University (prior to 1975), and one staff member that has indirect family ties to a former female tennis player here at the University that she is trying to put me in contact with (also prior to 1975).

I have also followed Ellen Swain's tips and found that I should be able to view slides of Women's Tennis in the AHS Dean's office, find information in the Carl Stephens' Papers and the Laura Huelster Papers as well as emailed Ellen Swain to ask for additional tips on searching for information that might be available on the coach and tennis player I have identified.

I am hoping to come up with enough information to do a paper this semester on media coverage of Women's Collegiate Tennis prior to 1975 with the anticipation that it will lead me to discover other sources in which to find the elusive tennis bracelet article I am looking for to help complete my master's thesis.

Plan

How will you go about answering your inquiry?

I have heard back from Ellen Swain with additional sources/places to look for information, some of which are not indexed so it may take some time to go through them. Her email mentions that the Ilios from the early 1970s contain essays including those on Women's Sports.

Ask

1. What do these readings tell us about history and historical method?

The past helps legitimize the present

History is past and present

History is never definitive

How we experience things now depends on past knowledge

The study of invented traditions is the study of society is the study of history and so on

Post colonialism describes something that does not yet exist

Historians write for themselves not the public

Primary sources are those that are first hand and the most sought after; a newspaper article by someone who was in attendance at an event, an autobiography written by the author (not a ghost writer). A secondary source is someone who writes about an event after reading primary and/or other secondary sources about it and drawing their own conclusions. Secondary sources are a good way to find primary sources since the primary sources should be listed in the bibliography. Historical sources can come from a variety

of documents and you should consider all sources and verify them before coming to the conclusion that the source is incorrect. Using a variety of sources keeps the author from coming to only one limited conclusion.

2. Give an example(s) from your own life or interests that apply to one or more of these articles

From my daughters first Christmas on, I wrapped all of her presents in one box. When she opened the box she had many gifts inside, but only one present was under the tree from Santa. I continued doing this when my son was born. If the gift they requested for that year was large, I had to find a box and wrapping paper large enough to wrap it with. My daughter now does the same thing with her children's gifts from Santa. We do this for all holidays where gifts are exchanged; birthdays, Valentine's Day, etc.

Sydnor inserts herself into the piece, speaking in first person. She uses many resources to back up her personal observations. Osmond, et. al., speak in third person, about the statue, without really being there. Both write about social memory and how what we remember today relies on what we have seen in the past and our vision of these statues today will not be the same as it will if we visit them again 20 years from now. Michael Jordan is still a living icon and people remember all (or at least what they consider all) of his accomplishments. Duke Paoa Kahanamoku is immortalized for what brings most recognition to the area, not for all that he accomplished in his lifetime. Both authors give us the information about the statues and let us choose what we want our social memory of the statues to be. They provide us with the facts, and let us choose which slant we wish to deem most believable.

Investigate

Somatype is something studied in KIN240. This helps relate the article to other areas of kinesiology than social/cultural studies. The best part of this article is the research/detective work required to get to the answer. With a little work, (okay, maybe a lot of work), Rosenbaum was able to find the original source documents he was looking for to complete the article. Each source he found, including those that thought they were dead ends lead him to another place to search for information. Following each lead, he found the archives he was looking for.

Somatype is something Laura Huelster studied, it is mentioned several times in the list of items in her archives. It would be interesting to see if her information includes anything along the lines of the "Posture Scandal". With body image being such a hot topic today, anorexic, bulimia, etc, I am glad that college freshmen male and female are no longer subjected to this type of punishment. If they want to study posture, it can be done with today's imaging equipment without undressing the student.

OTHER

A space for other notes, findings, comments, etc.

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