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Enduring values : a content analysis of television coverage of the 1994 Olympic games

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ENDURING VALUES: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF TELEVISION
COVERAGE OF THE 1994 OLYMPIC GAMES

A Thesis

Presented to the Faculty
of the School of Journalism and Mass Communications
San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science

By
Steven Nordenstedt
December 1995

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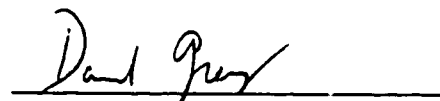
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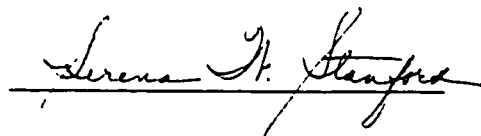
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ABSTRACT

ENDURING VALUES: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF TELEVISION COVERAGE OF THE 1994 OLYMPIC GAMES

by Steven Nordenstedt

This thesis, which examined American television coverage of the 1994 Winter Olympic Games, used the list of enduring values posited by Herbert J. Gans (1980) to illustrate how CBS and TNT produced their own distinctive versions of the events in Lillehammer, Norway for a receptive American audience. In addition to the empirical verification of Gans' enduring values, this study found that the key factor in determining the extent of an athlete's coverage on American television, as well as the tone of that coverage, was not a medal winning performance, but rather what country the individual hailed from. Athletes from Western developed countries, including the United States, dominated network coverage, and were more likely to be associated with a higher number of enduring values than their fellow competitors from Communist, former Communist, and non-Western developed countries.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

On Wednesday, February 23, 1994, the Columbia Broadcasting System's (CBS) prime-time coverage of the 17th Olympic Winter Games from Lillehammer, Norway received a Nielsen rating of 48.5, making it the highest rated prime-time television program in the United States within the past 12 years (CBS strikes gold, 1994). The program featured several different events and highlighted some of the more well-known names in recent Olympic lore, including the charismatic skier Alberto Tomba of Italy and speed skater Bonnie Blair, the woman CBS commentator Jim Nantz referred to on several occasions as "America's little sister." Also featured on that night's telecast was the much anticipated showdown of Nancy Kerrigan and Tonya Harding in the technical portion of the women's figure skating competition. By the time the Olympic flame was doused at the conclusion of the closing ceremonies, the 1994 Lillehammer Games had earned the distinction of being the highest rated Olympic telecast in the history of American television (Olympian effort, 1994).

CBS won the prime-time ratings battle every night of the 16 days of competition. Turner Network Television (TNT), the other American network televising live coverage from Lillehammer, also benefitted from the popularity of the Olympics. Relying on live hockey coverage and a steady dose of highlights from activities that occurred the day before, TNT's weekday cable audience share increased by 80% over regular programming during the two-week period in which the Olympics were held (Martzke, 1994). This came as no surprise.

because over the years both the Summer and Winter Olympics have established themselves as popular television events capable of delivering the large audience shares desired by both advertisers and network executives. What did come as a surprise was the realization that these Games resulted in higher overall Nielsen ratings than all of the Summer Olympiads televised on American television over the years. Historically, because the Winter Games are considered a harder sell, their broadcasting rights are sold for a considerably smaller fee than what the Summer Olympics typically commands. For example, CBS purchased the exclusive rights to the Lillehammer Games for \$295 million. NBC paid \$456 million for the rights to the 1996 Summer Games in Atlanta (Nevius, 1995).

Despite all the hoopla that surrounded women's figure skating, television critics like John Carman of the *San Francisco Chronicle* were cautiously optimistic in predicting how successful CBS and TNT would actually be in their attempt to capture audience share. Carman (1994) noted that American viewers normally have a hard time relating to the Winter Games: "Generally short on American medalists and traditional American sports, the Winter Olympics tends to be sold on American television as a sort of folksy convivial 'winterfest' event" (p. C1).

News of the stellar ratings prompted both advertising and network executives to attribute the tremendous success of Lillehammer to the women's figure skating competition and the flood of pre-Olympic media coverage generated by Harding, Kerrigan, and the scandal that will forever link them (Martzke, 1994). ABC executive Mark Mandel best summed up the industry's reaction to news of the high ratings when he told *USA Today* that "no sporting

event in history—not even Super Bowls—has received the amount of front-page attention Harding and Kerrigan gave this Winter Olympics leading in, borne out by the Super Bowl numbers when they actually skated" (Martzke, 1994, p. 3E).

In addition to a boost in television ratings, the Harding-Kerrigan scandal also raised a serious question about sports and the values commonly associated with participating in organized athletics: Are sports having a negative impact on society by producing false heroes who are more indicative of what's wrong with society instead of what's right with it? In her essay on sports and human values, Lumpkin (1983) concluded that winning has become such an obsession in American culture that it dominates all other aspects of athletic participation. Lumpkin contended that, instead of building character and teaching participants about the values of hard work, fair play, and teamwork, "most sports in America diminish rather than enlarge such values" (1983, p. 4). This sentiment is shared by Tutko and Bruns, who wrote that "we'll tolerate almost anything in the name of winning—cruelty, insensitivity, drugs, cheating, and lying—as long as the winners don't get caught" (1976, p. 12).

With hindsight, it's difficult to imagine that Harding's win-at-all-costs philosophy would have been admired instead of disdained if the end result had been a gold medal instead of an eighth-place finish. Or is it? As a chain smoker from a dysfunctional family, married to a wife-beating husband with a criminal record, Harding hardly had the makings of an ideal spokesperson for Wheaties or Corn Flakes before the attack on Kerrigan. Yet if she had not been linked to the assault and somehow turned in the performance of her life in Lillehammer, it's possible that she would have been besieged with offers to endorse a number of

commercial products. Instead of a failure, Harding would have been portrayed as yet another Olympic hero who had to battle long odds to realize her lifelong dream. If things had fallen into place, the lasting memory of Tonya Harding from the '94 Games might have been of her gliding across an ice rink holding hands with Mickey Mouse on her way to Disneyland, instead of sobbing to the judges over a broken shoelace in a desperate attempt to earn a re-skate during the free program.

Although athletes have been admired and respected for their physical prowess since the days of Ancient Greece, the full-blown modern sports hero first appeared on the American scene in the 1920s. Rader (1983) contended that athletes like Babe Ruth, Red Grange, and Jack Dempsey were transformed into sports idols during that decade because their success in the athletic arena "assisted the public in compensating for the passing of the traditional dream of success, the erosion of Victorian values, and feelings of individual powerlessness" (p. 11). According to Rader, Americans who found themselves at the mercy of the system, turned to the media for escapism. The media responded by creating what Rader called "defense mechanisms for the helpless individual that rested upon a complex set of images, fantasies, and myths" (p. 11). Sportswriters and broadcasters of this era often exercised their right of poetic license, creating "images of athletes which often overwhelmed the athlete's actual achievements" (Rader, 1983, p. 11).

Today, sports heroes continue to flourish for many of the same reasons proffered by Rader. However, the enormous salaries of today's professional athletes, coupled with the greed and labor strife that has struck Major League

Baseball, the National Basketball Association, and the National Hockey League, has given rise to an ever-increasing tide of media criticism aimed at sports figures. For the most part, Olympic athletes like Dan Jansen, Bonnie Blair, Oksana Baiul, and Johan Olav Koss have been able to avoid being subjected to media hero-bashing, and thus they continue to be portrayed by both print and broadcast journalists as embodiments of many of the values that have long been considered important in this country.

Purpose of Study. The purpose of this study was to examine the underlying values contained in television coverage of the Olympic Games. The enduring values defined by Gans (1980) in his seminal study: "*Deciding What's News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek and Time.*" were used as the basis for investigating how CBS and TNT presented the Lillehammer Games to a receptive American audience. Special attention was paid to the manner by which both networks highlighted certain athletes and events in an effort to cast those individuals as heroic archetypes. Because the focus of this study was concerned chiefly with program content rather than on what effects such content had on its audience, the method of inquiry used was content analysis.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the birth of the modern version of the Olympic Games in 1896, countries have come to see this once quadrennial and now biennial event as the ideal world stage on which to make political statements and re-affirm ideological concepts. Externally, because the eyes and ears of the entire world look in on the roughly two weeks worth of festivities, serving as host for an Olympiad has become one of the best ways for a nation to announce to the rest of the world that it is ready to assume a more prominent role within the international community. Internally, success in the Olympic Games fosters national pride and promotes values such as maintaining a hard work ethic and discipline among a country's population (Arbena, 1991). Winter or summer, large numbers of sports and non-sports fans alike literally drop what they are doing and tune in their television sets to watch, even though most of them do not have the slightest idea what a luge is, or what is the proper technique in throwing a javelin. Because of the attention they receive and the hundreds of millions of dollars they generate in television sales, the Olympic Games are entertainment, big-business, and a religious experience all tied into one neat package.

Pierre de Coubertin and the Spread of Olympism

Although this study was a content analysis of enduring values contained within television coverage of the 1994 Lillehammer Winter Games, it is appropriate that some mention of how the Olympics got started be included in this review. Both scholars and journalists refer to the Olympics and the doings of

the International Olympic Committee as the "Olympic movement." *Webster's New World Dictionary* defined movement as, among other things, "organized action by people working toward a goal" (1990, p. 386). In the beginning, the goal of the Olympic movement established by founder Pierre de Coubertin was to promote internationalism by bringing the countries of the world together every four years to participate in art exhibitions and athletic competitions. While others thought of sporting competitions primarily as any of a number of games best played by children in their spare time, de Coubertin envisioned athletics as a genuine vehicle of social change (Segrave, 1988).

De Coubertin hoped his decision to re-invent the Olympics would provide him with a solid foundation on which to introduce and build-up a new religion called Olympism (Lucas, 1988). Dedicated to the principle of a sound mind and a sound body, Olympism was de Coubertin's prescription for the ultimate elixir. In both his writings and in lectures, he ambitiously predicted that his personal ideology would become a "pervasive religion, a cult of beauty, and an instrument for world peace" (Lucas, 1988, p. 91). In an attempt to realize his idealistic dreams, de Coubertin and his followers went to great lengths to distinguish the Olympics from other major sporting events of both national and international significance, marking them with carefully choreographed rituals and symbols (MacAloon, 1984; Taylor, 1986; Rothenbuhler, 1989). The pomp and circumstance of the opening and closing ceremonies, the lighting of the Olympic torch, the Olympic oath, the Olympic hymn, and the massive white flag with the now familiar five interlocking rings strewn across it were all intended to be

reminders to spectators, athletes, and judges that the Olympic Games stand for something higher than simply win, place, and show.

Although de Coubertin wrote at length about the virtues of sports and the merits of his new found religion, it was noted that he also had an ulterior motive in organizing the Olympics. A devoted patriot, de Coubertin blamed France's defeat to Germany in the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71) on the generally poor overall physical fitness level of the French soldiers. Fearful that France was vulnerable to another attack, de Coubertin saw the Olympics as an outstanding way to improve military training habits, while also promoting the benefits of physical fitness among, what he called, an "effeminate non-sporting, excessively intellectual French population" (Lucas, 1988, p. 89). The paradoxical decision to use a vehicle intended to bring about world peace as a means to improve military strength in preparation for war, prompted Edwards (1981) to arrive at the conclusion that the impetus behind the introduction of the Olympics was not internationalism, but nationalism.

Despite de Coubertin's good intentions, the Olympics and Olympism have fallen well short of the lofty goals of international understanding and world peace. Every modern Olympiad has experienced some degree of political controversy, including the first one in 1896 when de Coubertin refused to extend an invitation to Germany because the Germans had defeated France in a war held 25 years earlier. For the Soviet Union and the United States during the Cold War, the Olympics became a substitute battlefield on which national pride and political ideologies were contested not with weapons of war, but rather with athletes and sporting equipment. With the break-up of the Soviet Union,

economic issues such as commercial sponsorship, the sale of television rights to future Olympiads, and the push for professional athletes to compete in team sports such as baseball, hockey, and soccer, have come to dominate discussion speculating on the future of the Olympic Games. However, politics still come into play, as shown by the role played by the United States in blocking China's bid to host the year 2000 Summer Olympics because of the Communist country's record on human rights.

Over the years, de Coubertin was subjected to criticism for allowing his patriotic passions to cloud his judgment when it came to formulating Olympic policy. Although nationalism played a key role in prompting de Coubertin to pursue his Olympic dream, it should be noted that he always stressed in his writings that sports and politics should be kept separate from one another (Lucas, 1988). In his travels to promote the Olympics, de Coubertin emphasized patriotism without nationalism (Segrave, 1988). He encouraged people to root for their countrymen, but he also hoped that they would not view the successes of other countries with hostility. According to Segrave (1988), de Coubertin's decision to promote the patriotic aspect of the Games was one of his greatest failures because it forever doomed the Olympics to be overshadowed by nationalism. "He [de Coubertin] failed to recognize that for too many, patriotism invariably connoted a feeling of hatred for other cultures" (Segrave, 1988, p. 158).

In light of de Coubertin's blunder, it should come as no surprise that an overwhelming majority of the research conducted by social scientists pertaining to the Olympics has focused on nationalism. Mass communications researchers

in particular have attempted to measure the amount of nationalism inherent in media coverage of the Games (Schillinger & Jenswold, 1987; Rabkin & Franklin, 1989; Real, 1989; Real, Mechikoff & Goldstein, 1989; Farrell, 1989; Larson & Rivenburgh, 1991; Riggs, Eastman & Golobic, 1993).

Nationalism still factors heavily into the Olympic equation, but the Games entered into a new era with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the reunification of Germany. Prior to the beginning of the 1992 Winter Games in Albertville, France, in which the former Soviet republics competed as the Unified Team, journalists like Jere Longman of the *Washington Post* wondered if Americans would lose interest in the Olympics after the demise of their country's two main adversaries: "But the question is, how large an audience will watch, now that the Soviet Union and East Germany no longer exist and the Olympics can't be portrayed, like wrestling, as good guys vs. bad guys" (1992, p. 7). Americans tuned in to watch the 1992 Games, and they continue to be big fans of Olympic television as evident by soaring Nielsen ratings and the ever-increasing large sums of money being spent by networks to acquire the exclusive broadcasting rights to future Olympiads. According to MacAloon (1989), "America is at base a nation of 'true believers,' or at least speakers of true belief, in the power of Olympic representations" (p. 185).

Sport and Society

With the recent proliferation of all-sports cable networks, including ESPN, ESPN2, Sports Channel, and other regional outlets, Americans now have the opportunity to watch sports on television 24 hours a day. The production and distribution of several thousand hours of sports television coverage annually is a

strong indication of America's obsession with sports. Several scholars have gone so far as to call sports a pervasive influence on the American way of life (Duncan, 1983; MacAloon, 1988; Shaikin, 1988; Tutko, 1989). MacAloon (1988) contended that "sport has colonized our leisure and industry, our family relations and gender identities, our media, school architecture and urban planning, our popular art and everyday speech, our national folklore, ritual, and mythology" (p. 282).

Although millions of Americans spend much of their free time, money, and energy talking about and participating in athletics, social scientists have been slow to take up the challenge of analyzing the role sports play in our society. Historically, erudites have taken a rather myopic view of sports and their relevance in American culture, writing them off as mere entertainment or escapism. Sports do indeed have entertainment value, but according to Kruse (1981), they also have ". . . both social and psychological significance" (p. 270). Fishwick (1969) contended that "for better or for worse, sport gives form and substance to much in American life" (p. 170). Over the years, athletes like Jim Thorpe, Jackie Robinson, and Magic Johnson have come to symbolize important social issues such as the mistreatment of Native Americans, racism, and the dangers of engaging in unprotected sex, respectively.

In American society, as in countries around the world, sport acts as a common thread tying individuals to one another. Although most people are hesitant to talk about who they voted for in the last presidential election, or where they stand on some of the more controversial issues of the day such as abortion and gun control, it is not uncommon for absolute strangers to talk at length about

such things as whether Joe Montana is the greatest quarterback in the history of the National Football League. This phenomenon is best explained by Fishwick (1969), who noted that sports are one subject in which the average person could: (1) identify with the principal actors involved, (2) become emotionally attached to certain teams and individual athletes, and (3) simply by observation over an extended period of time, develop a sense of expertise that would enable him or her to discuss sports matters in an "authoritative" manner (p. 170). The communicative aspect of sports was also acknowledged by Real (1977), who found in his ritual analysis of the Super Bowl that one of the primary motivating factors for watching large sporting events was that such contests provided people with something they could talk about with co-workers, neighbors, clients, and even strangers.

Because of their popularity with the masses, sports have become a useful policy-making tool for governments. International sporting events like the World Cup and the Olympics are perceived as being extremely useful in fulfilling political purposes. Nafziger (1992) contended that "governments use or abuse sports competition for any of at least seven objectives: propaganda, prestige, protest, conflict, cooperation, diplomatic recognition or non-recognition, and promotion of human rights or economic development" (p. 496). According to Allison (1986), how a government decided to use sports depended on the overall national development of the country that government represented. Third World or developing countries typically used sports to promote improvements in infrastructure and to educate young people about the values of discipline, hard work, and physical fitness (Arbena, 1991). First World countries, like 1994

Winter Olympic host Norway, hoped that success in international sports would have the dual effect of instilling pride among their nation's populace, while also boosting the nation's reputation in the international community (Hoberman, 1993). Superpowers like the United States and the former Soviet Union used sports competitions as the proving grounds on which to validate their respective political ideologies (Baumann, 1988; Begly, 1988; Riordan, 1993).

Values Expressed in Sporting Events

One of the major roles performed by sports as a social institution concerned the introduction and reinforcement of social values (Duncan, 1983; Trujillo & Ekdom, 1985; Tutko, 1989; Rothenbuhler, 1989). Sports were able to serve well in this important role because their impact on daily life extended well beyond the lockerrooms and playing surfaces. When a social, political, or economic issue affected the sporting world, such as an Olympic boycott or the threat of government intervention to put a halt to the baseball strike of 1994-95, athletes were quick to condemn such situations by using the familiar argument that sports should be kept separate from other institutions, especially politics. Shaikin (1988) condemned this argument, noting that "sports cannot be separate from education, the media, or any other sphere of society, because all of those spheres intersect" (p. 4). Trujillo and Ekdom (1985) also acknowledged a link between sports and the other social institutions that comprise the American social structure. Trujillo and Ekdom contended that because of this interconnection, sports inevitably embodied and communicated to spectators the same societal values more commonly associated with more sacred American institutions such as marriage, education, and family.

It was the format of most sporting events that made them a powerful tool in accomplishing the task of articulating values to large audiences. According to Real (1977), the dramatic structure of sporting events naturally provided for the creation of heroes, anti-heroes, winners, and losers, and that these archetypes became exemplary models of the values attributed to them (p. 95). Unlike most of the complex problems people faced on a regular basis that extended over a long period of time, conflicts that arose in sporting events were relatively simple. The event was scheduled, two opposing teams or individuals squared-off, and, at the end of a designated period of time or after a player or team scored a mutually agreed upon number of points, the event reached its conclusion. Because of the uncomplicated nature of their storylines, Tutko contended that any sporting event, big or small, "crystallizes all of the many values as well as fantasies that we have been trained to believe as children" (1989, p. 122).

The Olympic Games and Olympic athletes were especially useful in reaffirming and re-defining values to the audience. Rothenbuhler (1989) concluded that the Games not only embodied the values, beliefs, and attitudes that are at the core of American culture, but they also enabled Americans to "see these values performed as they are in few other realms, and also rewarded" (p. 153). Real (1989) has referred to the Olympics as "the tribal campfire around which the human race celebrates its common heroes, triumphs, defeats, myths, values, and hopes" (p. 15). Dayan and Katz (1985) classified the Olympics as one of a handful of special happenings that can rightfully be called "ceremonial events." Events of this nature serve two functions: (1) "the re-articulation and re-

affirmation of values, and (2) the ceremonial self-presentation of a society to other societies in exceptional circumstances" (Dayan & Katz, 1985, p. 60).

Values in American Culture

Social scientists have tried to identify those values which can best be described as being dominant in American society, but they have been unable to arrive at a consensus. The main obstacle in any attempt to compose a definitive list is the tendency for values to continually evolve and take on new meanings with the passing of time. Ball-Rokeach, Rokeach, and Grube (1984) have defined values as "standards that throughout the life course and because of ongoing changes in society are differentially reinforced by society, society's institutions, and significant reference persons and groups; thus values are wholly capable of being continually arranged and rearranged as they are applied to self and other" (p. 26).

Because they have the potential to undergo transformations and also drift in and out of vogue, scholars have focused their attention on trying to identify those values that have maintained a high degree of saliency over an extended period of time. Williams (1970) identified 15 value clusters that have been "frequently observed in the American scene" (p. 453). These clusters or "value-patterns," as Williams called them, included achievement and success, activity and work, moral ethics, humanitarianism, efficiency and practicality, progress, materialism, equality, freedom, external conformity, science and secular rationality, nationalism, democracy, individualism, and group superiority.

Rokeach (1973) noted that some values were more stable than others, and thus were more likely to be sustained over the course of one's life. Rokeach

contended that the key factor in determining whether a value withstood the test of time was the manner in which the value was taught to an individual: "It may be suggested that the enduring quality of values arises mainly from the fact that they are initially taught and learned in isolation from other values in an absolute, all-or-none-manner" (1973, p. 6). After many years of analyzing human values, Rokeach concluded that all humans possessed a relatively small number of values which germinated from one's culture and were nurtured by the social institutions that comprised that culture, including the media.

If the media did indeed play a powerful role in shaping and maintaining social order as contended by Real (1977), the values inherent in all types of media content need to be examined. In observing news content from both television and magazines over an extended period of time, Gans (1980) concluded that there were eight enduring values consistently expressed by the American media. These values included ethnocentrism, individualism, small-town pastoralism, responsible capitalism, altruistic democracy, moderatism, social order, and national leadership. Gans defined enduring values as "values which can be found in many different types of news stories over a long period of time: often they affect what events become news, for some are part and parcel of the definition of news" (1980, p. 41). Like the evening network news or the daily newspaper, major television events like coverage of the Olympic Games contained implicit values. These values painted a picture for the millions of Americans who dutifully tuned in to view them of "nation and society as it ought to be" (Gans, 1980, p. 39).

When the media reported that Tonya Harding was involved in the attack of her rival and Olympic teammate Nancy Kerrigan prior to the start of the 1994 Winter Olympics, millions of Americans, many of them dispassionate figure skating fans, were both shocked and outraged. Not only had Harding committed a crime, but she had also violated values commonly associated with the Olympics and Olympic television coverage like "sportsmanship," "friendship between competitors," and "personal sacrifice" (Rothenbuhler, 1989, p. 147). The Harding-Kerrigan scandal prompted television programs, ranging from network news programs such as *60 Minutes* and *Nightline*, to ESPN's *Sportscenter*, to syndicated tabloid shows such as *Hard Copy* and *A Current Affair*, to delve into Harding's troubled past. While Harding proved to be a tragic character atypical to the normally reserved world of figure skating, her violation of traditional values was what made her newsworthy. According to Gans (1980), when the media presents news coverage about social deviants and criminal wrongdoing, they are indirectly expressing to society the merits of proper behavior and social conformity: "If a news story deals with activities which are generally considered undesirable and whose descriptions contain negative connotations, then the story implicitly expresses a value about what is desirable" (Gans, 1980, p. 40).

Scholars have concluded that even the most conscientious journalist was compelled to shape and report news stories in such a manner that revealed his or her values and beliefs (Epstein, 1973; Tuchman, 1978; Gans, 1980). After observing the day-to-day activities of journalists and how they selected and wrote news stories, Gans (1980) concluded that journalists made more than a conscious effort to exclude personal feelings from their reporting by practicing the concept

of value exclusion (p. 183). Specifically, Gans referred to three ways that reporters tried to safeguard the news from being infiltrated by their own personal biases, including (1) objectivity, (2) divorcing themselves from the consequences of the outcomes of the stories they report, and (3) remaining noncommittal in issues of public debate between political parties and contrasting political ideologies. Despite taking these precautions, enduring values still found their way into news content because they unconsciously affected the journalistic decisions made by reporters and editors who must define what stories merit news coverage (Gans, 1980).

Sports Reporting

It's been said that some of the best and worst reporting is produced by the sports departments of newspapers and television stations. Morrow contended that sports reporting was based on the creation of illusions and that television, newspapers, and magazines possessed the power to construct themes and symbols at will (1989). Kidd (1989) was also highly critical of sports reporting and its practitioners, contending that the impetus behind sports coverage was a desire to attract the predominately male audiences that advertisers craved and, in the case of television, to promote interest for other shows that were aired on the same station.

Because of the high costs involved with covering the Olympics, the media rarely took a neutral position in reporting them (Kottak, 1988). Riggs et al. (1993) contended that, after paying \$243 million for the exclusive rights to the 1992 Winter Olympics, CBS purposely played-up pro-American sentiments in its coverage because it was in the network's best interest to arouse the viewing

audience. Farrell (1989), in his analysis of the 1984 Winter Olympics at Sarajevo, also concluded that an American television network was guilty of fanning the flames of patriotic nationalism to maintain viewership by devoting more air time and placing a higher emphasis on those sporting events in which American athletes had realistic chances of winning medals (p. 172). Farrell noted that ABC's coverage contained some mention of the Olympic ideals of humanity, internationalism, and participation for the glory of sport, but that these values were "found more frequently in commercials for banks and soft drinks than in the many hours of commentary examined" (p. 179). These conclusions corresponded to the finding of Bryant, Brown, Comisky, and Zillman (1982) that "sports commentary appears to be a very powerful tool in influencing viewer's perception of play and their enjoyment of an athletic contest" (p. 118).

Although sports reporting had its critics, it also had some supporters. Trujillo and Ekdorn (1985) contended that sports coverage mirrored news coverage in the sense that it also contained implicit values. According to Trujillo and Ekdorn, because sports reporters were subjected to the same journalistic rules and principles as other news reporters, they "usually avoid making explicit or critical value statements in their sports stories" (p. 264). In comparing Olympic coverage between *Pravda* and several Canadian newspapers, Rabkin and Franklin (1989) found that sports coverage could be less biased than straight news coverage.

Athletes as Heroes

For better or for worse, a growing number of athletes enjoy celebrity status in this country comparable to actors, musicians, and the president. Many of

them earn huge salaries, and some of them are so beloved and admired by the public that corporations pay them seven-figure sums to endorse products, ranging from jogging shoes to life insurance. According to MacAloon (1988), the tendency to canonize athletes and make them embodiments of values and beliefs says a great deal about our cultural framework. In recent years, television exposure promoted athletes like Michael Jordan, Joe Montana, and Nolan Ryan to the status of American icons. Goethals (1981) contended that the primary function of icons was "to articulate and shape beliefs through visual forms" (p. 36).

Fishwick (1969) contended that heroes act as societal mirrors, reflecting the values and ambitions commonly shared by all the inhabitants of a particular culture (p. 170). In addition to being a symbol of hope for the downtrodden, Goethals (1981) found that heroes become role models for the rest of a society's citizens to pattern their own lives after. Vulgar behavior, criminal wrongdoing, incidents of drug abuse, and apathy towards their fans and supporters, are all themes prevalent in today's media coverage of athletes. Nevertheless, because of their high salaries and the long odds nearly all of them had to overcome to reach a high level of expertise, athletes continue to be cast into heroic molds. MacAloon contended that the tendency to promote sports figures to the lofty status of role model was unwarranted, because with the exception of their athletic talents, they were "like any other congruent subset of Americans" (1988, p. 283).

The Olympics have also generated their fair share of sports heroes. Unlike professional sports where the audience is male-dominated, Rothenbuhler noted that the Olympic television viewing audience accurately mirrored

America's social structure (1988). Based on surveys conducted during the 1984 Los Angeles Summer Games, Rothenbuhler contended that the Olympic audience was composed of people from different educational, financial, and cultural backgrounds, and that the proceedings were watched equally by both males and females. Because they attracted a gender-neutral audience that tended to associate a set of "values, beliefs, and symbols" with the Olympics that were distinct from other sporting events, Rothenbuhler called the Games a "religious celebration" (p. 71). In speculating on the earning potential of the 1994 Olympians and their chances to land lucrative endorsement contracts once the Games concluded, Moore noted that Olympic athletes were attractive to corporations because "they're not as likely to be tagged with the millionaire-crybaby label even the best-loved professional athlete occasionally gets" (1994, p. 2-B). While much of the talk pertaining to professional sports in the early 1990s focused on finances, Olympic athletes were still seen as people who competed for the glory of sports and the honor of representing their country on a world stage. In concluding her assessment of the 1994 crop of Olympic athletes, Moore found that "the only Olympian who mentioned endorsement money was Tonya Harding, who, clearly, won't be getting any" (1994, p. 2-B).

Although Harding's Olympic experience was clouded by controversy, there were many potential heroes among the performers in Lillehammer, including Norway's Johan Olav Koss, America's Dan Jansen, and the Ukraine's Oksana Baiul. What made an Olympic hero? Obviously winning a gold medal helped, but surely it was not the only factor that ultimately determined if an athlete was worthy of being called a hero. Although there were 61 gold medals

awarded in Lillehammer, the most recognizable athlete to emerge from the 16-day event, at least from an American point of view, was not among the winners. Nancy Kerrigan earned a silver medal, but because of the media coverage she received prior to the start of the Games, she emerged from Norway with an armload of contracts that made her a spokesperson for, among other things, that most wholesome champion of middle-class American values, Disneyland.

Several scholars have noted the prominent role played by the media in the creation and sustainment of heroes. Farrell (1989) noted that the media manufactured heroes to maintain viewer interest during coverage of the 1984 Winter Olympics. When an American hero failed, another one was quickly brought to the audience's attention through the magic of American television. Observation of this phenomenon led Farrell to the conclusion that the typical Olympic hero, as manufactured by the media, tended to meet the following criteria: "(1) a true hero overcomes adversity; (2) a true hero 'brings out his or her best;' (3) a true hero triumphs over others competitively (i.e., in a fair fight); (4) a true hero handles pressure well, does not crack under strain; (5) a true hero is dedicated to his or her sport as craft (i.e., gives something back to the sport for all he or she has received from the sport)" (1989, p. 179).

Kottak (1988) contended that the media were so concerned with the presentation of hero types that they substituted athletes from other countries for Americans in their coverage when those athletes were perceived to be more representative of American values than members of the U.S. team. After observing a *Newsweek* article about the 1984 Summer Olympics that profiled three Olympic athletes, two which were not Americans, Kottak noted that

"although these winners were the products of different nations and had followed different paths to Olympic success, American values were used to explain their achievements" (p. 58). Kottak concluded that it's not what country an athlete hails from that determines newsworthiness, but rather how well he or she embodies a certain American hero type.

Boorstin (1987) contended that the media created heroes largely out of an attempt to satisfy the public's hunger for exemplary models of human greatness. Boorstin defined a hero as "a human figure—real or imaginary or both—who has shown greatness in some achievement" (p. 49). Sports figures, actors, and other well-known dignitaries were projected by the media as heroes worthy of emulation by the public. Boorstin noted that the shelf life of most modern heroes was short because they were in actuality not true heroes but rather well-known celebrities. "While the folklore of hero-worship, the zestful search for heroes, and the pleasure in reverence for heroes remain, the heroes themselves dissolve" (Boorstin, 1987, p. 48).

Because this study was focused specifically on examining the enduring values in television coverage of the 1994 Winter Olympic Games, it was necessary to make mention of some of the literature that addressed television's role in conveying values to its audience. According to Goethals (1981), television "assumed the primary role in re-articulating and re-affirming values in American society in recent years" (p. 2). Unlike printed materials, television messages were received concurrently by a national audience composed of people of all types of educational and income levels, providing them with a shared experience or common frame of reference (Real, 1977; Breen & Corcoran, 1982).

Television provided shared experiences and fulfilled the task of acculturation through the creation of myths (Goethals, 1981, Campbell, 1991). Malinowski (1961) defined myth as "a body of narratives woven into a culture which dictates belief, defines ritual, and acts as a chart of the social order" (p. 249). Goethals (1981) contended that all of the images on television, including those seen in sports coverage, contributed to the structure of myths. According to Breen and Corcoran (1982), myths served four functions: (1) to produce common social understandings among all of a culture's inhabitants; (2) to create and sustain exemplary heroes and heroines which others may imitate or model themselves after; (3) to mediate conflict, and (4) to provide structure to the randomness of history.

The end result of the myths and images that appeared on television screens was that they "became for many Americans a means of locating themselves in an ordered world" (Goethals, 1981, p. 4). Because it's simply not possible for Americans to travel around the world and see events of global and non-global importance unfold before their very eyes, they must rely on the media to keep track of world affairs. Shoemaker and Reese (1991) noted that a majority of the audience assumed the media provided a precise, well-balanced, representation of the world. In reality, American interests dominate all aspects of news reporting, especially foreign news coverage. Gans (1979) contended that foreign news was a less objective version of domestic news and that the media had a tendency to put an American spin on foreign events, interpreting them with American values.

Television Coverage of the Olympics

Journalist Pete Axthelm questioned the purpose of the Olympic Games, writing: "At their best, the Olympics are a mega-anthology show, a made-for-TV special that entralls millions of viewers with sports that they would not ordinarily watch if they were being contested in their bathtubs" (1987, p. 100). According to Real (1989), one of the purposes of television coverage of the Olympics was that it contributed immensely to how people visualized the rest of the world. It was Real's contention that the Olympics provided "an unparalleled global breadth of exposure for our perceptual systems" because they were one event in which the audience was exposed to many countries, including those normally not discussed on their television screens (p. 225). Athletes, officials, and judges were not seen merely as individuals, but rather as symbolic representations of the countries they hailed from.

In the beginning, the International Olympic Committee sought to resist the allure of television and the large sums of money that could be gained through the sales of exclusive broadcasting rights to each Olympiad. Long-time United States Olympic Committee President Avery Brundage, who was dedicated to the ideals of amateurism and the purity of the Games as outlined by de Coubertin, prophesied that putting a price tag on the Games would place the Olympic movement completely at the mercy of the global television networks (Guttman, 1984). Despite Brundage's pleas, proponents for the selling of exclusive television rights argued that television coverage would aid, not hinder, the Olympic movement by exposing the event to a worldwide audience.

Although snippets from the 1936 Berlin Games were shown as part of a demonstration at that year's World's Fair, the BBC was the first television network to actually bring the Olympics into people's living rooms, broadcasting coverage of the 1948 Games (Real, 1989). The marriage between American television and the Olympics began with the broadcasting of the opening ceremonies of the 1960 Winter Games, held beneath the snow-capped mountains of the Sierra Nevadas in Squaw Valley, CA. CBS paid \$50,000 for exclusive rights to the event, and the coverage was produced and narrated by members of the network's celebrated news division. After viewing the opening program, the *New York Times* predicted that "C.B.S. no doubt is going to have a television 'exclusive' that will attract very considerable interest over the period of the winter events" (Gould, 1960, p. 54).

For American television networks, the Olympics proved to be worthy of a gold medal because of their ability to attract both viewers and advertising revenue. In chronicling the history of ABC Sports, Sugar (1978) wrote that television coverage of the Olympics was such a financial success that "if they hadn't existed, television would have invented them" (p. 209). Both the winter and summer versions of the Olympics fit nicely into the network television calendar. The Winter Games were traditionally held in the crucial sweeps month of February. The Summer Games, televised opposite of reruns and summer replacement shows on other networks, attracted an even larger audience.

Because the Olympics attract a large audience and bring prestige to the network that televises them, ABC, NBC, and CBS are willing to pay excessive amounts of money to acquire their exclusive broadcasting rights. Success in

Squaw Valley prompted CBS to purchase the rights to the Summer Games, held later that year in Rome, Italy, for \$660,000. Four years later, ABC entered the Olympic arena for the first time, paying \$200,000 for the rights to broadcast the Winter Games in Innsbruck, Austria. Later that year, NBC paid a little over \$1 million to televise the Summer Games in Tokyo. From these humble beginnings, the price tags for exclusive rights to the Winter and Summer Games have soared to over \$700 million apiece for the Summer Games of 2000 and the Winter Games of 2002 (Nevius, 1995).

The most profitable Olympic television venture thus far was ABC's broadcast of the 1984 Summer Games in Los Angeles. According to Guttman (1988), The network paid \$225 million for exclusive rights and obtained \$650 million from sponsors and commercial fees. Although ABC made money in Los Angeles, the high cost of acquiring rights has made it increasingly difficult for the networks to earn profits with Olympic coverage in recent years. For example, despite record ratings, including the fourth highest rating of all-time for the first night of ladies figure skating, CBS just broke even on its coverage of the Lillehammer Games (Olympian effort, 1994). Why do the networks continue to bid for the rights to the Olympics when the soaring costs connected with producing coverage make it increasingly difficult to make a profit? According to Sugar, the "prestige" the Olympics bring to a network, along with the countless opportunities to hype network programming and personalities, is something that "can't be found on any balance sheet" (1978, p. 221).

The soaring costs involved with obtaining exclusive broadcasting rights affected the way Olympic programming was presented to the audience.

Anchored by Walter Cronkite, the 1960 Games were covered in the same manner as any other major news event reported by the CBS News staff (Gould, 1960). In critiquing coverage of the opening ceremony, Gould noted that CBS' presentation lacked personal features on the athletes and failed to paint a picture of life in Squaw Valley: "Instead, there was the familiar manifestation of television's preoccupation with television's role in reporting the news" (1960, p. 54).

Through the Winter Games of 1972 in Sapporo, Japan, the Olympics continued to be presented by the networks in the same vein as other major news events. The emphasis was placed on results and the recapitulation of facts, instead of on the human-interest angle and the personalities of the athletes competing. NBC, which purchased the rights to the Sapporo Games, attempted to present the competition in a truly objective manner. Instead of focusing on Americans and those athletes expected to win medals, entire events were televised from beginning to end. According to Sugar, viewers were "treated to performer after performer, including the last 60 skiers in the downhill—all of them Kamikaze pilots—from every country in the world with virtually no chance of winning" (1978, pp. 220-221). Relying on footage from the Japanese government-owned NHK, NBC's coverage also required subtitles. The result of this endeavor was such low ratings that the network avoided bidding on either of the 1976 Olympiads, as well as the 1980 Winter Games.

Following NBC's debacle, recent Olympic coverage has emphasized the personalities of the athlete's competing. The 1992 Winter Games in Albertville, France marked the end of a 32-year hiatus for CBS with regards to Olympic coverage. Media critics like Tom Shales of the *Washington Post* noted that CBS

was concerned primarily with captivating the non-sports fans who tuned into such programming out of curiosity. "ABC Sports set almost all the standards for covering events like this, and CBS follows many of the formulas, including little pieces on individual athletes that hew to Roone Arledge's 'Up Close and Personal' ritual" (Shales, 1992, p. E1). CBS continued to focus on the personalities of the athletes competing in the 1994 Games, especially during prime-time coverage. In reviewing the typical CBS telecast from Lillehammer, Shapiro (1994) wrote: "It's three hours of fast-paced highlights, a Norway travelogue, features on the athletes often far more interesting than the non-telegenic events they compete in and the now mandatory report on Kerrigan-Harding." (p. D6). Overcoming obstacles and pursuing the dream of competing in the Olympics at all costs were popular themes when reporting about Olympic athletes (Kottak, 1988). However, Carman complained that CBS focused too much on the adversities that athletes had to overcome to compete in Lillehammer: "CBS brings us right to the brink of actual event coverage and then stops the world for a hoary, crying jag about some athlete's endless tribulations" (1994, p. F1).

Real (1989) contended that extensive media coverage of the Olympics served three important social functions: communal, informative, and interactive. In dedicating two weeks of prime-time television scheduling, as well as entire sections of daily newspapers to reporting this one event, the media were fulfilling a communal function by turning the Games into a shared experience for all in which cultural values and beliefs were re-affirmed and celebrated. Media coverage of the Games also informed its audience by presenting stories about countries and cultures they knew little about. The third function, interactive,

referred to the way "Olympic events and media require interaction between nations and cooperation between different peoples" (Real, 1989, p. 242).

Conversely, several scholars have argued that television coverage of the Olympics has had a negative impact on society. When German terrorists attacked and eventually killed 11 Israeli athletes inside the Olympic Village at the 1972 Summer Olympics in Munich, West Germany, television brought the horrors of that day into living rooms around the world as the event unfolded. Shaikin contended that "the live global television coverage of the massacre graphically demonstrated that political statements made at this great political forum could now, through the miracle of modern technology, be instantly transmitted around the globe" (1988, p. 38). Shaikin is not alone in making this contention. Several scholars have concluded that television is the main culprit in increasing the political significance of the Olympics (Edwards, 1981; Leiper, 1981; Axthelm, 1987; Riggs et al., 1993). Larson and Rivenburgh see live television coverage as "a double-edged sword, capable of promoting common goals of international understanding, but also capable of advancing simplistic stereotypes or the narrower interests of individual nations and groups" (p. 75). Toohey and Warning (1981) contended that all major sporting events are potential targets for political protests because of the enormous media coverage they receive.

Because the 1994 Winter Olympics were held in Lillehammer, CBS chose to tape-delay all of its broadcasts. The decision to not air events live was made primarily for financial reasons because the time difference between Norway and New York would not permit the events to be held during prime-time viewing in the United States. Subsequently, the difference in time allowed CBS great

freedom to edit and re-arrange stories and event coverage. This advantage enabled CBS to focus on those particular athletes which the network deemed newsworthy. Some of those athletes became Olympic heroes, and thus embodied the enduring values Gans (1980) associated with America's middle-class ideology.

Throughout the Olympics, media critics complained about television coverage being too focused on American athletes and their triumphs and tribulations. Because of these complaints and the tendency for American media to Americanize events in distant lands, as noted by Tuchman, (1978), Galtung and Ruge (1973), and Gans (1980), ethnocentrism was expected to be a major value found in Olympic coverage. Gans defined ethnocentrism as "patriotism and or judging other countries by the extent to which they live up to or imitate American practices" (1980, p. 42).

Unlike most popular American sports where the emphasis is on the team, the Winter Olympics featured mostly events in which individuals competed against the clock or one another. Therefore, individualism was another highly concentrated value in Olympic coverage. Gans defined individualism as "the freedom of the individual against the encroachments of nation and society" (1980, p. 50). Gans noted that "the ideal individual struggles successfully against adversity and overcomes more powerful forces" (1980, p. 50).

Because nearly all of the events in the Winter Olympics required lots of open space for staging, not to mention snow or ice, almost all of the athletes came from small towns. Gans defined small-town pastoralism as a combination of many things often associated with small towns and the people who live in them.

Friendliness, cohesiveness, slow pace of life, and tradition were among the characteristics of this value. Gans also noted that "small-town pastoralism is, at the same time, a specification of two or more general values: the desirability both of nature and of smallness per se" (1980, p. 49). Over the years, the Winter Games have been hosted by such small towns or villages as Lake Placid, NY in 1980, Albertville, France in 1992, and Lillehammer.

In defining altruistic democracy, Gans noted the news had a tendency to "indicate how American democracy should perform by its frequent attention to deviations from an unstated ideal" (1980, p. 43). With the collapse of the Soviet Union, this value did not come into play as much as it once did. However, references to countries that once belonged to the Soviet Union tended to include comparisons between communism and democracy.

Gans defined moderatism as the enduring value that "discourages excess or extremism" (1980, p. 51). Although competitors in the Olympics are elite athletes in highly specialized sports, moderatism was evident in Olympic media coverage. Responsible capitalism was defined by Gans as "an optimistic faith that in the good society, businessmen and women will compete with each other in order to create increased prosperity for all, but that they will refrain from unreasonable profits and gross exploitation of workers or customers" (1980, p. 46).

Social order and national leadership were likely to be the least represented enduring values in Olympic coverage. Because the Games were highly structured and well-organized, social order or disorder rarely came into play. Commentators and journalists who had covered several different Olympics noted that the

Lillehammer Games were among the most well-run events they had ever witnessed. Social order did however play a role in Olympic coverage, specifically when athletes who competed in both Lillehammer and Sarajevo were performing. Both CBS and TNT devoted coverage to looking at the problems in Sarajevo, 10 years after that city hosted the 1984 Winter Games. Because national leadership is associated with maintaining social order, it also figures to be of little relevance in this study. American athletes represented some of the best qualities of America, but they did not represent leadership in the way Gans intended. When Gans referred to national leadership, he was most commonly referring to the office of President of the United States.

In addition to the enduring values mentioned by Gans, Rothenbuhler (1989) made reference to a number of other values which were typically associated with athletics and the Olympics in particular. These values corresponded with the ideals and principles forwarded by de Coubertin in his writings and lectures pertaining to Olympism, and included sportsmanship, training required, personal sacrifices, and skill required in performance (p. 147).

Research Questions

The research questions are as follows:

- (1) Did the number of each of Gans' enduring values used to describe athletes differ from country to country?
- (2) Was there a difference in the total number of Gans' enduring values used to describe medal winning athletes and non-medal winning athletes?

(3) Was there a difference in the number of times the value Gans called "small-town pastoralism" was used to describe medal winning athletes and non-medal winning athletes?

(4) In comparing TNT to CBS, did one network's coverage contain more enduring values and Olympic values than the other?

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

In his appraisal of mass communications studies devoted to gaining a better understanding of the Olympics, MacAloon (1989) noted that researchers "have been slow to take up the challenge" of investigating American television coverage of this international spectacle (p. 183). Among the myriad of reasons proffered by MacAloon for the dearth of academic discovery committed to the further understanding of Olympic television was the imposing methodological challenge of coding and analyzing hundreds of hours of broadcast coverage. Because the Games were covered by the American media on such a grand scale, including two solid weeks of prime-time television programming, Olympic research can be an arduous task. For example, about 120 hours of coverage produced by the two American networks that televised the proceedings from Lillehammer, Norway in February of 1994 were analyzed in this study.

Content Analysis

Because the primary focus of this study was concerned with examining the enduring values inherent in American television coverage of the Olympics, the research method used was content analysis. One of the greatest strengths of this method is its unobtrusiveness. Regardless of the object or medium being studied, the content analyst does not come into contact with either the source or the receiver and thus, avoids the risk of interfering and possibly contaminating the communication process being observed (Babbie, 1992). Although it is primarily considered a quantitative method, Krippendorff (1980) noted that

content analysis has qualitative applications as well, specifically in research pertaining to propaganda, psychotherapy, and computer analysis of linguistic data. According to Babbie (1992), the proper application of this method of inquiry is ideal for "answering the classic question of communications research: 'Who says what, to whom, why, how, and with what effect?'" (p. 314). It is Babbie's contention that "as a mode of observation, content analysis requires a considered handling of what, and the analysis of data collected in this mode, as in others, addresses the why and with what effect" (1992, p. 314).

Berelson (1952) was one of the first scholars to formally define content analysis, describing it as a "research technique for the objective, systematic, and qualitative description of the manifest content of communication" (p. 18). Manifest content refers to the literal, most visible, aspect of a particular communication process being studied. By coding and quantifying strictly manifest content, the content analyst gains the advantage of "ease and reliability in coding and of letting the reader of the research know precisely how something was measured" (Babbie, 1992, p. 318). Thanks in large part to Berelson's definition, much of the early research in which content analysis was the primary method of inquiry concentrated not on making inferences, but rather on describing communication processes.

The proliferation of purely descriptive studies that followed prompted scholars to attack Berelson's definition on the grounds that it was too restrictive. The chief objection to the definition was that it implied that the content analyst should be concerned solely with tabulating word counts and analyzing the communication process at its face value. Budd, Thorp, and Donohew (1967)

noted that by merely looking at the manifest content, researchers were failing to consider the more important question of how a communication process relates to other variables. Stressing that the impetus behind social science research should be the recognizing and predicting of behavioral patterns, Budd, Thorp, and Donohew (1967) expanded on Berelson's original definition, describing content analysis as a "tool for observing and analyzing the overt communication behavior of selected communicators" (p. 2).

Since words, messages, and images tend to have more than one meaning, depending on the context in which they are used, Krippendorff (1980) contended that the content analyst also needs to take into consideration the latent content or underlying meaning of the communication being studied. Krippendorff, cautioning that the content analyst should not make implications about the latent content of communication at the expense of reliability, defined content analysis as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their content" (1980, p. 21). Babbie (1992) suggested that coding latent content was the best method for "tapping the underlying meaning of communications, but its advantage comes at a cost of reliability and specificity" (p. 318). It is Babbie's contention that the best content analyses are those that consider both the manifest and latent content.

One of the common errors made by the novice social scientist concerns the tendency to use an improper research technique. Krippendorff (1980) noted that because every research method has its own "empirical domain," any method "can be misused and applied where other methods may be more efficient" (p. 29). It is Krippendorff's contention that content analysis is used at "its highest

potential" when the researcher takes into consideration the following four propositions: (1) the research in question requires unobtrusiveness; (2) the subject matter being researched is complex, and thus data may need to be examined many times to fully understand its context; (3) the subject matter has both manifest and latent meanings; (4) the researcher is dealing with a large amount of data (pp. 29-31). All four of Krippendorff's propositions can be applied to studying content of the Olympic Games.

Coding the Content

Once a social scientist has decided that content analysis is the appropriate method of inquiry for his or her study, the crucial step of setting up a proper coding schema can begin. One of the major decisions that must be made, concerns selecting a sample and determining its size. Television coverage of the Winter Games from Lillehammer, Norway was produced by both TNT and CBS. Overall, the two American networks produced a staggering total of 164 hours of Olympic programming. However, 44 hours of programming were omitted from this study for a number of reasons, including technical difficulties and time constraints. Because coding consisted of making several decisions based on the categories outlined below, daily coverage of the Olympics, as presented by the two networks, was recorded on a VCR. This method enabled the researcher and an assistant to review Olympic content on several occasions, and ensured that coding was thorough and complete. Tables 1 and 2 provide a breakdown of network coverage analyzed in this study.

CBS

CBS, the Columbia Broadcasting System, has televised the Olympic Games on four separate occasions, including the last two Winter Olympics. As the primary broadcaster of the 1994 Winter Games, CBS aired 119 hours of coverage from Lillehammer. In terms of ratings, the 1994 Games were a huge success for CBS, justifying the \$295 million dollar price tag the company paid to earn exclusive broadcasting rights in this country. This study focused specifically on 80 hours of the network's prime-time and weekend coverage, because these time slots ensured the largest audiences (See Table 1). Pat O'Brien's daily, one-hour, late-night highlight show and the two hours of coverage presented each weekday on *CBS This Morning* were not included in this study, because these shows concentrated on capturing the mood around the respective venues instead of on live-event programming.

Table 1

Sample of CBS Coverage Analyzed in This Study

Date	Time	Hours
Saturday, Feb. 12	7-10 p.m.	3.0
Sunday, Feb. 13	9 a.m.-Noon; 2:30-6 p.m.; 8-11 p.m.	9.5
Monday, Feb. 14	7-10 p.m.	3.0
Tuesday, Feb. 15	7-10:30 p.m.	3.5
Wednesday, Feb. 16	7-10 p.m.	3.0
Thursday, Feb. 17	7-10 p.m.	3.0
Friday, Feb. 18	7-10 p.m.	3.0
Saturday, Feb. 19	1-6 p.m.; 7-11 p.m.	9.0
Sunday, Feb. 20	9 a.m.-Noon; 3:30-6 p.m.; 8-11 p.m.	8.5
Monday, Feb. 21	1-6 p.m.; 7-10:30 p.m.	8.5
Tuesday, Feb. 22	7-10 p.m.	3.0
Wednesday, Feb. 23	7-10 p.m.	3.0
Thursday, Feb. 24	7-10 p.m.	3.0
Friday, Feb. 25	7-10 p.m.	3.0
Saturday, Feb. 26	1-6 p.m.; 7-11 p.m.	9.0
Sunday, Feb. 27	1-3 p.m.; 8-11 p.m.	5.0
Total Number of Hours:		83.0

TNT

In an attempt to offset the high price the company paid to acquire the exclusive broadcasting rights to the 1992 and 1994 Winter Games, CBS allowed TNT to televise weekday coverage from both Albertville and Lillehammer for a fee of \$50 million (Carman, 1994). Overall, 40 of the 45 hours of TNT programming devoted to covering the proceedings in Lillehammer were analyzed in this study (See Table 2). TNT was not permitted to televise American medal winning performances until after they had first aired on CBS. Therefore, TNT featured mostly live coverage of lesser known athletes with little or no chance of winning medals, as well as live hockey coverage, including those games that featured Team USA. Medal-winning performances were featured on a day-after basis, and a large portion of each day's coverage was devoted to recapping the previous night's events. TNT was founded by television cable magnate Ted Turner in October of 1988. At the time of its inception, Turner "envisioned TNT becoming the biggest channel for sports and entertainment in the world" (Whitmore, 1988, p. 279). TNT is the first cable network to televise the Olympics in the United States. Turner Sports President Terry McGuirk said that coverage of the Olympics was very beneficial to TNT: "The Olympics helped TNT grow into a very profitable station (61 million homes), our Olympic daytime ratings are 80% higher than regular programming, and it's gotten Turner into the Olympic community" (Martzke, 1994, p. 3E).

Table 2

Sample of TNT Coverage Analyzed in This Study

Date	Time	Hours
Tuesday, Feb. 15	10 a.m.-3 p.m.	5.0
Wednesday, Feb. 16	10 a.m.-3 p.m.	5.0
Thursday, Feb. 17	10 a.m.-3 p.m.	5.0
Friday, Feb. 18	10 a.m.- 3 p.m.	5.0
Tuesday, Feb. 22	10 a.m.-3 p.m.	5.0
Wednesday, Feb. 23	10 a.m.-3 p.m.	5.0
Thursday, Feb. 24	10 a.m.-3 p.m.	5.0
Friday, Feb. 25	10 a.m.-3 p.m.	5.0
Total Number of Hours:		40.0

Note. All times given in this study are Pacific Standard Time (PST) unless otherwise noted.

Gans' Enduring Values

As noted earlier, Gans defined enduring values as "values which can be found in many different types of news stories over a long period of time: often, they affect what events become news, for some are part and parcel of the definition of news" (1980, p. 41). The enduring values are: (1) Ethnocentrism, (2) Individualism, (3) Small-town Pastoralism, (4) Altruistic Democracy, (5) Moderatism, (6) Responsible Capitalism, (7) Social Order, and (8) National Leadership. One of the major goals of this content analysis was to strictly adhere to Gans' intended meanings of the enduring values. All coding decisions pertaining to the eight separate values were based on Gans' operationalized definitions, which are described in detail below.

1. Ethnocentrism: According to Gans, "American news values its own nation above all, even though it sometimes disparages against blatant patriotism" (1980, p. 42). It is Gans' contention that ethnocentrism is most explicitly discernible in foreign news coverage, "which judges other countries by the extent to which they live up to or embrace American practices and values" (1980, p. 42). References that depicted an athlete, team, or country as being influenced by American values or ideals was coded under this category heading. Also, in an effort to determine if the two networks covered the Lillehammer Winter Games as a purely "us versus them" drama, all references to athlete's national identity (American and otherwise) were coded in one of the following categories:

1a. Country is Best: Ethnocentric references by announcer's that were deemed to be positive or sympathetic were counted in this column. An example of this type of reference would be: "Our northern neighbors, the Canadians, are

celebrating their first gold medal of these games tonight." An example of a sympathetic reference would be: "The Austrians can't seem to get it going in Lillehammer, but to their credit, there is no quit in this team."

1b. Country is Not Best: Ethnocentric references to countries that were perceived to be negative were marked in this column. An example of this type of reference would be: "You are watching the worst hockey team in United States Olympic history."

1c. Country is Neutral: Ethnocentric references to countries that were neither positive or negative were marked in this column. An example of a neutral reference would be: "France versus Italy hockey highlights when we return."

2. Individualism: Gans noted that "one of the most important enduring news values is the preservation of the freedom of the individual against the encroachments of nation and society" (1980, p. 42). According to Gans, the media's conception of the "ideal individual" is any person who "struggles successfully against adversity and overcomes more powerful forces" (1980, p. 43). References to athletes who had to overcome adversities, such as the loss of a family member, physical injuries, mental trauma, and the high costs associated with training and competing in the Olympics were marked under this value heading. Also, athletes who are described as colorful, free-spirit types, who live life on their own terms, were also coded here.

3. Small-Town Pastoralism: Gans defined small-town pastoralism as a combination of many things often associated with small towns and the people who live in them such as "friendliness," "cohesiveness," "slow pace of life," and "tradition." Cohesiveness refers to the tendency that people in a crisis pull

together, and is frequently associated with family life. Another aspect of this value concerns technological advances. Gans noted that the "news celebrates old technology and mourns its passing, partly because it is tied to an era when life was thought to have been simpler" (1980, p. 50). An excellent example of this value in Lillehammer was Dan Jansen's family rallying around him, first in defeat and then in victory.

4. Altruistic Democracy: Gans noted that "foreign news suggests quite explicitly that democracy is superior to dictatorship, and the more so if it follows American forms" (1980, p. 41). As noted earlier, Lillehammer represented the first Olympics for several former Communist nations; therefore, references made to these fledgling democracies were counted under this category.

5. Moderatism: Gans noted that "the idealization of the individual could result in praise for the rebel and deviant, but this possibility is neutralized by an enduring value that discourages excess or extremism" (1980, p. 51). Gans contended that individuals and groups that exhibit "what is seen as extreme behavior are criticized in the news through pejorative adjectives or a satirical tone" (1980, p. 51). An example of moderatism from the Lillehammer Games was a segment on young figure skaters in which a CBS reporter questioned if these young girls were being pushed too hard to succeed at such an early age.

6. Responsible Capitalism: This value is defined as "an optimistic faith that, in the good society, businessmen and women will compete with each other in order to create increased prosperity for all, but that they will refrain from unreasonable profits" (1980, p. 41). This value was broken down into two categories:

6a. Good Responsible Capitalism: References to athletes/countries practicing acts of responsible capitalism were counted under this category heading. An example of good responsible capitalism from Lillehammer was Johan Olav Koss' decision to auction off his ice skates to the highest bidder on Norwegian television, and then donate the money to Olympic Aid to help war victims in Sarajevo.

6b. Bad Responsible Capitalism: References to athletes/countries practicing irresponsible capitalism, that is using capitalism to make huge profits and then failing to share the wealth, were marked under this heading. An example of bad capitalism was Tonya Harding's attempt to parlay her Olympic performance into a pile of huge endorsement contracts.

7. Social Order: Gans noted that "the frequent appearance of stories about disorder suggests that order is an important value in the news" (1980, p. 43). Although the Lillehammer Olympics were a well-planned event with few glitches, many of the athletes came to them from countries with serious social problems. References to social order, and or disorder, were marked under this value heading.

8. National Leadership: When Gans referred to national leadership, he was referring primarily to the office of President of the United States. Gans defined leaders as "people who because of their political or managerial skills, or personal attributes which inspire others, move into positions of authority and make things happen" (1980, p. 45). President of the International Olympic Committee, Norwegian officials, and various other world leaders were featured prominently in Olympic coverage. References to leaders/ leadership were marked

under this category heading.

Olympic Values

Based on an audience survey reported by Rothenbuhler (1989), the following values were expressed most often by respondents in a factor analysis as being values associated with watching the Olympic Games: (1) Sportsmanship, (2) Training Required, (3) Friendship Between Competitors, (4) Personal Sacrifice, (5) Pride in Victory, (6) Skill Required in Performance, and (7) Artistry of Performance. Rothenbuhler noted that these values were also associated with professional sports, but not as frequently. Since, as Rothenbuhler reported, these values all loaded on one factor, and were highly correlated, this researcher did not consider the categories to be mutually exclusive categories. Therefore, to create categories that were mutually exclusive, only four of the seven Olympic values were selected and coded: (1) Sportsmanship, (2) Training Required, (3) Personal Sacrifice, and (4) Skill Required in Performance. The four values were coded based on the definitions outlined below.

1. Sportsmanship: Sportsmanship was one of the major themes or ideals frequently expressed in de Coubertin's writings and lectures (Segrave, 1988). For this study, sportsmanship was defined as: (1) playing by the rules, (2) respecting fellow competitors and judges, and (3) maintaining one's composure regardless of the outcome of the competition. Praising the competition, consoling fellow athletes who failed to realize their own high hopes, crediting others for one's own success, and encouraging fellow competitors to excel are examples of sportsmanship.

2. Training Required: References to the amount of training or practice

that an athlete performed to reach the Olympics was marked under this value. An example of this value would be: "If the next Bonnie Blair is out there watching this telecast tonight, it's important for her to know that Blair had to practice four hours a day since the age of six to reach the dizzying heights she has now reached."

3. Personal Sacrifice: Because of the tremendous time demands on individuals aspiring to make their country's national team, every athlete must make some difficult choices if they are to realize their goal of competing in the Olympics. Therefore, personal sacrifice is a frequently mentioned value or theme in Olympic media coverage. Among the most commonly mentioned sacrifices that Olympic athletes must make to compete at such a high level include: careers, education, and starting a family. Personal sacrifices can also mean monetary decisions, such as the case of U.S. bobsled driver Brian Shimer, who took out a second mortgage on the family home because it was the only way he could finance his training program.

4. Skill Required in Performance: References by the announcers to an athlete's skills were counted under this value heading. Key words used to identify this value included: grace, coordination, balance, athleticism, artistry, technician, and expert. An announcer's reference to an athlete being the best at a particular facet of his or her sport was also counted here. An example of such a reference would be: "Johan Olav Koss is the best in the business at making the outside turn on a speed skating oval."

Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis in this study was the individual story segment. A

segment was defined as the amount of uninterrupted time devoted to one particular athlete, country, or subject. For example, the televising of a ski run by Germany's Katja Seizinger, followed by an interview with America's Picabo Street, and a short feature story on the Canadian ski team, were coded as three separate segments. All of the information on the Olympics presented by both networks was coded for its value content, with the exception of commercials and network promotional ads for upcoming shows.

Tone

The main objective in this study was to quantify the number of times the values, both enduring and Olympic, were discussed in rhetoric pertaining to the particular athlete or athletes that were the subject of each individual segment. Although television is both an audio and visual medium, coding was restricted to solely that of the spoken word. References to values were tabulated from the announcer's individual sentences or complete thoughts. In the event that more than one value was contained in a single sentence or complete thought, all of the values were counted. For example, the sentence "American Bonnie Blair proves once again that she is the best in the world" represents one enduring value—ethnocentrism. But in the sentence "American Bonnie Blair, the girl next door, has overcome adversity to prove once again that she is the best in the world," there are examples of three enduring values: (1) "American Bonnie Blair is best" is an example of ethnocentrism; (2) "Bonnie Blair is the girl next door" is an example of small-town pastoralism; (3) "Bonnie Blair has overcome adversity" is an example of individualism.

Time in Seconds

In addition to coding for the values outlined above, this study also paid particular attention to a number of other categories, including the length of each individual segment. Although the networks combined to produce 165 hours of Olympic programming, the amount of coverage afforded to the 61 events in which medals were awarded varied. Although there was extensive coverage of figure skating and ice hockey, audience exposure to some sports such as women's biathlon and cross-country skiing was virtually nonexistent. How did the networks use their time? Did they spend more time heralding the victors, or did they focus their attention primarily on the many who tried but came up short in their quest for an Olympic medal?

To answer these questions, each segment was timed with a stopwatch that recorded time to the hundredths of a second. Hundredths of a second were not recorded however, and in fact were rounded up or down to the nearest full second. For example, a segment lasting 35.49 seconds was counted as 35 seconds. Likewise, a segment lasting 35.51 seconds was counted as 36 seconds. Segments lasting more than a minute were converted into seconds.

U.S. Medal Chances

The length of each individual segment in and of itself meant little without some further information, including knowledge of the medal chances of the athlete being discussed, and what country he or she was representing. Farrell (1989) posited that American television networks tend to devote more of their Olympic coverage to those events in which American athletes are perceived as having the best chances of winning medals. To determine if the American media

placed more emphasis on those events in which Americans had realistic to good chances of winning medals in Lillehammer, the individual Olympic events were divided into four categories: (1) events where Americans were favored to win gold; (2) events where Americans were among the favorites to win; (3) events where Americans unexpectedly enjoyed success; (4) events where Americans were seen as having little or no chance of winning a medal and did not. Events were placed into these categories based on predictions made prior to the start of the Olympics by experts at *Sports Illustrated* (Verschoth, 1994, pp. 113-131).

Country/Ideology/Development

Despite the end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet-bloc, what country an athlete represents in the Olympic arena continues to be a matter of great importance. What country an athlete was representing at the Games was identified in virtually every segment by the announcers working for both networks. Therefore, it was necessary to code each individual segment by country/ideology or level of national development. Overall, 68 countries sent national teams to Lillehammer. To make coding easier, and better suited to computer entry, the countries were divided up and placed into seven distinctive categories. These categories included: (1) United States, (2) Communist, (3) former Communist, (4) Germany, (5) other Western developed countries, (6) non-Western developed countries, (7) developing countries. The United States was given its own category because it was expected to be the nation identified most often over the course of the Olympiad. Germany was also given a separate heading because of its unique situation as both a former Communist (East Germany) country and as an other Western developed (West Germany) country.

Athlete's Status

Were the most frequently mentioned athletes also the athletes that enjoyed the most success in terms of winning medals? One of the research questions explored in this study concerned whether winning athletes were likely to embody more enduring values than their less successful competitors? Therefore, it was necessary to code each segment into one of the following categories: (1) medal winners, (2) medal contenders, (3) other athletes, (4) judges, and (5) non-athletes. Because of the many subjective sports included in the Winter Games program, references to judges can be frequent, especially when controversial results are recorded. The non-athletes category refers to those stories of a non-sports nature such as the interviewing of dignitaries, officials, and fans attending the festivities. It was necessary to include this category for the value to be mutually exclusive. Medal contenders were those athletes predicted to win medals prior to the start of the Olympics by *Sports Illustrated* (Verschoth, 1994), but did not.

Intercoder Reliability

To ensure that the assumptions made from the collective raw data were accurate, 10% of the observed content was randomly selected and coded by another individual. The individual was instructed to code for the distinctive categories using the definitions outlined above. Sample size for the test of reliability was 12 hours of coverage, including eight hours of CBS programming, and four of TNT. Commercials were included in determining length of time, but they were not coded. The total number of segments analyzed for the purpose of determining intercoder reliability was 582. The correlation coefficient of .91

was obtained by using the formula outlined by Holsti (1969):

$$\text{Reliability} = \frac{2(C_{1,2})}{C_1 + C_2}$$

$C_{1,2}$ is the number of coding decisions on which two coders agree, and $C_1 + C_2$ refers to the total number of coding decisions by the first and second coder, respectively.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The 120 hours of Olympic television coverage analyzed in this study were broken down into 3,663 individual segments. The 80 hours of CBS' coverage accounted for 2,488 of the segments or 68% of the total sample. TNT's 40 hours of Olympic programming was broken down into 1,175 segments or 32% of the total sample studied. American athletes were the main subject of discussion in 1,074 segments. TNT devoted one-third of its coverage solely to discussion of the successes and the failures of the American team. By comparison, CBS placed less emphasis on the U.S. athletes, discussing American performances 27% of the time. Overall, athletes representing other Western developed countries actually tallied a larger number of total segments than the American team, but this amount was the combined total for the 26 nations included within this group (See Table 3).

Research Question #1

Did the number of Gans' enduring values used to describe athletes differ from country to country? The results of this study indicated that, for the eight enduring values combined, there was a statistically significant difference (See Table 4). What country an athlete represented did play a factor in determining how many enduring values were used to describe him or her to the American television audience. Individually, four of the enduring values were found to be statistically significant across all of the countries. Moderatism was found to be significant at .05. Germany, which could have been classified as either a former

Communist country, or an other Western developed country, recorded the highest overall mean score under the moderatism category. Individualism and positive examples of ethnocentrism, the two most prevalent values found in this study, were statistically significant at .01. Athletes representing developing countries recorded the highest overall mean under the individualism category. One of the reasons this group of countries scored so high for this value was that the many hurdles that the athletes had to clear just to compete in Lillehammer was a typical theme discussed whenever announcers referred to the performances of athletes from developing countries. The 26 nations that composed the other Western developed countries group recorded the highest overall mean under the positive examples of ethnocentrism category. This finding would appear to be consistent with this group's success in winning the majority of the total number of medals awarded in Lillehammer (See Table 3). Negative examples of ethnocentrism and negative examples of capitalism were statistically significant at .001. Communist countries recorded the highest average of negative examples of ethnocentrism. It would appear that, although the Cold War is over, American announcers continue to be critical of the Communist model of government.

These findings were consistent with one forwarded by Riggs et al. (1993) that contended that how countries were portrayed by the American media closely mirrored the state of international relationships as they related to American foreign policy. As expected, American athletes recorded a higher overall mean score of enduring values per individual segment than those athletes that

Table 3

Coverage Breakdown by Network, Including Percentage of Medals Won, for Each Individual Country, or Group of Countries that Competed in Lillehammer

Countries	<u>Number of Segments</u>			% of Coverage	% of Medals Won
	CBS	TNT	Total		
Other Western Developed	1,053	392	1,445	39.4	53.6
U.S.A.	680	394	1,074	29.3	7.1
Former Communist	340	212	552	15.1	18.6
Germany	167	112	279	7.6	13.1
Non-Western Developed	88	22	110	3.0	6.0
Communist	28	15	43	1.2	1.6
Developing	23	—	23	.6	—
Other	109	28	137	3.8	—
Total	2,488	1,175	3,663	100.0	100.0

Table 4

Average Number of Gans' Enduring Values Per Segment of Olympic Coverage Across Countries

Gans' Enduring Values (N = 7,930)	Countries							F
	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	
Positive Ethnocentrism	1.22	0.86	1.10	1.05	1.40	1.32	0.91	3.58**
Negative Ethnocentrism	0.27	0.40	0.23	0.20	0.16	0.14	0.39	3.86***
Pastoralism	0.45	0.23	0.20	0.23	0.31	0.16	0.30	6.24
Individualism	0.40	0.21	0.30	0.35	0.35	0.09	0.57	3.09**
Positive Capitalism	0.03	0.00	0.04	0.01	0.04	0.02	0.30	5.68
Negative Capitalism	0.01	0.02	0.04	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.13	3.88***
Altruistic Democracy	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	12.26
Social Order	0.01	0.00	0.06	0.02	0.02	0.00	0.00	1.98
Moderatism	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.01	0.00	0.00	2.36*
N. Leadership	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.00	1.78
Total Values	2.41	1.51	2.04	1.90	2.33	1.75	2.61	3.09**

* $p > .05$

** $p > .01$

*** $p > .001$

Note. C1 = United States; C2 = Communist Countries; C3 = Former Communist Countries; C4 = Germany; C5 = Other Western Developed Countries; C6 = Non-Western Developed Countries; C7 = Developing Countries; P. Ethnocentrism = Positive Examples of Ethnocentrism; N. Ethnocentrism = Negative Examples of Ethnocentrism; N. Leadership = National Leadership; Total Values = Total Number of Gans' Enduring Values Per Individual Segment.

represented Communist, former Communist, Germany, other Western developed, and non-Western developed countries (See Table 4). The nations that comprised the other Western developed countries group also fared quite well. Historically, all of the nations in this group have maintained a positive relationship with the United States. Many of them belong to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and several of them dispatched troops and fighter jets to Saudi Arabia to fight alongside American military personnel during the 1991 Persian Gulf War. Table 5 indicates how each country, or group of countries, fared in terms of overall mean score of enduring values per individual segment by network.

The U.S. team was the main topic of discussion in slightly less than one-third of all the segments included in this study, despite accounting for only 7% of the total number of medals won in Lillehammer. Did the networks spend too much time reporting the American angle? Riggs et al. (1993) contended that for the American media, a preoccupation with the U.S. Olympic team was inevitable, regardless of how many medals American athletes won. Building on Gans' (1980) concept of paraideology, Riggs et al. concluded that, because the American media are comprised almost entirely of American-born employees who are cognizant that they are covering the event for a largely American audience, "such ethnocentrism is expected in journalistic discourse, even if it distorts the totality of the event" (Riggs et al., 1993, p. 259).

Real (1989) noted that the technological innovations intended to make McLuhan's (1964) vision of a global village a reality, have instead made it possible for countries to tailor their Olympic coverage to feature the "home" team

Table 5

Breakdown of Overall Average of Gans' Enduring Values Per Segment by Network

Countries	CBS	Rank	TNT	Rank	Overall Mean	# Of Cases
Developing	2.61	1	0.00	7	2.61	23
United States	2.23	2	2.73	1	2.41	1,074
Other Western Developed	2.22	3	2.63	2	2.33	1,445
Former Communist	2.06	4	2.00	4	2.04	552
Germany	1.83	6	2.01	3	1.90	279
Non-Western Developed	1.97	5	0.91	6	1.75	110
Communist	1.57	7	1.40	5	1.51	43
Total						3,526

most prominently and, in some instances, exclusively. Thanks to the advent of satellite technology and sophisticated editing equipment, it has become possible for national networks to provide audiences with pieced-together snippets of action that feature athletes solely from one country. As Real (1989) noted, "the Olympics are not so much a single event transmitted to the world as a smorgasbord of many events, from which countries select their own partial version of 'the Olympics'" (p. 244).

Except for a handful of hockey games, all of the television coverage from Lillehammer was tape delayed. Because of a nine-hour time difference between Norway and the East Coast of the United States, CBS and TNT had the luxury of shaping and presenting their coverage so that it would appeal to the highest number of viewers. Serious sports fans, concerned only with who won or lost, could get that information from any of a number of media outlets mere moments after the individual competitions were completed. However, nobody saw highlights of a given day's activities until after they were first shown on CBS. On those days when American athletes did win medals, their performances were singled out for special attention. The winning athlete was introduced to the audience first in a three-to-five-minute feature story that focused heavily on the personal side of the medalist in question. Next came extended coverage of the winning performance, including the presentation of the medal and an in-studio interview. Finally, the studio hosts updated the overall American medal tally and compared the success of the team to past American Olympic teams. American medalists were usually featured at the end of a given day's programming. The

networks hoped that saving these special moments until the end of each telecast would keep the audience tuned in.

As noted earlier, athletes representing other Western developed countries actually accounted for a larger overall percentage of the coverage than the United States in terms of total number of segments. This group of 26 nations dominated Olympic competition, winning 53% of the total number of medals awarded. Another important aspect of this contingent was that it consisted primarily of those nations that have historically maintained good diplomatic relations with the United States.

The Cold War may be a thing of the past, but international relationships continued to play a role in how other countries were portrayed to the American television audience during this Olympiad. For example, a hockey game between Canada and the United States was described by CBS announcer Mike Emrick as a "family reunion of North American hockey." The main theme of the feature story, that recapped the action that took place in this "friendly" game, focused on how much Canada and the United States had in common, including a commonly shared border, the English language, and a distinctive style of play that differed from the European countries. Emrick concluded his report by saying: "And after the horn, a pair of cousins united by a continent, and a language, and a love for the fire of an old sport, playing it their way and playing it even."

Two days earlier, a recap of a hockey game between the United States and Slovakia took on a decidedly different tone. As viewers were shown a series of "cheap shots" being administered by Slovakian players to members of the American team, including a hockey stick to the face that required stitches.

announcer Emrick said: "Slovakia's size tested American resolve, and their [Slovakia] approach tested the rulebook." Whereas the feature reviewing the Canada-United States game focused on the similarities of the two teams and the countries they represented, the Slovakia-United States story paid more attention to differences. The Slovaks were depicted as bigger, stronger, more experienced, and more brutal than their opponents. The Americans were portrayed as young, enthusiastic, and inexperienced.

Aside from the early rounds of the hockey tournament when U.S. medal hopes were still alive, and on those occasions when their athletes were in direct competition with legitimate American medal hopefuls, athletes from former Communist countries were depicted in mostly sympathetic discourse. This tendency was consistent with the contention proffered by Riggs et al. (1993) in their content analysis of the 1992 Games from Albertville. For example, when Estonian ski jumper Ago Markvardt unexpectedly challenged for a medal in the Nordic Combined competition, CBS announcer Phil Liggett said: "Like the fate of his feisty little country that for years had been buried under the Soviet umbrella, Markvardt's near perfect first jump took him from no-name to the front page." Co-announcer Jeff Hastings added that Markvardt and his teammates were lucky just to be competing in Lillehammer because of the tenuous economic situation back home, following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Hastings said: "These guys in Estonia, they have no budget since they've moved out from underneath that Soviet umbrella. They're working alone, and he [Markvardt] tells me they're not working as hard either."

The much-maligned but tremendously successful government-funded Soviet sports system may be gone, but Russian athletes continued to dominate Olympic competition in Lillehammer. Announcers considered the success of the Russians to be remarkable because of all the turmoil and unrest of their native country. On the final day of competition, CBS' Jim Nantz said: "Russia leaves for home with a glittering pile of medals, including 11 golds—more than anybody else. When you don't want to place bets on who's in power tomorrow, how do you focus on sports? Some of Russia's athletes focused by leaving Russia. Most though, put up with the hardships. At his local rink, figure skating ace Alexi Urmanov could only get two hours of ice time a day. He won gold anyway."

Despite the growing pains Russia is experiencing in its attempt to adopt to a capitalist economy, announcers were careful not to criticize the principles of responsible capitalism or altruistic democracy. Although the Soviet sports system was successful, announcers pointed out that it was an impersonal system that did not provide equal opportunities for everyone. In a feature profiling Russian pairs skaters Gordeeva and Grinkov, CBS' Verne Lundquist said: "Under communism, crossing through the gates of the Central Red Army rink where they [Gordeeva and Grinkov] trained was once the exclusive right of the country's elite athletes."

Capitalism was heralded as the elixir that would solve Russia's ills on more than one occasion. Lundquist told viewers that thanks to the sponsorship of Mercedes Benz, the Central Red Army rink was now open to anyone who wanted to skate there. Nantz noted that the Russian Olympic Committee was making the transition from government funding to mostly corporate funding in an effort to sustain the country's long history of Olympic success: "Not having the

government to count on anymore, they have turned to the wonderful world of corporate sponsorship," Nantz said. "Goodbye hammer and sickle, hello Reebok or anybody else that comes along." One has to wonder if Nantz would have been as generous in lavishing praise on corporate America if he were covering the festivities from Lillehammer for a government-supported network like the BBC, instead of privately-owned CBS? In the eyes of a highly-paid CBS employee, corporations like Reebok are deemed worthy of such plaudits because it is their advertising money that makes it possible for a television network like CBS to pay more than a quarter of a billion dollars for exclusive rights to a given Olympiad in the first place.

Real (1989) noted that one of the negative impacts of Olympic media coverage was the tendency for the balance of coverage to grossly favor those countries which are "technologically rich and literate" (p. 243). It was Real's contention that poorer countries, those unable to afford high-tech satellite and computer systems, would receive very little coverage on American television in any given Olympiad. The results of this study supported Real's claim. The 10 countries included in the developing nations group accounted for less than 1% of the total number of individual segments recorded. Remarkably, out of 1,175 total segments, TNT failed to even once mention a single athlete or team from one of the developing nations that competed in Lillehammer (See Table 3).

This disparity may have been partially the result of the small number of athletes sent to Norway by the developing nations. Because of a lack of funds and limited training facilities, athletes from developing nations found it difficult to qualify for Olympic competition, much less be considered contenders for

Olympic medals. According to Real, an imbalance like that observed in this study was not so much a reflection of bias or favoritism towards developed nations by Olympic broadcast networks as it was "a reflection of more general imbalances in developmental stages in countries and regions" (1989, p. 243).

Despite a paucity of coverage, athletes from developing nations were portrayed favorably by CBS with regards to enduring values on those rare instances when they were shown participating in the various competitions (See Table 4). Developing nations recorded the highest mean score for total enduring values per segment. This would have been a significant finding if there had been more segments included in this sample. Athletes from developing countries were presented by CBS broadcasters as courageous individuals who competed in Lillehammer not for Olympic medals and contract endorsements, but rather for the glory of the Olympics as originally defined by de Coubertin. Introducing a feature segment on skier Limine Gueye, the lone representative from Senegal, announcer Jim Nantz told viewers: "Now we're going to focus on a skier who came from a country without winters and no hope of winning." The feature described the Senegal-born Gueye as a real estate broker from Paris who trained for the Olympics by spear fishing for barracudas and red snappers. Narrator Tim Ryan explained that spear fishing was beneficial to Gueye because "it builds up his lung capacity for skiing and it keeps him in touch with his heritage."

A feature such as this one served two purposes. First, because the subject matter concerned a little known athlete from a small African country, it could loosely be classified as a foreign news story. According to Gans, the impetus behind the presentation of foreign news stories was that they had either some sort

of relevance to national interests, or that they could be presented with "interpretations that apply American values" (1980, p. 37). The latter reason best explained why this feature was televised. Over the course of four minutes, Gueye typified many of Gans' enduring values, including small-town pastoralism, individualism, responsible capitalism, and ethnocentrism. In addition to describing Gueye's unorthodox training methods, the piece also chronicled the skier's responsibilities as team captain, coach, trainer, and chief fundraiser.

A second purpose for showing a feature like this was that "Olympic media coverage contributes directly to international understanding by providing actual data and portrayals from distant peoples and countries, countries that may otherwise be reported on only because of disasters, conflicts, or wars" (Real, 1989, p. 241). This story about a Senegalese athlete living out his dream to compete in the Winter Olympics differs from your typical story about life on the African continent. There was no mention of famine, drought, political unrest or disease in the Gueye piece. Instead, the focus was on a proud athlete who was doing his best to live life to its fullest. The feature ended with a picturesque view of Senegal's coastline and the following comments from Ryan: "It was France that gave him the snow and the mountains, and the income to pursue an Olympic dream, however frugally. The rest of him, the pride and passion, comes from the golden shores of West Africa."

At face value, it would appear that this was a very positive feature on an athlete from a developing country. However, it could also be considered a somewhat misleading portrait of a country few Americans could point out on a world map. While the Gueye piece did offer American viewers a brief glimpse of

life in Western Africa, this feature failed to inform the audience about Senegal's political, economic, or social conditions. Rather the emphasis was placed on an affluent individual who lived in France, but happened to be born in Senegal. One of the unstated realities of this piece was that the main reason that this athlete competed for Senegal was not for the sake of pride, but rather because he was not a good enough skier to make the more-competitive French team. The network also failed to examine Gueye's personal motives for competing in Lillehammer. Instead, style won over substance, and the piece was shown on American television because it was thought to be a good story by CBS.

Research Question #2

Was there a difference in the total number of Gans' enduring values used to describe those athletes who won medals and those who did not? Winning athletes did record a higher overall mean of 2.25, as compared to 2.11 for non-winners, but the difference between the two groups was not statistically significant. Winning athletes were featured in 41% of the total number of segments. Non-medal winning athletes, including those considered medal contenders prior to the start of the Olympics, were the main subject of coverage in 46% of the segments. As for time spent covering winners and other athletes, the average length of a segment was 104 seconds for medal winners, compared to 141 seconds for other athletes.

It should come as quite a surprise that more time was spent chronicling the triumphs and the tribulations of the many others who came to Lillehammer merely to participate in the Olympic Games, as opposed to singing the praises of

the medal winners. After all, Trujillo and Ekdom (1985) contended that winning has become "the most dominant theme reflected in American sports today" (p. 265). Lumpkin (1983) would concur with this contention, proffering that in athletics today, "the value of playing has been replaced by the imperative of winning" (p. 4). Of course, it should be noted that Lumpkin and Trujillo and Ekdom were basing their contentions on what they observed by watching the American sporting scene, especially professional sports and Division One college athletics.

The Olympics are supposed to be a different story. Rothenbuhler (1989) contended that the Olympics were a type of secular religious festival that championed a distinctive value system separate from that of American professional sports. Taylor (1986) also observed that the Olympics had its own distinctive collection of values and attitudes. Taylor wrote that "these values and attitudes, summed up in the phrase 'Olympic spirit' involve appreciation of the benefits of fair play in structured competition and of the general value of sporting experience in defeat as well as in victory" (1986, p. 217).

Did network coverage reflect the values typified by Taylor and Rothenbuhler, or was the emphasis placed on winning? This study's results, indicating that more time was spent on non-winners than winners, would suggest the former. Throughout their coverage, both networks emphasized the friendliness of the Norwegians, and the spirit of the Olympic Games. As the only American networks covering the Games, CBS and TNT covered all of the performances by American athletes who participated in the various competitions.

regardless of their medal chances. Interestingly, the networks seemed to judge American athletes by two different sets of standards. Those who were perceived as having little or no chance of winning were commended for merely participating in the Olympic Games. Those athletes expected to win medals were judged more harshly. Their Olympic experience was judged to be good or bad based solely on whether they won medals.

At the close of the opening ceremonies, CBS host Greg Gumbel asked two of the networks most recognizable newscasters, Ed Bradley and Charles Kuralt, to put the night's festivities into perspective. Bradley said: "The camaraderie among the spectators, their support for the athletes, whether it be for the host country Norwegians, the 155-person delegation from the United States, or for that one solitary athlete I saw walking in from Senegal. The support of this crowd is so strong, so good that you can actually feel it." Kuralt, concurring with Bradley, described the Olympics as a "neighborly gathering." After praising the Norwegian crowd for cheering those countries making their first ever appearance in a Winter Olympics, Kuralt said: "And you think, from the warmth of this cold night, that there never had been a conflict anywhere in the world."

Just out of earshot of Kuralt's comments that night was an athlete who himself was embroiled in conflict. Dan Jansen, whose history of hard luck results in Olympic competition was well chronicled, once again marched into an Olympic arena considered one of America's best chances for a gold medal. Both CBS and TNT made it clear that for Jansen, the thrill of just competing in the Olympics was not enough. His Olympic experience in Lillehammer would only be judged successful by both networks if it included a gold medal. Minutes

before Jansen took the ice to compete in the men's 500-meter speed skating event on February 14, 1995, Ed Bradley said: "Dan Jansen is one of the best ever at his sport and he has been for some time. But fairly or unfairly, his career will probably be judged by what he does at these Winter Games." When Jansen failed to medal in the 500-meter race, TNT's studio anchors Fred Hickman and Nick Charles compared the speed skater to actress Susan Lucci of soap opera infamy, and the Buffalo Bills football team, two entities with the reputation of being unable to "win the big one" in their respective fields of endeavor. After Jansen fell short of the media's expectations, several announcers felt compelled to make excuses for him. CBS reporter Michael Barkann wondered if the ice was too hard. TNT's Charles asked: "How many bad things can happen to a good guy?"

In the time leading up to Dan Jansen's final Olympic race, the 1,000-meter men's speed skating race on February 18, discussion pertaining to the "snakebit" skater focused on whether he could, as Dick Stockton said: "Put an end to 10 years of Olympic frustration." As the event drew nearer, it became increasingly difficult to determine who wanted the gold medal more, Dan Jansen or the television networks? Minutes before Jansen took to the ice for the final time, Kuralt told viewers: "We don't tell you who to root for in these Games, but I will tell you this, even the skaters who have raced against him all these years are pulling today for Dan Jansen." When Jansen did win, TNT's Fred Hickman said: "The hard luck label is gone. Dan's good work puts another doubloon in the U.S. medal kitty." Co-anchor Nick Charles added: "If falling short was failure to him, it's all forgotten now."

The portrayal of Dan Jansen by both CBS and TNT elevated him to the status of Olympic hero. Both networks introduced him early in their coverage, made excuses for him when he failed, and then dubbed him worthy of the fruits of his labor when he finally succeeded in winning a gold medal. By suggesting that his competitors, men who had also subjected themselves to long hours of training and years of preparation in hopes of realizing the same Olympic dream, were actually rooting for him, the networks were trying to communicate to the audience that Dan Jansen was somebody who was truly special. Four days after Jansen's winning performance, TNT reporter John Nabors compared the speed skater to the beloved "Miracle on ice" U.S. ice hockey team that won the gold medal in 1980 at Lake Placid, NY. Would Jansen have been a hero if he had failed to win a gold medal? Perhaps TNT anchor Charles answered this question best when he said: "You don't have to win a gold medal to be a winner in life, but it sure helps for Dan Jansen."

While Jansen emerged victorious from Lillehammer, there were far more losers than winners among the 1,902 athletes that competed. Although these athletes were unable to measure up to the likes of Dan Jansen, Bonnie Blair, Oksana Baiul, and Johan Olav Koss as far as their athletic prowess was concerned, they did represent many of the same enduring values. For example, there was the story of American biathlete Joan Getchow, who finished in the middle of the pack in a sport most Americans have only seen or heard of once every four years when the Olympics come around. As Getchow was shown skiing across the screen, a CBS announcer said: "Two years ago at the Albertville Olympics, American biathlete Joan Getchow finished 64th. But today she

finished 17th, all the more remarkable because just 11 months ago, she underwent heart surgery. Joan Getchow—Olympian."

Non-medal winning athletes like Getchow, who put in long hours of training with little or no hope of winning a medal or an endorsement contract, were the unsung heroes of Olympic coverage. Boorstin (1987) defined an unsung hero as a person "with solid virtues who can be admired for something more substantial than his well-knownness" (p. 76). Following Dan Jansen's disappointing finish in the 500-meter race, CBS' Greg Gumbel rationalized that, "for the many winners and gold medalists we show you time and again, there are literally dozens of disappointments and failures."

A feature story that followed Gumbel's comments illustrated the fine line between winning and losing in Olympic competition. Kuralt, the story's narrator, assured Dan Jansen and luger Duncan Kennedy, another disappointed American medal hopeful, that they were in "good company." At the end of the story, Kuralt focused not on Jansen, but rather on his teammate on the U.S. speed skating team, David Westerman: "He painted houses during the summertime to make the money to get here. He's 31, he'll never be back. And someday he'll tell his grandchildren that if he had been a hundredth of a second faster in Lillehammer, he'd have finished 26th instead of 27th."

Research Question #3

Was there a difference in the total number of times the value Gans called small-town pastoralism was used to describe winners and non-winners? The results of this study indicated that there was a statistically significant difference (See Table 6). Winning athletes did account for a higher mean score for this

variable. As noted earlier, small-town pastoralism is Gans' term to describe a number of ideal characteristics normally associated with small-town life, including friendliness, family cohesiveness, respect for tradition, and the belief that the best things in life are the simple things.

Hailed as the "Green Olympics," the Winter Games in Lillehammer provided CBS and TNT with an excellent setting on which to communicate to viewers what Gans called "the desirability both of nature and of smallness per se" (1980, p. 49). Host countries for the Winter Olympics need to supply challenging ski slopes, miles of cross-country trails, special hills for freestyle competition, a combination bobsled-luge run, and two ramps for ski jumping. Since most of the events are contested in the great outdoors, very few, if any, big cities have the wide open space required to host this quadrennial festival. Therefore, past Olympics have been held in Albertville, France, Lake Placid, New York, and the 1994 Games in Lillehammer, Norway.

How small a town is Lillehammer? In trying to paint a picture of what downtown Lillehammer would be like once the Games had concluded, and the thousands of Olympic visitors had disembarked, CBS' Jim Nantz said: "Perhaps the population balance will be restored, and once again the furry creatures will outnumber the people." Nantz compared Storgata, the main thoroughfare in Lillehammer, to "an avenue out of *Northern Exposure*," a once popular CBS television show about a collection of people who lived in a fictional small town in Alaska.

Table 6

Comparison of the Use of the Enduring Value Gans Called Small-Town Pastoralism to Describe Winners and Non-Winners

Athlete's Status	# Of Cases	Mean	Std. Dev.	SE of Mean
Winner	1,512	.33	1.03	.026
Non-Winner	1,707	.28	0.86	.021

Mean Difference = .0449

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances: $F = 5.38$

$p = .02$

Norway last hosted the Winter Olympics in 1952. Both CBS and TNT marked the occasion of Norway's 42nd anniversary of the first time the country served as Olympic host by periodically showing viewers what the Olympics looked like back then. Gans (1980) contended that "the news celebrates old technology and mourns its passing, partly because it is tied to an era when life was thought to have been simpler" (p. 50). Consequently, all flashbacks to 1952 had a distinctively nostalgic tone. In introducing the first flashback to 1952, Nantz told viewers that the first Norwegian-hosted Olympics was held "in a relative age of innocence without drug testing, big endorsement deals, or tabloid television." In describing the 1952 "Parade of Nations," CBS' Ray Gandolf compared modern athletes with those of yesteryear and ruled in favor of the latter because he felt the Olympians of 1952 had more in common with the average American. Gandolf said: "These creatures from another time, these athletes, their baggy, woolly outfits, aerodynamically incorrect, free of corporate logos, they looked like real people wearing real clothes."

Although the athletes that competed in Lillehammer were bigger, faster, and stronger than their predecessors, both networks portrayed them in commentary that exemplified the value of small-town pastoralism. For example, when American Tommy Moe won the gold medal in the downhill, broadcasters were quick to attribute his success to the discipline instilled in him by his strict, but loving father. Moe's path to the Olympic medal podium was described as a circuitous one with more downs than ups, including a drug problem and a dismissal from the U.S. Ski Team. Forced to make a decision between giving up his Olympic dreams or applying himself with renewed conviction, CBS

announcer Hank Kashiwa said: "Moe buckled down to his skiing, founded his rafting business, and lived the clean life."

A great deal of attention was paid to the fact that Moe hailed from Alaska. Viewers were told that a salmon painted on the side of his ski helmet was not an Atlantic king salmon, but rather a Pacific salmon, native of the 49th state. In a CBS feature introducing Moe as America's best chance at a skiing medal, viewers saw the young skier enjoying the natural landscape of his home state. In addition to skiing down a snow-covered slope, Moe was also depicted salmon fishing, white water kayaking, and building his own house against a backdrop of tall timber and wide open spaces. At the feature's conclusion, an American bald eagle was shown gliding across the television screen while CBS announcer Kashiwa said: "Tommy did all this with the help of his friends, his family, and of Alaska itself, where you can see America in flight." When the results of the downhill became official, announcers noted that Moe was the first Alaskan to ever win a gold medal in the Winter Olympics.

The adage that the simple life was the best life for a successful Olympian was a familiar storyline that ran through other features about gold medalists. For example, a feature profiling Italian luger Gerda Weissensteiner accredited her storied career in luge to the rural environment where she grew up, and the tremendous support of her family. As the television screen showed pictures of the Weissensteiner family home, nestled among a mountainous region of northern Italy, a CBS announcer said of the luger's daily life: "Gerda's close family ties bind this champion willingly to a life in the countryside. Horses, cows, dogs, chickens, and the rigors of her sport conspire to keep Gerda's feet firmly planted

on the ground. With the backing of team Weissensteiner, Gerda might find an Olympic medal ripe for the picking."

Research Question #4

In comparing TNT to CBS, did one network's coverage contain more enduring values and Olympic values than the other? Results of this study indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in the total number of Gans' enduring values used to describe Olympic coverage as it appeared on CBS and TNT, respectively. Although one sample was smaller than the other—TNT's coverage consisted of some 1,313 fewer segments—both networks met the assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance, therefore a t-test was performed (See Table 7).

The Olympic Games are one of the most expensive and most hyped television programs broadcast on network, and now cable, television. Farrell (1989) contended that American television networks were compelled to present the Games as an event of great significance to justify their substantial investments in both time and money. Historically, because of this compulsion by the networks, more emphasis has been placed on American athletes and their performances (Farrell, 1989; Riggs et al., 1993). Due to the high costs of attaining exclusive broadcasting rights to the Olympics, broadcasters and network executives have developed a rooting interest in the home team because more American medals usually translates into higher Nielsen ratings.

TNT's coverage of the proceedings in Lillehammer emphasized competition rather than the personalities of the athletes participating. Daily

Table 7

Comparison of the Total Number of Gans' Enduring Values Used to Describe Olympic Coverage as Presented by TNT and CBS

Network	# Of Cases	Mean	Std. Dev.	SE of Mean
CBS	2,488	2.07	2.81	.056
TNT	1,175	2.38	2.85	.083

Mean Difference = -.3126

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances: $F = 5.909$

$p = .015$

promotional ads reminded viewers that TNT was delighted to be bringing them coverage of "the world's most important sporting event," and that the network was "committed to coverage of gold medal moments as they unfold." As expected, gold medal moments in which the winning athlete was an American were of particular interest to TNT. On several occasions, TNT announcers completely eschewed objectivity, attaching the personal pronoun "we" to comments regarding the American team. For example, when the Women's Super-G ski race was drawing to a close with an American in first place, announcer Ron Thulin exclaimed: "The U.S.A. had the first skier down the course, and we have the leader in Diann Roffe-Steinrotter." Prior to coverage of the men's luge competition in which two Americans were among the favorites to win a medal, announcer Nick Charles told the audience that, when it came to this particular sport, "we have never won an Olympic medal."

Compared to TNT, CBS' coverage was much more personality driven. One of the main factors for taking this approach concerned the time of day when most of CBS' coverage was televised. While TNT's coverage was restricted to weekdays between the hours of 1 to 6 p.m. on the East Coast, and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the West Coast, the majority of CBS' coverage was shown during television's prime-time hours. Unlike TNT, CBS took a broad view of the Olympics in an effort to attract the non-sports fan. As *USA Today* reporter Martha T. Moore wrote of CBS' style: "CBS' interviews, feature stories on athletes and focus on their families, helped viewers figure out who was under the Spandex" (1994, p. 2B). As a result of this approach, CBS' coverage contained

a lower mean score of enduring values per segment, but it did manage to keep a record number of American television sets tuning in each night.

The most prevalent enduring value exemplified in this study of network television coverage of the Lillehammer Winter Games was ethnocentrism. Earlier in this chapter, the following question was posed: "Did the networks spend too much time reporting solely the American angle?" *San Francisco Examiner* media critic Bruce Adams thought so. On the last day of competition, Adams wrote: "CBS focused too much on the Americans, the winners and the big-ticket events" (1994, p. C-5). In contrast to Adams and the many journalists who shared his point of view, the *San Francisco Chronicle's* Glenn Dickey contended that CBS was placing an emphasis on American athletes and American results because that was precisely what viewers wanted. Dickey wrote: "As before, the emphasis on American winners at the expense of competitors from other countries has been criticized, though CBS is giving viewers what they want. Americans have proven themselves to be chauvinistic with sports; the rest of the world doesn't count" (1994, p. B3).

Did the performances of some American athletes count more than others? Was there a statistically significant difference in the total number of positive examples of ethnocentrism that were used to describe American medalists and non-medalists? Non-winners recorded a higher mean score of 1.36, as compared to 1.14 for winners, but the difference between the two groups was not statistically significant. Both networks totaled a higher concentration of positive examples of ethnocentrism for the many American men and women who went home from Lillehammer empty-handed, than for those fortunate few who did

manage to win medals. The finding that the networks tended to glorify non medal-winning athletes and promote them in terms that made them living, breathing, examples of America at its best, was inconsistent with the conclusions reached by Lumpkin (1983), Tutko and Bruns (1976), Tutko (1988), and Trujillo and Ekdom (1985), which contended that winning has surpassed the joy of competing as the most important aspect of sports participation in this country. Of course, anyone who makes a nation's Olympic team is already considered a winner in the sense that he or she is that country's best athlete in a particular sport or discipline. For example, although Todd Lodwick failed to come close to the medal podium in the ski jumping competitions, he was still acknowledged as the U.S. National Ski Jumping Champion for 1994.

In his analysis of rhetoric from the 1984 Winter Olympics, Farrell (1989) contended that ABC spent too much of its coverage analyzing and previewing those events in which Americans stood the best chances of winning medals. Events where American chances were slim or nonexistent were relegated to secondary status, and the amount of coverage they received was restricted (See Table 8). Did CBS and TNT cover the action in Lillehammer in the same manner? Unlike the 1984 Games when the final American medal tally was disappointing, the 1994 team set a record for most medals won by a United States Winter Olympic team. The success of the team provided the networks with many opportunities to cast winners into spokespersons for the American way of life, especially in those events where American successes have traditionally been few and far between. Overall, both networks described winners and non-winners in roughly the same number of total enduring values per segment.

Table 8

Breakdown of Network Coverage of Events Based on Perceived American Medal Chances

Event	CBS	TNT	# Of Cases	Avg. Length of Segments in Seconds.
American Wins	194	62	256	101.8906
American Favored	426	239	665	107.0466
American Upsets	197	95	292	72.2979
U.S. No Chance	1,441	731	2,172	126.1796
Other	230	48	278	120.8597

Note. American Wins = Events in which an American Athlete was Expected to win an Olympic Medal and Did; American Favored = Events in which American Athletes were Expected to Win Medals But Did Not; American Upsets = Events in which Americans Unexpectedly Won Medals; U.S. No Chance = Events Where Americans were Given No Chance of Winning a Medal and Did Not; Other = Non-Sports Segments.

Results of this study did not indicate any statistically significant difference in the total number of Olympic values used to describe coverage on the two networks. Although results of random sample surveys of the 1984 Summer Olympics, as reported by Rothenbuhler (1989), indicated that the American audience associated these values with Olympic athletes, examples of these values contained within the television discourse examined in this study were lower than expected. The most prevalent Olympic value in this study was the one Rothenbuhler called "Skill Required."

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study examined television coverage of the 17th Olympic Winter Games, focusing specifically on Gans' enduring values contained within announcers' descriptions of the athletes from the various countries that competed. Although the Olympics are promoted by organizers and the media as a special event capable of bringing the countries of the world together in the name of peace and mutual understanding, financial concerns dictate who participates and to what extent. The larger, developed countries, especially the Western ones including the United States, send the largest delegations of athletes and officials, win the most medals, and serve most often in the prestigious role of Olympic host. The results of this study show that these countries also dominate American television coverage of the Games. The United States and the other Western developed nations—the 26 nations included in the other Western developed countries group—share many of the same cultural values. Both the United States and the other Western countries group recorded a higher overall mean score for Gans' enduring values per individual segment than athletes representing Communist, former Communist, and non-Western developed countries.

This study also provided evidence of how the media manufacture sports heroes for public consumption. Escalating salaries and an increase in media coverage have made today's athletes highly recognizable figures in American society. With the exception of a few notable sports legends of the past, like Babe Ruth, Joe Louis, and Muhammad Ali, it could be argued that today's athletes are

subjected to more media scrutiny than at any other time in American history. Because of the attention they receive, athletes, and the images they convey, have been the subject of increasing debate. Corporate America's decision to use athletes as spokespersons suggests that these individuals are seen by large portions of the American population as role models and heroes. What does this say about our country when an individual can be admired and considered influential simply because he or she can excel in athletics? Interestingly, although the potential is there, most athletes have balked at the opportunity to assume a leadership role, contending that they are entertainers and not role models.

Nevertheless, the media continue to churn out sports heroes. Boorstin (1987) contended that the American media are compelled to create an endless supply of heroes because this country has an unquenchable thirst for witnessing acts of "human greatness" (p. 76). According to Boorstin, because true displays of "human greatness" are so rare, the overwhelming majority of the heroes manufactured by today's media are actually false heroes or overexposed celebrities. Boorstin contended that celebrities are poor substitutes for heroes, because they rarely stand for anything as relevant as an enduring value or values. The defining characteristic of a celebrity is not one of individualism, ethnocentrism, and small-town pastoralism, but rather it is name recognition (Boorstin, 1987, p. 60).

Tonya Harding and Nancy Kerrigan were the most widely recognized celebrities that competed in Lillehammer. In the weeks leading up to the start of Olympic competition, the two skaters dominated front page headlines from coast

to coast and were the main subject of pre-Olympic hype. However, they both failed to be elevated to the status of Olympic hero.

Once actual Olympic coverage commenced, discussion pertaining to Harding was limited to descriptions of her daily practice routines, and speculation as to where she stood legally with regards to her tenuous status as a member of the U.S. team. Announcers were careful not to judge her too harshly. They also avoided praising her, therefore Harding did not become synonymous with any of the enduring values. Despite her status as United States National Ladies Figure Skating Champion, Harding's circuitous journey from troubled child to world-class figure skater was never the subject of a feature story by either network. Instead, CBS viewers were subjected to occasional reports by former *CBS Evening News* anchor Connie Chung. The extent of the information gathered by Chung about Harding consisted of hearsay, second-hand musings from the Harding camp, and personal recollections of Chung's encounter with the troubled skater in Oregon, prior to the start of the Games. Chung did land an exclusive interview with Harding in Lillehammer, but the skater walked out after the first couple of questions when Chung attempted to probe her involvement in the attack on Kerrigan. Viewers seeking information about Harding's complicated upbringing or the imbroglio that was her marriage to the former Jeff Gillooly had to rely on purveyors of tabloid television like *Hard Copy* and *A Current Affair* to fill the void.

Though Kerrigan collected the largest sum of endorsement money among all of the athletes that competed in Lillehammer, most of her endorsement contracts were procured before she even boarded an airplane to Norway. Under

enormous pressure, Kerrigan's performance in the ladies figure skating competition contained some of the elements that comprise what Boorstin called "human greatness," but her long-lasting effect as an Olympic hero was derailed by her post-competition comments and public relations gaffes. Obviously not content with a moral victory over her aggressors, Kerrigan did not receive the news of her winning a silver medal very well. She questioned the competence of the judges, and accused winner Oksana Baiul of overreacting, when the young Ukrainian became over-wrought with emotion upon learning that she had won the first gold medal in Olympic competition for her newly independent country.

Before the torch was lit in Lillehammer, there were many candidates vying to be promoted to the rank of sports hero. As the competition unfolded, new candidates emerged (Tommy Moe), while others performed below expectations (the U.S. Hockey team) and dropped out. As noted earlier, Kottak (1988) contended that when it came to Olympic coverage, the American media singled out those athletes, American or otherwise, that best represented American cultural values (p. 58). This study contends that at the conclusion of the Winter Games of 1994, four athletes in particular were singled out for their accomplishments by CBS and TNT. Those athletes were American speed skaters Dan Jansen and Bonnie Blair, Norwegian speed skater Johan Olav Koss, and Ukrainian figure skater Oksana Baiul. These athletes were cast into heroic archetypes, and thus were presented to the American viewing audience as excellent examples of a number of enduring values.

Because of a long run of hard luck in Olympic competition, Dan Jansen's winning a gold medal in his final race was described by CBS' Dick Stockton as "a

story for the ages." Jansen's strong family ties (small-town pastoralism), his determination to overcome setbacks and personal tragedy (individualism), and his quest to win the elusive gold medal that would solidify him as America's best male speed skater since Eric Heiden (ethnocentrism) were three themes constantly brought to the attention of the viewers during the course of the two weeks of programming. Once the results were official, and it became clear that Jansen had finally won his gold medal, announcers were quick to proclaim the speed skater as one of the great heroes of Olympic history. Stockton said: "No one could have foreseen the events that led to Jansen becoming the symbol of human spirit, not only in this venue, but in the entire Olympics. Personal tragedy and failures on the ice were intertwined and they produced a tragic hero competing for that one last chance at Olympic glory." Interestingly, one fact not mentioned in Stockton's testament to sports hyperbole was that Jansen's financial prospects and future endorsement opportunities also hinged on the outcome of his final race. Perhaps the greatest pressure on Jansen was not coming from the competition, but rather from corporate representatives and his own agent. However, CBS made no mention of Jansen's earning potential until after the gold medal was obtained.

Whereas Jansen's perseverance personified Gans' definition of individualism, Bonnie Blair's Midwestern roots and close relationship with her mother made her the ideal example of small-town pastoralism. Despite being thousands of miles away from her hometown of Champaign, IL, Blair enjoyed a great deal of support from her personal entourage—the Blair Bunch. Comprised mainly of family members and close friends, the Blair Bunch was a frequent topic of discussion by both networks. All of Blair's performances on ice included the

customary camera shot of the Blair Bunch watching from the stands. Viewers were frequently told how close America's top female speed skater was to her family. Before she took the ice on February 20, 1994, Greg Gumbel said: "If you know anything about Bonnie Blair, it all starts with her family." Moments before Blair went for her record fifth gold medal, TNT's Ernie Johnson assured viewers that "the 60-member Blair Bunch, her now famous traveling fan club headed up by her mother, was out in force."

Referred to at times by CBS' Jim Nantz as "America's little sister," the media portrayed Blair as a folksy, Midwesterner whose primary motivation for competing was the love of her sport. Blair embodied a number of enduring values, including individualism, responsible capitalism, and ethnocentrism. As with Jansen, viewers were given a great deal of information about Blair's life on and off the ice. Separate profiles showed: (1) the obstacles she had to overcome to reach the status of Olympic gold medalist, (2) what her early childhood was like, and (3) how she insisted on giving back to her community by serving as a fundraiser for a number of important local causes.

As the closest thing to a sure bet to win a medal on the entire U.S. team entering Olympic competition, rhetoric referring to Blair was highly ethnocentric. Viewers were constantly reminded by both networks that Blair was in Lillehammer on a mission to become the most highly-decorated female athlete in United States Olympic history. This point was reinforced by a series of ethnocentric superlatives, including "America's sweetheart," "America's most winning Olympian," and "the most decorated American winter athlete of all-time." TNT's Johnson said: "American Bonnie Blair came into these Games as

destiny's darling." Johnson's cohort, Leah Mueller dubbed Blair "America's golden girl of speed skating."

While Blair got her inspiration from the Blair Bunch, figure skater Oksana Baiul, an orphan from the Ukraine, succeeded without the luxury of tremendous family support. Harding and Kerrigan may have dominated all discussion pertaining to the ladies figure skating competition prior to the start of the Olympics, but Baiul was the only one of the three skaters who was the subject of a full-length feature story on both networks. Much was made of the tragic losses Baiul experienced at such a young age, including the deaths of her mother and grandparents, and her father's decision to abandon her. CBS' Lundquist said of Baiul: "What's not so easy to remember is how much she has gained and lost in this young life. She can't remember when she began skating. And there's no one there to remind her. You have to remember that this 16-year old who could be everyone's daughter, in fact is no one's."

Although Harding and Kerrigan were isolated from the fans, spectators, and television cameras until the start of the ladies figure skating competition on February 23, 1994, Baiul, who was more accessible to the television cameras, was portrayed as warm, friendly, and sociable. After she suffered an injury in practice on February 24, 1994, there was some doubt as to whether she would be healthy enough to compete the next day for the gold medal. Faced with the grim prospect of having her Olympic dream quashed by a fluke accident in practice, Baiul never stopped being gregarious. CBS' Scott Hamilton said: "Oksana in tears as she left the Northern Lights Hall, but still gracious enough to sign an autograph for a fan."

No athlete who competed in Lillehammer received more favorable coverage by both networks than Norwegian speed skater Johan Olav Koss of Norway. When Koss won his second gold medal on February 16, 1994, TNT's Charles proclaimed: "He is the man." A winner of three gold medals in Lillehammer, Koss made headlines around the world when he donated his prize money to an organization called Olympic Aid, which was dedicated to providing relief to war-torn Sarajevo. Announcers noted that Koss' gesture was only one of many humanitarian deeds he had performed over the years. Greg Gumbel said: "His efforts on behalf of the handicapped are well documented here. And his announcement last week that he would take all of his gold medal bonus money from the Norwegian Olympic Federation and give it to the survivors of Sarajevo and Olympic Aid underscore what the people here have known all along. That Koss' heart is made of the same gold as his medals. He is Norway's golden son because he's more than a great man, he's a good man."

Daily reports chronicling Koss' good deeds and athletic achievements kept his name fresh in the minds of the viewers. Features described his marathon-like training regiment, his relationship with a young handicapped boy, his humanitarian mission to Africa, and his commitment to raise funds to help the citizens of war-torn Sarajevo. Announcers also noted on several occasions that, in addition to being an outstanding speed skater, Koss was also a serious medical student studying in the United States. Because he combined athletics with academics, TNT's Charles called Koss "a renaissance man."

The fact that Koss was studying in this country was repeated on several occasions. Why was this important? By telling the audience that Koss was living

and studying in the United States, the networks were trying to blur Koss' national identity. Perhaps, if the information were repeated several times, the American viewers would begin to see the Norwegian star as one of their own, and begin to root for him. This would have been a safe strategy to keep viewers interested in speed skating, because, aside from Blair and Jansen, both the U.S. men's and women's speed skating teams were short of medal hopefuls. Therefore, those who were motivated to root for Koss were not having to do so at the risk of being unpatriotic.

Overall, network coverage of Koss was steeped with many examples of all of the enduring values except for national leadership. By virtue of Gans' definition of national leadership, Koss was excluded from this value because he was not a world leader. Interestingly, announcers noted that Koss' popularity was so great in his native country that he could be king of Norway if he wanted too. Since he was not a member of the royal family, such a promotion would be impossible. Nevertheless, this statement was made several times.

As the Games progressed, and it became abundantly clear that Koss was going to be a triple-gold medalist, both networks gushed over the Norwegian speed skater. Objectivity was abandoned, and the respected sports broadcast journalists covering the Games transformed themselves into Koss' press agents. Koss the hero was offered to the audience as an excellent example of the model human being. On February 20, 1994, Greg Gumbel said: "Superstar. There are so many in the sporting galaxy and so few heroes. Norway's Johan Olav Koss is a hero. A gifted athlete and a humanitarian, a man that appears worthy of the tribute he's paid." TNT's John Nabors said directly to Koss in an interview on

February 23, 1994: "You've donated your prize money to Olympic aid. You're modest and humble. You don't get drunk, you don't get into trouble. It's a privilege to watch a guy like that. Great work ethic and a nice kid." Although Nabors directed his comments to the Norwegian speed skater, he was also talking to the viewers at home, telling them that Koss was living the model life.

Koss, Baiul, Blair, and Jansen all met Farrell's (1989) criteria for heroism. Each of the four athletes overcame obstacles, performed at their highest level, triumphed while following the rules that defined their sport, performed at their highest level with the pressure of knowing the whole world was watching, and were portrayed as participants competing primarily for the glory of their sport. At various times, the term hero was actually used by announcers searching for laudatory phrases to describe these four individuals.

All four athletes were introduced to the viewing audience early on, similar to the way main characters are introduced in the first few chapters of a novel. The audience heard their names repeatedly and got to know about their backgrounds and personalities in "Up Close and Personal" feature stories. Other athletes were introduced to the audience during the first few days of programming, but poor performances or simple bad luck ruined their chances of soaring to the rank of Olympic hero.

For example, next to Blair, freestyle moguls skier Donna Weinbrecht was considered the best chance for an American gold medal. When the U.S. team entered the stadium during the opening ceremonies, Weinbrecht, who participated in one of the most obscure sports included in the Olympic program, was singled out by announcers Greg Gumbel and Andrea Joyce as one of America's top medal

contenders. Prior to the first day of competition in her event, CBS aired a 10-minute feature on Weinbrecht, concentrating on the arduous rehabilitation program she had to endure to recover from a serious skiing accident. The typical CBS athlete feature lasted between three and five minutes, thus the length alone of the Weinbrecht piece was an indication that network executives thought that she was a potential Olympic hero. However, when she faltered and eventually finished out of medal contention, Weinbrecht was quickly forgotten by both CBS and TNT.

Limitations of this Study

Perhaps the most obvious limitation of this study is that in this content analysis of television coverage of the Winter Olympics, only the spoken words, and not the visual images, were coded and analyzed. To be sure, what was said by the announcers who were covering the competition was important, but research has shown the pictures that flashed across the television screen were probably more important, and probably made a more lasting impression on the audience. Images and symbols have the ability to represent a number of values or beliefs. For example, the image of an American flag being waved rinkside during a hockey game in Norway can conjure up feelings of pride, patriotism, and a number of other emotions for the individual viewers watching at home. There were many images of flag-waving and sportsmanship exhibited by spectators and athletes in the television coverage, but they were not coded unless the announcers made comments about them.

Since only the 1994 Winter Olympics in Lillehammer, Norway were examined, the second limitation of this study is that the results cannot be

generalized to other Olympics. To some extent, every Olympics is different. For example, coverage of the 1972 Summer Olympics was dramatically shaped by the hostage crisis and eventual murder of 11 members of the Israeli Olympic team. Media coverage of the 1980 and 1984 Summer Olympics was affected by the political boycotts of the United States and the Soviet Union respectively. In the 1994 Olympics, the record-breaking television ratings in Lillehammer were generated by both the aftermath of the Harding-Kerrigan scandal, and a new record for most medals won in an individual Olympiad by the American team.

Contributions to the Literature

A major contribution of this study to mass communication research is the empirical verification of Gans' enduring values. The findings also contribute to the small body of research on the mass media and the Olympics. It should be noted that this content analysis was based solely on American media coverage of an international event. American performances were portrayed with more zeal than those of other country's athletes because CBS and TNT were presenting the action to primarily an American audience. The Olympics are a popular spectator event all over the world. Virtually every country that sends participants to compete, produces its own version of the proceedings. Does the emphasis of their coverage differ from that exhibited by the American broadcasters? Do they reserve praise only for those athletes that win medals for their country, or do they spotlight successful athletes regardless of their national identity? Perhaps most importantly, do international broadcasters share the American media's compulsion to build and create heroes out of Olympic athletes?

Despite the end of the Cold War era, the Olympics continue to be an extremely popular special event for American television viewers. Findings in this study confirm that how athletes were portrayed by the American media depended largely on what country those individuals represented. This study confirmed one of the chief findings of a content analysis by Riggs et al. (1993) that contended that the tone of coverage, and the amount of air time devoted to an athlete's performance, depended on the relationship of that athlete's country to the United States with regards to American foreign policy.

This study also explored a relatively untapped area of mass communication research which concerns the manufacturing of sports heroes, not to mention media portrayal of role models. The athletes that emerged as sports heroes in Lillehammer all met the criteria forwarded by Farrell (1989) in his analysis of the 1984 Winter Olympics. Thus his concept of how the media creates Olympic heroes needs to be expanded and applied to future Olympic hopefuls.

Another finding concerned the amount of coverage that was devoted to detailing the exploits of both winning and non-winning athletes. Although critics of sports like Tutko and Lumpkin have charged that Americans place too much emphasis on winning, the breakdown of coverage in this study did not confirm an obsession with winning by either network. Overall, more time was spent covering the non-winners.

Directions for Future Research

It is hoped that the completion of this study will open the door to future content analyses that attempt to explore the value content of, among other things,

popular sitcoms, movies, and coverage of professional sporting events. Because these entities occupy a large portion of the free time most Americans have, the values that are at the heart of their storylines should reveal much about American culture. Perhaps others will take a further look at Gans' (1980) concept of paraideology and the enduring values championed by most Americans, consciously or subconsciously. While Gans was concerned primarily with the news media and the manner by which journalists gather and distribute information, his contention about enduring values portraying American society as it ought to be can be applied on a much wider scale to include other types of media programming and materials.

This study presupposed that the media's manufacturing of heroes affected the audience in some profound way. Such a claim cannot be backed up with hard evidence because the impact of Olympic television coverage from Lillehammer on its audience was not measured. There would appear to be a scarcity of mass communications research dedicated to discovering how the average viewer receives the images and rhetoric dispensed by network broadcasters covering the Olympic Games. Real (1989) noted that "super media's power to motivate imitations of heroic models creates a level of 'media effect' that behavioral empiricism has never been able to comprehend" (p. 236).

Addressing specifically the issue of the effectiveness of role models and heroes, Real (1989) contended that the impact of Olympic media coverage varied from person to person. Real (1989) wrote: "The Olympics via media affect an enormous number of people slightly—those passive audience members around the world—but they also affect a small number of people very profoundly: the would-

be Olympians who sacrifice years of their life to the dream of Olympic glory in front of the whole world" (p. 236).

Although it was beyond the scope of this study, it should be noted that researchers need to address some of the social factors that determine how athletes are perceived by both the American media and the public. Successful athletes are not always the most beloved people. A whole closet full of Olympic gold medals does not guarantee that an athlete will be swamped with endorsement contracts. For example, American track star Carl Lewis has been winning gold medals every four years since 1984. His accomplishments, and his staying power as an Olympic-caliber athlete over a period of more than a decade, are unparalleled in American Olympic history, but he continues to be overlooked by corporate America. Does racism have anything to do with his limited commercial prospects?

This study looked at the values contained within media commentary of the Olympics. It stands as a foundation on which to build. The next logical step would be to concentrate on how audience members interpret the rhetoric proffered by announcers during Olympic coverage. One method of analysis would be ethnography, because it would allow researchers to see first-hand how the images and words that enter into America's living rooms are received by their intended audience. However, the small window of opportunity (the Olympics last roughly two or three weeks) would make it difficult for a small number of researchers to gather enough data. Surveys are an alternative method, but also a highly costly one in terms of time and money. If time and money were plentiful,

the best research would combine ethnography, random sample surveys, and content analysis.

One of the major roadblocks to furthering the cause of Olympic research is that researchers have been hesitant to replicate past studies. The 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta will mark the 100th anniversary of the modern Olympic Games. It will also be the first Olympics held in the United States in the post-Cold War era, therefore it will be a closely watched spectacle. Researchers planning to study some aspect of the 1996 Atlanta Games, as well as future Olympiads, should consider some of the recent happenings related to Olympic matters.

The recent decision by the International Olympic Committee and the National Hockey League to include professional hockey players in the 1998 Winter Olympics takes the Olympics further away from the ideals of participating for the glory of sport forwarded by de Coubertin. A story that appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle* noted that: "By agreeing to a mid-season shutdown during the 1997-98 season, the path was cleared for the world's best players to make up the world's best team at the ultimate international showcase" (Olympic deal set, 1995, p. B2). The impetus behind this decision was primarily financial, but it also is a strong indication of the importance placed on winning in this country, especially in international competition.

A second development that has occurred in the Olympic realm since the torch was doused in Lillehammer was the astounding decision by NBC to lock up exclusive rights to the year 2000 Summer Games and the Winter Games of 2002 for a combined \$1.45 billion (Nevius, 1995, p. D2). Will this dramatic increase

in dollars spent to acquire broadcasting rights affect the manner in which NBC promotes and covers the Olympic Games in the future? How will NBC cover the Games if the American team fails to perform well, or if there are no stand-out American athletes competing?

Finally, the effects of corporate sponsorship on the Olympics needs to be monitored. The controversy that surrounded the American men's basketball "Dream Team" in Barcelona during the Summer Games of 1992, in which star player and Nike spokesperson Michael Jordan refused to take the medal stand in the official U.S. Olympic team warm-up jacket because it was made by Reebok, Nike's largest competitor, could be a sign of things to come. Perhaps, in the future, the Olympics will be seen not as an international competition, but rather as a corporate competition in which Nike athletes will be competing against General Motors athletes to bring glory and a boost in worldwide sales to the victorious corporations.

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