

# What is it to be an athlete?

## Ethos in athlete's narratives



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# Ethos

- Custom or character and guiding beliefs of a person, group or institution
  - Ethos in sport refers to general atmosphere
  - What it is like to be an athlete or a coach?
  - actions, attitudes, patterns of communication...
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# Narrative material

- Athletes' experiences – interpreted meanings  
– assumption that these meanings describe cultural actions and attitudes
  - Presumably these actions have an effect on what we learn and how we grow in the world of sports
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# Work ethos

- The core of sports is hard work (training)
  - Training becomes more important than the results
  - Discipline is a key factor: it helps to concentrate and it prevents laziness
  - Discussions are waste of time – the coach should know all the answers and not ask any questions
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# Ethical problems in the work ethos?

- Health is easily sacrificed.
  - Strain disorders are just a prize one has to pay.
  - Control of the body – eating disorders
  - Doping – helps to train more and build a body that looks like a result of a hard work
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# Ethos of success

- Unquestionable attitude to winning
  - It is not enough to do your best
  - You should have killers instincts in the battle
  - Taste of blood
  - Weakness is out
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# Ethical problems in the ethos of success

- Health: competing sick and injured
  - Violence: physical and mental: education to the toughness.
  - Performance becomes a public property
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# Ethos of virtuosity

- Sport itself is the ultimate goal
- Virtuosity, superiority – measured not only in the competition



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# Ethos of fun

- Friends and enjoyment
  - Cozy atmosphere
  - Mixed feelings: “I enjoy but still I’m determined.”
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# Ethos of care

- Close relationship and devotion
  - The athlete feels that he/she is appreciated and important
  - Security
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# Ethical problems in the ethos of care?

- overprotection
  - abuse
  - manipulation
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