

vision in his classic *The Collapse of British Power*: "The post-evangelical hopes of a peaceful world society founded on love or the moral law or economics took no positive account of existing human aggressiveness or rationality, but dismissed them as morally reprehensible or rationally absurd habits that mankind ought to decide to give up." Barnett could as easily have been describing Francis Fukuyama's hosanna about the eternal triumph of the liberal democratic free-market state on a global scale. Or he could have been replying to some neocon columnist explaining why no free-market Muslim would ever abandon his Lexus for Osama bin Laden's olive tree.

Princeton's Harold James concluded in the *Financial Times* that the precarious "high tide" of capital inflows to the United States "could be rapidly reversed on some chance piece of bad news. Such a reversal would involve a collapse of the US stock market, the property market and the dollar. ... The financial reversal would also bring about the collapse of the US security policy and its calculated strategy of world pacification." What a price then for Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz's National Security Strategy that foresees a hyper-powered United States enforcing its unipolar moment into infinity?

Such fantasies are destined not only to collapse but also to bring ruin to hundreds of millions of Americans. For every great nation that has become prosperous over the last 350 years has done so through protectionist policies, exporting far more than it imports and doing so on its own shipping. Naïve free trade policies with powerful protective tariff states ruined 18th-century France and 19th-century Britain, and now they are ruining us. ■

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Back to the Ladies' Tees

Feminist pipe dreams won't erase the sports gender gap.

By Steve Sailer

BECAUSE I HAVE LONG been interested in how female athletes match up against men, I particularly looked forward to the recent battle of the sexes on the golf course. With six hours of web searching and spreadsheet jiggering, I was able to publish a UPI article called "How will Annika Sorenstam perform?" the day before the top female golfer teed it up with the boys at the Colonial Country Club. This was my forecast, based on her typical scores on Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) courses, which average about five strokes per round easier than the PGA courses: "So, I predict that if Sorenstam plays this week the way she's played in the rest of 2003, she'll miss the cut by four strokes." That's exactly what she did.

She shot what she called one of the best rounds of her life on Thursday (71) then regressed toward her mean on Friday (74). She hit a disastrous stretch of five bogeys in eight holes in the middle of her second round but then gutted it out and closed with seven straight pars to stanch the bleeding. She still beat 13 men out of 114, so she played extremely well under pressure. Congratulations, Annika!

But while her cut-missing was celebrated wildly in the media, it confirmed my assessment: she couldn't make a living on the men's tour. Sorenstam carefully selected the Colonial tournament because the course suited her and

because its field is limited in both quality (all five of the year's multiple winners—Tiger Woods, Davis Love, Mike Weir, Ernie Els, and Vijay Singh—had passed it up) and quantity (about 35 fewer golfers start than in the normal tournament, but the same number make the cut).

Top *Washington Post* sports columnist Tom Boswell claimed ahead of time that Annika could be a top-100 player on the PGA Tour and even win one or two tournaments. Boswell was unusual for a journalist in that he actually tried to use statistics. He took Sorenstam's LPGA scoring average then adjusted for the greater length of the PGA courses. But, either through ignorance or ideology, he failed to account for the obvious facts that the men play inherently more rigorous courses and that those links are set up harder with longer grass in the rough and shorter grass on the greens.

My estimate was that if Annika had been playing on the men's tour all of 2003, her scoring average would be tied for 183rd out of the 185 golfers on the PGA's scoring average list. But the guys down at the bottom are not among the top 185 in the world at present. They are ex-stars like David Duval and Craig Stadler who are invited to tournaments solely because they used to be big names.

There may also be 100 minor-league golfers who are better than Duval and

Stadler (and Sorenstam) right now. Plus, say, 125 golfers in Europe, plus more on the Asian tour and on the Senior (Champions) tour. Overall, Annika is probably about the 300th to 500th best golfer in the world. Not bad, but nowhere near as good as you have been hearing from the press because few journalists understand how to think quantitatively about human differences.

Veteran pundit James J. Kilpatrick has rightly argued that the most important course of study in college for aspiring journalists should be statistics. But if your ideological bias is that everyone is exactly the same, or at least they morally ought to be, you will not be comfortable with the tools developed by the great statisticians.

Statistics is essentially the study of differences, including human differences. In his recent book *The Lady Tasting Tea: How Statistics Revolutionized Science in the Twentieth Century*, David Salsburg makes clear that many fundamental statistical techniques were invented by the British hereditarians Francis Galton, Karl Pearson, and Ronald Fisher, who were fascinated with measuring the heritability of traits, especially intelligence—an inquiry that continues to attract furious denunciations even today.

Galton—who also invented fingerprinting, the weather map, and the silent dog whistle—was Charles Darwin's half-cousin. Their common grandparent was the famed doctor and polymath Erasmus Darwin, who proposed his own version of a theory of evolution. Not surprisingly, Galton was fascinated by how intelligence tends to run in families. In 1869, Galton wrote the first book on the subject, *Hereditary Genius*. To aid his research, Galton invented the correlation coefficient and the concept of “regression to the mean,” which describes how smart parents tend to have less smart children (and, more happily,

how dim parents tend to have children brighter than themselves). In the 20th century, Fisher's enthusiasm for Galtonism led him to become not only the most important statistician of all time but also the leading mathematical geneticist of his era.

Galton's “London School” demonstrated that the proper way to compare people's performances is not absolutely but relatively—often in terms of a bell curve. For example: Colonial's winner Kenny Perry finished at 261, 19 under the par of 280. Justin Leonard was 13 under. Both shot rounds of 61, since conditions at Colonial were easy this year—soft, holding greens, no wind. Shooting 145 for two rounds before being cut, Annika was en route to a four round total of 290 or ten over par. Thus, she projected to be 29 strokes or 11.1 percent worse than the winner.

Eleven percent doesn't sound like much. Yet, because of diminishing returns, that is expected for a gender gap in sports in which the competitors strive against nature rather than against each other. In our 1997 article “Track and Battlefield,” sports physiologist Stephen Seiler and I pointed out that the gender

round. Unlike Annika, however, she would lose ugly, as Serena knows from rallying against obscure male pros.

Here is the difference between objective and subjective sports: an Olympic sprinter can run 100 meters in 10 seconds. I could probably step outside right now in my bathrobe and slippers and run 100 meters in 20 seconds. So, arithmetically, he's only twice as good as I am. But if I stepped into the ring with a top boxer for 15 rounds, he would not win ten rounds to my five. He would win on a one-punch knockout in the first 20 seconds.

Annika can score respectably because she is playing the course. But Serena would be humiliated by a professional male tennis player because she would be playing him. That is why the Galtonians invented statistical techniques like the bell curve—they are the way to compare people's performances rationally.

Thinking like a statistician allows for fascinating questions that open up important perspectives on society. For example, I compared Annika statistically to the small, short-hitting, old-timer Corey Pavin. I suggested, based on their

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gap between the male and female world records in the ten main running events from 100 meters to the marathon averaged 11.5%.

Yet, Serena Williams, the world's best female tennis player, has strongly denied any intention of ever attempting a men's tournament. Annika and Serena are about equally good compared to the rest of the women in their respective sports. If Serena entered a 128-player men's field, she would do exactly as well as Annika did: fail to make the second

scoring averages, that he was at least two strokes per 18 holes better than she. As it turned out, over 36 holes he beat her by seven strokes. Corey is clearly a better golfer than Annika, but why? It's not because he hits it longer, now that Annika has added a dramatic amount of upper-body muscle mass in the last couple of years. At Colonial, they both averaged 268 yards off the tee (99th out of 114 players). A major reason is that Corey has more delicate judgment around the greens. That is a typical sex

difference in professional golf—even though women overall tend to have better small motor skills than men at tasks like sewing and typing. Men tend to be better than women at three-dimensional visualization. Golf-course architects build undulations into greens to test golfers' ability to forecast the gravity-induced curvature of their putts.

Also, male pros simply constitute a much more highly selected fraction of all male golfers than female pros make up of all female golfers. In other words, out of the millions of slightly built guys who were nuts about golf while they were growing up, Corey Pavin is simply way, way out at the far right edge of the bell curve of talent.

In contrast, it is an understatement that not very many American teenage girls have been obsessed with golf. Indeed, a major PR problem for the American-based LPGA tour is that fewer and fewer American women are winning its tournaments. In Sorenstam's Sweden, and in East Asia, golf is more fashionable among heterosexual teenage girls than it is here. (In fact, girl's high school golf in the U.S. is increasingly dominated by East Asian girls. The six-foot-tall Korean-American Michelle Wie is the most promising player of the next generation.)

Golf used to be trendy among young American women. My mom once gave me a book of golf memorabilia that included women's magazine covers from the 1920s showing young ladies dressed in the height of flapper fashion swinging their mashie-niblicks. In that decade, the great P.G. Wodehouse sold dozens of romantic comedy short stories about beautiful girls who shoot scratch and the duffers who love them to the *Saturday Evening Post* for bundles of money.

At some point, though, golf stopped being sexy for American girls (perhaps because it is not as good for losing

weight as, say, aerobics.) Nowadays, the great majority of amateur women players in America are the wives of male players. Typically, they are post-menopausal. Most of the fans at LPGA tournaments are middle-aged or elderly husband-wife couples. The next biggest cohort: packs of burly, crop-haired, gym-teacher-looking women who express approval of their favorites' best shots by punching each other excitedly on the shoulders.

As all this shows, thinking seriously

about fun and games can reveal a lot about both contemporary society and unchanging human nature. Nothing in life is more voluminously quantified than sports, with its millions of statistics. And, in an intensely unfair world, sports offer just about the most level playing field we have, the closest approach to a real world laboratory. ■

Steve Sailer writes for VDARE.com, where a version of this piece first appeared.

Sign of the Times

When diversity is the goal, standards suffer.

By R. Cort Kirkwood

"SO JAYSON BLAIR could live, the journalist had to die." Thus spake the *New York Times's* ex-prodigy, laid low for a record of prevarication lesser liars could barely match in a lifetime, much less a few short years.

The apogee of the Blair disaster, however, wasn't the writer's poetic fare-thee-well. Rather, it was the resignation of *Times* executive editor Howell Raines and managing editor Gerald Boyd on June 5, five weeks to the day after Blair's deportation from journalism's Mecca.

The *Times* said little of their departure, although publisher Arthur Sulzberger Jr. acknowledged the pair thought it "best for the *Times* that they step down." Best indeed, given what transpired.

The postmortem on Blair opens a cadaver of smelly facts about modern journalism. Chief among them, papers such as the *Times* focus on a priority far from what most readers might think. That priority is diversity, or bringing

more "journalists of color" into the newsroom, as opposed to what it should be: getting the story straight.

Published weeks before the two editors jumped ship, a titanic confession in the *Times* explained how a cub reporter conned the smartest editors in the business. Blair, who began his comedy of errors at the *Boston Globe*, amassed more than four-dozen corrections and plagiarized copiously. More than that, he simply concocted stories. A plagiarized writer at another paper finally blew the whistle. Blair's undoing was fiction about the war in Iraq, but he also spun yarns about the D.C. sniper shootings. This curt, pre-sniper warning, from a *Times* editor in April 2002, appeared in the paper's windy apology: "We have to stop Jayson from writing for the *Times*. Right now." Having reported that, the same corrective story quotes a *Times* spokesman: "When considered over all, Mr. Blair's correction rate at the *Times*