

## AE: The Sports Issue

When I began focusing my research on sports history in the mid-1990s, several colleagues at the Department of History here at Texas Tech University were not impressed. An effective way to summarize their assessment was to say that they believed sport history was little more than glorified newspaper writing, and concerned something that was not too consequential to American life in the first place. Well, the intervening years have proven these “scholars” wrong; and not just the amount of work that I have produced, but the overall volume and significance of the materials generated by scholars and yes, sportswriters. As I noted in a 2008 article in the *Journal of the West*, one key aspect of current sports history has been to provide “an increased recognition of a more inclusive and egalitarian history of sport.”

It is in this hope that we offer this issue of *Archivation Exploration*, and what better way to commence this endeavor than with a challenging article that takes under consideration how the African American media perceived one of the most important sportsmen of the twentieth century: Muhammad Ali. This essay by Dr. Taradash runs counter to most of the “accepted” notions of how people perceived the now departed champion. Remember, inclusivity does not necessarily mean that we bring in stories of “others”: it can also mean taking a fresh look (from different angles) at the stories we “thought we knew.”

In addition to the fine essay on Ali, you will also encounter some wonderful reviews of recent works in sport history, a memoir, and short, fictional stories dealing with athletics. Finally, you will also be treated to a “tour” of the fine collections related to sports available here at the Southwest Collection by our archivist, Dr. Monte Monroe. Given all of this, I invite you to sit back, and be both educated and enthralled by what good writing about sports, by academicians and popular writers, can do to inform about the life and the history of the United States.

Dr. Jorge Iber  
Guest Editor  
*Texas Tech University*