

Citation for published version:

David Turner, 'The Extreme Phronesis of Percy Cerutti: A Narrativized Life History of a Legendary Sports Coach', *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies*, Vol. 36 (1), September 2017.

DOI:

<http://dx.doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24972/ijts.2017.36.1.81>

Document Version:

This is the Published Version.

Copyright and Reuse:

© 2017 David Turner.

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 4.0 License. This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals and Newsletters at Digital Commons @ CIIS. It has been accepted for inclusion in International Journal of Transpersonal Studies by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ CIIS. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@ciis.edu.

Enquiries

If you believe this document infringes copyright, please contact the Research & Scholarly Communications Team at rsc@herts.ac.uk



9-1-2017

The Extreme Phronesis of Percy Cerutti: A Narrativized Life History of a Legendary Sports Coach

David Turner
University of Hertfordshire, Hatfield, UK

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.ciis.edu/ijts-transpersonalstudies>

 Part of the [Philosophy Commons](#), [Religion Commons](#), [Sports Studies Commons](#), and the [Transpersonal Psychology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Turner, D. (2017). The extreme phronesis of Percy Cerutti: A narrativized life history of a legendary sports coach. *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies*, 36 (1). <http://dx.doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24972/ijts.2017.36.1.81>



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 4.0 License](#).

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals and Newsletters at Digital Commons @ CIIS. It has been accepted for inclusion in *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies* by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ CIIS. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@ciis.edu.

The Extreme *Phronesis* of Percy Cerutti: A Narrativized Life History of a Legendary Sports Coach

David Turner

University of Hertfordshire
Hatfield, UK

This paper presents and interprets a narrativized coaching life history of the Australian athletics coach Percy Cerutti (1895-1975). Through a relational process of self-improvement and practical wisdom sometimes called *phronesis*, Cerutti exemplifies an intimate interconnectedness with his own and others' experiences, with the natural environment, and with the transformative capacities of such influences, as often highlighted in transpersonal literature. Three potential themes are offered from the resultant meaning-making: a feel for the game, *phronesis*, and the coach as a paradoxical figure. Those themes are also interwoven with a consideration of how Cerutti's story and practices might link to aspects of the transpersonal approach, using the motifs of redemption, transformation, and transcendence, as well as to elements of coaching theory. The paper concludes by evaluating Cerutti's influence and legacy, and their broader implications.

Keywords: *Percy Cerutti, narrative, feel for the game, hysteresis, micropolitics, phronesis, coaching, athletic coaching, redemption, transformation, transcendence*

Perry Cerutti's coaching life narrative demonstrates how it is possible to think and act powerfully at the cutting edge of intuitive and creative ideas. Through a relational process of self-improvement and practical wisdom sometimes called *phronesis* (Wacks, 2011), Cerutti exemplifies the form of mastery that can come from practical action that arises out of an intimate interconnectedness with one's own and others' experience and with the natural environment—forms of intimacy that are often highlighted in transpersonal literature (e.g., Hartelius, Rothe, & Roy, 2013). *Phronesis* involves acquiring and using experiential knowledge, that is to say, practical wisdom comes from transformative doing (cf. Flyvbjerg, Landman, & Schram, 2012). *Phronesis* is achieved not by following instructions, but by promoting change within oneself (Frank, 2012).

Thus, presented herein is a narrativized¹ life history of Percy Cerutti. I have used the term *legendary* in the title to reflect that while his coaching achievements may be considered significant and impressive, he is also an almost mythical, half-forgotten character, rendered insubstantial by the passage of time. The only entirely original aspect in what follows is my speculation upon a possible causative factor related to Cerutti's death. The rest is essentially a collage of existing factual information, sculpted into my own retelling of Cerutti's story, and inevitably featuring my own particular selected

emphases. Notwithstanding, in accordance with the life history method, I aspire to have produced an in-depth storied account of lived experience that adds anchor points for potential understanding and meaning-making (Behar, 1990; Hatch & Wisniewski, 1995; Shacklock & Thorp, 2005). Afterwards I offer three potential themes arising from this coaching life history, interwoven with associated possible links to the transpersonal approach (in particular motifs related to redemption, transformation, and transcendence) and coaching-related theory; but, I also invite the readers to explore their own reactions and thoughts, and hone personal interpretations, as a result of reading the featured tale.

It was in Walton's (1992) *Beyond Winning: The Timeless Wisdom of Great Philosopher Coaches* that I initially encountered Percy Cerutti. The chapter on Cerutti seemed somewhat at odds with the rest. First, the other coaches profiled seemed better known, such as Vince Lombardi and John Wooden. Second, although all the featured coaches were innovative in their approaches, Cerutti stood out as a maverick practitioner. My interest was provoked and driven by a frustration that the chapter focused more on Cerutti's athletes, and especially Herb Elliot, rather than the coach himself; I felt motivated to research further.

Subsequently, references to Cerutti began to appear in my lectures as a coach educator in Higher

Education and in *Learning From Legendary Coaches*, a series of public talks I developed. As a result, it became apparent to me that tales of Cerutti often seemed to provoke a polarized reaction; some dismissed him as a ridiculous figure, and others found themselves inspired by this unorthodox and independent-minded coach. When I later explored life history as a method in my own research, it occurred to me that a coaching life history of Cerutti could be a story of redemption, transformation, and transcendence worth telling.

Percy's Story

The unlikely birth of Percy Cerutti as a sports coach happened midway through his life. In 1939, at the age of 43, he suffered a complete physical, mental, and emotional breakdown, following a long history of deteriorating health (Sims, 2003). By this point he suffered from debilitating digestion problems that did not allow him to eat solid foods; endured rheumatism and arthritis so dreadful that he could not stand unsupported; was plagued by migraines and visions; and weighed only 45kg (Sims, 2003). Medics advised that he should avoid physical exertion (Hargreaves, 2009), would never work again, and probably had two years to live (Kelly, 1964). Another doctor cast doubt on reliance on traditional medicine, advising: "You have to save yourself. If you want to do anything about yourself, you'll get off that bed under your own will and spirit" (Bascomb, 2005, p. 37). Cerutti was granted six months leave for convalescence, during which he reflected upon his life and condition (Gordon, 1993).

Born in 1895 in Melbourne, Australia, into a poor working class background and soon to be broken home (his mother left his alcoholic father when he was a toddler), Cerutti was a weak and sickly child (Gordon, 1993). He nearly died from blood poisoning before his first birthday, later contracting double pneumonia that caused lasting damage to his lungs, and experienced the effects of malnourishment, not tasting fruit until the age of 15 (Sims, 2003). Nonetheless, he took up middle distance athletics with reasonable success in early adulthood (18-23 years of age), winning 11 of 37 races with a respectable best mile time of 4.34 (Bascomb, 2005). However, he was invariably physically sick after races and remained frail, enduring further ill health, such as severe headaches, which triggered agonising stomach pains and fit-like reactions (Sims, 2003; Walton, 1992).

As societal expectations to make his way in the world came to bear on Cerutti, his motivation for athletics waned, and he turned his back on exercise (Bascomb, 2005). Having entered a courtship with a woman several years older, from a devoutly religious family of successful merchants (Sims, 2003), Cerutti would be unable to realise his matrimonial ambitions until his circumstances improved (Kelly, 1964). Thus, the importance of athletics in his life was relegated, especially as his prospective wife, and those in her social scene, considered it an inconsequential recreation (Sims, 2003). Already bookish, Cerutti became more involved in intellectual pursuits as he sought middle class respectability (Sims, 2003). He attended cultural and social events, secured employment with the Post Office, and was able to wed, but he was perpetually seeking more lucrative employment opportunities or get rich quick schemes (Sims, 2003). Cerutti was under pressure to better himself and provide for his wife's ambitions for social standing and material comforts (Sims, 2003), a strain that inexorably took its toll on his already fragile health (Bascomb, 2005).

In the midst of a family involved in the retail trade, Cerutti found himself desperate to cultivate and demonstrate his own business acumen while simultaneously feeling nauseated by the pettiness of material greed (Sims, 2003). A series of failed business ventures, exacerbated by the 1930s Depression, eroded his self-confidence (Kelly, 1964). Nonetheless, he remained possessed by ambition and driven by an obsessive nature so extreme it occasionally made him doubt his own sanity (Sims, 2003). Cerutti had always had the propensity to think differently and possessed a fierce curiosity, but now his mind went into overdrive; he sought a deeper meaning of life through studying philosophy, religions, and mysticism—all without satisfaction (Sims, 2003). His self esteem plummeted, and he came to feel insignificant, even contemplating suicide at his lowest ebb (Sims, 2003). To make matters worse, potent drugs prescribed by doctors for his digestive ailments wreaked havoc in his stomach and bowels, causing him to lose all faith in medical science (Sims, 2003). All this, along with heavy smoking and poor diet, culminated in the devastating breakdown which he later described as the turning point in his life (Sims, 2003).

The man who had suffered illness and frustration nearly all his life set about reinventing himself and essentially coached himself back to not only health, but

also to flourishing. He gave up his 20 year smoking habit, radically changed his diet, and resolved to start walking (Solo Palabras, 2012). After one week he could reach the front door, after two, the front gate, and after three, he was able to make it around the block (Solo Palabras, 2012). One day, on returning from watching a famous racehorse, he felt the urge to break into a run (Solo Palabras, 2012). After years of sickness and inactivity he instantly reconnected with the joy of exercise and was sparked into new life. Cerutti threw away his medicines, read avidly about anything that might inform his recovery (such as physiology and philosophy), and further increased his physical activity (Kelly, 1964).

Influenced by yoga (O'Regan, Smith, Davies, & Shirrefs, 2008), he not only became a vegetarian (Racing Past, n.d.), but also largely rejected cooking and processed foods (Solo Palabras, 2012). He adopted new ideas about a vitamin rich diet, eating raw foods (such as eggs and muesli), fresh fruit, and lightly steamed vegetables (Sims, 2003). This fuelled a rapid resurgence in his health (Phillips & Hicks, 2000). Furthermore, he found that increased exercise (particularly that in the great outdoors) reduced the incidence of migraines and improved his ability to think clearly (Sims, 2003). Cerutti took up swimming, building up to diving off the ten-meter board to promote his self-belief (Walton, 1992); joined a walking club, completing a 113km hike in late 1940 (Solo Palabras, 2012); took up weight lifting, adding 4.5kg of muscle in a year (Gordon, 1993); and began running during lunch breaks (Sims, 2003). After a life of pain he found the discomfort of physical exertion easily bearable, and his strength and pace grew steadily (Sims, 2003).

In 1942, after an absence of nearly a quarter of a century, he returned to his old running club and competed successfully (Bascomb, 2005). Two years later, at 49, he recorded a time of 5.10 for the mile (Racing Past, n.d.). During 1945 he claimed to have covered more than 1,500 miles in training and competing (Solo Palabras, 2012) and became the third Australian to run 100 miles in 24 hours (Sims, 2003). In 1946 he won the State marathon championship, with a sub three hour performance (Sims, 2003) and went on to set Australian records at ultra distances up to 60 miles (Gordon, 1993).

Cerutti had embraced a life of contemplation, reading, writing, and extreme exercise (Gordon, 1993). He began studying in detail the movements of animals and humans to seek clues as to more effective running

styles (Phillips & Hicks, 2000), and pored over the lives of great historical figures and how they had dealt with problems they had encountered (Sims, 2003). It began to dawn on him that with his accumulated knowledge, his own emerging theories and philosophies, and his inspiring personal example, he might also be able to help others to develop themselves as athletes and people (Sims, 2003). By the time he retired for the second time from athletic competition in 1955, he had already attracted a group of acolyte athletes, whom he led in training sessions at Melbourne's Botanical Gardens, and who joined him on extended back to nature style conditioning camps at his remote ramshackle Portsea property beside the Pacific Ocean (later grandly titled the International Athletics Centre; Sims, 2003).

The remainder of Cerutti's life was devoted to coaching. Unsurprisingly, his own renaissance shaped his philosophies on athletic training (Phillips & Hicks, 2000). He promoted a strength through nature approach that viewed running as an expression of joy to be undertaken in idyllic surroundings, rather than a tedious chore to be endured on an athletics track (Walton, 1992). Drawing upon ancient Greek ideals (from the Stoics and Spartans) he advocated a Stotan Creed, that athletes should stand great pain and show no emotion, and emphasized the importance of frequent high quality, intense sessions where athletes were encouraged to train to the point of exhaustion (although they also covered training mileages far higher than was customary; Sims, 2003). Yet, he also believed athletes should be self-reliant and independent, constantly thinking about their own training and experimenting with their work. To this end he insisted they keep training diaries and be guided by their feelings and experiences (Wilson, 1994, as cited in Glenhantly Athletics, 2010), and, once they demonstrated full commitment, they were encouraged to take control over their own schedules (Phillips & Hicks, 2000). However, for Cerutti athletics was merely the foundation for a broader education in life, such that philosophical debates were included in the programme, and athletes were encouraged to read books and listen to music (Kelly, 1964). Cerutti's coaching strength was his ability to inspire, motivate, and empower (Solo Palabras, 2012), intensified by his revolutionary innovations and ability to think unconventionally about training (Walton, 1992).

Much that is accepted wisdom today in athletics was pioneered by Cerutti (Wilson, 1994, as cited in Glenhantly Athletics, 2010)—heavy weight training,

core conditioning, periodization, upper body work (such as rope climbing or chin ups), sand hill sprints, resistance running in the sea, nature trail circuits, use of visualization, and dietary schemes (Sims, 2003; Walton, 1992). These, along with his original theories of human movement and ideas about the need to constantly vary the pace in running (which gave his athletes an unusual advantage in competition), led to great success for many who followed his methods and to international fame for Cerutti (although he was less accepted by the Australian authorities at home; Sims, 2003). He contributed to the early development of the second athlete to break the four-minute mile, helped to cultivate national champions, and produced Commonwealth and Olympic medallists (Kelly, 1964). His zenith came at the Rome 1960 Olympics when his most famous protégé, Herb Elliott, won the 1500 metres by the largest margin in Olympic history, in a world record time that would still have won Gold at the 1996 Olympiad (Hargreaves, 2009). Elliott was conceivably the greatest miler of all time, never beaten over that distance (or 1500 metres), and sheared an incredible six seconds off the world record in his six years with Cerutti (Walton, 1992).

Cerutti gradually turned more to writing than coaching during the 1960s (Racing Past, n.d.), announcing he had had enough of running up sand hills at the end of that decade (Gordon, 1993). Nonetheless, he was still running on the flat after his 80th birthday (Sims, 2003). Suddenly becoming ill, Cerutti was forced to overcome his contempt for medical science and consult a doctor for the first time in 36 years (Sims, 2003). He died of motor neurone disease in 1975, swearing to the last he would come back better than ever (Sims, 2003). There is a tragic irony in that some assert the onset of this condition may be triggered in part by extreme exercise (e.g., Harwood, McDermott, & Shaw, 2009; Price, 2013). But, even if this was so, perhaps it was worth the cost in return for the extraordinary success and positive legacy of the life he led post 1939. Hundreds had been drawn to Portsea as a training centre, not just from athletics, but also from boxing, cycling, tennis, and Australian Rules football (Sims, 2003). In all, Cerutti contributed to the development of 30 world record holding athletes (Walton, 1992). Thousands more were influenced by his ideas expressed through numerous lectures and books (Sims, 2003). His influence upon Australian sporting culture, the Australian Institute of Sport model, modern athletic training methods, and the

growth of recreational running (he first used the term *fun run* early in the 1950s) and ultra-distance running movements are profound (Sims, 2003; Solo Palabras, 2012; Stewart & Smith, 2000). Yet Cerutti remains largely overlooked and unrecognized because of his irascibility and eccentricity (Steve Magness' Training, n.d.).

Numerous examples illustrate that his behaviour could undoubtedly be ridiculous, exhibitionist, and outrageous. He could be seen galloping alongside horses at the racecourse mimicking their running action (Solo Palabras, 2012). He once led a group of athletes through the Melbourne streets carrying bamboo sticks to replicate the running style of African tribesmen covering long distances with spears (Sims, 2003). At 65 he managed to leap a moat and scaled spiked railings designed to keep out football hooligans, to cheer on Elliott at the Rome Olympics (but missed him crossing the finish line when police dragged him away; Walton, 1992). Cerutti could certainly be provocative towards his own athletes, for example, belting around the track himself before his athletes competed and spitting, "You may run faster, but you'll never run harder" (O'Regan et al., 2008), as well as to opponents: "So, you're [Roger] Bannister. We've come to do you!" (Racing Past, n.d.).

At times he could almost be vaudevillian in his antics. Finding himself frequently shunned by the Australian athletic authorities, Cerutti was usually not part of the official team at Olympic and Empire Games but still felt compelled to smuggle himself into the athlete village in order to spur on the Australians and hold court with admirers from other nations (Sims, 2003). So, he concealed himself in a pack of athletes as they returned through the gates from a training run and once hid his skinny frame between two thick set weightlifters as they walked past the guards (Sims, 2003). On another occasion, Cerutti managed to wrangle a press pass and, dressed as a journalist, entered the village and approached the Australian team manager who had already repeatedly ejected him. Drawing out a pencil and notepad he shamelessly said, "Could you give me a story? I hear you have had some trouble with an Australian called Cerutti!" (Cerutti, 1966, p. 153).

However, his outlandish misbehaviour should not obscure the important contributions of this highly successful and influential coach who has also been referred to as a genius (O'Regan et al., 2008). There may be much to learn from Percy Cerutti's inspiring story,

not least the power of the human spirit that fired his personal reinvention in the face of crippling adversity, and in turn led him to facilitate others in developing themselves (Walton, 1992). As Percy once stated, “We can become what we believe we can become” (Wilson, 1994, as cited in Glenhuntly Athletics, 2010).²

Potential Meanings

As indicated earlier, we now proceed to explore three potential themes of meaning-making arising from the coaching life history presented, and possible links to the transpersonal approach.

A Feel for the Game

According to Bourdieu (1998), for practitioners to work effectively within a particular field they must cultivate practical sense, demonstrated in a sensitized *feel for the game*—an attuned practical mastery developed through long term immersion in practice. In this way Bourdieu considered that agency and structure coexist and interrelate (Maton, 2008). That is, one’s *habitus* (internalized dispositions developed through lengthy occupation of a social position) is both produced by and shapes the *field*, a context that frames practice within which people relate and struggle (Maton, 2008). When the field and habitus are well matched, there is harmony (which Bourdieu and Wacquant [1992] described as like being *a fish in water*), but there is always a shifting balance between what one might want to do in practice and what is at the time deemed socially acceptable. Thus, one may somewhat construct his or her own world while also being partly constrained by surrounding structures (Cushion & Kitchen, 2011), such that within the confines of a particular field, individuals may attempt to exercise the extent of their agentic power in order to enhance their personal capital.

However, both the person and context are dynamic. Although habitus is deeply embodied, occupational identity can change as a result of altered experiences or roles, and the world, the times, or the *zeitgeist*, can change too (Bourdieu, 1990b). In some cases this can result in an ill fit between habitus and habitat (Cushion & Kitchen, 2010). For instance, tacit ingrained dispositions can determine coaching practice, making alterations in habitus difficult when the coaching context changes. One could suggest that Brian Clough’s infamous 44 days as manager of Leeds United (Rostron, 2009) and Sir Clive Woodward’s disastrous 2005 British Lions Tour (Kervin, 2005) are examples of this.⁴ In both

cases there seemed to be a lack of fit, a displacement, and a resulting form of culture shock, despite previous success in similar settings.

Bourdieu (1990a) referred to such a disturbance between the field and a person’s habitus as the *hysteresis* effect which can cause a sense of disconnection, a feeling of being out of touch, or alienation, since it involves an encounter with a social environment altered from that which one is attuned to. In other words, hysteresis can result in a *lack of a feel for the game*. Since change is inevitable in most fields, the habitus is subject to constant transformation (Bourdieu, 1994), but hysteresis is usually characterized as a mismatch between the field and habitus due to a time lag or lack of synchronization (Hardy, 2008).

When a field shifts, what is considered legitimate is altered, and the habitus may become dislocated (Hardy, 2008). An individual’s capital within the field may quickly decline, power or credibility is diminished (Hardy, 2008), and the world seems to have passed them by (Grenfell, 2008). Consider, for instance, some high-profile coaches who seem to be in the running for a number of top coaching jobs and then, after a period of time, appear to fall out of favour and drop off the radar. Resilient ways of being developed by individuals in a particular social setting simply cannot alter at the same pace as field adaptations; the habitus is likely to undergo a more gradual creative adjustment to altered circumstances (Maton, 2008).

Conversely, it might be plausible that the volatility of social conditions could result in the dynamics of change being in the opposite direction. That is, progressive individuals may successfully drive the direction of change within a field. Extraordinary persons might literally *change the game* within a field by transformative ways of being. For example, Cerutti, in considerably more conservative times, espoused going against the norm: “Be a rebel against the orthodox, the traditional, even the secure, the safe, the satisfactory, the conforming. Rebel against mediocrity and complacency. Leave your comfort zone” (Cerutti, 1967, as cited in Dave, 2011). In relation to the transpersonal approach, Cerutti’s story seems to be one of personal redemption (Wacks, 2011), a transcendence beyond the boundaries of the self (Maslow, 1969), and a moving beyond conventional ways of thinking (Scotton, 1996). Likewise, Boxall and Turner (2010) portrayed how international coach John Buchanan radically changed the orthodoxy

of how cricket was coached.⁵ Indeed, Buchanan asserted that true greatness is about changing the game and setting new standards (O'Regan & Davies, 2007).

In this way, Cerutti may be considered to have demonstrated a reverse form of hysteresis. He was, for instance, an early pioneer of holistic coaching (Tyson & Binder, 2013). Elliott claimed he was one of the most widely read men he met and was informed by an astonishing breadth of subject areas, while his underpinning philosophy was essentially about self-improvement as human beings (O'Regan et al., 2008). Cerutti believed that athletes should be self-determined, independent thinkers, so he aimed to teach them what was needed for success and then largely leave it up to them what to do; for him the athlete needed to come to know her or himself and then intelligently train her or himself (Walton, 1992). Here Cerutti's coaching approach seems to resonate well with Hartelius et al.'s (2013) proposition that transpersonal psychology might be characterized by a self-expansive quality, a whole-person approach, and an interconnected process. Interestingly, Cassidy (2010) claimed that transpersonal theory has the potential to extend understanding of the meaningfulness of holistic sports coaching. Cerutti certainly worked on the body and the mind but also coached the spirit (Walton, 1992), viewing track work as soul destroying and calling runners who did not vary their pace or think about their training *zombies* (Myers, 1977). For him, mind, body, and spirit were inseparable, and he proposed that a balanced well-roundedness is needed in life in order to promote wellbeing and flourishing (Cerutti, 1967). Athlete Ben Mackie testified: "You came here with the object of running more quickly . . . but really it was an education in life" (Y42K, n.d.).

McDonald and Hallinan (2005) described the concept of *spiritual capital*, whereby the cultivation of the whole individual (mind, body, and spirit) can become embedded in the athletes' habitus as avowed values. In this way, Cerutti's notion that athletics was not just about running but a way of life (O'Regan et al., 2008) may have helped individuals become more than just athletes, perhaps reflecting Maslow's (1969) thoughts on the fourth force spiritual aspects of human nature and themes from transpersonal literature regarding integrative psychological wholeness (Hartelius, Caplan, & Rardin, 2007). Herb Elliott illustrated the concept of spiritual capital: "Percy helped me not so much by improving my technique but by releasing in my mind and soul a power

I only vaguely knew existed" (as cited in Glenhantly Athletics, 2010).

Cerutti exhibited a whole-person approach to his own as well as his athletes' development—for example, accumulating an extensive library, writing broadly, and encouraging growth in mind, body, and spirit in advocating a particular way of engaging with the world (Hartelius et al., 2013)—that promoted all-roundedness (Cerutti, 1967) and extended beyond athletics (Kelly, 1964). Ultimately, Cerutti's nadir triggered what Taylor (2013) recently described as an awakening experience that not only caused him to reinvigorate himself but also led to the facilitation of others in transcending themselves through coaching that encouraged athletes to know themselves and to be self-determining. Hence, Brymer and Oades (2009) claimed that events drawing human beings closer to the actuality of their demise can be affirmative life-changing epiphanies; thus one could consider Cerutti to have suffered a spiritual emergency, whereby a psychospiritual crisis ultimately offered an opportunity for personal growth and reinvention (Viggiano & Krippner, 2010). Grof (1985) explained how such an experience of hitting bottom, akin to ego death, can be followed by a deep sense of redemption; this could be likened to Grof's (2003) notion of a holotropic (altered) state of consciousness which not only fosters healing and self-transformation but is also connected with a heightening of intuition, insight, and creativity.

Cerutti is regarded as an anti-scientific coach who wanted his athletes to develop an intuitive feel for the quality of their training, who encouraged them to embrace pain and suffering, rarely used a stopwatch, and usually did not write training programmes (Walton, 1992). Nevertheless, his use of an early form of periodization (the division of the training year into phases with different emphases) could be seen as a further example of being ahead of the game. Cerutti worked as a coach mostly in the 1950s, while most consider modern periodization practices to have been developed by Soviet scientists in the 1960s (Rowbottom, 2000).

Cerutti employed a six-month conditioning phase where athletes covered up to 100 miles a week to build an enormous aerobic base; utilized extended fartlek runs at a pace that remained quick and intense to avoid staleness; and featured double runs, single long runs (overdistance), and rest run days (Cerutti, 1960; Myers, 1977; Steve Magness' Training, n.d.; Wilson,

1994, as cited in Glenhantly Athletics, 2010). During this phase he also promoted regular heavy weight lifting, gymnastics, yoga, and hill sprints (for fast twitch fibre recruitment); Cerutti expected marathon runners to be able to bench press their body weight and believed athletes should spend a third of their time on activities unrelated to their sport (Myers, 1977; Steve Magness' Training, n.d.; Wilson, 1994, as cited in Glenhantly Athletics, 2010).

In his three-month race practice period, training was cut by 50%, featured more intervals and more quality (four out of six sessions being very demanding) with portions of runs undertaken at race, or faster than race, pace (Myers, 1977; Steve Magness' Training, n.d.; Wilson, 1994, as cited in Glenhantly Athletics, 2010). Cerutti advised that training should be "tiring but never exhausting" (Myers, 1977, p. 110)—for instance, ten minutes hard running, slow running until recovered, repeated for up to an hour and a half (Myers, 1977). Finally, in his three-month competition period there was an emphasis on sharpening (almost all high quality and varied pace work) and rest (Steve Magness' Training, n.d.). Running up and down hills remained but not as steep or frequent (Myers, 1977). A concern that athletes should not overtrain is indicated by Cerutti cautioning that "any unnecessary stress put on the runner in this part of the season will only detract from his competitive performance" (Myers, 1977, p. 111).

However, these periods were guidelines only, and Cerutti demanded that athletes monitor and adapt training to their own individual needs; it was not intended that phases be fixed and predetermined, and smooth transitions in emphases were expected as they merged (Cerutti, 1960; Wilson, 1994, as cited in Glenhantly Athletics, 2010). Although training remained tough and character building, and largely about building will and resistance to quitting, the above indicates that it was at least well considered. A typical day at Portsea might include long runs, swimming in the ocean, physical chores, weight lifting, group meals, and discussions (Sims, 2003; Walton, 1992).

He coaches your spirit. The body itself may only need two months to get fit; the rest of the time you're building up your spirit—call it guts or some inner force—so that it will go to work for you in a race without your even knowing it . . . (Elliott, as cited in Walton, 1992, p. 147)

I raise the spirits of the athlete and inspire the soul to a higher state of consciousness. As the athlete grows spiritually as a person, his person in the physical will gradually unfold to new heights . . . (Cerutti, as cited in Walton, 1992, pp. 145-146)

You develop physical and mental strength when you train that way. Even when I'm not completely fit, I can call on that. (Elliott, as cited in Walton, 1992, p. 151)³

But, even a seemingly positive mismatch between habitus and field may prove dangerous if new ways do not come to be accepted, or the visionary lacks the capital to effectively implement them. Cerutti's influence upon holistic coaching and periodization is largely overlooked as he was considered eccentric (Steve Magness' Training, n.d.). Despite being a successful maverick practitioner, Cerutti was regarded with suspicion, and largely rejected and marginalized by the authorities of his time (Sims, 2003). Interestingly, more so at home than abroad, Cerutti was overlooked for a top coaching job in Melbourne but was offered a prestigious position in Sweden; also, the first American runner to break four minutes for the mile trained at Portsea (Sims, 2003). Perhaps thinking differently is deemed more acceptable from the exotic outsider, while the insider who goes against the grain may be simply labelled nonconformist?

In a film clip from *The Four Minute Mile* (Grech, 2010) one glimpses how Cerutti might have been affected by micropolitics within his homeland. Here he is represented as a wildman (bare chested as opposed to the blazers of race officials), a laughing stock, made to look ridiculous, engaged in confrontations with authority, disrespected, and treated as a sideshow. However, the point that Cerutti's Monty Pythonesque character makes in the clip has a grain of truth. That is, the poor quality of Australian tracks is thought to be one reason why the four-minute mile was broken in the Northern Hemisphere first (Sims, 2003). But, if certain forms of knowledge are privileged over others in the process of professionalisation, then the practical sense of practitioners could become devalued, and it is here that phronesis might be relevant. But, before proceeding, it may be worth reflecting upon whether coaches might benefit from deliberately attempting to cultivate a sensitized feel for the game, a heightened awareness of fit with the environment, and possible opportunities to get ahead of the curve.

Phronesis

Aristotle (1998) proposed three intellectual virtues: *episteme* (universal scientific truth from theoretical knowledge), *techne* (technical knowledge or know how), and *phronesis* (practical wisdom). In sports coaching these might correspond to a science-based coaching approach, a how to coach emphasis, and a slant predicated upon treasuring the astuteness of accomplished practitioners. Phronesis may be considered the ability to do the right thing in the circumstances encountered (Thomas, 2011). In this regard persons come to recognize situations as worthy of investing energy in and develop intervention strategies that effectively and ethically address problems (Halverson, 2004). This could equate to investing effort and creative thought in coaching because one cares. Hence, Flyvbjerg (2001) argued phronesis is requisite for intelligent and appropriate social action, characterized by values-based context-dependent practice, and manifested in knowing the correct thing to do in particular situations. In this way phronesis could constitute a framework for better appreciating how complex practice is enacted in localized settings, such as values applied in coaching context.

Halverson (2004) suggested that phronetic narratives of successful practice might be an insightful resource for other aspiring practitioners in uncovering powerful examples of localized wisdom. Furthermore, case studies have been recommended as a means by which such context-dependent knowledge may be represented (Flyvbjerg, 2011). To learn phronesis one must be able to see it in action (Halverson, 2004), so one must study case-by-case examples, whilst attending to differences and cultivating idiosyncratic practices in action. Phronesis involves experiential knowledge being both acquired and used; that is to say, having phronesis is reliant upon practicing phronesis (Flyvbjerg, Landman, & Schram, 2012). One may not have practical wisdom in the absence of transformative doing; consequently, studying the cases is insufficient, as one must also practice and experience.

Therefore, phronesis is not achieved through merely following instructions but by promoting change within oneself (Frank, 2012). Studying cases, practicing, and experiencing mean nothing if they do not cause one to adapt who and what he or she is. The following quote illustrates how phronesis is effectively lodged in practice: "Practical reasoning [is] engaged in by an excellent practitioner . . . who through experiential learning and

for the sake of good practice continually lives out and improves practice" (Benner, Chesla, & Tanner, 2009, p. xv). In this regard Cerutti was described as both a talker and a doer who constantly experimented and read/wrote widely to inform his coaching (Sims, 2003; Walton, 1992). In referring to the mindset required to promote personal wellbeing, Cerutti (1967) might have been describing phronesis when he stated the need for a "natural 'Nous', and an instinctive response, developed to a high degree, perhaps by observation and experience, of innate intelligence, wisdom, and commonsense" (p. 56).

Flyvbjerg (2001) contended that rules-based rationality derived from universal theories has become privileged over experience-based intuition. This can make other ways of knowing, such as practical wisdom which is problematic to apprehend, invisible and intangible (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Cerutti called intuition "intelligence" (Sims, 2003), and stated, "Be guided by your heart, but follow your brain" (Sims, 2003, p. 230). Yet, in modern society, where the accountability and measurement of outcomes associated with professionalisation dominates, phronesis may incur reduced prominence. Whilst one can point out someone who has practical wisdom, it is difficult to measure or capture it. Although, as Cameron (1963) highlighted, "Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted" (p. 13).

Cerutti is often contrasted with his rival, Franz Stampfl, who employed a more science based, stopwatch regulated, interval work, and track situated approach to athletics coaching (Phillips & Hicks, 2000). Stampfl's schedules were regimented, outlining what was to be done months in advance, causing Cerutti, in one of his more outrageous moments, to exclaim, "His sort of training is for Nazis. It's for people who like to be dominated" (Sims, 2003, p. 212). Cerutti was more intuitive, less prescriptive, and emphasized training in natural surroundings, but probably the greatest difference between them was Cerutti's emphasis on the self-determination of his athletes (Stewart & Smith, 2000).⁶ Foucault (1977) contended that science has intensified the means of regulation of the body, sometimes resulting in what he termed *docile bodies*. This seems to resonate well with Cerutti's statement detailed earlier about zombies and his thoughts on the empowerment of those in his charge (Phillips & Hicks, 2000). Cerutti's phronesis exemplifies an intimate interconnectedness

with his own and others' experiences, and with the natural environment, and the transformative capacities of such influences, as often highlighted in transpersonal literature (e.g., Hartelius et al., 2013).

Elliott claimed he could not have withstood Stampff's track-based interval training, and that while his training sessions with Cerutti were painful, they were also beautiful (O'Regan et al., 2008). Stampff's star runner, Merv Lincoln, never beat Cerutti's best athlete, Elliott, in competitive action, although they were the first Australians to achieve sub four-minute miles in the same race (Phillips, 2000). Nonetheless, Stampff was given a high profile coaching position in Melbourne, while Cerutti was overlooked (Sims, 2003). Although a micropolitical element is again implicated here, Stampff was a groundbreaking successful coach in his own right, and, while they certainly had their differences, both men were inspirational, intellectual, adversity transcendents who used cutting edge methods to produce many champions (Phillips & Hicks, 2000). However, it was Stampff's scientific evidence-based approach that came to ascendancy, and Cerutti's stock (and the potency of his ideas) declined steadily after the 1960s (Bourne, 2008; O'Regan et al., 2008).

Recently, however, some have questioned the limitations of evidence-based practice for practitioners operating in conditions of unpredictability and flux (Flaming, 2001; Standal, 2008) in that it could possibly devalue the accomplished practitioner who deals artfully well with the indeterminacy of real world demands. Aristotle claimed that the purpose of personal phronesis is to promote human flourishing (Flaming, 2001). Thus, a coach employing phronesis might be guided by a desire for athlete's flourishing (not necessarily evidence-based)—a sense of what is right or best for the athlete's development. Nevertheless, a science-driven technical approach to practice and the conception of good coaching as being synonymous with success and results (rather than virtuous actions) prevail (Standal & Hemmestad, 2010).

Coaching science and how to coach (recipe-like) approaches downplay the contextual contingencies of coaching and the inherent uncertainties of human interactions (Standal & Hemmestad, 2010). For instance, Curzon-Hobson, Thomson, and Turner (2003) described how the rise of biomechanics within New Zealand cricket had radically altered the demands on, and expectations of, coaches and marginalized certain coaching qualities associated with care and trust. That

is, a legitimization of the discipline of biomechanics had essentially constrained the ability of those coaches who were not willing to become its disciples to flourish, and effectively disempowered them. This seems to be a clear example where scientific theory and technical knowledge were privileged over practical wisdom (especially at the expense of pedagogy) in the domain of sports coaching.

In contrast, coaches who exhibit phronesis may be better equipped to deal flexibly with the messy world of practice (Standal & Hemmestad, 2010). Hence, Standal (2008) suggested that we should celebrate the insecure practitioner who balances knowledge of universals against understanding the particularities of situations encountered in exercising judgements. Such a way of being requires an acceptance of uncertainty, an openness to engage in constant learning, and the cultivation of self-awareness relying not only on scientific knowledge, but also on an affective, caring, and experiential element. Thus, Cerutti advocated that both mental and emotional knowing were necessary to perform optimally: "Knowledge without emotion is sterile logic. Emotion without logic is utter chaos. But when knowledge is tempered with emotion we have something" (Cerutti, as cited in Sims, 2003, p. 290).

Cerutti learned greatly from his own experiences. From his absentee alcoholic father he derived a mistrust of male authority figures, which promoted a sense of personal agency and autonomy—and more than a little rebelliousness. He even cut his own hair for 50 years, rather than let another man touch him (Sims, 2003). He also came to particularly value the natural environment—firstly, as a pleasurable refuge from bullying at school when his family moved to the fringe suburbs temporarily, and later, as an escape from the urban environment and capitalist pressures (Sims, 2003). Therefore, Cerutti considered that the natural environment could be a positive counterbalancing influence: "Nature can bring the mind and body into perfect harmony and balance with the universe" (Myers, 1977, p. 169).

In his childhood and during his recovery from breakdown, he appreciated the worth of reading. For example, he read eagerly about the new science of vitamins, and subsequently rejected processed foods. He also read about the lives and tribulations of great figures. Those readings combined with his own transformative experiences reinforced for him the power of the mind and spirit in overcoming adversity. Essentially Cerutti had to learn about his own inner resources and to realize

who he wanted to be before he could unlock the potential of others (Westerbeek & Smith, 2005),

From his own experiences, Cerutti developed a unique variation on degeneration theory and was ahead of his time in predicting the modern problems of inactive lifestyles, processed foods, declining health, and urban pressures (Sims, 2003). In particular, when on tour in the United States, he commented that so many Americans were ripe for disease, due to excess weight and lack of physical activity (Walton, 1992). He also admired certain races as athletically gifted and unspoiled by civilizing factors (Phillips & Hicks, 2000). Cerutti valued learning from them, although his thoughts in this regard were framed and restricted by contemporary notions that served to essentialize racial categorizations and differences (see further in Conclusion section).

For instance, his ideas about weight training came largely from wrestling champion and strongman George Hackenschmidt's *Physical Strength and How I Acquired It* (n. d.; as cited in Sims, 2003). Incidentally, Cerutti's use of ropes, bars, and trampolines may have originated from a gymnastics club having been situated adjacent to his running club when he was a young athlete (Sims, 2003). Philosophically he was influenced greatly by the work of Jiddu Krishnamurti who rejected religion and emphasized self-understanding through a rigorous consideration of one's own experiences, and he was also inspired by pioneering marathoner Arthur Newton's *Running* which detailed advice on training for long distances (Sims, 2003). Amusingly, Phillips and Hicks (2000) claimed that when Cerutti spoke of the influence of Newton, he was referring to Arthur, while when Stampfl mentioned the inspiration of Newton, he was referring to Sir Isaac, providing further indication that Cerutti was influenced by practitioners more than scientists.

It may be concluded that Cerutti was inspired principally by lessons forged in the fire of experience. Thus, he not only tested theories on himself, but also insisted that his athletes think critically too (Phillips, 2000). He cherished experience-based knowledge and practical wisdom above all else—maybe even too highly. As the following vignettes illustrate, Cerutti might be considered to have exhibited an extreme phronesis:

- Percy was unimpressed by newly transposed ideas from Europe that led to athletes warming up for long periods in the Australian heat (Westerbeek &

Smith, 2005). Thus, he led his athletes to a sleeping cat and threw a bucket of water over it. "Did the cat do stretches? Did the cat jog around? Did the cat do knee bends? Did the cat have a track suit on before racing? No, the cat just got up and went. No more warming up. Forget it." (Bascomb, 2004, p. 40)

- Percy's own digestive system struggled with milk (Sims, 2003), and he was doubtful about the value of liquids taken with meals (Myers, 1977). Thus, runners took bowls of muesli dry at Portsea, masticating for 20 minutes (Cerutti, 1960), causing their abraded teeth to gleam in the sunshine.

- One of Cerutti's athletes reached the 1500m Olympic final at Helsinki in 1952. A professor linked to the Australian team told the athlete about work he was doing with swimmers using hot baths to bring up temperature and heart rate. Cerutti asked how it might be done with a runner. It resulted in the athlete jogging, on a hot day, with two track suits on and towels wrapped round his head, in preparation for the final. The professor monitored until he confirmed the athlete was ready to go. At the start line, he wished him luck, and the athlete found that he was so dehydrated he could not even reply. The race went badly. In the ensuing row Cerutti said, "Go out and show me Professor. Don't just tell me what you think you know. Show me what you can do." The professor replied, "You know I can't do that Percy, not with my heart." (Sims, 2003, p. 133)

Of course, Cerutti was breaking the cardinal coaching rule that one should trial interventions in training first, but for him it was unthinkable that anyone should recommend something not based upon personal experience:

I have approached the business of teaching sport by being out in front of the learners and demonstrating in my own person how it is done. Not to say, do this, or that, but to show the way; to be able to draw upon one's own experiences. (Cerutti, 1966, p. 12)

Clearly, all coaches need scientific theoretical knowledge, technical know-how, *and* practical wisdom. While Cerutti may have demonstrated an extreme form of phronesis, it has recently been proposed that practical wisdom could be *the* primary requirement in order

to be an effective practitioner, in that it is requisite to prudently employ and manage both scientific theory and technical knowledge in applied action (Flyvbjerg et al., 2012). Conversely, it has also been suggested that there is a contemporary overemphasis on coaching science, technical rationality, and an evidence-based approach in coaching (Standal & Hemmestad, 2010). This raises the question of whether phronesis is sufficiently valued or cultivated in modern coaching.

The Coach as a Paradoxical Figure

Bowes and Jones (2006) asserted that the coach works at the edge of chaos where conditions may be considered *chaordic* (Hock, 1999)—neither entirely stable nor totally in flux. Yet, is the coach also a chaordic system? Knyazeva (2001) considered the self as a non-linear dynamical structure process, such that humans are always searching for elements perceived as missing, in a longing for completion. That could account for inconsistencies in the coach's role and behavior.

The field, habitus, phronesis, feel for the game, and micropolitics are all subject to change, and so is the coaching self. If coaching is complex and athletes are complex, so can be the coach (Gilbourne, 2012). Cerutti was a complex character who changed himself, changed others, and changed the game. He also got things wrong. For one, he failed to fully recognize the importance of hydration. In other instances his behavior was highly questionable and could inflict psychological damage. For instance, Ron Clarke ran poorly and rattled at the Tokyo 1964 Olympics after Cerutti said to him just before the final, "You've got no hope, Clarke, you always were a weak bastard" (as cited in Sims, 2003, p. 285).

Here Cerutti situated himself "beyond continuing rationalistic and 'heroic' accounts of coaching practice" (Potrac, Jones, Gilbourne, & Nelson, 2012, p. 79) that currently dominate the coaching literature, and demonstrated both the genius and fallibility of sports coaches. The potential for both wisdom and foolishness, alluded to in the famous newspaper headline *Hero to Zero* (Walsh, 2005) referred to Sir Clive Woodward after the 2005 Lions tour. As Jones (2011) indicated, this "gives fallacy to much research that portrays the leader as a transformative, heroic figure able to surmount obstacles by ability or force of will" (p. 635). Instead, the coach is viewed as human and inevitably flawed as an antidote to the danger of over romanticising the role of the coach.

The Extreme Phronesis of Percy Cerutti

Hence, Elliott initially thought Cerutti was interesting but an old fool, but came to have (selective) faith in him, sieving insightful observations from outlandish ones, and tolerating his contradictions as part of the fun of their unpredictable but exciting relationship (O'Regan et al., 2008). Thus, Cerutti had two paradoxical, yet complementary sides: he could be considered a genius, a pioneer, and a visionary, while at once be seen as a ridiculous, outrageous, and controversial character, all depending on perception. However, outside perception was not what mattered most to Cerutti, who stated, "In the end we stand or fall by what we are" (Cerutti, 1966, p. 7)—or, in other words, one does not stand or fall by *what others think of oneself*. Cerutti's story demonstrates human beings' capacity to transcend and transform themselves and others, which seems to mirror Hartelius et al.'s (2007) identified broad uses of the term transpersonal psychology in academic literature. Simultaneously, Cerutti's paradoxical behaviour reminds us that human beings may also remain bounded by their human flaws and faults.

His contradictions are further illustrated by his beliefs that athletes should be guided to strive for a higher purpose of self-determination and free expression rather than allowing others to dictate to them: "If he, the coach, is a 'little man', he will strive to remain in authority, retain control over his athletes, dominate them by assuming a superior position" (Cerutti, 1960, p. 80). Indeed, he asserted that athletics could help people to temporarily be liberated from the imprisoning conditions and pressures of everyday life (Stewart & Smith, 2000). Yet Percy did not always live up to his own ideals. There was only one shower at the International Athletics Centre, and when he did not think runners had worked hard enough he would turn off the hot water, in mid-winter (IronOnline, 2006). Similarly, one former athlete explained how a particular extended run at weekends started after Percy ejected the athletes from his car at Frankston and instructed them to run back to Portsea (35 miles), in a required time of under five hours; this was subsequently occasionally employed as a punishment for inappropriate behaviour or insufficient effort (Hargreaves, 2009). Nonetheless, as Hartelius (2014) advised, transpersonal psychology offers a view of humanity that celebrates differences; can individuals really be considered to be fully taking responsibility for their own performance if coaches are expected to be ever infallible and totally consistent?

Conclusion

Cerutti could undoubtedly be controversial and mercurial, but he was, and remains, an inspiring character. American coach Mike Spino (2002) used Cerutti's methods in developing national champion track teams in the 1990s and even built artificial sand dunes to enable a maximum anaerobic workout without having to move at full speed, at which athletes could work to exhaustion and even fall safely in the process. Spino adhered to Cerutti's principle of mental and spiritual toughening with one of his most demanding workouts called *death by dunes*. In this sense then the phronesis of committed embodied practitioners may transcend the boundaries of individual existence (Maslow, 1969) and persist in stimulating unconventional ways of thinking (Scotton, 1996) about practice.

Cerutti displayed practical wisdom that enabled him to achieve great things in coaching. In many respects he was ahead of the game, while in others he was not—such as his attitude toward female athletes and his outdated Victorian and colonial racial categorizations and attitudes (Sims, 2003). One can justly criticize him and may even baulk or laugh at some of his behaviour, but one should not forget nor overlook him as arguably the greatest athletics coach that Australia has ever produced.

Phronesis could be regarded as the manifestation of transformative experiences as one sculpts their own sensitized idiosyncratic practices within a context they deeply care about, and in so doing adapt who and what they are (Frank, 2012). While this redemptive process of self-improvement (Wacks, 2011) allows the cultivation of a feel for complex games, thinking and acting differently at the cutting edge of intuitive and creative ideas might also lead into areas of controversy or be regarded unorthodox. Ultimately coaching is an act of personal interpretation, featuring alternative approaches to promoting the flourishing of others, such that practitioners using methods considered outlandish might become sidelined or dismissed.

In an interview (O'Regan et al., 2008), Elliott was asked what Cerutti's legacy was, given that Stampff's approach eventually gained ascendancy, and that sport has become largely scientized (something Cerutti feared). Elliott indicated two major themes that Cerutti's coaching raised. Firstly, if an athlete is to be truly successful, then he or she must be totally independent in, and accept full responsibility for, his or her own performance. Secondly,

when confronted with issues of quality versus quantity, while professional athletes may now have more time for training and an elevated concern about avoiding overtraining, Cerutti would invariably go with intensity in sessions, recommending that athletes embrace pain and punishing workloads. The latter is in stark contrast to guidelines derived from science, although in this respect Elliott thought science may be mistaken. Consider, for instance, one of Cerutti's heroes, Emil Zatopek, who won four Olympic Golds in distance running post World War II. He would train in any weather, including snow, often wearing heavy work boots as opposed to running shoes; he endured gruelling workloads and claimed to train five hours a day, seven days a week (even running on the spot when on guard as a member of the Czech Army; Phillips, 2002). Although Cerutti's story features his own transformation and the discovery of a new self (Raab, 2013), his practices emphasized that others should take personal responsibility for their own transformation and transcendence—in other words, that they should cultivate their own phronesis rather than be reliant on the phronesis of others.

In terms of his legacy, one must also remember that Cerutti's ideas extended beyond athletics to encompass a way of living (Sims, 2003). His philosophies regarding deriving strength from exercising in natural surroundings, along with critically moderating one's diets and habits, were designed to promote self responsibility for one's own wellbeing, a greater clarity of thought, a flourishing life, as well as to promote athletic performance (Dave, 2015). In other words, Cerutti was concerned with the development of the whole person, consistent with the imperative of developing a whole-person approach to psychology expressed by Hartelius (2014), and the transcendence of ordinary states of mind and more attuned relationships with broader reality, as outlined by Haas (2010). Indeed, drawing upon Hartelius et al.'s (2013) threefold categorisation of themes within transpersonal literature, Cerutti's story may be exemplified as an expansion of the self and the adoption of a multidisciplinary orientation, resulting in a transformative coaching process.

To extend Cassidy's (2010) claim in relation to holistic sports coaching, the author would assert that transpersonal theory exhibits substantial potential for extending understanding of the redemptive, transformative, and transcendent qualities associated with the coaching role; similarly, sports coaching

may be a domain well suited for the application of transpersonal thought. The interlinking of sports coaching and transpersonal psychology seems surprisingly underdeveloped, despite an apparently promising cross-fertilisation (Cassidy, 2013). Phronesis seems to represent a pertinent bridging concept since it informs how individuals might improve, how they might best adapt (within a changing game), and how they might surpass themselves, in promoting personal and others' flourishing.

Finally, only Cerutti could have inspired a commemorative 34-mile annual Frankston to Portsea fun run, for which a documentary stated: "This run has no entry fee, no official status, no wimps. Percy would have loved it" (Hargreaves, 2009). I will end with two quotes that sum up the indomitable and inspiring spirit of Percy Cerutti, and his transformative ideas that reach out to humanity long after his passing.

You only ever grow as a human being if you are outside of your comfort zone. (Cerutti, as cited in O'Regan et al., 2008)

Work does things. Hard things take time to do. Impossible things take a little longer. (as cited in Myers, 1977, p. 172)

References

- Aristotle. (1998). *The Nichomachean ethics* (W. D. Ross, Trans.). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Bascomb, N. (2005). *The perfect mile: Three athletes, one goal, and less than four minutes to achieve it*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Behar, R. (1990). Rage and redemption: Reading the life story of a Mexican marketing woman. *Feminist Studies*, 16(2), 223–258. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08164649.1990.9961695>
- Benner, P. E., Tanner, C. A., & Chesla, C. A. (2009). *Expertise in nursing practice: Caring, clinical judgement, and ethics*. New York, NY: Springer.
- Biesta, G., Goodson, I., Tedder, M., & Adair, N. (2008). *Learning from life: The role of narrative*. Scotland, UK: University of Stirling/The Learning Lives Project.
- Bourdieu, P. (1990a). *The logic of practice*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1990b). *In other words: Essays towards a reflexive sociology*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1998). *Practical reason: On the theory of action*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L. J. D. (1992). *An invitation to reflexive sociology*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Bourne, N. D. (2008). *Fast science: A history of training theory and methods for elite runners through 1975* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Texas, Austin, TX.
- Bowes, I., & Jones, R. L. (2006). Working at the edge of chaos: Understanding coaching as a complex, interpersonal system. *The Sport Psychologist*, 20(2), 235–245. <https://doi.org/10.1123/tsp.20.2.235>
- Boxall, R., & Turner, D. (2010). Outside the box to orthodox: How John Buchanan changed coaching boundaries. *Coaching Edge*, 18, 22–23.
- Bruner, J. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bruner, J. (1990). *Acts of meaning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Brymer, E., & Oades, L. G. (2009). Extreme sports: A positive transformation in courage and humility. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 49(1), 114–126. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0022167808326199>
- Cameron, W. B. (1963). *Informal sociology: A casual introduction to sociological thinking*. New York, NY: Random House.
- Cassidy, T. (2010). Holism in sports coaching: Beyond humanistic psychology. *International Journal of Sports Science and Coaching*, 5(4), 439–501. <http://doi.org/10.1260/1747-9541.5.4.439>
- Cassidy, T. (2013). Holistic sports coaching: A critical essay. In P. Potrac, W. Gilbert, & J. Denison (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of sports coaching* (pp. 172–183). Abingdon, UK: Routledge.
- Cerutti, P. W. (1960). *Athletics: How to become a champion*. London, UK: Stanley Paul.
- Cerutti, P. W. (1966). *Sport is my life*. London, UK: Stanley Paul.
- Cerutti, P. W. (1967). *Be fit! Or be damned!* London, UK: Pelham.
- Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1990). Stories of experience and narrative enquiry. *Educational Researcher*, 19(5), 2–14. <http://doi.org/10.3102/0013189x019005002>
- Curzon-Hobson, A., Thomson, R. W., & Turner, N. (2003). Coaching a critical stance. *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport*, 30(1), 68–82. <http://doi.org/10.1080/00948705.2003.9714561>
- Cushion, C., & Kitchen, W. (2011). Pierre Bourdieu: A theory of coaching practice. In R. L. Jones, P. Potrac, & L. T. Ronglan (Eds.), *The sociology of sports coaching* (pp. 40–53). Abingdon, Oxfordshire, UK: Routledge.

- Dave. (2011, June 13). Be a rebel by Percy Cerutti. [Web log post]. Retrieved from <http://torunistolive.blogspot.co.uk/2011/06/be-rebel-by-percy-cerutti.html>
- Dave. (2015, January 30). Is Percy Cerutti still relevant today? [Web log post]. Retrieved from <http://livingthetotanlife.blogspot.co.uk/2015/01/is-percy-cerutti-still-relevant-today.html>
- Douglas, K., & Carless, D. (2008). Using stories in coach education. *International Journal of Sports Science and Coaching*, 3(1), 33–49. <http://doi.org/10.1260/174795408784089342>
- Flaming, D. (2001). Using *phronesis* instead of “research-based practice” as the guiding light for nursing practice. *Nursing Philosophy*, 2(3), 251–258. <http://doi.org/10.1046/j.1466-769x.2000.00066.x>
- Flyvbjerg, B. (2001). *Making social science matter: Why social inquiry fails and how it can succeed again*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511810503>
- Flyvbjerg, B. (2011). Case study. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed.) (pp. 301–316). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Flyvbjerg, B., Landman, T., & Schram, S. (2012). Introduction: New directions in social science. In B. Flyvbjerg, T. Landman, & S. Schram, *Real social science: Applied phronesis* (pp. 1–12). Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511719912.001>
- Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. London, UK: Penguin.
- Frank, A. (2012). The feel for power games. In B. Flyvbjerg, T. Landman, & S. Schram, *Real social science: Applied phronesis* (pp. 48–65). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511719912.005>
- Gardner, H. (1995). *Leading minds: An anatomy of leadership*. London, UK: Harper Collins.
- Gardner, H., & Laskin, E. (2001). *Leading minds: An anatomy of leadership*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Gilbourne, D. (2012). Contemplations on sport, complexity, ages of being and practice. *Sports Coaching Review*, 1(1), 4–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21640629.2012.689491>
- Gill, S. (1988). The power of story. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 12(3), 69–84. <https://doi.org/10.17953/aicr.12.3.w42720x18105x661>
- Gordon, H. (1993). Cerutti, Percy Wells (1895–1975). In *Australian dictionary of biography* (Vol. 13). Melbourne, Australia: Melbourne University Publishing. Retrieved from <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/cerutti-percy-wells-9718/text17159>
- Glenhantly Athletics. (2010). The Cerutti legend: Percy’s ideas on training and life. Retrieved from <http://forums.glenhantly-athletics.com/index.php?showtopic=465> (Reprinted from *Australian Runner Magazine*, by T. Wilson, 1994)
- Grech, M. (2010). The four minute mile—Victorian Athletics Club featured. [YouTube video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UfftNYUws9A>
- Grenfell, M. (2008). Conclusion. In M. Grenfell (Ed.), *Pierre Bourdieu: Key concepts* (pp. 213–218). Durham, UK: Acumen. <https://doi.org/10.1017/UPO9781844654031.018>
- Grof, S. (1985). *Beyond the brain: Birth, death and transcendence in psychotherapy*. New York, NY: State University of New York.
- Grof, S. (2003). Implications of modern consciousness research for psychology: Holotropic experiences and their healing and heuristic potential. *The Humanistic Psychologist*, 31(2–3), 50–85. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/08873267.2003.9986926>
- Halverson, R. (2004). Accessing, documenting, and communicating practical wisdom: The phronesis of school leadership practice. *American Journal of Education*, 111(1), 90–121. <https://doi.org/10.1086/424721>
- Hardy, C. (2008). Hysteresis. In M. Grenfell (Ed.), *Pierre Bourdieu: Key concepts* (pp. 131–148). Durham, UK: Acumen. <https://doi.org/10.1017/UPO9781844654031.012>
- Hargreaves, B. (2009). Percy Cerutti—Frankston to Portsea 2009. [YouTube video file]. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zw3xYNrJhrc>
- Harnett, P. (2010). Life history and narrative research revisited. In A. Bathmaker & P. Harnett (Eds.), *Exploring learning, identity and power through life history and narrative research* (pp. 159–170). Abingdon, Oxfordshire, UK: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203858370>
- Hartelius, G. (2014). The imperative for diversity in a transpersonal psychology of the whole person: Editor’s introduction. *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies*, 33(1), iii–vi.

- Hartelius, G., Caplan, M., & Rardin, M. A. (2007). Transpersonal psychology: Defining the past, divining the future. *The Humanistic Psychologist*, 35(2), 135–160. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08873260701274017>
- Hartelius, G., Rothe, G., & Roy, P. J. (2013). A brand for the burning: Defining transpersonal psychology. In H. L. Friedman & G. Hartelius (Eds.), *The Wiley-Blackwell handbook of transpersonal psychology* (pp. 3–22). Chichester, UK: Wiley Blackwell. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118591277.ch1>
- Harwood, C. A., McDermott, C. J., & Shaw, P. J. (2009). Physical activity as an exogenous risk factor in motor neuron disease (MND): A review of the evidence. *Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis*, 10(4), 191–204. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/17482960802549739>
- Haas, A. S. (2010). On a physical scientific approach to transpersonal psychology. *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies*, 30(1–2), 69–81.
- Hatch, J. A., & Wisniewski, R. (1995). *Life history and narrative*. Lewes, UK: Falmer Press. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203486344>
- Hock, D. (1999). *Birth of the chaordic age*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.
- IronOnline. (2006). Distance running = leg strength? [Web log]. Retrieved from <http://www.davedraper.com/fusionbb/showtopic.php?tid/9026/post/222664/>
- Jenkins, S. (2010). Coaching philosophy. In J. Lyle & C. Cushion (Eds.), *Sports coaching: Professionalisation and practice*. (pp. 233–242). Oxford, UK: Elsevier.
- Jones, R. L. (2011). Leaving. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 17(7), 631–638. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800411414004>
- Kelly, G. (1964). *Mr. Controversial: The story of Percy Wells Cerutti*. London, UK: Stanley Paul.
- Kervin, A. (2005). *Clive Woodward: The biography*. London, UK: Orion.
- King, D. B., Mara, C. A., & DeCicco, T. L. (2012). Connecting the spiritual and emotional intelligences: Confirming an intelligence criterion and assessing the role of empathy. *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies*, 31(1), 11–20.
- Knyazeva, H. (2001). The self as a nonlinear dynamical structure-process. *Dialectic, Cosmos and Society*, 14, 9–29.
- Koch, T. (1998). Story telling: Is it really research? *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 28(6), 1182–1190. <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2648.1998.00853.x>
- Langdon, J. (2013). Sporting nation: Herb's race. [YouTube video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DnXiAcgcb5I>
- Maslow, A. H. (1969). The farther reaches of human nature. *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*, 1(1), 1–10.
- Maton, K. (2008). Habitus. In M. Grenfell (Ed.), *Pierre Bourdieu: Key concepts* (pp. 49–65). Durham, UK: Acumen. <https://doi.org/10.1017/upo9781844654031.006>
- McDonald, B., & Hallinan, C. (2005). Seishin habitus: Spiritual capital and Japanese rowing. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 40(2), 187–200. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1012690205057197>
- McMahon, J. (2013). The use of narrative in coach education: The effect on short- and long-term practice. *Sports Coaching Review*, 2(1), 33–48. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21640629.2013.836922>
- Myers, L. (1977). *Training with Cerutti: Revolutionary track and field techniques*. Mountain View, CA: World.
- Phillips, B., & Quercetani, R. (2002). *Zatopek!: The Life and Times of the World's Greatest Distance Runner*. Manchester, UK: Parrs Wood Press.
- Phillips, M. G. (2000). *From sidelines to centre field: A history of sports coaching in Australia*. Sydney, Australia: University of New South Wales Press.
- Phillips, M. G., & Hicks, F. (2000). Conflict, tensions, and complexities: Athletic training in Australia in the 1950s. *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 17(2–3), 206–224. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09523360008714134>
- Polkinghorne, D. E. (1988). *Narrative knowing and the human sciences*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
- Potrac, P., Jones, R. L., Gilbourne, D., & Nelson, L. (2012). “Handshakes, BBQs, and bullets”: Self-interest, shame and regret in football coaching. *Sports Coaching Review*, 1(2), 79–92. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21640629.2013.768418>
- Price, S. (2013). Physical activity and MND—Is there a link? [Web log post]. Retrieved from <https://mndresearch.wordpress.com/2013/12/08/physical-activity-and-mnd-is-there-a-link/>
- Raab, D. (2013). Transpersonal approaches to autoethnographic writing and research. *The Qualitative Report*, 18(21), 1–18.
- Rostron, P. (2009). *We are the damned united: The real story of Brian Clough at Leeds United*. Edinburgh, UK: Mainstream.

- Rowbottom, D. G. (2000). Periodization of training. In W. E. Garrett & D. T. Kirkendall (Eds.), *Exercise and sport science* (pp. 499–514). Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins.
- Racing Past (n.d.). Percy Cerutti 1895–1975. Retrieved from http://www.racingpast.ca/john_contents.php?id=93
- Scotton, B. W. (1996). Introduction and definition of transpersonal psychiatry. In B. W. Scotton, A. B. Chinen, & J. R. Battista (Eds.), *Textbook of transpersonal psychiatry and psychology* (pp. 3–8). New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Shacklock, G., & Thorp, L. (2005). Life history and narrative approaches. In B. Somekh & C. Lewin (Eds.), *Research methods in the social sciences*. (pp. 156–163). London, UK: Sage.
- Sims, G. (2003). *Why die? The extraordinary Percy Cerutti "maker of champions"*. South Melbourne, Australia: Lothian.
- Solo Palabras. (2012). Percy Wells Cerutti. [Web log post]. Retrieved from <http://sinmuros.blogspot.co.uk/2012/10/percy-wells-cerutti.html>
- Spino, M. (2002). Resistance training—The Stotan way—Training to be a champion like Percy Wells Cerutti. *The Sport Digest*. Retrieved from <http://thesportdigest.com/archive/article/resistance-training-stotan-way-training-be-champion-percy-wells-cerutti>
- Standal, Ø. F. (2008). Celebrating the insecure practitioner: A critique of evidence-based practice in adapted physical activity. *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy*, 2(2), 200–215. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17511320802223527>
- Standal, Ø. F., & Hemmestad, L. B. (2010). Becoming a good coach: Coaching and phronesis. In A. R. Hardman & C. Jones (Eds.), *The ethics of sports coaching* (pp. 45–55). Oxford, UK: Routledge.
- Steve Magness' Training (n.d.). Learning from the past: Training through the ages: Percy Cerutti. Retrieved from http://magstraining.tripod.com/Learning_From_The_Past.html#Percy_Cerutti
- Stewart, B., & Smith, A. (2000). Australian sport in a postmodern age. *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 17(2–3), 278–304. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09523360008714137>
- Taylor, S. (2013). The peak at the nadir: Psychological turmoil as the trigger for awakening experiences. *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies*, 32(2), 1–12.
- O'Regan, M. (Presenter), & Davies, A. (Producer). (2007). John Buchanan: The cricket coach [Transcript of audio program]. In A. Davies (Producer), *The Sports Factor*. Sydney, Australia: Australian Broadcasting Company. Retrieved from <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/sportsfactor/john-buchanan-the-cricket-coach/3225694>
- O'Regan, M., Smith, A. (Presenters), Davies, A., & Shirrefs, M. (Producers). (2008). Herb Elliott and Percy Cerutti [Transcript of audio program]. In A. Davies & M. Shirrefs (Producers), *The Sports Factor*. Sydney, Australia: Australian Broadcasting Company. Retrieved from <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/sportsfactor/herb-elliott-percy-cerutti/3161490>
- Thomas, G. (2011). The case: Generalisation, theory and phronesis in case study. *Oxford Review of Education*, 37(1), 21–35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2010.521622>
- Tyson, P., & Binder, D. (2013). *Coaching cross country successfully*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Viggiano, D. B., & Krippner, S. (2010). The Grofs' Model of Spiritual Emergency in retrospect: Has it stood the test of time?. *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies*, 29(1), 118–127.
- Wacks, V. Q. (2011). The elder as sage, old age as spiritual path: Towards a transpersonal gerontology. *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*, 43(2), 127–155.
- Walsh, D. (2005, July 3). Hero to zero. *The Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/sport/rugbyunion/article2359071.ece>
- Walton, G. M. (1992). *Beyond winning: The timeless wisdom of great philosopher coaches*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Westerbeek, H., & Smith, A. (2005). *Business leadership and the lessons from sport*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230524415>
- Y42K. (n.d.). #tbt—Percy Cerutti wants you to “Just Do It” [Web log post]. Retrieved from <https://www.y42k.com/2015/04/23/tbt-percy-cerutti-wants-you-to-just-do-it/>

Notes

1. Polkinghorne (1988) distinguished a narrative as a story with a particular plot.

2. This quote is only indirectly attributed to Cerutti in Wilson (1994, as cited in Glenhuntly Athletics, n.d.). However, it seems to reflect accurately his philosophies. For instance, in *Be Fit! Or Be Damned!* (Cerutti, 1967) he stated: “We make of ourselves what we may make . . . the solution . . . to our problems lies within us . . . the rewards are in direct proportion as we are prepared to learn: to think: to act” (p. 25). Elsewhere he said: “Each individual creates his own destiny” (Cerutti, 1967, p. 149).
3. For a fascinating insight into how Elliott’s training helped him to overcome adversity during the Rome Olympics 1500m final, see Langdon (2013).
4. Brian Clough was an English association football manager whose charismatic leadership transformed two floundering lower division teams into champions, but in between these projects his bombastic style did not sit well at already high flying family atmosphere-oriented Leeds United, from where he was sacked after only 44 days (Rostron, 2009). Sir Clive Woodward led England to Rugby World Cup glory in 2003 through rigorous and innovative preparation but failed very publicly as British Lions coach in 2005 with the same kind of approach (Kervin, 2005).
5. John Buchanan is the most successful international cricket coach ever. His unusual background and unorthodox methods provided a supportive developmental environment that encouraged the Australian national cricket team to keep challenging itself to get better during a period of world domination (Boxall & Turner, 2010).
6. Stampfl was influenced by German ideas on interval training, Cerutti by Swedish ideas on fartlek. Another significant difference was that Cerutti placed greater importance on the development of running technique than did Stampfl (Cerutti, 1966; Sims, 2003).

About the Author

David Turner, EdD, is a Principal Lecturer in Sports Coaching at University of Hertfordshire. He has been a sports coach and an educationalist for 30 years, a coach educator for 20 years, and has recently completed an Educational Doctorate. He has written widely on coaching, coach education, and coaching expertise. He also presents an ongoing series of public lectures entitled *Learning From Legendary Coaches*.

About the Journal

The *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies* is a peer-reviewed academic journal in print since 1981. It is sponsored by the California Institute of Integral Studies, published by Floragrades Foundation, and serves as the official publication of the International Transpersonal Association. The journal is available online at www.transpersonalstudies.org, and in print through www.lulu.com (search for IJTS).