The value concept has been considered crucial by various scholars (e.g., Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992). Theorists have viewed values as the criteria people use to select actions and evaluate events (Schwartz, 1992). The concept of values can be considered an independent variable affecting behavior (Rokeach, 1973). As such, it is likely that sport spectator behavior would be affected by personal values.

Previous research has examined the motives driving consumers' spectatorship at sporting events (e.g., James & Ross, 2004; Trail & James, 2001; Wann, 1995). Such studies provide insight regarding the motives people have for watching games, but they do not necessarily provide insight on the personal values people associate with spectator sports. Values are "centrally held cognitive elements that stimulate motivation for behavioral response" (Vinson, Scott, & Lamont, 1977, p. 49). Values extend over time whereas motives may be temporal or situation-specific. Thus, understanding values associated with spectator sports will provide meaningful implications for sport managers and likely a better understanding of motives for consuming (or not) sporting events.

The major purpose of this study was to examine the relationships between personal values and sport spectator behavior. It was hypothesized that personal values would predict sport spectator behavior. Using existing value measures (Kahle, 1983; Maslow, 1970; Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992, 1996), a pilot survey was conducted to specify 28 personal values which were considered more relevant to spectator sports. A main study was then conducted by using a questionnaire with 28 value measures and 6 modes of spectator sport behavior. The questionnaire was distributed to students enrolled in a large southeastern university in the US. Three hundred and eighty four participants were recruited. Stepwise multiple regression was conducted.

The results showed that the value ranked the highest was HONESTY whereas the value ranked the lowest was SOCIAL POWER. The modes of sport spectator behavior ranked the highest were: watching sports in person, talking about sports, watching sports on TV, and reading about sports on newspapers or magazines. Because a majority of respondents watched sports on the Internet or listened to sports on the radio for less than half an hour, these two modes of behavior were not examined in the consequent analyses. For watching sports in person, six values were selected from 28 potential value variables as independent variables, using stepwise estimation. Respondents who emphasized the values PRESERVING MY PUBLIC IMAGE, EXCITEMENT and A SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT consumed sports in person; however, respondents who rated the values CREATIVITY, AESTHETICS, and KNOWLEDGE as important in their daily life tended not to consume sports in person. For talking about sports, four independent value variables were selected. The value CREATIVITY wielded the strongest influence: A respondent who emphasized uniqueness and imagination would be less likely to talk about sports with others. Also, respondents who valued MORAL were less likely to talk about sports. Respondents who rated LOYAL and A SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT as important tended to talk about sports. For watching sports on TV, three independent value variables were selected. The value LOYAL wielded the strongest influence: A respondent who is faithful to his or her friends or group would likely watch sports on TV. Respondents who valued CREATIVITY and INNER HARMONY tended not to watch sports on TV. For reading about sports, a single independent value variable was selected. The value KNOWLEDGE had significant influence: A respondent who emphasized pursuing understanding and acquiring information would not like to read sports in newspapers or magazines.

The results provide implications for theory in sport consumer behavior to explain spectator sport behavior more thoroughly. The results also provide useful information for sport marketers, sponsors, and policy makers to design their promotion activities, proposals, and policies by using (or not) the values as themes. Future research should examine how different sports and cultures influence the associations between personal values and spectator sports. By conducting spectator sport value research, it is hoped that attributes of spectator sports can be identified or created to help sport marketers design sporting events to meet the desires of broad potential consumers.

Key words: Personal values, Sport Spectator Behavior, Stepwise multiple regression