



National Shorthand Court Reporters Annual Convention July 31, 2004 Chicago, IL

Dr. Fletcher recently spoke to the National Shorthand Court Reporters annual convention in Chicago, IL. One notable audience member was Janice Friend, granddaughter of Judge Hugo Friend who presided over Joe Jackson's 1921 Milwaukee trial against Charles Comiskey. Please see the following pages to view the presentation.



Dr. Fletcher answers questions from audience members at the Shorthand Court Reporters National convention.

The 1919 Black Sox Scandal, Shorthand Reporters, and Your Health - What Do They Have in Common?

David J. Fletcher, MD MPH FACOEM

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Major League Baseball: Early 1900's

- Structure of the National Commission
- Baseball as an entertainment industry
- Major League Baseball's labor situation:
salary structure, reserve clause
- History of gambling and baseball



Influences on Baseball 1918-1920

World War I

Federal League Insurgency

Commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis

Negro League Baseball

Steel Strike

1919 Chicago White Sox



Monetary Disputes

- Player bitterness results from poor pay from owner Charles A. Comiskey
 - Joe Jackson paid \$6,000 per year VS. players with half the talent making \$10,000 on other teams
 - White Sox players given \$3 per day for road trips VS. \$4 per day for other teams in the league

Controversies

- Comiskey once promises pitcher E. Cicotte a \$10,000 bonus for winning 30 games; benches him after winning 29 games
- Baseball's famous reserve clause prohibits players from playing baseball for another professional team if they refuse a contract

The 1919 World Series Fix

- Sox first baseman Chic Gandil gets the idea to fix the 1919 World Series
- He contacts professional gambler “Sport” Sullivan in Boston, three weeks before the end of the 1919 season
- Demands \$80,000 to pull off the scheme

The 1919 World Series Fix

- Gandil recruits pitcher Eddie Cicotte
 - Cicotte hates Comiskey and is in financial stress from a farm he purchased in MI
- Cicotte agrees to participate if \$10,000 is paid him *before* the Series begins

The 1919 World Series Fix

- Gandil then attempts to recruit:
 - Shortstop Swede Risberg
 - Infielder Fred McMullin
 - Starting pitcher Claude “Lefty” Williams
 - White Sox star hitters Joe Jackson, Oscar Felsch and Buck Weaver

The 1919 World Series Fix

- Gandil tells Sullivan the fix is on, provided the players involved receive \$80,000 in advance
- Sullivan tells Gandil he will look into it and meet him in Chicago for the final games of the regular season

The 1919 World Series Fix

- Another gambler, B. Burns hears rumors and tells Cicotte he will top Sullivan's offer
- Gandil and Cicotte agree to work for Burns for \$100,000 upfront

The 1919 World Series Fix

- Burns approaches prominent gambler A. Rothstein in NY to front the fix
- Rothstein sends right-hand man A. Attel to refuse the plan
- Attel sees an opportunity to make money and decides to lie to Burns

The 1919 World Series Fix

- Attel contacts Burns and says Rothstein is interested
- Meanwhile Sullivan, the original gambler still determined to throw the Series, contacts Rothstein and gets his interest

The 1919 World Series Fix

- Rothstein sends a partner to Chicago to meet with Sullivan and the players
- September 29, 1919 gamblers agree to \$80,000; half upfront, the rest distributed after the Series
- Sullivan gives Gandil \$10,000

The 1919 World Series Fix

- Gandil puts the \$10,000 under starting pitcher E. Cicotte's pillow
- Angry at a mere \$10,000, the players meet with opposing gambler A. Attel
- Attel refuses money upfront, instead agreeing to \$20,000 for each game lost

The 1919 World Series Fix

- Rothstein sends word to starting pitcher Cicotte to hit the first batter if the fix is on
- Opening Day, October 1, 1919 in front of a sellout crowd, Cicotte hits lead-off batter M. Rath with his second pitch

1919 World Series Outcome

Game 1 & 2 – Cincinnati

Game 3 – Chicago

Game 4 & 5 – Cincinnati

Game 6 & 7 – Chicago

Game 8 and the 1919 World Series –

The Cincinnati Reds

The Payoff

- Gandil - \$35,000
- Cicotte - \$10,000
- Risberg, Felsch, and Williams \$15,000
 - Jackson each receive \$5,000
- *Weaver does not participate in the fix and therefore receives no money*

The World Series Aftermath

- Comiskey issues statement to press:

“I believe my boys fought the battle of the recent World Series on the level, as they have always done. And I would be the first to want information to the contrary – if there be any. I would give \$20,000 to anyone unearthing information to that effect.”

The World Series Aftermath

- Comiskey withholds World Series share money from eight players in October 1919
- Comiskey hires private detectives to investigate finances of seven players (Weaver is not under suspicion)

The World Series Aftermath

- Chicago sportswriter Hugh Fullerton publishes story in New York World, December 12, 1919:

*Big League Baseball Being Run For Gamblers,
With Ballplayers in the Deal?*

- Fullerton demands baseball confront gambling problem

Exposing the Scandal

- Grand Jury convenes September 1920 to widen investigation from Cubs/ Philly game to gambling and baseball in general
- Philly *North American* ran interview with gambler B. Maharg who detailed 1919 World Series fix

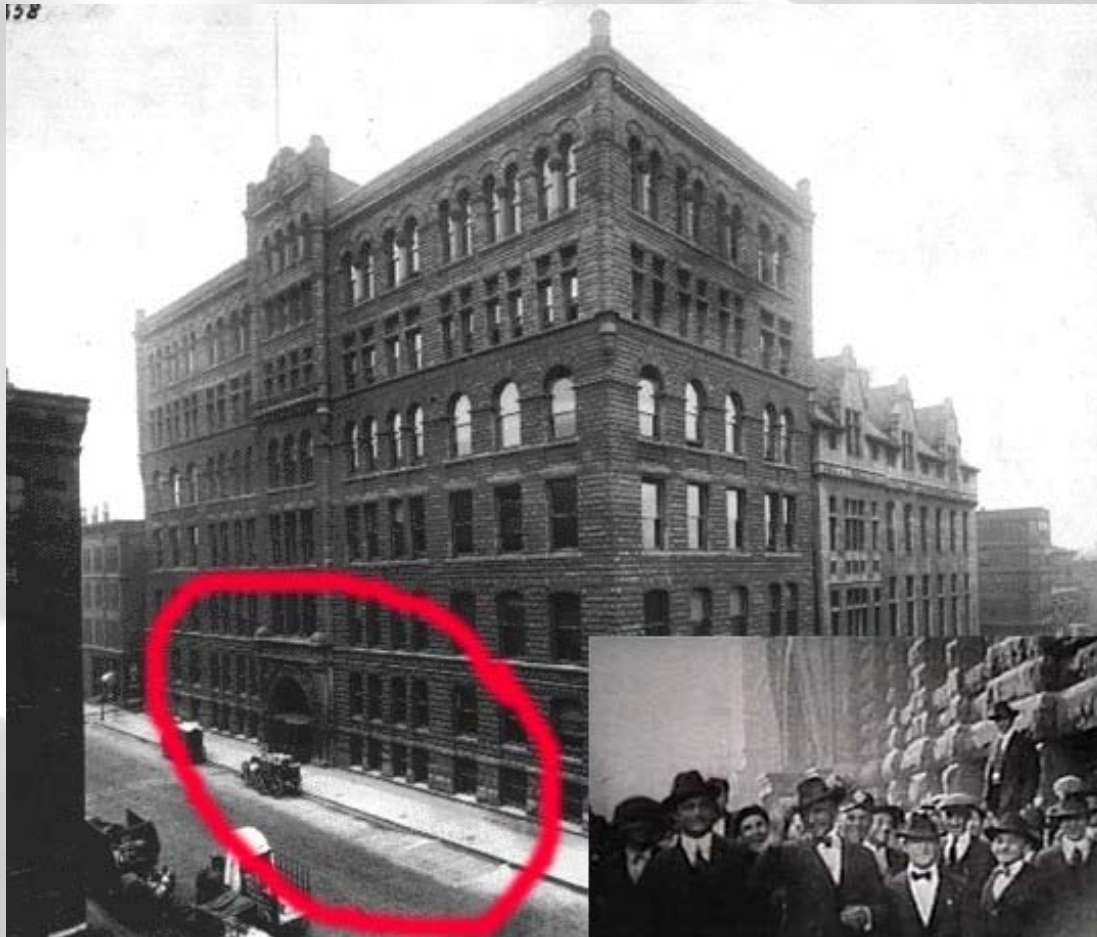
The Confessions

- Cicotte confesses:

“I don’t know why I did it,” Cicotte told the Grand Jury. “I must have been crazy.

Risberg, Gandil and McMullin were at me for a week before the Series began. They wanted me to go crooked. I don’t know. I needed the money. I had the wife and kids...”

The Confessions



Joe Jackson exits
the Cook County
Criminal
Courthouse after
his confession on
September 28, 1920



242 for 10

September 28, 1920.

To: Charles Risberg,
Fred McMullin
Joe Jackson
Oscar Felsch
George Weaver
C. P. Williams, and
E. V. Cicotte.

You and each of you are hereby notified of your indefinite suspension as a member of the Chicago American League Base Ball Club (The White Sox)

Your suspension is brought about by information which has just come to me directly involving you and each of you in the base ball scandal (now being investigated by the present Grand Jury of Cook County resulting from the World's Series of 1919.

If you are innocent of any wrong doing you and each of you will be reinstated; if you are guilty you will be retired from organized base ball for the rest of your lives, if I can accomplish it.

Until there is a finality to this investigation it is due to the public that I take this action even though it costs Chicago the pennant.

CHICAGO AMERICAN LEAGUE BASEBALL CLUB

By: _____

9/28/20	copy to Weaver held.	by O'Neill
"	"	" Jackson " Gleason
9/29/20	"	" Risberg " "
"	"	" McMullin " "
"	"	" Williams " "
9/28/20	"	" Cicotte by Reg. Letter, also salary ok.
"	"	" Felsch " " " " "

September 28, 1920 -
Comiskey sends a telegram
to seven players still on the
White Sox roster:

*"You and each of you are
hereby notified of your
indefinite suspension as a
member of the Chicago
American League
Baseball Club (The White
Sox)."*

1921 Cook County Trial

- Defendants arraigned February 14, 1921
- Ballplayers present; no gamblers present
- State announces shocking news that the players' confessions were stolen, and asks for reconvening of the Grand Jury
- State maintains the confessions voluntary

1921 Cook County Trial

- Judge Friend opens trial in Chicago on June 27, 1921 with charges to E. Cicotte et al:
 - Conspiracy to defraud the public; to defraud catcher Ray Schalk; to commit a confidence game; to injure the business of the American League; and to injure the business of Charles A. Comiskey

1921 Cook County Trial

- Comiskey testifies for prosecution and on cross-examination, defense attorneys show his business was more profitable in 1920
- Gambler Burns testifies to meeting with Cicotte in September 1919
- Burns remains on stand for three days

1921 Cook County Trial

- Judge Friend rules no evidence of the confessions can be introduced unless State can prove they were made voluntarily
- **Court reporter Elbert M. Allen**, present during Joe Jackson's Grand Jury testimony, testifies in 1921 trial

The Verdict

- Judge Friend tells jury a guilty verdict must find the players conspired “to defraud the public and others, and not merely throw ballgames.”
- Players are acquitted; some jurors hoist the ballplayers on their shoulders in celebration

Baseball's First Commissioner

- August 4, 1921 Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis issues the following statement:

"Regardless of the verdict of juries, no player who throws a ballgame, no player that undertakes or promises to throw a ballgame, no player that sits in conference with a bunch of crooked players and gamblers where the ways and means of throwing a game are discussed and does not promptly tell his club about it, will ever play professional baseball."

Former offices of:
Baseball Commissioner Kenesaw
Mountain Landis and American League
President Ban Johnson.

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Chicago, Illinois
D.H. Burnham and Company, 1910

Now known as The Peoples Gas Building



The Effect on Baseball

- Baseball in Chicago is rocked by the banishment of eight White Sox players
- Bitter feud develops between Charles Comiskey and Ban Johnson
- Banished players, especially Buck Weaver, petition for reinstatement

1924 Milwaukee Trial

- Joe Jackson, Oscar Felsch and Charles Risberg sue former boss Charles A. Comiskey for conspiring to keep players out of baseball
- Judge Gregory dismisses these charges in circuit court

1924 Milwaukee Trial

- The court permits Joe Jackson's allegations that his signed contract after the 1919 season was obtained deceitfully
- The court also permits charges of slander made on behalf of Oscar Felsch and Charles Risberg to stand

Notes From Milwaukee

- Ray Cannon represents Joe Jackson in the Milwaukee trial
 - Attempts to organize players' union
 - Stops baseball's monopoly over the players by putting an end to the 10-day reserve clause
- Fletcher has had full access to the 1700 page transcript from the 1924 Milwaukee trial

Notes from Milwaukee



Notes From Milwaukee

- Cannon examines major players of 1919 World Series fix
- Cannon confronts Grand Jury foreman Harry Bringham, about not digging deeper into Charles Comiskey investigation
- Claims he didn't know Grand Jury could be more aggressive

Notes From Milwaukee

- **Court reporter Elbert M. Allen** testifies again in 1924 trial about being present during Joe Jackson's confession in 1920
- Charles Comiskey takes the stand and begins to reveal his knowledge of the fix before Game 2

Notes From Milwaukee

- Comiskey admits he withheld World Series share money from eight players for two weeks after the World Series
- Why these eight? Comiskey claims, “Heard from newspapers.” But names were never printed in any newspaper

Notes From Milwaukee

- Missing Grand Jury confessions mysteriously reappear in briefcase of Comiskey's attorney
- Court finds 11 – 1 in favor of Joe Jackson that he was not part of the 1919 World Series fix and awards him back pay

Notes From Milwaukee

- Judge Gregory overrules the jury's verdict and has Jackson arrested for perjury, for testimony inconsistent with his Grand Jury testimony from September 28, 1920
- First and last page excerpts from Grand Jury testimony follow...

Jackson 1920 Grand Jury Testimony

First page

Last page

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BEFORE THE GRAND JURY OF COOK COUNTY,
September, A. D. 1920, Term.

In the Matter of the)
Investigation of Alleged)
Baseball Scandal.)

September 29, 1920.
1.00 o'clock P. M.

Present: Mr. Hartley L. Replogle, Assistant
State's Attorney, on behalf of
The People.
Hon. Charles A. McDonald, Chief Justice
of the Criminal Court.

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Q Do you know whether or not Gideon is in on the deal?
A No, sir, I do not.
Q Do you think he was? A (no answer.)
Q Does Williams know where you are now? A I don't think so.
MR. REPFLOCLE: It is an off day, no game today.
(Whereupon the Grand Jury adjourned to
Wednesday, September 29, 1920, at 9:30
o'clock A.M.)

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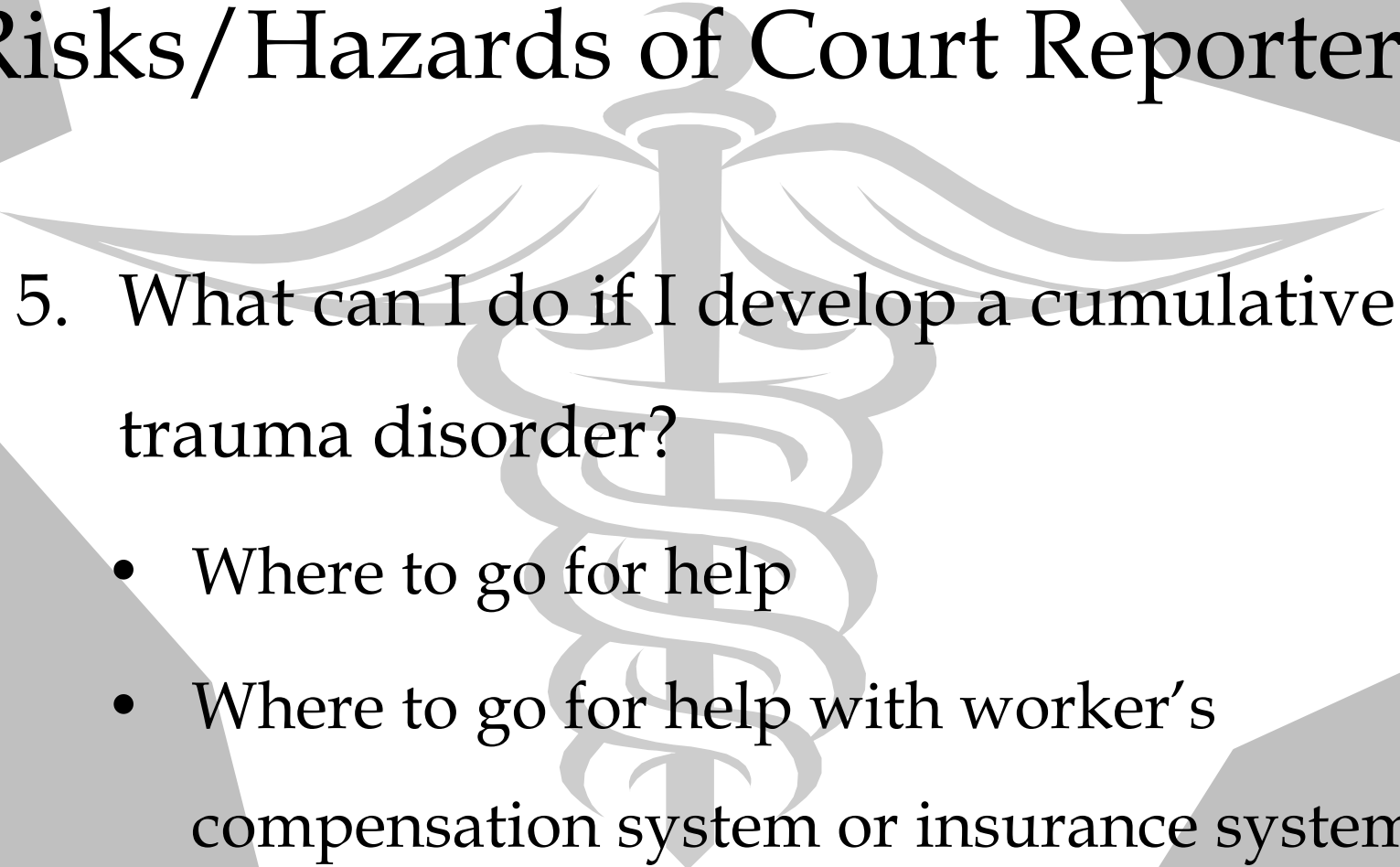
Occupational
Health Risks and
Hazards of Court
Reporters

Occupational Health Risks/Hazards of Court Reporters

A. Ergonomic Issues & Cumulative Trauma

1. What is cumulative trauma?
2. What ergonomic risks do court reporters face?
3. What can I do to prevent cumulative trauma?
4. What is carpal tunnel syndrome?

Occupational Health Risks/Hazards of Court Reporters

- 
5. What can I do if I develop a cumulative trauma disorder?
- Where to go for help
 - Where to go for help with worker's compensation system or insurance system

Occupational Health Risks/Hazards of Court Reporters

- What if I need surgery? Can I work again?
- B. Job Stress and Burn-Out
 - C. Workplace Violence and Court Reporters
 - D. Lifestyle and Wellness Issues

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