

An introduction to the sociology of sports mega-events¹

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Introduction: sport, sociology: sociology of sport

It is surprising that the sociological and social scientific study of sport – ritualized, rationalized, commercial spectacles and bodily practices that create opportunities for expressive performances, disruptions of the everyday world and affirmations of social status and belonging – was still seen as something of a joke by mainstream sociology until recently. A similar comment was made in the introduction to a previous *Sociological Review Monograph on Sport, Leisure and Social Relations* published twenty years ago (Horne, Jary and Tomlinson, 1987). Yet, quite clearly, social aspects of sport can be considered from most classical, modern and postmodern sociological theoretical perspectives, even if the ‘founding fathers’ did not have much explicitly to say about them (Giulianotti, ed., 2004). Ritualized, civic, events and ceremonies (Durkheim); rationalized, bureaucratically organized, science driven behaviour (Weber); commercial, global spectacles (Marx); expressivity and the everyday (Simmel and postmodernism); and male cultural displays and cultural centres (feminism). These are just a few of the issues that have concerned sociological theorists and inform the sociological analysis of sport. It was Pierre Bourdieu, however, alongside Norbert Elias and his colleague Eric Dunning, who has been one of the few leading mainstream sociologists to have taken sport seriously and who recognized the difficulty in doing so: ‘the sociology of sport: it is disdained by sociologists, and despised by sportspeople’ (Bourdieu, 1990: 156).

This book suggests that just as modern competitive sport and large-scale sport events were developed in line with the logic of capitalist modernity, sports mega-events and global sport culture are central to late modern capitalist societies. As media events, the Summer Olympic Games and the FIFA association football World Cup provide cultural resources for reflecting upon identity and enacting agency. More generally they provide resources for the construction of ‘a meaningful social life in relation to a changing societal environment that has the potential to destabilize and threaten these things’ (Roche, 2000: 225). Sports ‘mega-events’ are important elements in the orientation of nations to international or global society. As Munoz suggests in his chapter, mega-events,

such as the Olympic games, have also had an important role in the transformation of the modern urban environment, as a conveyor of architectural design traditions. Hence sport, here in its mega-event form, comes to be an increasingly central, rather than peripheral, element of urban modernity (Tomlinson and Young, 2005; Young and Wamsley, 2005; and Vigor *et al.*, 2004 are three other recent collections that discuss the increasing social significance of sports mega-events).

This volume, featuring chapters from leading sports mega-event researchers around the world, has three main objectives. Firstly it aims to demonstrate the social (economic, political and cultural) significance of sports and sports mega-events. Secondly it outlines the sociological and social scientific significance of sports mega-events, by reviewing research and debates about their impact from the disciplines of political science, human geography, international relations, economics as well as sociology. Thirdly it suggests why sociologists and other social scientists should be interested in analysing them and asks what can sociologists and social scientists learn from analysing sports mega-events. This chapter provides an overview of previous studies in the field and thus introduces each of these objectives. First we discuss the scope and growth of sports mega-events in the past 25 years. Next we review debates about the attractions and impacts of sports mega-events. Then we consider the sociological and social scientific significance of sports mega-events. Finally we highlight a research agenda for the study of sports mega-events.

What makes a mega-event ‘mega’?

Whilst there have been a number of earlier discussions about ‘special’, ‘hall-mark’ or ‘mega-events’ (see for example Law, 1994; Syme *et al.*, 1989; and Witt, 1988) it is Maurice Roche’s definition of them that commands our attention today. He states that mega-events are best understood as ‘large-scale cultural (including commercial and sporting) events, which have a dramatic character, mass popular appeal and international significance’ (Roche, 2000: 1). Two central features of contemporary mega-events are firstly, that they are deemed to have significant consequences for the host city, region or nation in which they occur, and secondly, that they will attract considerable media coverage. By this definition therefore, an unmediated mega-event would be a contradiction in terms, and several of the contributions to this collection focus on this theme.²

For Kenneth Roberts (2004: 108) what defines certain sports events as ‘mega’ is that they are ‘discontinuous’, out of the ordinary, international and simply big in composition. What Roberts refers to as ‘megas’ have the ability to transmit promotional messages to billions of people via television and other developments in telecommunications. ‘Megs’ have attracted an increasingly more international audience and composition. An estimated television audience of 3.9 billion people, for example, watched parts of the 2004 Athens Olympic Games, and the cumulative TV audience estimate was 40 billion. 35,000 hours were

dedicated to its media coverage – an increase of 27 per cent over the Summer Olympics held in Sydney in 2000 (see www.olympic.org/uk). The 2002 FIFA World Cup, staged in Japan and South Korea, provided even more – 41,000 – hours of programming in 213 countries and produced an estimated cumulative audience of 28.8 billion viewers (Madrigal *et al.*, 2005: 182). Research on sports mega-events that have taken place, or are planned, in Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe and North America, the leisure industry's 'supernovas' (Roberts, 2004: 112), is what this book largely focuses on.

The growth of sports mega-events

Since 1992, when the Summer and Winter Olympic Games took place in the same year for the last time, there has been a two-year cycle of sports mega-events.³ The Summer Olympic Games occupies the same year as the European Football Championship, organized by the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), whilst the Winter Olympics shares its year with the FIFA football World Cup finals and the Commonwealth Games. Despite the decision of the Olympic Programme Commission of the IOC in July 2005 to reduce the number of sports from 28 to 26 from the 2012 Olympics, it is evident that the size of the event, as well as the enthusiasm to host and participate in sports mega-events like the Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup has grown in the past twenty years.⁴ At the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles 140 countries were represented, 6797 athletes competed, and 221 events took place in 23 sports. By 2004 in Athens 201 countries were involved and 11,099 athletes took part in 301 events in the 28 Olympic sports (Malfas *et al.*, 2004: 210; www.athens2004.com). The expansion and growing attraction of mega-events has been for three main reasons (as Whitson and Horne also suggest).

First, new developments in the technologies of mass communication, especially the development of satellite television, have created unprecedented global audiences for events like the Olympics and the World Cup. Since the 1960s, US broadcasting networks have substantially competed to 'buy' the Olympic Games. Next in order of magnitude of rights payments is the consortium representing the interests and financial power of Europe's public broadcasters, known as the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) that buy the rights to transmission in Europe. Media rights fees are also paid by the Asian broadcasters (including Japan and South Korea) and national media organizations, such as CBC and CTV in Canada. So in addition to the US\$300 million paid by the US corporation NBC to the International Olympic Committee in 1988 (for the Seoul Summer Olympics), the EBU paid just over US\$30 million and Canada paid just over US\$4 million for media broadcasting rights. By 2008 (the Beijing Summer Olympics) NBC will pay US\$894 million, the EBU will pay over US\$443 million, and Canadian broadcasters will pay US\$45 million just for the rights to transmit pictures of the action (Coakley and Donnelly, 2004: 382; Westerbeek and Smith, 2003: 91).

Table 1: US Broadcasters and Olympics Television Rights (US\$m) 1960–2012

Year	Summer Games			Winter Games		
	Place	Network	Amount	Place	Network	Amount
1960	Rome	CBS	0.39	Squaw Valley	CBS	0.05
1964	Tokyo	NBC	1.5	Innsbruck	ABC	0.59
1968	Mexico City	ABC	4.5	Grenoble	ABC	2.5
1972	Munich	ABC	7.5	Sapporo	NBC	6.4
1976	Montreal	ABC	25.0	Innsbruck	ABC	10.0
1980	Moscow	NBC	72.0	Lake Placid	ABC	15.5
1984	Los Angeles	ABC	225.0	Sarajevo	ABC	91.5
1988	Seoul	NBC	300.0	Calgary	ABC	309.0
1992	Barcelona	NBC	401.0	Albertville	CBS	243.0
1994				Lillehammer	CBS	295.0*
1996	Atlanta	NBC	456.0			
1998				Nagano	CBS	375.0
2000	Sydney	NBC	705			
2002				Salt Lake City	NBC	545.0
2004	Athens	NBC	793\$			
2006				Turin	NBC	614
2008	Beijing	NBC	894			
2010				Vancouver	NBC	820**
2012	London	NBC	1.181 bn			

* From 1994 Summer and Winter Games have been staged in different years, allowing US TV to spread the burden of raising advertising revenue over two years.

\$ NBC paid \$2.3 bn for rights to the 2004, 2006 & 2008 Games after the merger of ABC & CBS in 1995.

** NBC agreed to pay just over \$2bn for the rights to 2010 and 2012.

(Sources: Whannel 1992; Toohey & Veal 2000; www.Olympicmarketing.com – accessed 6 June 2003; IOC (2006) 2006 Marketing Fact File available at www.olympic.org – accessed 11 June 2006).

Similarly to the Olympic Games since the 1980s the FIFA Football World Cup has attracted substantial media interest and commercial partners. The Football World Cup is a huge media event. The resources made available for the communications systems, the enormous media centres, and the amounts paid by national broadcasting systems to televise the event provide ample evidence for this. At the Football World Cup Finals co-hosted by South Korea and Japan in 2002 for example each Local Organizing Committee (LOC) was responsible for arranging its own media facilities, infrastructure and services (Horne and Manzenreiter, 2002b). In order to reach the global television audience the World Cup was serviced by two International Media Centres (IMCs), one in Korea and one in Japan. The Korean IMC was in the COEX exhibition centre in Seoul, which at 37,000 square metres actually offered a larger area than the IMC in Paris for the whole of the previous World Cup in 1998. The Japanese IMC was in the Pacifico Yokohama Exhibition Hall and was a little over half the area (20,000 square metres). In addition, at each of the ten stadia in the two countries there were Stadium Media Centres.

In the case of the Olympic Games, TV rights accounted for 53 per cent (US\$2.229 billion) of total revenue, followed by sponsorship (34 per cent, US\$1.459 billion), ticketing (11 per cent, US\$441 million) and merchandizing (2 per cent, US\$86.5 million) in the period 2001–2004 (www.olympic.org, accessed 13 January 2006). Jacques Rogge, president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), told *The Financial Times* in May 2005 that he expected total television rights for the Olympic Games to rise to US\$3.5 billion by 2012. Not surprisingly, therefore, representatives of the media easily outnumber the athletes – in Sydney in 2000 there were 16,033 (press and broadcasting) reporters and during the Winter Olympic Games in Salt Lake City in 2002 there were 8730 reporters covering the performances of 2399 athletes (Malfas *et al.*, 2004: 211).

With respect to the Football World Cup, in 1990 sales of television rights were estimated to amount to US\$65.7 million (41 per cent), sales of tickets for US\$54.8 million (34 per cent) and sales of advertising rights for US\$40.2 million (25 per cent). Twelve years later the world TV rights (this time excluding the US) for the 2002 and 2006 Football World Cup Finals were sold for US\$1.97 billion. This was a six-fold increase on the US\$310 million paid by the EBU for the three tournaments held in the 1990s.

The second reason for the expansion of mega-events is the formation of a sport-media-business alliance that transformed professional sport generally in the late 20th century. Through the idea of packaging, via the tri-partite model of sponsorship rights, exclusive broadcasting rights and merchandizing, sponsors of both the Olympics and the football World Cup events (see Tables 2 and 3) have been attracted by the association with the sports and the vast global audience exposure that the events achieve.

The two largest sports mega-events have lead the way since the 1980s in developing the transnational sport-media-business alliance worth considerable millions of dollars. According to the IOC, international sponsorship revenue for

Table 2: TOP Sponsors (The Olympic ProgrammelPartner Programme) 1988–2008

TOP-1 1988 Seoul	TOP-2 1992 Barcelona	TOP-3 1996 Atlanta	TOP-4 2000 Sydney	TOP-5 2004 Athens	TOP-6 2008 Beijing	Commercial Sector
Coca-Cola Kodak Sports Illustrated/ Time	Coca-Cola Kodak Sports Illustrated/ Time	Coca-Cola Kodak Time Inc.	Coca-Cola Kodak Time Inc.	Coca-Cola Kodak Time Inc.	Coca-Cola Kodak	soft drinks photographic media
VISA	VISA Bausch & Lomb	VISA Bausch & Lomb Xerox	VISA Xerox	VISA Xerox	VISA	credit cards optical, dental
Brother Philips 3M Federal Express	Brother Philips 3M United States Postal Service (USPS)	United Parcel Service	United Parcel Service			photocopying typewriters audio & TV magnetic tapes couriers
Matsushita (Panasonic)	Matsushita (Panasonic) Ricoh Mars	Matsushita (Panasonic)	Matsushita (Panasonic)	Panasonic	Panasonic	audio & video fax food
	IBM John Hancock	IBM John Hancock	IBM John Hancock Samsung McDonald's	John Hancock Samsung McDonald's Swatch Atos Origin	John Hancock Samsung McDonald's Swatch	data processing insurance communication fast-food timing, scoring IT services IT services communication computing
					Sema General Electric Lenovo	

Sources: Miguel de Moragas Spa et al (1995) *Television in the Olympics* London: John Libbey, p. 29; Kristine Toohy & Tony Veal(2000) *The Olympic Games: A social science perspective*, Oxford: CABI, p. 108; www.olympic.org (accessed 13 January 2006).

Table 3: *FIFA World Cup Partners 1990–2006*

1990 <i>Italy</i> (9)	1994 <i>U.S.A.</i> (11)	1998 <i>France</i> (12)	2002 <i>Korea/Japan</i> (15)	2006 <i>Germany</i> (15)	<i>Commercial Sector</i>
Coca-Cola	Coca-Cola	Coca-Cola	Coca-Cola	Coca-Cola	soft drinks
Gillette	Gillette	Gillette	Gillette	Gillette	men's toiletries
Fuji	Fuji	Fuji	Fuji Film/ Fuji Xerox	Fuji Film	photographic
Philips	Philips	Philips	Philips	Philips	audio & television
JVC	JVC	JVC	JVC		audio & television
Canon	Canon	Canon			photography
Mars	Snickers	Mars			food
Vini Italia					wine
Anheuser- Busch		Casio*	Budweiser	Budweiser	beer/calculators
	MasterCard	MasterCard	MasterCard	MasterCard	credit cards
	McDonald's	McDonald's	McDonald's	McDonald's	fast-food restaurants
	Energizer				batteries
	General Motors	General Motors			automobiles
		Adidas	Adidas	Adidas	sports wear
			KT/NTT		telecommunications
			Hyundai	Hyundai	automobiles
			Toshiba	Toshiba	electrical goods
			Avaya	Avaya	communications
			Yahoo!	Yahoo!	internet services
				Continental	car tyres
				DeutscheTelekom	telecommunications
				Emirates	air transport

* French legislation placed restrictions on alcohol advertising and Budweiser sold their rights to Casio. Sources: John Sugden & Alan Tomlinson (1998) *FIFA and the contest for world football* (Polity), pp. 92–93; <http://fifaworldcup.yahoo.com> (17/01/02, 10:05 p.m.); *FIFA Magazine* May 2004 Number 5 p. 82.

the 1980 Summer and Winter Olympics was nil (*Marketing Matters*, 2000: 1). The idea of selling exclusivity of marketing rights to a limited number of sponsoring partners began in Britain in the 1970s with Patrick Nally and his associate, Peter West, as the media agency WestNally. In the early 1980s the idea was taken up by Horst Dassler, son of the founder of Adidas, and at the time chief executive of the company. With the blessing of the then FIFA President Joao Havelange, Dassler established the agency ISL Marketing in 1982. Later in the 1980s ISL linked up with the International Olympic Committee (IOC), presided over by Juan Antonio Samaranch. It was ISL that established TOP, or 'The Olympic Programme', in which a few select corporations were able to claim official Olympic worldwide partner status. Whilst the TOP programme supports the Olympic Movement internationally, sponsorship agreements by Olympic host cities create even further opportunities for making money. Hence for the 2008

Olympics in Beijing, organizers have created three additional tiers of support at the national level (Beijing 2008 Partner, Sponsor and (exclusive) Supplier). In light of the enormous attraction of the Chinese market, it is not surprising that revenues from national sponsorship arrangements are likely to be considerably more than those from the TOP programme. There are at least three beer companies acting as sponsors at different levels in 2008. As Sugden and Tomlinson (1998 p. 93) note in relation to the World Cup, 'Fast foods and snacks, soft and alcoholic drinks, cars, batteries, photographic equipment and electronic media, credit sources – these are the items around which the global sponsorship of football has been based, with their classic evocation of a predominantly masculinist realm of consumption: drinking, snacking, shaving, driving'.

The third reason why interest in hosting sports mega-events has grown (as Hall and Horne and Whitson also note) is that they have become seen as valuable promotional opportunities for cities and regions. John Hannigan (1998) has identified the growth of 'urban entertainment destinations' (UEDs) since the 1980s as one of the most significant developments transforming cities throughout the developed world. Hannigan argues that the 'fantasy city' of the late 20th and early 21st century has been formed by the convergence of three trends. Firstly, through the application of the four principles of efficiency, calculability, predictability and control (or 'McDonaldization' as Ritzer, 1993, described it), there has been a rationalization of the operation of the entertainment industries. Secondly, theming, as exemplified by the Disney Corporation (or 'Disneyization', see Bryman, 2004), produces new opportunities for commercial and property developers in urban areas. Thirdly, accompanying synergies between previously discrete activities, such as shopping, dining out, entertainment and education, lead to 'de-differentiation – what some analysts regard as a feature of 'post-modernization'.

These trends, alongside the pursuit of enhanced, or even 'world class', status by politicians and businesses, raise questions for some analysts about the social distribution of the supposed benefits of urban development initiatives, including festivals, spectacles and mega-events. Which social groups actually benefit, which are excluded, and what scope is there for contestation of these developments, are three important questions that are often ignored (Lowes, 2002). Gruneau (2002: ix–x) argues that local politicians and media often focus on the interests and enthusiasms of the developers, property owners and middle-class consumers as 'synonymous with the well-being of the city'. As a result, sectional interests are treated as *the* general interest, and ongoing 'class and community divisions regarding the support and enjoyment of spectacular urban entertainments' are downplayed, if not ignored altogether (Gruneau, 2002: ix–x).

Compounding the problem is the fact that developers have often been able to obtain public subsidies from central and sub-central governments, while the same governments have been cutting back on social welfare spending. Both neo-liberal (and in the United Kingdom what might be called after Tony Blair's New Labour project) 'neo-labour', political ideas have meant different objectives for

community development, and different definitions of the public good. The growth of the 'global sport-media-tourism complex' (Nauright, 2004: 1334) also leads in some respect to greater secrecy and lack of transparency on the part of the organizations involved. For Zygmunt Bauman (1998: 8) this impact on democratic processes of consultation and discussion is part of the 'Great War of Independence from Space' begun in the last quarter of the 20th century. There has been 'a consistent and relentless wrenching of the decision-making centres, together with the calculations which ground the decisions such centres make, free from territorial constraints – the constraints of locality'.

What is the attraction of sports mega-events?

The 'legacies' – whether social, cultural, environmental, political, economic or sporting – are the greatest attraction but also form part of the 'known unknowns', of sports mega-events (Horne, 2007). They create the 'allure of global games' – perhaps especially for developing economies (Black & van der Westhuizen, 2004). At the same time it seems evident that forecasts of the benefits are nearly always wrong. Notwithstanding Holger Preuss's (2004) economic 'commonsense', noted by Gratton *et al.* in their chapter, since the Montreal Olympics in 1976 especially (as Whitson and Horne point out) a major public and academic concern in considerations of sports mega-events has been the gap between the forecast and actual impacts on economy, society and culture. Whilst the general academic consensus regarding the impacts of mega-events is that there are both positive and negative outcomes, a review of the enormous amount of literature on the socio-economic, socio-cultural, physical and political impacts of Olympic Games, concludes that 'economic benefits are the prime motive' for interests involved in hosting them (Malfas *et al.*, 2004: 218). The positive impacts on employment (or rather unemployment), additional spending in the community hosting an event, visiting tourist/spectator numbers, the 'show-case effect' (Hiller, 1989: 119) of media coverage on an event locality, and some (usually unspecified) impact on the social condition of the host community, are the main claims made for hosting mega-events.

As Munoz's chapter illustrates, Barcelona'92 is often cited as an exemplary Olympic Games. The Games attracted public investment of US\$ 6.2 billion that helped redevelop the city and the province of Catalonia (Malfas *et al.*, 2004: 212). Unemployment in Barcelona fell compared with the rest of Spain and the European average. Yet Munoz also notes some of the downside to this success story. In a detailed economic analysis of the resources, financing and impact of the Olympics Brunet noted that 'Barcelona '92 was unusual' (Brunet, 1995: 15). Only one other Olympics (Tokyo in 1964) had generated more direct investment. Improvements in transportation, particularly 'the circulation of motor vehicles' (Brunet, 1995: 20) was one of the major impacts of the Olympics on the urban infrastructure of Barcelona. The newly built Olympic Village also opened up

the coast to the city in a way that had not occurred before. Brunet (1995: 24) estimated that there was an overall permanent employment effect of 20,000 extra jobs and that the Olympics acted as ‘a protective buffer against the economic crisis’ that affected much of the rest of Europe in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Brunet, 1995: 23). There was some indication also that the citizens of Barcelona took advantage of the new sports infrastructure that was left after the event. The overall legacy of the ’92 Olympics, however, focuses on the transformation of the urban and economic environment of Barcelona. Despite Brunet’s findings questions about the quality, and duration, of the jobs created in Barcelona have been raised. The majority of the jobs created were actually low paid and short-term (Malfas *et al.*, 2004: 212). Sydney 2000 was also proclaimed by the then IOC President, Juan Antonio Samaranch, as ‘the best Olympics ever’, yet similar concerns about the actual distribution of the social and economic benefits and opportunity costs of hosting that Games linger, as Hall’s chapter notes (see also Lenskyj, 2002).

The FIFA World Cup in 2002 was the first ever to be staged in Asia. Predictions of an additional one million sports tourists to watch the FIFA World Cup in Japan and South Korea in May and June 2002 proved to be wildly optimistic. Japan attracted only 30,000 more visitors and South Korea reported similar visitor numbers as in the previous year (Horne and Manzenreiter, 2004: 197, see also Matheson and Baade, 2003). In this respect there are several comparisons to be drawn between the study of sports mega-events and the analyses of Bent Flyvbjerg and his associates into the planning of *megaprojects* – such as major bridges, tunnels, canals, public transport schemes and prestige buildings. Their research findings suggest that promoters of multi-billion dollar megaprojects, including sports stadia and other infrastructure, may often consistently, systematically and self-servingly mislead governments and the public in order to get projects approved (see Flyvbjerg *et al.*, 2003: 11–21 and 32–48 esp.).

The tendency to overstate the potential economic, as well as social, benefits of stadium developments and hosting sports events has been detailed by several academic researchers from the UK and the USA (see contributions to Gratton and Henry eds., 2001a). With respect to megaprojects there is a similar fantasy world of underestimated costs, overestimated revenues, underestimated environmental impacts and over-valued economic development effects. As Flyvbjerg *et al.* (2003: 7) suggest, more often than not ‘power play, instead of commitment to deliberative ideals, is often what characterizes megaproject development’. In this context it is important briefly to review debates about the impacts of sports mega-events.

Debates about the impacts of sports mega-events

Debates about the impacts of sports mega-events – about the distribution of the opportunity costs and benefits of hosting sports events and using sport as a

form of social and economic regeneration – are best understood within the broader political/economic/ideological context in which the debates have taken shape. Claims and counter-claims are issued, with the emphasis of advocates typically on the *economic* impacts of hosting sports events (Roberts, 2004: 116–120, UK Sport, 1999). As the UK Sport report *Measuring Success 2* noted, major international spectator events generate ‘significant economic activity and media interest’ (UK Sport, 2004: 11). The chapter by Gratton *et al.*, which derives from this research, demonstrates how these conclusions are reached. But how that economic activity is distributed – before, during and after the event – and who actually benefits, remain key questions posed by those sceptical of economic impact studies. Social redistribution versus growth machine arguments about sports mega-events such as the Olympic Games revolve around the spin-offs and ‘legacies’.

After a mega-event has finished, questions start to be raised about the popular belief that sport can have a positive impact on a local community and a regional economy. Sport has been seen as a generator of national and local economic and social development. Economically it has been viewed as an industry around which cities can devise urban regeneration strategies. Socially it has been viewed as a tool for the development of urban communities, and the reduction of social exclusion and crime. Whilst hypothetical links exist between sport activities/facilities and work productivity, participation, self-esteem, quality of life, employment, and other variables, not as much rigorous research has been done as might be expected given the claims made. Often research has been conducted in advance of sports mega-events on behalf of interested parties. As Gratton and Henry (2001b: 309) suggest, ‘In general, there has been inadequate measurement’ of final and intermediate outputs as well as inputs.⁵

In the UK and Australia, the main stimuli for using sport for economic regeneration has been the hosting of international sporting events. In response to urban decline, Glasgow, Sheffield, Manchester and Birmingham have invested heavily in the sports infrastructure so that each has a portfolio of major sports facilities capable of holding major sports events.⁶ In addition, three of them have been designated as a ‘National City of Sport’. While the World Student Games held in Sheffield in 1991 was entered into without any serious impact study, it produced a loss of £180million, and the resulting debt has added ‘just over £100 to annual council tax bills and will not be repaid until 2013’ (www.strategy.gov.uk/2002/sport/report). Following several failed bids to host the Olympics in the 1980s and 1990s, and the embarrassment of having to relinquish the opportunity to host the World Athletics Championship in 2005, UK cities aimed to host smaller major sports events. The generally trouble-free success of the European football championship held in England in 1996 and the Commonwealth Games staged in Manchester in 2002 provided positive support for those with the aspiration to try again for one of the ‘megs’. This, plus the enthusiasm of key politicians in an era of ‘cultural governance’, undoubtedly underlay the decision to put London forward in the race to stage the 2012 Olympics (Fairclough, 2000).⁷

In Australia (as Hall's chapter reveals) a similar strategy of using sports events to promote tourism and regeneration has been adopted at state level – states provide cities with the funds to bid for international sports events. Several Australian cities (including Adelaide, Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney) used sport as part of an economic development strategy in response to city/state rivalry – to establish a strong tourism industry. As Schimmel also notes, cities in the USA have placed a huge investment in the infrastructure – such as stadium developments for the big four professional team sports. Such efforts at 'urban boosterism' saw more and more cities competing to offer professional teams facilities. Teams sat back and let bidding cities 'bid up the price'. By the end of the 1990s there were 30 major stadium construction projects in progress – nearly one-third of the total professional sports infrastructure in the USA. The total value was estimated at US\$9 billion (Gratton and Henry, 2001b: 311).

Reviewing these attempts to use sport as a means of urban regeneration in the USA, Europe and Australia Gratton and Henry (2001b: 314) concluded, 'the potential benefits . . . have not yet been clearly demonstrated'. Some places have been successful in harnessing social and urban regeneration plans to the sports mega-event. In this respect, as we have already noted, Barcelona was acclaimed throughout Europe and the rest of the world as how to do it. But even apparent winners have created problems for themselves. The Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE) investigating displacement, or forced evictions, resulting from the Olympic Games and other major international events estimates that 700,000 people were evicted to make way for the 1988 Seoul Olympics and 300,000 have already been forced to move ahead of the 2008 Beijing Games (http://www.cohre.org/downloads/Achieving_Housing_for_All.pdf). Evictions are anticipated in the east end of London before 2012. In Barcelona 400 homeless people were subject to control and supervision during the 1992 Games (Cox *et al.*, 1994) and competition between high-income and low-income residents for the low-cost housing, promised after the Olympic athletes left town, soon resulted in the most affluent gaining most. Most of the apartments that comprised the 'Nova Icaria' project were sold on the open market, contrary to a previously announced aim of subsidizing housing for those on low incomes (see Hughes, 1992: 39–40 and Vázquez Montalbán, 1990/1992: 6–7). Similarly in Sydney, before the 2000 Olympics, property prices and rent increases in the vicinity of Homebush Bay, primarily occupied by low-income tenants, lead Lenskyj (2002) critically to assess the claim made by IOC President Samaranch that the Sydney Olympics were the best ever (see also Cox, 1999). Arguably, therefore, increased social polarization also remains one of the major legacies of mega-events.

Cashman (2003) identifies four periods during which the impact of the summer games on Olympic host cities is usually most open for debate. During the preparation of the bid and competition to win the right to host mega-events such as the Olympic Games 'bidding wars' are particularly apparent (also see Sugden and Tomlinson, 2002, on the bidding wars surrounding the 2006 FIFA

World Cup). This is when overestimated benefits and underestimated cost forecasts are likely to be stated with most conviction and yet often prove to be wildly inaccurate. An email circulated by British Prime Minister Tony Blair, a month before the decision was made about the 2012 Summer Olympics, claimed, amongst other things, that, 'A London victory on 6 July would mean: thousands of new jobs, a boost to tourism across the UK, the chance to host athlete preparation camps up and down the country' (tony.blair@reply-new.labour.org.uk).

We have already noted that claims about the impact of mega-events on employment need to be treated very warily. The key questions to be asked are, what kind of jobs are to be created – part-time or full-time, temporary or permanent, and for whom? In the case of the 2012 Olympics, athlete preparation camps are most likely to be in the South east of England near where the vast majority of Olympic events are to take place. These locations can also be subject to bidding wars, for example as happened in Japan during the 2002 World Cup, when local authorities proffered lucrative inducements to national football associations of teams competing in the competition to establish training camps (Horne and Manzenreiter, 2004). As regards tourism, once again specific areas of the UK/South east England are likely to benefit, whilst displaced non-sports tourists may defer their visit to the capital during the event. Clashes with other sports fixtures and cultural events (for example cricket Test matches and the Edinburgh festivals) in August 2012 appear inevitable and will therefore likely lead to a reduction in visitors to them.

Despite changes of personnel and rules, considerable secrecy and lack of transparency continue to pervade the undemocratic organizations that run sports mega-events (Hoberman, 1995; Krüger, 1993). Those that challenge this, or write about it critically, may become *persona non grata* to the mega-event organizers. Certainly there has been an increasing reliance on protecting the image of the Olympics, the host city and the IOC in the past 15 years through the employment of public relations companies (*The Guardian Sport section*, 22 September 2005: 2).

Another focus of research is the impact of mega-events on the culture, beliefs and attitudes of the host population (exemplified here in the chapters by Cornelissen and Swart, Marivoet, and Whitson and Horne). During the mega-event the identities of local people are meant to conform to the (generally) positive stereotypes contained in pre-event publicity and the opening ceremonies. A mega-event is not only about showing off a city to the world but also about putting the global on show for the locals (especially in the case of marginal cities, see Whitson, 2004). Mega-events thus invite the people of a host city – and even a host nation – to take on new identities as citizens of the world. The hosting of sports mega-events, such as the Football World Cup Finals, provides multiple meanings for different groups of agents – as they happen, when they have taken place and, perhaps especially, as they are being bid for. Advocates of hosting mega-events will deploy a range of discursive strategies to win over public opinion internally.

In the case of semi-peripheral or developing societies, colonial and neo-colonial ties have shaped and continue to shape external relationships with sports mega-events as well. Neither the continents of Africa nor South America have yet staged an Olympic Games. The unsuccessful bid by Cape Town to host the 2004 Olympic Games was the first African bid for the Games (Swart and Bob, 2004). Cornelissen (2004) notes how discourse about 'Africa' was used ideologically, by both South Africa and Morocco, during the competition to host the 2010 Football World Cup that was eventually resolved in favour of the former in May 2004. The South African bid estimated massive benefits from the event, which many consider will be impossible actually to achieve⁸. In the final bid document, twelve locations were named as sites to host matches but, as in Japan and Korea in 2002, there are likely to be several of these that do not obtain 'the requisite levels of tourism' (Cornelissen, 2000: 1307). As Cornelissen and Swart note in their chapter, this has now been reduced to ten but, even so, it remains likely that under-utilization of the facilities built will mean that not all localities will obtain the benefits promised.

Flyvbjerg (2005) has noted that mega-projects *can* be completed on schedule and within budget – the Guggenheim Bilbao Museum, the Pompidou Centre, and even further back the Empire State Building and the Eiffel Tower are examples of this. But the vast majority of mega-projects are not delivered anywhere nearly on time or within their estimated cost (*The Economist* 11 June 2005: 65–66).⁹ It is becoming so evident that cost overruns are predictable that certain sections of government, as well as academics such as Flyvbjerg, have begun to consider this more seriously. The Department for Transport in the UK, for example, commissioned Flyvbjerg to investigate procedures for dealing with, in classic British understatement, 'optimism bias' in transport planning (Flyvbjerg, 2004). When it comes to actually staging mega-events, such as the Olympics, one of the persistent public concerns is whether monuments can turn into 'white elephants' and end up costing considerably more than they are worth to maintain, as happened most notoriously in Montreal in 1976, but also in Atlanta, Sydney and Athens.¹⁰

The kind of detailed case study conducted by Mark Lowes (2002) of community opposition to another spectacular urban sports event – the Molson Indy Vancouver – provides one model for alternative research into sports mega-events. He focuses attention on the limits and possibilities of local resistance to attempts to relocate the motor racing event into public space. Such opposition coalitions are one of the unacceptable practices to organisations running mega-events that have to be managed. In this respect Lenskyj has suggested that the IOC has become more like a 'transnational corporation' that has increasingly exploited 'young athletes' labour and aspirations for its own aggrandisement and profit' (Lenskyj, 2000: 195). The local mass media's economic interest in sport mega-events turns journalists from reporters into impresarios, from potential whistle blowers into cheerleaders. The hosting and staging of sports mega-events may help to create bourgeois playgrounds but the long-term benefits are unevenly shared.

The politics of sports mega-events

We can summarize the discussion so far, and those of several of the contributors to this volume, by stating that sports mega-events are a significant part of the experience of modernity, but they cannot be seen as a panacea for its social and economic problems. Hence there is a need to maintain an independent position to assess these events. As Flyvbjerg suggests, the key weapons against a culture of covert deceit surrounding mega-projects are transparency, accountability and critical questioning from independent and specialist organizations. Rather than simply become cheerleaders for them, boosters, rather than analysts, academics equally need to reflect critically on the effects, both economic and beyond economic impacts, that sports mega-events have. As Flyvbjerg *et al.* (2003: 108) note, 'there is no such thing as an entirely private venture for investments' with 'the magnitude and consequences' of mega-projects. The same is certainly true for sports mega-events such as the Olympics and the FIFA World Cup. Hence Bruce Kidd's (1992b: 154) observation (cited by Whitson and Horne) that 'Mega-projects like the Olympic Games require a tremendous investment of human, financial and physical resources from the communities that stage them', reminds us that they need to be the subject of public debate and accountability.

In the past twenty years government sports policy – concerning regulation, consumer protection and sports promotion – has developed in a context of the spread of neo-liberal economic ideology and globalization (Horne, 2006). This has produced a change in the relationship between sport and the state. Different states use sport for different non-sports ends – economic development and social development, nation building and signalling ('branding the nation') and to assist in economic and political liberalization (Black and van der Westhuizen, 2004). As Houlihan (2002: 194) notes the 'willingness of governments to humble themselves before the IOC and FIFA through lavish hospitality and the strategic deployment of presidents, prime ministers, royalty and supermodels' is a reflection of the value that governments now place on international sport. The promoters of sports mega-events – the Olympics and the World Cup especially – in turn rely on two agencies. On the one hand the media are essential, since without the media, sports mega events would not be able to attract the public's attention and corporate sponsorship. On the other hand, without the thousands of volunteers who work for free, the games would not be able to 'go on' (see Nogawa, 2004 for an analysis of volunteers during the 2002 World Cup in Japan and Korea). The state constructs what is and what is not legitimate sports practice and in doing so effectively determines what the sports consumers' interest is. The state also creates the framework within which partnerships between local authorities, voluntary sports and commercial organizations operate. The neo-liberal state may have 'less responsibility for direct service delivery' of sport but it has retained, if not actually expanded, its influence because of the other agencies' dependency on state resources (Houlihan, 2002: 200). Hence the state remains

the place to campaign – whether it is over inequalities and social exclusion, the regulation of mega-events, consumer politics, human rights or environmental risks in sport.¹¹

The sociological significance of sports mega-events

If the bulk of this introduction has so far indicated the social, economic and political significance of sports mega-events, what are the reasons why sociologists and other social scientists should be interested in analysing them? What can social scientists learn from studying them? We suggest that detailed analysis of sports mega-events, such as the football World Cup and the Summer Olympics, enables consideration of several overlapping and intersecting issues of contemporary social scientific interest. These issues include: centre-periphery relationships related to governance in world sport (Sugden & Tomlinson, 2002), power relations between nation states, supranational sport associations and the sports business (Butler, 2002), the media-sport-business connection (Jennings with Sambrook, 2000), and the cultural production of ideologies needed to cover emergent fissures when ‘the circus comes to town’ (Horne and Manzenreiter, 2004a).¹²

Graham Scambler (2005: 189) suggests that sports mega-events can only be fully comprehended through adopting a multidimensional ‘jigsaw’ theoretical model of social reality derived from the work of Habermas and the critical realism of Bhaskar. This would take into account five sets of logics and relations: the economy and relations of class, the state and relations of command, patriarchy and relations of gender, tribalism and relations of ethnicity, and honour and relations of status. Whilst we applaud the ambition to incorporate so many aspects of the contemporary lifeworld in this model for a reflective, critical sociology of sport, we consider that the ideas of other leading social theorists, including Bourdieu and Giddens in terms of understanding sport as practice and sport as spectacle in the hypercommodified world of disorganized, global capitalism also remain underdeveloped.¹³

Elsewhere we have discussed the promise of Bourdieu’s ideas for analysing sport and globalization (Horne and Manzenreiter, 2004b) and one of us has outlined the promise of some of Giddens’ conceptions with another colleague (Horne and Jary, 2004). Bourdieu’s conception of sport as a relatively autonomous field or space of body practices with their own logic and histories created a distinctive school of research, especially, but not exclusively in France (see Pociello, ed., 1981). Other writers have noted the specific theoretical insights that Bourdieu’s sociological concepts offer to the study of sport and the body (Giulianotti, 2005; Tomlinson, 2004; and Shilling, 1993). It is not our ambition here, however, to promote one particular theory or mould a synthetic sociological theory of sport (or anything else) and thus resolve the issues emerging from ‘multi-paradigmatic rivalry’. We would suggest that synthetic theories in themselves are not very helpful, as they tend to close down debate. Arguably greater

advances are possible through a more eclectic theoretical approach. Whilst there are obvious incompatibilities between Bourdieu and Giddens, for instance, the ambition to generate a sociology of sport that investigates novel 'empiricities' is common to both.

What is required, if better multinational transdisciplinary research is to develop, some of which is evidenced in this collection, are methodological pluralism and theoretical openness. Theory should be seen as a process, not an accomplishment. Theoretical oppositions, or dualisms, should be mobilized to address certain substantive concerns, rather than argued away. Like Eric Dunning (1999) our argument is that 'sport matters'. Unlike him, we would place greater emphasis on the variability of sports' impact on different people at different times and places. The overall social significance of sport is conjunctural. Sport has become more of an integral part of the 'economies of signs and space' of late capitalist modernity in the past twenty years, but it has not always been so. Therefore a discontinuist thesis of historical development, rather than a developmental one, such as figurational sociology provides, is arguably a more accurate model. This is consistent with Pierre Bourdieu's concern, made with reference to Elias, that 'historical analysis of long-term trends is always liable to hide critical breaks' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 93). Sport can best be viewed as a contested cultural terrain. Sport, and leisure in general, do matter, but not for all the people and not all the time. Studies of contestation and fluctuations in the relationship between sport and economic, political and social power, contained in this collection, demonstrate some aspects of this variability in significance.

Sports mega-events provide novel ways in which research into national and cultural identity, mobility, and individualization can be approached, as our contributors indicate. Insofar as sports mega-events reflect contemporary socio-economic conditions study of them highlights matters pertaining to the 'cultural turn' applied to sociology and the sociology of sport. The 'cultural turn' is connected to debates about modernity, lifestyles and identity concerning the shifting relationship between the state and the capitalist market, above and below the national level, the transformation of the meaning of citizenship, and the implications of these developments for personal and social identities. Research into sports mega-events can provide insights into three main dynamics of this contemporary consumer society – globalization, increased commodification and growing inequality.¹⁴ Sports mega-events also bring large groups of people together in collective displays of devotion and celebration. As the chapters by Manzenreiter and Marivoet, in particular, indicate, the adoption of symbols, especially flags, songs and team shirts, act as signs of social inclusion in expressive displays of sportive nationalism. Yet challenges to national identity are also manifest in contemporary patterns of elite athletic talent migration that contribute in no small part to the difficulties in defining national allegiances. Additionally the global division of labour in sport means that some local and national sporting differences may be erased by the economic dominance of certain regions and leagues (eg, Europe and football, the USA and basketball).

The dominance of transnational companies and media conglomerates in terms of the sponsorship and marketing of sports mega-events also creates the conditions in which leading athletes become stars, celebrities and brands (Smart, 2005; Whannel, 2002).

Sports mega-events have been largely developed by undemocratic organizations, often with anarchic decision-making and a lack of transparency, and more often in the interests of global flows rather than local communities. In this respect they represent a shift of public funds to private interests. Such organizations represent part of the ideological assault on citizenship that has occurred since the 1980s, which prefer global consumers to local publics. This emphasis on economic liberalization also has its corollary in discourses about human rights and political liberalization. But, as Xu's chapter suggests, the contradiction between these two is often resolved in favour of economic liberalism. Whether it be through the removal of surplus populations and the socially marginal from host sites and venues, the construction of highly gender specific male cultural centres, or the re-affirmation of the hierarchical ranking of nations through sport performances, sports mega-events can contribute to the naturalization of social inequalities. Sports mega-events promise (albeit brief) moments of 'festive intercultural celebration' (Kidd, 1992a: 151). Yet, as we have suggested here, it would be a failure of the social scientific imagination to be seduced by the allure of mega-events.

Conclusion – forming a new research agenda for sports mega-events

The chapters that follow are arranged into three sections that indicate broad sub-divisions in the study of sports mega-events – their role in capitalist modernity, glocal politics, and as a feature of power, spectacle and the urban environment. The chapters all indicate areas where further research is needed, whilst those by Roche and Gratton and his colleagues explicitly state some of the research questions about sport mega-events that might be specifically investigated in the future. What kind of mark do we hope this book leaves on sports mega-event discourses in the future?

An Olympic Games or a football World Cup involves competing groups of players with different interests and capital. As academics we too are players in the game, and generally as Giulianotti (2005: 159) notes, 'no player argues for the game's complete abolition; the most radical argue for reinventing the system that produces the game's rules, procedures and distribution of capital'. It is true to say that almost all sports politics is reformist rather than revolutionary. Those involving 'occidental modernity's core urban mega-events' (Scambler, 2005: 69) are no different. The main axis of concern about sports mega-events, however, has swung from their political use to their economic use in the past twenty-five years, when the Los Angeles Olympics witnessed an accelerated 'incorporation of sporting practice into the ever-expanding marketplace of international capitalism' (Gruneau, 1984: 2).

So what are the key themes and issues we consider worth further exploration in future research into sports mega-events? Firstly, in keeping with the reformist politics mentioned above, more accurate evaluations, social impact assessments and full public consultation before submitting bids is required if mega-events, as mega-projects, are to retain public support and become more democratically accountable achievements (Flyvbjerg *et al.*, 2003). Greater institutional checks and balances to control costs, including the formulation of penalties for transgression, such as financial penalties for cost overruns, as well as environmental and social impact assessments need to be developed on the basis of independent research. This book does not outline such checks and balances but may, it is hoped, contribute to their development by raising awareness of the existence of research-based criticism of non-economic, as well as economic, aspects of sports mega-events. Secondly, as Schimmel indicates in her chapter and as was witnessed barely 24 hours after the announcement that London had been selected to host the 2012 Summer Olympic Games in July 2005, security issues are likely to come more to the fore in production of sports mega-events. Heightened concerns about risk and the nature of globalization in its 'uncertainty' phase (Robertson, 1992: 58–9) will form a substantial research theme in future studies of sports mega-events.

Thirdly, whether the focus is on the business of sport in a globalizing world (involving the global trade in sports goods, services, sponsorship and team and property ownership), the mediation of mega-events by transnational media conglomerates and new technologies, or the shifting balance between public and private financing of sport, commodification and the heightened spectacularization of sport through sports mega-events will remain central concerns of research (see Kellner, 2003 on the 'sports media spectacle'). Fourthly, and last but by no means least, the social function, meanings and processes involved in the stimulation of new social movements and opposition coalitions, as well as volunteers and spectators, engaged with sport and sports mega-events will continue to require further analysis from independent social researchers. In these and other ways, social scientific analysis of sport and sports mega-events will develop in the future.

Notes

- 1 This chapter draws in part on sections of Horne (2007).
- 2 For another illustration of the importance of the media to sports mega-events see many of the contributions to the special edition of the *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 'Sports Mega-Events', Volume 35, No. 3, 2000.
- 3 The Winter Olympic Games is roughly one-quarter the size of the Summer Games in terms of athletes and events and so some might argue that it is not a true 'mega' (Matheson and Baade 2003). It certainly qualifies as a 'second order' major international sports event. The UEFA European Football Championship is in a similar category, as Marivoet outlines in her chapter.
- 4 Between 1980 and 2000 seven new sports and 79 events were added to the programme of the Summer Olympics. 28 sports have featured in the Summer Olympics since 2000, although the

- rare decision to scale down the number to 26 (removing baseball and softball after the 2008 Olympics) was made in July 2005 (www.olympic.org/uk). After 1998 the FIFA World Cup Finals expanded from 24 to 32 football teams.
- 5 One of the main problems regarding the assessment of the costs and benefits of mega events relates to the quality of data obtained from impact analyses. Economic impact studies often claim to show that the investment of public money is worthwhile in the light of the economic activity generated by having professional sports teams or mega events in cities. Yet economic benefits are often expressed in terms of both net income *and* increased employment, whereas in fact increased employment results *from* additional income, not as well as. Economic impact assessments of mega events also rely on predictions of expenditure by sports tourists, and again research shows that such studies have often been methodologically flawed. The real economic benefit of visitor numbers and spending is often well below that specified because of 'substitution', 'crowding out' and unrealistic use of the economic 'multiplier' factors. Another measure of economic impact – on the creation of new jobs in the local economy – has often been politically driven to justify the expenditure on new facilities and hence the results are equally questionable – see Matheson and Baade 2003 and Crompton (n.d.).
 - 6 Partly in the light of London's successful bid for the 2012 Olympic Games, the Scottish Executive endorsed the bid by Glasgow to host the Commonwealth Games in 2014 in 2005, although the final decision is not expected until November 2007.
 - 7 Fairclough describes 'cultural governance' as 'governing by shaping or changing the cultures of the public services, claimants and the socially excluded, and the general population' (Fairclough, 2000, p. 61). This form of governance has featured in the political system of the United Kingdom for the past 26 years. Cultural governance also 'implies an increased importance for discourses in shaping the action – managing culture means gaining acceptance for particular representations of the social world, ie, particular discourses' (Fairclough, 2000, p. 157). In this respect sport has become a most important feature of government intervention and regulation. This importance has been reflected in a number of initiatives and publications. Thus Tony Blair has continued the style of politics inherited from Margaret Thatcher, and to a lesser degree John Major. The Thatcher Government(s) between 1979 and 1990, for example, explicitly sought to create an 'enterprise culture' in which social and political well-being would be ensured not by central planning or bureaucracy but through the enterprising activities and choices of autonomous businesses, organizations and people. 'Enterprise' was a potent concept because it conveyed not just how organizations should operate but also how individuals should act – with energy, initiative, ambition, calculation and personal responsibility. The enterprising self was thus a calculating self, about her or him self and on her or him self. That the 'enterprising self' also appears to be a description of an active sports person is no coincidence. It is not unusual to find a particular kind of figure held up in high esteem at specific historical moments.
 - 8 77,400 permanent jobs, income of 2 per cent of South Africa's GDP and additional income from tax of US\$ 550 million (Cornelissen, 2004: p. 1297).
 - 9 Two recent examples of escalating costs and delays in megaprojects in Britain are the rebuilding of Wembley Stadium and the new Scottish Parliament building. After Wembley was chosen as the site of the new national stadium in 1997, delays and cost overruns have been a regular feature of the project. Initially costed at £185 million. Work on the site was due to start in 1999 by when the stadium was expected to cost £475 million. In fact work did not get underway until September 2002 when the figure had reached £752 million – making it the most expensive sports stadium in the world. At the time of writing (February 2006) the rising costs of steel and other delays to completion have led some people in the construction industry to estimate that the final total cost will be close to £1 billion. It is still not certain however when it will be open for business. Such was the outcry about the spiralling costs associated with the building of the new Scottish Parliament building at Holyrood in Edinburgh that an inquiry was established. Originally estimated at between £10 and £40 million in the devolution legislation passed in 1997, costs rose to £55 million (1998), £109 million (1999), £195 million (2000) and £374 million (2003). The building was finally opened in 2004 at a cost of £431 million (www.holyroodinquiry.org).

- 10 The phrase 'white elephant' is purported to derive from the practice of the King of Siam (modern Thailand) to deal with threats to his rule by giving these sacred and therefore purely symbolic, but expensive animals to rivals. The cost of maintaining the animal was more than they were worth.
- 11 One of us has suggested elsewhere that the major issues in the study of sport in consumer culture are 1. 'commodification' and trends in the global sports goods and services market, 2. 'consumerization' and the growth of sports coverage in the media, especially its role in the process of creating consumers out of sports audiences and fans, 3. 'commercialization' and the importance of sponsorship and advertising for contemporary sport, 4. 'cultural governance' and the changing role of government in the regulation, (consumer) protection and promotion of sport, 5. 'lifestylization', or how much, as a result of increasing consumerization, has the role of sport in the construction, maintenance and challenging of lifestyles and identities altered, and 6. 'inequality' – how consumerization is reflected in social divisions in patterns of involvement and participation in sport. These issues amount to a research agenda for the sociology of sport that considers consumer processes and politics more centrally than it has done to date (Horne, 2006).
- 12 See Veal & Toohey 2005 for a substantial bibliography of writing on the Olympic Games that includes much of this research.
- 13 Whilst there are obviously several alternative theoretical approaches in the sociology of sport, it is not our intention to argue for one or other of these here. As one of us has noted elsewhere (Horne, 2006, pp. 15–16), it was sports historian Allen Guttman who once observed (in relation to the figurational sociology of Dunning and Elias) that 'no key turns all locks'. Nonetheless, as can be seen from several of the contributions to this collection, many social scientists recognize there is a need to approach the study of sport and sports mega-events in consumer culture with considerable emphasis placed on the production of consumption, as much as the meanings or pleasures of consumption.
- 14 In these economies the body is more than an instrument for producing material goods and getting things done. The body, including the sporting and physically active body, is now portrayed as an object of contemplation and improvement, in the spectacular discourses of the mass media, the regulatory discourses of the state and in peoples' everyday practices (or 'body projects'). Contemporary advertisements for commercial sport and leisure clubs in the UK combine the discourses of both medical science and popular culture in such phrases as 'fitness regime', 'problem areas like the bottom or the stomach', 'consultation' and 'fix'. By exhorting potential consumers/members to 'Flatten your tum and perk up your bum' and reassuring us that 'Gym'll fix it', regulatory control of the body is now experienced through consumerism and the fashion industry. Sport has thus become increasingly allied to the consumption of goods and services, which is now the structural basis of the advanced capitalist countries through discourses about the model, (post-) modern consumer-citizen. This person is an enterprising self who is also a calculating and reflexive self. Someone permanently ready to discipline her- or himself – through crash diets, gymnastics, aerobics, muscle toning, tanning, strip-waxing, and cosmetic ('plastic') surgery (including breast enlargement and cellulite reduction) as well as sporting physical activity – in order to fit in with the demands of advanced liberalism (Horne, 2006).

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