2 Before, During, and After the Neoliberal Moment

Media, Sports, Policy, Citizenship[1]

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> I think we have gone through a period when too many children and people have been given to understand "I have a problem, it is the Government's job to cope with it!" or "I have a problem, I will go and get a grant to cope with it!," "I am homeless, the Government must house me!" and so they are casting their problems on society and who is society? There is no such thing!—Margaret Thatcher making policy, 1987. (Cited in Keay 1987, p. 9)

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is largely meta-critical. Rather than offering original research, it provides a tendentious background to theorizing the principal terms of this volume. After providing some definitions, I will propose that the dominant forces animating sporting policy in the media area are desires to police the public and protect the profiteer. Then I will outline some actually existing alternatives.

POLICY

Policy refers to a regularized set of actions based on a principle. It's a very Weberian concept.[2] The authority of policy is based on transparent rationality rather than ancestral tradition or individual charisma. All entities make policies, in the sense of regularized plans of action and norms that they follow. In terms of media and sporting policy, I suggest that we understand the terms as applying both to private and public concerns. From differing political perspectives, both functionalists and Marxists consider the private-public distinction under capitalism to be problematic, and policies are certainly developed and implemented by businesses as often—if less publicly—as governments. The same doctrine applies to the third sector, where sports and the media live hybrid lives as creatures of the state, commerce, and voluntarism.

It follows that different countries' media systems have particular emphases in their coverage of what are superficially the same sporting events, without this necessarily resulting from government policy. For example, it is because of NBC's policies that the summer Olympics on US television amounts to little more than swimming, gymnastics, and track and field, with a focus on national success. By contrast, policy decisions on coverage across a wider array of sports see the British media respond to Olympic results with retribution, the Chinese with forgiveness, and the Russians with analysis (Project for Excellence in Journalism 2008). Elsewhere, the Israeli media insist that local Arab footballers speak Hebrew, suppress alternative identities and politics, and shun independent nationhood (Shor 2010). These are not state policies of censorship and propaganda, but policies adopted in newsrooms and based on nationalism, everyday practice, and audience research. As H. G. Wells put it, "[t]he sport-loving Englishman, the sociable Frenchman, the vehement American will each diffuse his own great city in his own way" (1902, p. 57).

This is not, of course, to suggest that such policies lack a wider geopolitics. Consider Edward Said's reflections on US talk radio:

> The American consciousness of sports, with its scores and history and technique and all the rest of it, is at the level of sophistication that is almost terrifying, especially if you compare it with the lack of awareness of what's going on in the world. That's where you get the sense that the investment is being made in those things that distract you from realities that are too complicated. (1993, p. 23)

This attention is neither accidental nor driven by a natural interest. Rather, as Herb Schiller explains:

> The child, the teenager, and the adult now encounter in their daily routines, in the home, at school, on television, in the movies, at sports events, in museums and concerts, and at recreational parks, messages and images that celebrate and promote consumption. In these communications, democracy comes to be defined as the act of choosing . . . goods. (Schiller 1991, p. 58)

In addition, because sport and the media transcend both state boundaries and commercial rents, they are often managed by international organizations. This phenomenon is neither new nor entirely dissociated from national citizenship. Away from the utopic hopes of world government on a grand scale, international organizations have been working for a long time, sometimes quietly and sometimes noisily, to manage trans-territorial issues—telecommunications, football, accreditation, Catholicism, postage, airways, sea-lanes, cricket, smallpox, and athletics come to mind. Their business is sometimes conducted at a state level, sometimes through civil society, and sometimes both. In almost every case, they encounter or enact legal and political doctrines that make them accountable in certain ways to the popular will of sovereign-states, at least in name. Whilst that popular will may frequently be overdetermined or overrun—by technocratic mandarinism, superstitious god-bothering, or corporate shill—it remains a key site of change via representative government. We have seen this phenomenon operate, for both good and ill, in sporting and media debates over everything from ceding legal sovereignty to underwriting stadium construction. It is sometimes referred to as a "New Medievalism," because it weakens central state control in favor of a patchwork of associations, localities, and internationalisms (Strange 1995, p. 56).

THE MEDIA

The second key concept in this book is the media. The state has participated in the media via two intersecting models: indirect control, through the regulation of ownership, and textuality; and direct and indirect production, through government-run media, as per state socialism, or quasi-independence, as per public service broadcasting. Business has participated in the media through a desire to profit by selling advertising time on air and subscriptions on satellite, as well as aiding its specific and class-based political-economic interests via populist programming that both underwrites and is underwritten by nationalism and capitalism.

From the 18th century through to the 1940s, the press and the media mostly derived from a central node—whether public or private, governmental or commercial—that sent out material to readers and audiences within circumscribed political, physical, and demographic terrain. It was not person-to-person, and only newspapers were conventionally available by subscription. The media have unfurled from this centralist concentration to a diverse system of both embedded and explicit policies, interests, and knowledge. Radio, for example, developed genres and themes for stations to organize listeners, increased its capacity for transmission and reproduction, and mobilized new spaces of reception, such as the beach, car, and workplace. It displaced the newspaper's monopoly over time—but limited spatial reach—by temporal continuity and a less measurable and contained dominion over space. Outside broadcasts were soon part of programming, and coverage of popular sports brought a new immediacy. In today's era of digital technology, consumer sovereignty, and anti-democratic deregulation, niche programming and channels proliferate. The internet and cell phone are really extensions of the transistor radio's reach and adaptability. For while the media have obviously changed, much of their essence remains—information is sent out from a central point and takes root elsewhere. Tensions remain, then, between the notion of sport as part of a pre-existing cultural environment and ideas of intellectual property and ownership that the media capitalize on at the expense of the public. When US, European, or Chinese legislation identifies copyrighted elements or territorial rights of television, internet, or radio coverage, it has implications for audience pleasure and price, state participation, team ownership, and media profit (Court of Justice, 2011, Evens et al. 2011, Song 2011,).

SPORT

For its part, sport began in two ways: on the one hand, as unregulated, unruly forms of peasant and proletarian joy, relaxation, and violence (in the street); and on the other, as forms of state and popular pleasure derived from more ordered if similarly violent activities (in the Coliseum). Sport expanded by blending these two forms and mixing volunteer and waged labor, amateur and professional management. As sentiment and behavior were codified, management and auto-critique tempered excess and self-laceration. The displacement of tension and the search for ordered leisure allocated the task of controlling and training gentry, workers, and colonists alike to organized sport. High tension and low risk blended popular appeal with public safety—a utilitarian calculus of time and pleasure (Elias 1978, Elias and Dunning 1986, Thompson 1967). These trends were subject to local customization and struggle, as per the shifts in European sport that occurred between the 13th and 19th centuries, with enclosure and the open air in an ambiguous relationship. The spatial separation of sport from nature during late 19th-century industrialization saw bodies in motion progressively contained, enraging hygiene movements but facilitating surveillance, spectacle, and profit (Eichberg 1986). A similar form of enclosure occurs today with the use of eminent domain and public funds to take public and private space and build privately owned stadia for profit, as per contemporary North American sports (Nunn and Rosentraub 2003).

CITIZENS

There are individual correlatives of this commodification and corporate welfare. In Guattari's words:

> From the most personal—one might almost say infra-personal—existential data, integrated world capitalism forms massive subjective aggregates, which it hooks up to notions of race, nation, profession, sporting competition, dominating virility, mass media stardom. Capitalism seeks to gain power by controlling and neutralizing the maximum possible number of subjectivity's existential refrains; capitalistic subjectivity is intoxicated with and anaesthetized by a collective sense of pseudo-eternity. (1989, p. 138)

My final keyword is the citizen, the subject referred to above. Classical political theory accorded representation to citizens through the state; the modern, economic addendum promised a minimal standard of living; and the postmodern, cultural version guaranteed access to communications. Put another way, the last two hundred years of modernity have produced three zones of citizenship, with partially overlapping but also distinct historicities. These zones of citizenship are the political (the right to reside and vote); the economic (the right to work and prosper); and the cultural (the right to know and speak). They correspond to the French Revolutionary cry '*liberté, égalité, fraternité*' (liberty, equality, solidarity) and the Argentine left's contemporary version '*ser ciudadano, tener trabajo, y ser alfabetizado*' (citizenship, employment, and literacy). The first category concerns political rights; the second, material interests; and the third, cultural representations (Miller 2007). The three categories inflect and overdetermine one another as their relative importance shifts over time, space, and theme.

Beginning in the 1970s, there was a change in economic citizenship away from the welfare of the public and toward the welfare of the private in ways that inflect and infect citizenship *tout court*. In addition to fundamental policy decisions that redistributed wealth upwards and internationally, this radical change had an ideological dimension—neoliberalism. One of the most successful attempts to reshape individuals in human history, neoliberalism's achievements rank alongside such productive and destructive sectarian practices as state socialism, colonialism, nationalism, and religion. Its lust for market regulation over democratic regulation was so powerful that true-believing prelates opined on every topic imaginable, from birth rates to divorce, suicide to abortion, and performance-enhancing drugs to altruism. Rhetorically, it stood against elitism (for populism); against subvention (for markets); and against public service (for philanthropy) (Grantham and Miller 2010). In keeping with neoliberalism's class project, economic citizenship has changed dramatically from social welfare to corporate welfare. Begging/demanding firms are handed taxpayers' money while individuals and social groups are told to fend for themselves. In direct contradiction to equality and social justice, this is socialism for capitalists and capitalism for workers. It is exemplified by Thatcher's notorious quotation from *Women's Day* above and endless neoclassical true believers' claims about human conduct (rote renditions relevant to this book include Forrest *et al.* 2004 and Noll 2007).

My basic argument is that political citizenship's role in sport and media policy has been overdetermined by economic citizenship in its latest form, while cultural citizenship offers a riposte to this domination by right-wing economism. Political citizenship is the entity by which laws are created about access to media coverage, as parliaments speak on behalf of their electorates, and where large organizations such as Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) undermine national sovereignty over space and people (Bond 2010, Hyde 2010). Economic citizenship invokes the citizen as a consumer while actually aiding corporate interests by charging rent for previously uncommodified goods. And cultural citizenship resists these forms of domination through a politics of spectacle and belonging that both appeals to and questions the other forms of citizenship. It can be used to argue for democratic interventions in and responses to changes in sport and the media via cultural citizenship (Scherer and Whitson 2009, Rowe 2009).

Corporations invoke all three types of citizen to describe themselves, while principally pursuing economic interests. This is part of their restless quest for profit unfettered by regulation, twinned with a desire for moral legitimacy and free advertising that is based on 'doing right' in a very public way while growing rich in a very private way through respect for the law and the desire to meddle in others' lives. The 255 public, private, and mixed projects of international development listed as utilizing sport in 2008 represented a 93 per cent increase over five years. A high proportion involved corporations, notably media ones, frequently via 'Astroturf' (*faux* grassroots) organizations such as the Vodafone Foundation. Sport and the media make corporations resemble governing agencies operating with the public good in mind, even as their actions heighten North-South imbalances, promote their own wares, commodify sports, distract attention from corporate malfeasance in terms of the environment and labor, and stress international/imperial sports over local ones (Levermore 2010, Silk *et al.* 2005).

THE GREAT UNWASHED/THE PAYING AUDIENCE

Margaret Thatcher opened this chapter. She has long been a synonym for the paradox that characterized neoliberalism's thirty-year suzerainty—moral regulation and heightened social policing alongside economic deregulation and diminished corporate policing. Running through the relationship between citizenship, sport, and media policy has been a related trend: anxiety about, and desire for, crowds/audiences/spectators/fans/hooligans (insert your preferred term here). They must be governed and/or commodified. A paradoxical fear and adoration of such groups dates back to Ancient Greece and Rome. But a truly furious excitement about large numbers of people gathered together emerged with the industrial and post-industrial ages that have dominated the globe since the 18th century, once newly urbanized dwellers both confronted and helped to create unprecedented social relations. Weber imaginatively evoked this arcane utopia and dystopia via his image of the:

> modern metropolis, with its railways, subways, electric and other lights, shop windows, concert and catering halls, cafes, smokestacks, and piles of stone, the whole wild dance of sound and color impressions that affect

> sexual fantasy, and the experiences of variations in the soul's constitution that lead to a hungry brooding over all kinds of seemingly inexhaustible possibilities for the conduct of life and happiness. (2005, p. 29)

Along with the great opportunities and changes that accompanied urbanization and the Industrial Revolution came new fears and ways of inculcating and managing them. The prospect of a long-feared 'ochlocracy' of 'the worthless mob' (Pufendorf 2000, p. 144) afflicted both hegemons and the critics and scholars who served them. In the wake of the French Revolution, Edmund Burke was animated by the need to limit popular exuberance via "restraint upon . . . passions" (1994, p. 122). John Stuart Mill spoke with horror of "the meanest feelings and most ignorant prejudices of the vulgarest part of the crowd" (1861, p. 144), while the Latin@ founder of the 'American Dream,' John Truslow Adams, regarded "[t]he mob mentality of the city crowd' as 'one of the menaces to modern civilization" (1941, pp. 404, 413). Élite theorists from both right and left, notably Vilfredo Pareto (1976), Gaetano Mosca (1939), Gustave Le Bon (1899), and Robert Michels (1915), argued that newly literate publics were vulnerable to manipulation by demagoguery and the simple fact of gathering together in large numbers, whether for sporting events or political demonstrations. These critics were frightened of socialism, democracy, and popular reason (Wallas 1967, p. 137).

Brecht (1964), by contrast, welcomed the passionate sporting crowd as a potential site of resistance to government and capital, and Adorno reflected on sport's duality:

> On the one hand, it can have an anti-barbaric and anti-sadistic effect by means of fair play, a spirit of chivalry, and consideration for the weak. On the other hand, in many of its varieties and practices it can promote aggression, brutality, and sadism, above all in people who do not expose themselves to the exertion and discipline required by sports but instead merely watch: that is, those who regularly shout from the sideline. (2010)

The last century and a half of scholarship, policy, and punditry has seen obsessive attempts to correlate the popular classes with anti-social conduct: where they came from, how many there were, and what they did as a consequence of being present. The effect has been to create what Harold Garfinkel called the 'cultural dope,' a mythic figure who is imagined to act "in compliance with pre-established and legitimate alternatives of action that the common culture provides" (1992, p. 68). For Adorno, the issue was:

> whether people who no longer have any clear idea of their own job or vocation, and who are therefore said to be able to adapt themselves and get used to a new area of work with relative ease, whether this really

> promotes maturity for them, or whether, by losing their heads on the sports field on Sundays, they do not actually prove themselves to be immature. (Adorno and Becker 1999, p. 29)

Adorno thought simply watching sport promoted “a retrogressive and sometimes even infantile type of person” (1945, p. 213) and Richard Hoggart doubted its capacity for social control:

> When we say that adolescence must often be a time of opposition and rebellion we should realise that this will often mean *real* rebellion, not something that can be fairly easily piped-off, by providing physical exercise or some kind of strenuous sport or initiative-test. That may do for some people but it will not do for others. (1965, p. 35)

Inside these discourses of fear, control, and desire, sports both exemplified and countered violence, and the media both exemplified and countered demagoguery. Managed properly, they could lead to power and profit. At the same time, this management required delegitimizing crowds and rendering them non-ideological, as E.P. Thompson (1971) explained in his study of riots as concepts as well as events.

Sociological figuration has been a key means of addressing these questions. Its founder, Norbert Elias, synchronically and diachronically analyzed sport and social structure. He coined the term ‘figuration’ to designate how people inhabit social positions over time and space. The figural keys to sport were exertion, contest, codification, and collective meaningfulness. Elias and his disciples asked why there was such fascination with rule-governed contests (i.e., policies in action) between individuals and teams, which was evident in a trend that began with the European ruling classes in the 16th century and discernible today through crowd numbers, media coverage, and governmental action:

> Battle lust and aggressiveness . . . find socially permitted expression in the infighting of groups in society or, for that matter, in competitive sports. And they are manifest above all in “spectating,” say, at boxing matches; in the daydream-like identification with some few people who, in a moderate and precisely regulated way, are allowed to act out such affects. . . . Already in education, in the prescriptions for conditioning young people, originally active, pleasurable aggression is transformed into a more passive and restrained pleasure in spectating, consequently into a mere visual enjoyment. (Elias 1978, p. 240)

This translation from uncontrolled to directed violence and spectator pleasure is the key to figuration. Following that model, Joseph Maguire (1993) typifies today’s sporting body as a site of discipline, domination, reflection, and communication. The disciplined body is remodeled through diet and training.

The dominating body exercises power through physical force, both on the field and—potentially—off it. The reflecting body functions as a machine of desire, encouraging mimetic conduct via the purchase of commodities. The communicative body is an expressive totality, balletic and beautiful, wracked and wrecked. These taxonomies bleed into one another and can be internally conflictual or straightforwardly functional. They are carried by human, commercial, and governmental practices that stretch and maintain boundaries between performance, aspiration, and audience.

Twentieth-century social reformers sought to harness such energies to nation building and economic productivity. Capitalism was transforming sport into a practice of spectatorship that was as rule-governed as the games being watched. In Weber's words:

> where violent conflict changes to "competition," whether for Olympic wreaths or electoral votes or other means of power or for social honor or gain, it is accomplished entirely on the basis of a rational association, whose regulations serve as "rules of the game" determining the forms of conflict, thereby certainly shifting the conflict probabilities. The gradually increasing "pacification," in the sense of the reduction in the use of physical force, only reduces but does not ever wholly eliminate the appeal to the use of force. But in the course of historical development, its use has been increasingly monopolized by the coercive apparatus of a certain kind of association or consensus community—the political—and has been changed into the form of the regulated coercive threat by those in power and finally into a formally neutral force. (1981, p. 173)

The 19th-century British Inspector of Schools, poet, and critic Matthew Arnold (2003) looked on, bemused but resigned, as the Industrial Revolution created "games and sports which occupy the passing generation of boys and young men" and delivered "a better and sounder physical type for the future to work with." Governments and the media came to invest in these bodies as part of the spread of biopower—a switching point between Weber, Elias, Arnold, their Marxist and postcolonial neighbors Bourdieu (1980) and Ali Mazrui (1977), and Foucault.

Biopower made the relationship of populations to their environments a central strut of governance. It linked productivity and health both performatively and indexically to work and leisure. Each aspect was subject to human intervention and hence governmental interest, via forecasting, measuring, and estimating. Foucault proposed three concepts of biopower to explain life today. The first element utilizes economics to mold the population into efficient and effective producers. The second is an array of apparatuses designed to create conditions for this productivity, via bodily interventions and the promotion of fealty and individuality. The third exchanges methods between education and penology, transforming justice into human 'improvement.' Put another way, we might understand this exercise of biopower as the indoctrination of the social by the state and the infestation of sovereignty with demography (Foucault 2003, 2007, and 2008).

The idea of sport as a release for otherwise unruly forms of public life and as a means of generating profit ran into problems through an apparent regression to its ungoverned origins in the 1970s. In Western Europe, football became the crucible of such concerns, often impelled by anxieties about nationalistic, racist, misogynistic, and hyper-masculinist conduct and the desire to control such urges as part of state power and commercial expansion. The term 'hooligan' was applied to describe such 'dross.' A wonderfully onomatopoeic coinage, it borrowed from Marx's Dickensian taxonomy of:

> vagabonds, dismissed soldiers, discharged convicts, runaway galley slaves, sharpers, jugglers, lazzaroni, pickpockets, sleight-of-hand performers, gamblers, procurers, keepers of disorderly houses, porters, literati, organ grinders, rag pickers, scissors grinders, tinkers, beggars. (1987, p. 63)

Hooliganism was redisposed to cover a group of young white proletarian men in Northern Europe dealing with the stagflationary chaos of the 1970s as jobs were lost, social services disappeared, unemployment rose, and immigration became a tinderbox because people from former colonies came (in small numbers) to a reactionary deindustrializing metropole.

THE NEOLIBERAL HEGEMONY

One response to this hooliganism was strict private and public policing of stadia. Another was the confluence of media deregulation and emergent companies' subsequent search for relatively cheap programming guaranteed to attract middle-class audiences to subscription services; hence US television offering more than 43,000 hours of live sports in 2009 (Nielsen 2010). The amounts paid to televise sport may seem large, but they are risible when compared to producing drama, because development costs and salaries are borne by the sports themselves rather than television stations. As a consequence of new admissions policies and prices and the televisualization of football as a paying service, the armchair customer has largely displaced the terrace hooligan. Along the way, new zones of citizenship have appeared below and above the nation, under the sign of football.

It is hard to imagine a better example of collectivity, individuation, substructure, and superstructure in policy tension than European football and television over the last three decades. Prior to this period, football clubs were small urban businesses, run rather like not-for-profit fiefdoms that drew upon and represented local cultures. Then they were commodified and made into creatures of exchange. In the course of this radical transformation, football clubs fell prey to fictive capital, becoming sources of asset inflation for rentiers to service other debts through the cash flow of television money and gate receipts. At the same time, this *embourgeoisement* addressed a policing problem for states, as the great unwashed could no longer afford tickets. During the first five years of the English Premier League, which commenced in 1992 and is now the Barclays Premier League, sixty matches were on television each season; by 2006, the number was 138. Enter a transnational policy entity with even greater neoliberal governing lust than national governments, which were beholden to local media—the European Commission. It expressed major concerns about the prospects for new entrants competing to cover the competition. That opened the way for Setanta, a satellite channel that was moving from its original home in Irish pubs around the world to private homes around the British Isles and the US Setanta and Sky paid £2.7 billion for national and international rights between 2007 and 2010. But the neoliberal dream was going awry, as we all know. With the major rights-holders through 2013 being a subsidiary of News Corporation, which had manifold debts, and Setanta, which operated under serious financial strictures, and many teams themselves owned by debtors, the bubble grew tighter yet more tumescent. Then Setanta UK and US collapsed, and many teams that were highly geared faced similar futures. More and more mavens and pundits thought that the entire sport of football would trip, stumble, and perhaps even fall, although ESPN, a Disney subsidiary, took up Setanta's slack.

The idea of an endlessly expanding universe of televised sport, a recession-proof genre that would keep going and going, was revealed to be a fantasy, and not only via Setanta. Morgan Stanley says that the major US television networks lost US$1.3 billion on sport between 2002 and 2006, which led to an expected US$3 billion dollar devaluation of the rights that they had bought. The US National Football League suffered a 13 per cent decrease in television ratings in the five seasons to 2002. Disney exiled *Monday Night Football* from its broadcast network (ABC) to a niche cable channel (ESPN) in 2006 due to falling audience numbers, where it succeeded at a much lower ratings threshold (Miller 2010). At the same time, mind-boggling amounts are still paid for some events. When US television and radio rights to the 2018 and 2022 FIFA World Cup tournaments went up for sale, Fox bought the Anglo version and NBC's Telemundo the Spanish for a combined US$1.2 billion, more than twice the previous amount (Longman 2011).

The road of sport and media policy in the Global North inevitably leads to the new economic powerhouses of the world. Here, cricket is of particular interest. India, once a minor player in the administration of the world game, is now hegemonic due to its sizeable middle class and wealthy television rights regime. This development is conventionally understood as what happens to a sport when a very large population interested in it grows wealthy and exercises economic power to take control from residual, decadent imperialism. So far so good: but that argument forgets the element of media policy. For the narrative also relies on the notion that cricket has a special cultural meaning for Indians beyond other sports. But until neoliberalism, cricket was of much less significance than hockey or, arguably, football. The triumph of cricket derived from a complex field of media deregulation, televisual investment, middle-class expansion, nationalistic Hinduism, and satellite innovation (Mehta 2009, Nandy 2000).

At the same time, we must beware of reducing media sports policy to any of its constituent terms. The Olympic Games and the men's FIFA World Cup of football are among the world's most important events. Policy discussions have generally focused on rights issues as host broadcasters and major rightsholders negotiate who covers what and from where (NBC pays the most so it gets priority). But the wider impact of the coverage has wider policy implications. The media have begun to fetishize efforts to clean up the environmental destruction of such parties by focusing on the policies of corporations to make their activities greener. Endless stories are concocted through public-relations experts about the beneficence of polluters and the seriousness with which host committees and governments and presiding bodies take environmental policy, as per the seemingly altruistic tales of social responsibility mentioned earlier. The Vancouver Games of 2010 boasted via *Advertising Age* that:

> visitors will find café furniture made from pine-beetle-salvaged wood, drink out of bottles made from 30% plant-based materials, and their beverages will be delivered via hybrid vehicles and electric cart. All are elements of [corporate name censored by me]'s first zero-waste, carbon-neutral sponsorship. (Zmuda 2010)

That year's South African World Cup proclaimed that nine teams had their jerseys made from recycled polyethylene terephthalate bottles. Coincidentally, they were sponsored by a major sporting goods company, which remorselessly promoted its good deed (Menon 2010). None of these initiatives touched on the real issue: that the very possibility of free corporate media publicity depended on environmental despoliation through air travel by businesses, teams, the media, and fans. This was a step too far—or too close—to take. It would have signaled serious intent on the part of media organizations, sports, and states to diminish the worst carbon footprint in the world outside the Pentagon's, and engage the fact that the 2010 World Cup racked up twice the greenhouse-gas emissions of its predecessor (Bond 2010, Shachtman 2010).

If we move to a very different arena, to the high priest of *bourgeois* individualism called golf, we see destructive and literally sickening environmental developments at the nexus of sport and media policy. Along with state clearance of space on behalf of capital through the doctrine of eminent domain, the media are crucial players in the problem. Whereas the *mythos* of golf declares it to be a conservationist's delight, based on the notion that rabbits grazing, birds shitting, and other wild things burrowing naturally produced St Andrew's grass, the model television course for the four majors (conducted in just two countries, and reliant on keeping people off course for many months in advance of media exposure) has become the standard worldwide.

CULTURAL RESPONSES

The story I have told is rather pessimistic. I want to conclude by offering some alternative visions through cultural citizenship that might buttress public interests against commercial ones. Despite all the changes made to the media around the globe to reinforce profiteering, diminish democratic participation, and rein in unlicensed spectatorship via 'piracy,' the state still protects certain sports from full corporatization. In order to preserve nationalism and culture based on ideas of cultural citizenship, governments effectively remove key events from the full media market. The rather dreadful expression 'anti-siphoning legislation' exemplifies this decision. (Full disclosure: I used to be a bureaucrat. We'd sit around laughing and make up concepts with awful English and acronyms with absurd sounds in the hope that journalists, academics, and other public servants would take them seriously and denotatively use them). Such lists generally cover events or codes of national appeal and prevent their being fully commodified by insisting that they be shown on free-to-air television rather than cable, satellite, and the internet. In Britain, for instance, men's Test cricket, the men's World Cup, and the All-England Club's tennis Championship are on various lists (Australian Government 2009, Ofcom n.d.). In the UK, 3 o'clock kickoffs of Premier League football matches on Saturdays are blacked out from television coverage in order to stimulate attendance in lower leagues. Because foreign satellite and cable customers are not covered by the ban, some UK viewers decode these channels. The League and television rights holders argue that while this is legal for individuals to do, it is not acceptable for pubs that then charge customers, whether directly or indirectly, for the privilege. There has been a great deal of legal controversy as a consequence (Ballard and Bye 2008, Court of Justice of the European Union, 2011).

At a more organic level, supporters frequently draw on the discourse of citizenship to reject wholesale corporate control. Consider the League of Fans, which the noted consumer advocate Ralph Nader formed in the 1970s. Its 2011 *Sports Manifesto* notes today's almost unbridled commodification, as the newer media join their elderly and middle-aged counterparts in 'a frenetic rush for money.' The League is concerned that this tendency diverts attention from the communality of sport, and erodes its capacity for cultural and civic expression and togetherness. One side effect is a lopsided relationship between spectatorship and participation, such that the media emphasize the former, notably sports in which they have financial interests. In the US, attempts to create lists of sports and events that should be available on free-to-air media have long been ruled unconstitutional, so nowadays attempts are made to argue on the basis of consumer interest rather than culture (see the chapter by Wenner, Bellamy, and Walker in this volume). This tension amounts to a struggle between one corner of capital and another, such as network affiliates *contra* cable companies. Fans become their alibi and plaything.

At the same time, it is worth noting that, unlike most other wealthy nations, the US media, public, and state are just as engaged by amateur as by professional sports. For instance, in 2010 the National Collegiate Athletic Association signed a US$10.8 billion contract with CBS and Turner Broadcasting for coverage of men's basketball through to 2024. The state also has a crucial cultural policy role that supports university sport, in that it prohibits professional football being played on Saturdays in order to protect college sports coverage, and permits cartel conduct by franchises to ensure continuity of corporate investment (Evens and Lefever 2011, Flint 2010, Wolverton 2010). To counter this commodificatory drift, the League of Fans calls for a focus on sports stakeholders, such that all its principal actors are involved in decision-making in order to build "citizenship through sports activism" (2011). Human Rights Watch (2008) did sterling work to expose the International Olympic Committee's and the Chinese government's summer Olympics conspiracy of 2008, which whitewashed profound human-rights abuses and limits on press freedom. Less spectacularly, Australian rugby league fans invoked cultural citizenship in their opposition to Rupert Murdoch's takeover of the sport (Grainger and Andrews 2005). Then there is the tactic of refusal. John Frow refers to the 2012 Olympics as "the kind of mass event that I will try hard to avoid; whatever interest I have in sport is quenched by the hype and the commercialism that surround and inform the games" (2007, p. 17).

Simmel argued that sport is both a motor and an index of social life and can transcend control:

> The expression "social game" is significant in the deeper sense [of t]he entire interactional or associational complex among men: the desire to gain advantage, trade, formation of parties and the desire to win from another, the movement between opposition and co-operation, outwitting and revenge—all this, fraught with purposive content in the serious affairs of reality, in play leads [to] a life carried along only and completely by the stimulus of these functions. For even when play turns about a money prize, it is not the prize, which indeed could be won in many other ways, which is the specific point of the play; but the attraction for the true sportsman lies in the dynamics and in the chances of that sociologically significant form of activity itself. The social game has a deeper double meaning—that it is played not only in a society as

> its outward bearer but that with the society actually society is played. (1949, p. 258)

In the face of corporate juggernauts, other stakeholders *can* pursue divergent agenda, via negotiations with states, leagues, laws, and businesses as well as refusal, negation, and critique. As the chapters in this collection illustrate, the agenda to be drawn on will vary. If it is to take the form of progressive citizenship action, the brief outline I have provided here points to certain key concerns: opposition to neoliberal dogma, commodification, *embourgeoisement*, corporate Astroturfing, and environmental irresponsibility. The tasks are as great as they are varied.

NOTES

1. Thanks to the editors for commissioning this work.
2. The editors want a reference for this adjective. I suggest readers consult either of the Weber entries in the reference list.

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